

Hakalau

Foundation:

First, a little bit of neuro science and NLP.

Where you position your eyes is where you access your brain. In Neuro Linguistic Programming, it's referred to as Eye Accessing. There are only 3 basic positions. These positions are directly related to your learning styles:

- (1) Looking up: Visual learners look up; making or remembering pictures
- (2) Looking straight out: Auditory learners look straight out, remembering or creating sounds
- (3) Looking down: Kinesthetic (hands-on) learners look down, internal dialogue and emotions

Most learning institutions teach to the visual and auditory learners. When people take tests and are relaxed, they are able to access all the learning styles for recalling information. However, when individuals become tense or nervous they go to their primary learning style. The visual learners look up, answers tend to be there. The auditory learners look up and straight out, answers tend to be there as well. Hands-on learners look down, answers tend **NOT** to be there, especially if their internal dialogue is negative.

The purpose of writing this section is to give teachers & educators a practical tool to use everyday in the classroom to assist students to be in the optimum state for learning; a relaxed state.

Background:

Do we all agree that the best state to learn in is a relaxed, focused state?

Psychologically, it is said that the best state to retrieve information (test taking) is to retrieve it in the same state you learned it in. Makes sense to me.

If that is the case, then shouldn't we be receiving the information initially, studying and taking the test in this same relaxed state? Again, makes sense to me.

This is where Hakalau comes in. Hakalau means expanded awareness. Simply put, peripheral vision. The kaona (deeper meaning) comes from Uncle George Naope.

Hakalau is based on one of Hawaiian's most basic values. How do Hawaiians view the world? Not just Hawaiians, indigenous people around the planet. Tunnel vision or Big picture? Big picture, of course. That's not a metaphor. It's a physiological reality. Meaning, when we look out at the world we can physically see 180 degrees. If we are in a classroom, we would be able to see the walls on both sides.

When you are in Hakalau (peripheral vision), it's extremely difficult to hold on to a negative thought. Don't take my word for it. Try it yourself.

Being a teacher, how many times have you told a kid to just relax? But, did you show them how to relax? Do you even know how to relax yourself? If the answer is no, you're not alone. Most people were never taught how to relax, let alone how to teach others.

Hakalau, simply put:

When you are looking at the teacher (receiving information), be able to see the walls on both sides. Is that it? **YES!** Look straight out, (slightly up is better) and be able to see both sides in your peripheral vision.

How to teach it to others: (Your students)

For older students, when you are in front of the class teaching, tell your students to be able to see the walls on both sides.

For younger students, use pictures or stuffed animals along the walls and say “When I’m in front of the class, I’m going to check (periodically) how many of you can see me and the cat & dog or dolphin & whale on the walls at the same time.” Make it a game. When they learn this skill early in life, they will have it forever.

In short, we believe Hakalau should be in all the schools, taught to all teachers so that they can teach it to their students.