



Growing Times October 2020

Promoting the maximum development of the whole child and adult through innovative, individualized and comprehensive brain-centered programs and services.

“Now I’m in Tune” - Kevin’s Story

Kevin, 23, exudes calm energy, the kind that comes from knowing who you are and what you can do. But it wasn’t always like that.

It began in middle school. “I had trouble, where I’d be working, trying my best, and not receiving the results, with testing, homework, stuff like that.” It affected every part of his life: he began to struggle academically, particularly with math and science. Sports had been his outlet, but he felt that somehow he could not reach his full potential. Even social interactions became difficult. “I felt burnt out, just tired.”

When he got to high school, “I did really great freshman year in classes, and then I found sophomore year to be a step up from freshman year. I began to have trouble meeting expectations. I was really struggling with honors classes that I was selected into. I had to drop from honors geometry and biology into the regular courses. Man, did that year suck! I also found that it was becoming harder to interact with other people socially, even at the lunch table, because I was so drained. You see the ones that are achieving, and then you look at yourself and you think, I’m doing the same exact thing, or working even harder. You feel a little less than, hopeless.”

Getting tutoring at school and at home did little to help, nor did other evaluations. “I’d had eye tests and hearing tests before, but nothing had ever been caught, any physical exam came out fine. But things still weren’t working out well, and when it came time for the ACTs and SATs, we knew I needed more help. We found out about A Chance To Grow from a friend on the football team, his mother referred us to you. I was evaluated by Dr. Moroz [then ACTG’s developmental optometrist, now retired], who diagnosed me with *convergence insufficiency exophoria*, and she gave me eye exercises

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Kevin working with his OT, Michelle, to find his center for improved postural alignment.



Listen up! Time to get your hearing checked!

ACTG’s Audiology Clinic offers insurance-based diagnostic assessments of hearing and auditory processing for both children and adults. We offer multiple interventions to help individuals develop skills to discriminate, recognize and comprehend auditory information more efficiently. If you or a loved one is experiencing hearing issues, **schedule a hearing evaluation** with our Audiologist to determine the cause of the deficit and develop a treatment plan to address the issue. Call us today at (612) 789-1236 to get started!

and visual therapy. Then they introduced me to Michelle [Koyama, Neuro Integrative Clinic Therapist], for therapy to help with the visual system even more.”

Kevin continued to see Michelle throughout college when he was home on breaks. Before long, the work began to pay off. He noticed physical improvements. “I’d had back issues from football. I remember after one practice I could barely walk up and down stairs, couldn’t do deadlifts. Michelle really opened up my back, and I began to have improved trunk extension, more flexibility in my shoulders, legs, spine and neck, even my hamstrings felt looser. My sitting posture improved, my back pain went away, I started to feel symmetrical, grounded, I could feel individual muscles. My vision really improved, I could see the world three-dimensionally, I could gaze, my eyes stopped tearing up when there was direct light or something was coming toward me. I could walk better, drive better, my hand/eye coordination and timing in things like playing tennis got better. I could do deadlifts smoothly with thrust when I was coming up, I could do squats and bench lifting better.”

What is Convergence Insufficiency?

When your eyes can’t work together, it results in double vision and blurring of near targets, fatigue and suppression, where the brain essentially “turns off” an eye to stop seeing double. This can lead to a host of learning issues. Children with this diagnosis can be incorrectly identified as poor learners. They struggle with simple tasks, or disengage from activities due to the difficulty and discomfort of seeing near.

As his physical condition improved, so did his performance at school. “I used to have trouble just sitting in a classroom, it was hell for me. Becoming comfortable, being space-oriented in a classroom setting was a dramatic change for me. Things got better—everything, from my handwriting to my ability to reflect, not just jump to an answer. Instead of taking notes word for word, which is what I did for the most part in middle school, high school, beginning of college, I was able to finally start to process, it was just easier.”

His life got better in other ways too: “Sleeping dramatically improved, my mood improved, I was more optimistic.” Eventually, even Kevin’s fatigue began to evaporate.



Kevin practicing an exercise to help his balance, visual and auditory systems work together.

“I found work weeks to be really challenging, so I’d be working like 25-30 hour weeks and I’d be exhausted. Once I started visiting Michelle, it went from 30 to 100-hour weeks for 10 consecutive weeks and it was insane. I was able to become more in tune with what I was able to enjoy. I took on a lot of extracurricular activities. For example, last summer, I had five different things going on – a full time job with a residential real-estate content company, a part-time internship with an organic food company where I did digital marketing, three online classes to fulfill university requirements, various software/design classes for my own benefit, and rebranding/revamping an advertising club of which I was the president.”

Perhaps most important, Kevin feels like the work he has done with Michelle at ACTG has helped him reach his true potential. “I think the fact that I’m confident in starting a business right out of college, I think that says something. I mean, two years ago, I don’t think I’d have been at that level. My self-confidence has increased, my ability to collaborate, to be able to take a step back. Now I’m in tune. Before, I was just drained, but now, it produces energy.

