

## Eyeing It Up!

by Jinjer Stanton

An article I read compared the percentage of Japanese school children who wear corrective lenses to the percentage of American school children who wear corrective lenses. The Americans beat the Japanese hands down. Should we be proud? Of course when the children graduated and went off to college, the difference between the two disappeared. Turns out, Japanese eyes were not genetically superior. They just had teachers who made them do eye exercises every morning in grade and high schools. Hmmm . . .

It also turns out that Buddhism has a strong presence in Japan, and Buddhism has an ancient connection to yoga and yoga has a tradition of yoga for eyes. Hmmm again.

These exercises can not only fend off eye problems, they can also reverse them. As we age, many of us start wearing corrective lenses. It's not because our eyes are degrading. It's because our eye muscles are losing tone. These exercises restore tone. See for yourself!

Key guidelines: 1) Only the eyes are moving. Head and body are still in all of these exercises. 2) Blink your eyes rapidly after each exercise for a few seconds to relax them. 3) The optimal number of repeats for each exercise is ten times. Start with five repeats and build from there. 4) End each session with a few minutes of palming (described below).

**The Cross:** Sitting quietly, head facing forward, look as far to the left as you can without strain, find a point to focus on, then do the same thing to the right. Repeat back and forth.

Now, without moving your head, look up as far as you can without strain, find a spot to focus on, then do the same thing looking down.

**The X:** Look up to the left on a 45 degree angle as far as you can without strain. Choose a focal

point. Look down and to the right on a 45 degree angle. Choose a focal point. Repeat back and forth.

Now, do the same to the upper right and lower left wall and floor juncture. Repeat back and forth.

**The Circle:** Beginning with your eyes focused on a point as high up as you can look without strain, rotate your gaze in a wide, clockwise circle. Keep everything in focus as best you can as you draw a circle with your eyes. Repeat in a counterclockwise direction. You may wish to do only one or two repeats with this exercise at first.

**The Thumb:** Place your thumb at the tip of your nose and move it straight out away from you until you can focus on it sharply. Now, look past the thumb at something either across the room from you or across the street or . . . whatever, it just needs to be more distant . . . and focus on that. Go back and forth bringing whatever you're looking at into focus each time.

**Palming:** Highly therapeutic and worth doing even without the other exercises. Rub your palms together briskly until you feel some heat. Cover your eyes with your palms with the heels of your hands resting high on your cheekbones and the fingers of each hand overlapping on your forehead so that no light leaks through. Your eyes should be able to open and close freely. Hold for as long as you like as often as you like. You may want to do this seated where your arms can be supported.

Do these daily and your sight *will* improve. It should improve even if you do it less often. *If you aren't able to do some of this because of hand or arm problems, ask someone to help. It is particularly nice to have someone cover your eyes with their palms.*

The spirit in me salutes the spirit in you.  
We're all in bodies together.



## Student Roseann Mammoser on Her Yoga Experience

I began coming to Jinjer's yoga class about three years ago. I was going through a job change and feeling stressed. It affected me emotionally and physically. I could feel the stress in my body and I found an outlet through yoga. I learned how to relax and breathe deeply. I had more energy. I noticed that gradually I was gaining more range of movement and strengthening my joints. Some poses are easier for me to do than others but with the help of blocks and other props I can benefit from many more.



I think yoga has helped me to become more aware of my body and the world around me.

During these difficult times, I am going through another period of job loss and financial concerns but I find yoga has helped me to better cope with the day to day stresses. I look forward to Jinjer's yoga class and especially enjoy the guided meditation and toning at the

end of class that leaves me relaxed and in a blissful state.

## Announcing! Additional Classes in a New Yoga Studio!

In April Nokomis Yoga (.com) will move from its shared digs to its own store front at 2722 East 50th Street (on the corner of 28th Ave. and 50th St., 3 doors down from Nokomis Beach Coffee Shop). It's just a block from Lake Nokomis.

I'll be teaching two classes (in addition to those already in progress). On Wednesdays at noon you can take a mini-vacation at the "Hump Day Yoga Break," 45 minutes dedicated to easing away tension and finding your center so you can face the rest of the week. The second class will take place on Thursday evenings at 7 pm and will last 1 1/2 hours. Get to know your body better and put it back together while growing younger.

Open House



Saturday, April 11th, 10 am to 3 pm

Meet all of the at Nokomis Yoga teachers over refreshments. There will be drawings for prizes and in the week following the open house, some of the teachers will offer free sample classes (including me). My first six-week sessions will begin Wednesday, April 22nd and Thursday April 23rd. and will go until May 27th and 28th respectively. FMI: 612/722-9703.

### Yoga Classes:

**7 to 8:30 Monday evenings**

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (2nd floor)

<http://www.htlcmpls.org>, for directions

612/722-9703 for class information

**11:15 am to 12:15 pm**

**Saturday mornings**

**Lake Hiawatha Park**

1 block east of 28th Ave. on 45th Street  
(612/370-4930)

This gentle, mindful approach honors where your body is right now. These yoga classes are fun and beneficial. Wear easy-to-move-in clothes. If you have a mat, bring it. Also helpful are a bath towel and a woven fabric belt. We look forward to meeting you. FMI call Jinjer at 612/722-9703.



### Yoga Bytes:

Yoga Bytes is a message intended to bring yoga to your consciousness regularly by suggesting a little something you can work on right now. For more information and additional Yoga Bytes go to [www.jinjerstanton.com](http://www.jinjerstanton.com). *Yoga Bytes is published in cooperation with Lake Hiawatha Park.*