

Change Your Handwriting,

Change Your Life

By

Joel Engel

Several graphologists theorized, if you can study someone's handwriting and deduce ideas about his character, why can't you reverse the process? By modifying his handwriting, perhaps you can modify his character.

Character sets the individual pattern of each handwriting and is inseparable from it; consequently, a voluntary handwriting change, once achieved, produces a corresponding change of character. How is this possible? The circuit established between brain and graphic gesture by the nervous system is two-way. Thus, the ability of the brain to influence the writing hand is reversible.

The treatment of personality and character flaws through deliberately made changes in the handwriting, offers a

completely new field for the graphologist and subject alike.

The possibilities for giving quick and effective help where it is needed are almost boundless in dealing with the myriad problems that grow out of character defects. In the case of children, where character is in the process of being formed, graphotherapy is particularly effective. And this is true whether the child in question is 'disturbed,' delinquent or just an average youngster needing guidance to arrest undesirable tendencies and to develop good, sturdy characteristics to see him through life and permit him to make the most of his potentials.

The technique requires the subject to copy a handwriting exercise at least twice a day, morning and night, consciously modifying his script according to instructions supplied by a competent graphologist.

Graphotherapists have won the support of doctors, teachers and psychologists for success in clearing up mental disturbances in children by changing their handwriting.

Graphologists have found that many of children's 'inner problems' showed up clearly in their writing. The introverts had difficulty connecting their letters; the fearful tended to squeeze all theirs together. Gradually, graphotherapists concocted a set of corrective exercises designed to give children a sense of continuity, invention and equilibrium. They theorized that in overcoming a defect in any one of these elements, a child must first develop a feeling for rhythm, melody and harmony.

Selected, 'unstable' children are asked to develop continuity in a discontinued movement.

Those who squeeze their letters practice broad, sweeping motions:

Moreover, those who spread their letters too much through lack of a sense of harmony must develop a consciousness of space and balance.

Later, each child is encouraged to find his own creative personality by forming his letters individually and to develop equilibrium by slanting his writing

in one direction and making his letters all one size.

Like remedial reading, graphotherapy does not change the basic personality; it is merely one way to break down certain kinds of emotional barriers. Experts conclude that freeing children from the restrictions imposed by the fact of having to write can contribute to emancipating them from deeper problems and help their personalities to blossom.

Graphotherapy undertakes to break undesirable habits which the hand follows as it writes, replacing them through repetitious exercise with desirable graphic habits. The hand, if you will, is retrained in specific writing gestures.

Handwriting exercises have much in common with the finger exercises employed in learning to play the piano. In the latter case, as long as the pianist must consciously think where to place each finger on the keyboard as he reads the music, he proceeds slowly and painfully, making errors. It is only after repetitious practice, when his fingers respond automatically and

without conscious attention that he can perform as an accomplished artist. In graphotherapy, the goal is achieved when the desired handwriting change has passed the state of conscious application and imitation, becoming automatic and normal to the hand.

General Rules:

* Establish a time, morning and night, to perform the exercise, and adhere to it. Writing is, of itself, an act of will. If you lack the energy to do the exercise regularly of your own accord, you should solicit the help of someone who will see that you accomplish the task. Regularity and persistence are salient ingredients of the treatment.

* At the outset, exaggerate the change you are trying to achieve; but as it comes easier to your hand, cease to emphasize it and aim for naturalness.

* If several changes are desired, accomplish only one at a time, unless they are interrelated.

A mother of a fifteen-year-old boy wanted him to be 'cured' of his shyness and low self-worth. She made an appointment with a graphotherapist. The graphotherapist must graphologically identify at first the desired trait to be modified and then proceed with the appropriate exercises. His mother was accurate in her evaluation.

A graphologist, utilizing the recommended 'gestalt approach,' first notices what is obviously 'different' about this handwriting. It is written with very light pressure (timidity, lack of confidence) and a wavering base line (unclear about direction).

The subject was asked to try to write with heavier pressure. Lines were superimposed to point out to him that his writing 'bobs and weaves.' 't' bars that were initially written particularly without pressure (lack of enthusiasm) were reinforced with heavy pressure.

After a few weeks of exercises, his writing--he--is healthier

The writing has heavier pressure than originally, including the 't' bars. The lines are evenly balanced. In addition, although the subject was not asked to change his personal pronoun "I," there is prominence in both size and shape. In his writing before the exercises, the "I" is dwarfed, a personal reflection. Now the larger size and shape speak for itself. The astute graphologist would certainly take note of this enhancement of the writer's self-image.

Does graphotherapy work?

Perhaps this boy's mother summed it up best. "To be perfectly frank, I am not sure. It probably does. I know that he would hesitate to go outside with friends, etc., and I would avoid asking him. Now neither of us has a difficulty with this. What I can say is that from the time he started these exercises, his self-confidence and motivation has greatly improved. He's happy and that's what is important."