What is Neuro Integrative Therapy?

We use a variety of interventions to promote brain growth and social, physical and emotional development. The goal is to establish efficient neurological connections between brain and body systems, ultimately improving higher-level function. Each session is adaptable specifically to the individual’s priorities or concerns.

Want to learn more? Call us at (612) 789-1236 or visit our website at ACTG.org/neurointegrativeclinic.html to schedule an evaluation.

Holiday Gift Auction

Opens: November 27, 2020 at 12:15 AM | Closes: December 6, 2020 at 11:45 PM

HAVE A LONG GIFT LIST?
ACTG'S ONLINE AUCTION HAS
SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

- > SHOP FROM THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME!
- > SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES!
- > MAKE BIDS FROM YOUR CELL PHONE!

Skip the mall and shop from home for great gifts and experiences for people of all ages! Free shipping and delivery by Tuesday, December 15. Proceeds support the programs and services of A Chance To Grow!

ONLINE AT ACTG.ORG

BID ON GREAT PACKAGES FOR...

HOME!

WORK!

PLAY!



Vision Clinic Now Accepting Clients!

ACTG's recently re-opened Vision Clinic is now accepting new clients! If you or a loved one is struggling to see clearly, please visit us at [ACTG.org/visionservices](https://actg.org/visionservices) and learn how our Vision Clinic and OptomEYES Therapy programs may be able to help. Our staff is dedicated to helping children and adults obtain optimal vision through individualized therapies and treatment plans tailored to each client's needs. Call us today at (612) 789-1236 to schedule an appointment and to see if our Vision Clinic can accept your insurance plan at this time. Private pay is also offered.



Teletherapy Services Now Available

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, A Chance To Grow's Clinical Services have offered Teletherapy to individuals receiving Occupational and/or Speech-Language Therapies. Our goal is to ensure the safe, effective and appropriate delivery of our services to keep our clients as healthy as possible. Our staff are committed to providing the exact same high standards of care online as we do in person, centered on the needs of our clients.

If you are new to ACTG, please complete an **Evaluation Inquiry** on our website to get started. For current clients, consult with your therapist to learn how you or your loved one can begin receiving Teletherapy Services. For more information, please visit [ACTG.org/teletherapy](https://actg.org/teletherapy).

Save the
DATE



#GIVING TUESDAY™

Join the Global Day of Giving

S.M.A.R.T. Fall Workshops Approaching!

The final S.M.A.R.T. and S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshops of the year are right around the corner! Don't miss your chance to boost your student's learning readiness skills. Our instructors will provide you with everything you need to implement this brain-stimulating program into your classroom this year! If you are an educator working with Pre-K - 3rd graders, this program is for YOU! [Register today at ACTG.org/workshops](https://actg.org/workshops).

S.M.A.R.T. Workshops

- October 27-29, 2020
- February 23-25, 2021

S.M.A.R.T. Pre-K Workshops

- November 3-5, 2020
- March 2-4, 2021



All workshops will be held at A Chance To Grow in Minneapolis, MN. [Register two weeks in advance and save \\$25!](https://actg.org/workshops) Our S.M.A.R.T. Workshops are following the health & safety guidelines provided by the Minnesota Department of Health.

In-Home Neurofeedback Rentals Available

Make brain training a part of your daily schedule! Neurofeedback is a perfect in-home tool for children and adults looking to improve focus, relieve stress and promote emotional regulation, getting the brain "unstuck" for optimal functioning. It's easy to use and great for the whole family. [Rental units are now available but supplies are limited.](https://actg.org/neurofeedbackrentals) To learn more, please visit our website at [ACTG.org/neurofeedbackrentals](https://actg.org/neurofeedbackrentals) or call us at (612) 789-1236 to schedule a FREE consultation.



Childcare Openings for Preschoolers

Turnquist Child Enrichment Center currently has preschool openings! Come be a part our family where your child will explore the world around them through projects and play! Turnquist is a Hennepin County Strong Beginnings site, NAEYC-accredited and 4-Star Parent Aware Certified daycare center. Our dedicated staff provide a nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of your child. If you are looking for childcare, please call us today at (612) 706-5590 to schedule a tour of our facility.

Will you support A Chance To Grow's programs and services?

Visit [ACTG.org](https://actg.org), click on the "Donate" tab on the homepage and fill out the form. Your contribution makes a difference in the lives of children and adults with learning disabilities, developmental delays and brain injuries. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you for your generosity!

Want to view our newsletter online? Visit [ACTG.org](https://actg.org) and sign-up to receive news and updates from A Chance To Grow.

Equal Employment Opportunity

A Chance To Grow provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants. Employment is based upon personal capabilities and qualifications without discrimination because of race, color, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, disability, gender identity, genetic information, service in the military or any other protected characteristic as established by law. This policy of Equal Employment Opportunity applies to all policies and procedures relating to recruitment & hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, training and all other terms and conditions of employment.



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