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HINGED KALEIDOSCOPE.

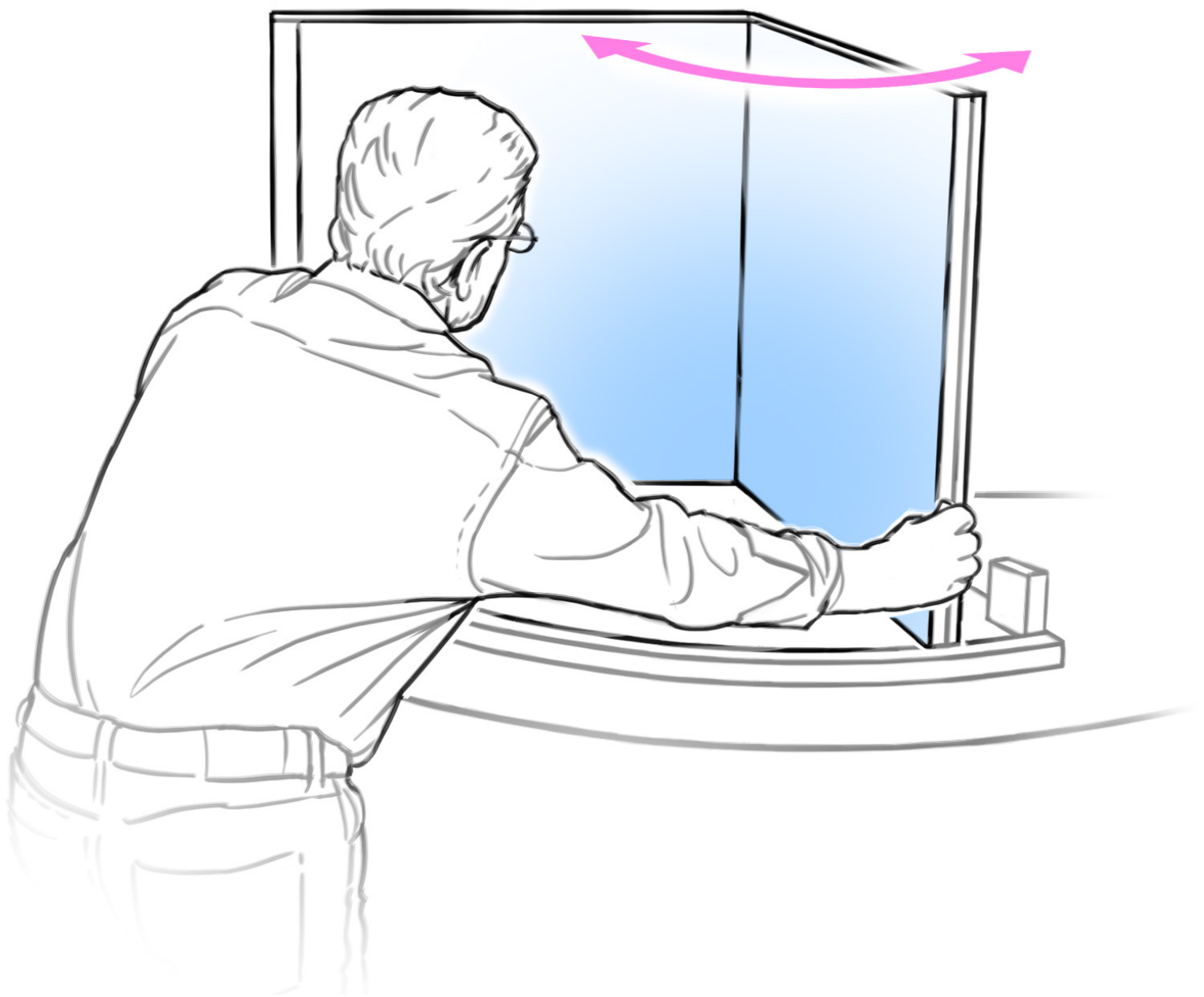
OPEN the mirror to its full extend. Do you see the triangle?

CLOSE the mirror slowly. How does the triangle change?

The pieces of elastic form an equilateral triangle when the mirror is opened to its full extend (opening angle = 120°). The side of the triangle closest to you is real – you can touch it. The other two sides appear "behind" the mirror.

You can create all sorts of plane figures, so-called polygones, when you close the mirror further. The first figure you see is a square, then a pentagon, a hexagon... and so on.

If you close the mirror almost fully, the result is an almost circular figure. So you can approximate the perimeter of a circle and calculate the number pi.



Idea: Exploratorium, San Francisco/USA.

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