I enjoyed all of the talks on each day. Each speaker had an incredible depth of knowledge, and was very generous in sharing that knowledge with us. What follows is mainly concerning vision and the incredible effect this day had on the life of my family. This account might seem a little disjointed, as I tried to write down thoughts and observations as they came to me.

I really enjoyed Bob Edwards' talk on vision and perception. I thought it was great stuff when I heard it, but did not know at that time how profound an influence he would have on my life and the life of my family. Bob described how to make changes in midline and anterior shifts and how to enhance or decrease the influence of ambient vision. He also taught simple techniques for shifting visual perception. When I returned home, I quickly went out and bought the materials needed to create glasses that would shift perception. I constructed a pair of glasses that I thought might change things for me. I created a set of Base Down 1.5 glasses with binasal occlusion taping to increase ambient vision. I put them on and moved around for a while and I noticed almost nothing (upon reflection, I realized my anterior midline shift is minimal and my ambient vision is really good. There was no reason the glasses should affect me dramatically). I was beginning to wonder about the usefulness of the glasses.

Then I tried the glasses on my daughter Emily. She is mildly to moderately ligamentously lax. People who have ligamentous laxity are esophoric, according to Ron Hruska. The end result of esophoria is that you rely heavily on your focal vision, but ambient vision is often limited. Emily put on the glasses and noticed an immediate change. " Wow! I can see you (me) standing in the kitchen, but now I can see the kitchen too. This was all fuzzy before." I took Emily outside. "Now I can see the house down the street, and I can also see the street." After she had the glasses on about five minutes, she said, "Dad, this is really weird, but now all of my teeth touch perfectly when I close my mouth." Emily has a cranial torsion that I have been working on, but have been unable to completely reduce. The glasses reduced it. The shape of her face looks dramatically different when she is wearing the glasses. When we were eating supper, Emily noticed that she could chew on either side of her mouth without difficulty (she generally chewed on the right side because the left side did not occlude properly). Emily has had difficulty swallowing liquids without getting strangled, yet she seemed to have no difficulty swallowing liquids when wearing the glasses.

Emily was doing some homework with her glasses on. "Dad, I can see the whole page, I can scan the whole page. I always thought that when people said they scanned the page, it just meant they skipped every other word".

Most remarkable to me are the changes in Emily's face. Prior to the glasses, Emily had an extended, R TMCC face. With the glasses, she looks totally different. Her face is more symmetrical, her palate broader, and she exhibits no neck tension. She reports a feeling of decreased tension in her low back and notes that she can now carry her school backpack without feeling any discomfort in her low back when she is using the glasses.

Emily has played soccer since the age of six. She tended to prefer the position of defender, and is quite good in this position. I always wondered why she didn't prefer offense, but now I think I understand. Offense requires a "situational awareness" of all that is going on around you. This requires ambient vision that Emily did not have. As a defender, she could use her focal vision to keep track of the ball as it was coming toward her. In other words, her vision/perception determined her choice of positions in soccer. She did what she was good at.
I recently began to let Emily drive a little (on private, deserted roads and in deserted parking lots) in preparation to her taking Driver's Education. She had a lot of trouble steering the car properly. After wearing the glasses for a while, she said "I think this will help me when I am driving. The problem I had before was that I could not see the side of the road and see the road in front of me at the same time."

One of the points I would like to make is that no one (including Emily) in our family realized that Emily had this problem. It was only when she put on the corrective glasses that the world opened up for her and she

realized what she had been missing. Hindsight is 20/20, and although there had been some clues all along, we missed them entirely. Emily had real difficulty driving a car. How many other loose-jointed kids are encountering this same problem without realizing that it is a visual/perceptual problem, and not because they are a “poor driver” or “uncoordinated”? How many other kids are trying to play sports without good ambient vision?

In talking with Emily, I realized that she had never seen the “whole picture”. I asked her about when we would go to the beach. She said, “Yeah, you guys would stand on the beach and say, “Look at that view!” I would look and it didn’t mean that much to me”. Emily has never really seen the ocean. I am looking forward to going to the beach this summer and watching as my fifteen year old daughter actually sees the entire panorama of the ocean for the first time.

My older daughter, Laura, witnessed the changes occurring in Emily. When I explained the situation regarding focal and ambient vision, she immediately said "Dad, my college roommate is very loose jointed and her family is always teasing her for being clumsy. She runs into things frequently. I think she may not be seeing them.” Yesterday, I had the opportunity to try a set of binasal occlusion glasses on a teenager (female) who was very loose jointed. I wasn’t sure she would try the glasses because they looked so “lame”, but, to my surprise, she not only tried them on but really liked them! While we were walking outside (to really let her experience ambient vision) I asked her if she ran into things a lot. Her reply surprised me. “Are you kidding? I have to psych myself up just to walk through a doorway. I say “come on, you can do this” and then I still bump my shoulder on the doorjamb”. With the glasses on, she may not have such a problem.

Thanks to Bob Edwards and Ron Hruska for making this possible. The information presented at the Interdisciplinary Integration course has made a huge difference in my daughter’s life, and is starting to make a difference in the lives of many of my clients as well. I encourage everyone who attended the course to question any ligamentous lax clients they have on some of the above issues, and try a pair of binasal occlusion glasses on them to see if it makes a difference for them.

Joe Belding, PT, PRC