Trauma, Rage, and Dissociation
Movement is the Key to Release and Recovery

S. Christina Boyd
Educational Kinesiologist
Licensed Brain Gym® Consultant
Brain Gym®

Brain Gym® is a series of specific movements that activate neural systems in the brain/body system. This improves an individual’s ability to:

1. process information from sensory input (both cognitively and emotionally)
2. maintain focus and attention
3. self-regulate behavior, and
4. communicate clearly
How Did Brain Gym® Develop?

Brain Gym® and its parent discipline, Educational Kinesiology (Edu-K), developed out of more than seventeen years of research by Dr. Paul E. Dennison, beginning in 1969.

- Gail E. Dennison, movement educator and partner in the development of Brain Gym®
- Collaborations with experts in visual and motor development
- Learning readiness, the process of gaining knowledge or skill, can be cultivated through physical movement.
We Each Have The Power to Create a Positive, Efficient Brain

BrainHighways.com

A series of short videos providing playful explanations of how a “disorganized,” or un-integrated, brain functions.
Brain Gym® at Work

BRAIN STEM
reactive, freeze/fight/flight

Brain Gym®…

- Disengages the primitive reflexes
- Restores focus, fluidity, proprioception
- Restores ability to process sensory input

IN TEENS

Strengthens the developing connections between the neocortex and brain stem thus inhibiting reactive responses.
Brain Gym® at Work

LIMBIC SYSTEM
interprets the world, the seat of motivation, emotions, memory

Brain Gym®…

- Builds proprioceptive awareness to align vision, listening, and movement.
- Supports balance, postural awareness, and the sense of self in space.

IN TEENS
Strengthens growth fibers between the neocortex and limbic area, which increases cognitive control and links reasoning with feeling. This inhibits reactivity.

Live and learn at your best.
Brain Gym®... 

- Strengthens bi-lateral integration for more effective functioning of the fine-motor skills central to spoken and written communication, cognitive functioning, and self-awareness.

NEOCORTEX

cognition, self-expression, autonomy, reasoning, reflection

IN TEENS

Helps to increase cortical integration during the massive neural changes taking place in the adolescent brain. This generates more cognitive control, emotional regulation, and appropriate social interaction.
Brain Gym® at Work

PREFrontAL CORTEX
master integrative hub that links neural input from various brain areas, the body, and social interactions

INSula
connects all bodily processes to the prefrontal cortex, creating self-awareness

Brain Gym®…

• Supports brain function to monitor and manage the subcortical world of reactions.

IN TEENS

Strengthens the new circuits that are forming during the “pruning” and myelination of the nerve pathways.
Movement as a Method of Remediation

“By the application of stylized sequential movements, practiced daily, it is thus possible to give the brain a ‘second chance’ to register the reflex inhibitory movement patterns which should have been made at the appropriate stage in development. As aberrant reflex activity is corrected, many of the physical, academic and emotional problems of the child will disappear.”

A Teacher’s Window Into the Child’s Mind

Sally Goddard Blythe, International Director, Institute for Neuro-Physiological Psychology, England
Movement as a Method of Remediation

“Yoga helps regulate emotional and physiological states. It allows the body to regain its natural movement and teaches the use of breath for self-regulation.”

Yoga and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, an interview

Bessel van der Kolk, MD, one of the world’s leading authorities on PTSD, USA
Movement as a Method of Remediation

“We develop our neural wiring in direct response to our life experiences. These patterns are organized and reorganized throughout life, allowing us greater ability to receive outside stimuli and perform the myriad jobs of a human life…Neural organization takes place in response to stimulation and activity…Movement and practice establish and elaborate these pathways.”

Smart Moves – Why Learning is Not All in Your Head

Carla Hannaford, PhD. International, Award-winning Author, Biologist, and Educator, USA
Movement as a Method of Remediation

“The Brain Gym movements simulate many of the developmental movements that babies and young children naturally perform, improving the processing of sensory information. As early and primitive reflex activity is integrated, many of the physical, academic and emotional problems of the child will decrease and/or disappear.”

Retained Primitive Reflexes and Their Effect on Learning, Behaviour and Wellbeing

Clair Hocking, Educational Kinesiologist, Brain Gym® Instructor, Australia
Movement as a Method of Remediation

“We can use targeted body movement and natural processes to help enhance the manufacture, balance and transportation of informational substances (and the flow of subtle balanced energy) in the body.”

Making the Brain Body Connection

Sharon Promislow, Author, International Speaker, Licensed in Educational Kinesiology (Brain Gym®), Canada
Movement as a Method of Remediation

“Because the brain is informed by movement and the senses, true learning results from highly charged and instantaneous sensorimotor events – moments of neural reorganization by which one is freed to think in new ways.”

Brain Gym® Teachers Edition

Paul E. Dennison, PhD., former Teacher, Reading Specialist, and Developer of Brain Gym®, USA
How Stress, Trauma, and Chaos Affect the Brain

• Compensation patterns (coping behaviors) become habitual reactions: repetitive actions strengthen neural pathways...for good or bad.

• Early trauma can interrupt the orderly progression of early infant (survival) reflexes.

• Lack of early movement (crawling, exploring, touching) can compromise vision, hearing, coordination, and expression.

• Chaos and instability can cause the freeze/fight/flight reaction to be repetitively engaged, resulting in a continual state of fear and arousal.
Reports From The Field

• **Reducing Challenging Behaviours in At-Risk Adolescents.** A study that investigated the hypothesis that the daily practice of Brain Gym® could reduce challenging behaviors and positively influence affective and cognitive problems. *Download at: HighPointAZ.com/Resources/Articles*

• **Counseling and Assessment Center, Tyler, Texas.** Case examples of behavioral changes in teens. By Laurie Ann Frank, LCSW, Licensed Brain Gym® Consultant

• **Brain Gym in Coconino County Juvenile Court – A Summary.** Positive changes in mood and behavior. A pilot program developed and implemented by S. Christina Boyd. *Download at: HighPointAZ.com/Resources/Articles*
Brain Gym® Supports the Goals of All Other Programs

Brain Gym® serves as a unique adjunct modality in three ways.

- Through neural integration, it strengthens the small and large motor movements that underlie learning of all kinds.

- Through engagement and then “maturing” of the infant (survival) reflexes, it moves the youth out of freeze/fight/flight mode and allows for easier, more comfortable interaction with the world.

- By stimulating a flow of energy through the limbic system (emotional brain), the youth experiences a calmness that allows him/her to physically relax, thus making it easier to be receptive to new ideas.
A Few Simple Brain Gym® Highlights to Take With You

- Drink Water
- Brain Buttons
- Cross Crawls
- Hook-ups
Thank You!

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S. Christina Boyd

2013  Resumed Full-time Brain Gym® Consulting

2002  Non-Profit Program Manager/ Director; Part-time Brain Gym® Consultant

1994  Licensed in Brain Gym®

1992  Full-time Consultant and Educational Therapist

1990  Master Certification in Neuro-Linguistic Programming