- Vision

Life in Vivid Colors

It's been said that "the eyes are the windows to the soul." There is a kind of deep connection established when one looks into another's eyes. One tends to get a hint of the other's essential being, and vice versa.

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While one's perception of the other's 'soul'is already beyond the function of eyesight, it would be difficult to have by any other means. Looking at something yields a great deal of information, instantly. Thus, the saying: "A picture paints a thousand words," maybe more. "Sight and vision are different entities," writes Molly Blakely at the website www. marveloptics.com. Blakely explains that "sight is physical – a sensory experience in which

light reflects off of shapes and objects and the eyes then focus this light. Signals are sent to the brain to be converted into images. Vision is how the mind, an aspect of the brain, interprets these images. Vision is a metaphysical concept."

"Sight and vision are important," Blakely adds, "because these allow us to connect with our surroundings, keep us safe, and help maintain the sharpness of our minds." Sight allows a person to witness an event, and from it he determines its significance and draws interpretations.

Sight and vision, together, is a very important human faculty, perhaps the most important of all the human senses. Animals – like dogs, for example – are weaker in eyesight and stronger in their sense of smell. Dogs easily detect the presence of food and other creatures nearby by smelling it.

Among humans, sight and vision help to connect them with their surroundings, keep them safe, and keep their minds alert and sharp. Because of eyesight, people don't bump into walls or into each other. Their minds are always calculating their physical distance to things and each other, and then decide whether to get closer or back off – and such mental activity keeps their minds active.

Most of all, sight makes possible the perception of colors, and shapes, and movements – essential elements for the experience of beauty. Human life is beautiful because of the meaning that people attach to the things they see. Conversely, life is meaningful because of people's capacity to see beauty.

With good eyes, one sees life in vivid colors. Therefore, it is only proper for one to take good care of his or her eyes. The website https:// nei.nih.gov shares simple steps for maintaining healthy eyes well into one's golden years:

Eat right to promote good eyesight. You've heard carrots are good for your eyes. But eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, particularly dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, or collard greens is important for keeping your eyes healthy, too. Research has also shown there are eye health benefits from eating fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, tuna, and halibut.

Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight or obese increases your risk of developing diabetes and other systemic conditions, which can lead to vision loss such as diabetic eye disease or glaucoma.

Wear protective eyewear. When playing sports or doing activities around the home, always be conscious about protecting your eyes. Protective eyewear includes safety glasses and goggles, safety shields, and eye guards specially designed to provide the correct protection in certain activities. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Choose sunglasses that block out 99 to 100 percent of both UV-A and UV-B radiation.

Practice workplace eye safety. Employers are required to provide a safe work environment. When protective eyewear is required as a part of your job, make a habit of wearing the appropriate type at all times and encourage your coworkers to do the same.

Quit or never start smoking. Smoking is as bad for your eyes as it is for the rest of your body. Research has linked smoking to an increased risk of developing age-related macular degeneration, cataract, and optic nerve damage, all of which can lead to blindness.

Rest your eyes. If you spend a lot of time at the computer or focusing on any one thing, you sometimes forget to blink and your eyes can get fatigued. Try the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look away about 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds. This can help reduce eye-strain.

Never touch your eyes with dirty hands. To avoid the risk of infection, always make sure that your hands are clean when touching the area around your eyes. Wash your hands thoroughly before putting in or taking out your contact lenses. Make sure to disinfect contact lenses as instructed and replace them as appropriate.

Have a comprehensive dilated eye exam. You might think your vision is fine or that your eyes are healthy, but visiting your eye care professional for a comprehensive dilated eye exam is the only way to really be sure. When it comes to common vision problems, some people don't realize they could see better with glasses or contact lenses. In addition, many common eye diseases such as glaucoma, diabetic eye disease and agerelated macular degeneration often have no warning signs. A dilated eye exam is the only way to detect these diseases in their early stages.

Know your family's eye health history. Talk to your family members about their eye health history. It's important to know if anyone has been diagnosed with a disease or condition, since many eye problems are hereditary. This will help to determine if you are at higher risk for developing an eye disease or condition, and so proper precautions may be taken.