

# CARE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SENSES

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### Disclaimer

The understanding of human development and health has many lenses from which it can be viewed; further therapeutics to complement this support may be required in some instances. We recommend that prior to using the suggested treatments each person weigh up any risks that may be involved for an individual situation. This document is available online at [www.developingtheself.org](http://www.developingtheself.org) and is regularly updated to improve the way the content is presented. Please check the version of this document with the current version on the website so as to be utilising the most accurate content. Any queries can be directed to *Developing the Self Developing the World* and the content can be individualised for a community or family by requesting workshops or referrals to private consultations across Australia and America.

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The understanding of hyper and hypo senses originates from therapeutic and observational studies by Lisa Romero. Lisa first introduced this knowledge within the *Towards Health and Healing* set of workshops that ran alongside the [EduCareDo](http://www.educaredo.org) Foundation Year in Anthroposophy from 2003 – 2011. It has been taken up by a number of extra lesson practitioners, curative educators and therapists as well as health practitioners within their private practice and the professional development education they deliver around the world. By publishing this document, along with the book '*Spirit-led Community; healing the impact of technology*' with the contribution of other members of *Developing the Self Developing the World*, Lisa hopes that the depths of insight that can come from this knowledge live and grow. Anyone may download and use the document to assist their individual understanding and support their individual work. Please contact *Developing the Self Developing the World* to seek permission to use the document for anything other than personal use.

Email: [info@developingtheself.org](mailto:info@developingtheself.org)

## INTRODUCTION TO SENSORY DEVELOPMENT

The senses play a most important role in informing us about the physical world. And at the same time, the senses inform us about ourself; we can learn what makes our body healthy and unhealthy. Through our sensory system we take in the world and learn what we need to do to be able to be a part of the world. We develop an ability to share parts of ourself and to experience another, to control ourself and to keep from distractions so as to perceive things accurately.

Through the insights laid down in anthroposophy, we can recognise twelve senses. They start forming when a baby is in utero, maturing at different times throughout life. The senses that give us the ability to perceive where our body is and what it is doing reach maturity in early childhood. Whereas the senses connected to perceiving the natural environment reach maturity in primary school and those perceiving what lives within another person can take a lifetime to mature.

When a child is hard of hearing or has poor vision, the surroundings and the behaviour of the adult is adjusted to ensure that the child can continue to develop fully. Likewise, adults who are hard of hearing or with poor vision can live a full life in the community. Some people have a heightened sense of hearing and vision; noise and light can cause pain and blindness. This too requires a change in the surroundings so the person can engage fully in the world. If we observe a little closer we will be able to notice that for each of us some senses are highly stimulated by things as they cross into us, other senses are not so stimulated when things cross into us. We call this hyper sensitive or hypo sensitive. All children “on the spectrum” have more intensive responses to their own hyper and hypo senses, and by this means they indicate to us how we need to treat each child individually. They insist that we not lag behind in developing an individualised approach to care and understanding for every child, even if they do not outwardly demand it of us.

A sense and its variance in sensitivity develop firstly upon a person’s disposition; the tendency to be hyper (over) sensitive or hypo (under) sensitive in the processing of a particular sense can sometimes be perceived from birth. When these variances are acknowledged, and the environment is altered, the person can continue to flourish and fully develop despite any noticeable imbalance. This leads us to the secondary influence of development, and that is the conditioning from the environment; we learn to ignore, be hyper-vigilant or have a healthy awareness of the way the world affects us by being raised in particular conditions. Growing up does not necessarily change the sensitivity, but the expression and reaction can change as we mature and also because we learn how cultural conditions expect us to respond.

Whether or not we perceive things as they truly are, depends less on the imbalance in a sense and more so on whether we can discern between what belongs to our individual self and what is living outside of us. We could ask ourselves: can I see something for what it is despite the impact it is having on my sensory system?

This ability to separate individual experience from the outer subject matter develops throughout childhood and adolescence and requires an effort on the part of the individual. A child's age and their sensitivity in a particular sense should be taken into account when deciding whether it is healthy to give extra protection or expose them to a situation. Using the development of the senses as a guide, we can learn to know when to expect the child can take responsibility and how to stand up for the individual needs of each child.

When a person senses something and holds their ground so they are not overpowered by it, they are in a position to choose what they take into their self. Only a matured sense can put this filter in place; the younger the person, the more vulnerable they are to the outer world effecting them.

When we view the senses in this way we come to realise that each person has a unique inner life that can be altered according to what is perceived and impressed by the 'outer world'. This document provides examples to recognise the different levels of perception in each sense. It also suggests activities and treatments that can be used to awaken the senses in such a way that out of ourselves we can find direction towards what is healthy for us. We can ask the question: Where, as an individual, should I place my time, energy and attention?

The examples of support offered throughout this document provide experiences because it is through experience that we develop a measure for ourselves. The home health care treatments are applied to the skin, which is the body's largest organ. The fine nerve endings that lie just under the skin receive the treatment more directly than if a medicine is given orally. As simple as they may seem, they can have a profound effect on the sensory system. Because of the increasing bombardment of our senses, Rudolf Steiner indicated that remedies would need to be applied 'externally' as a base for preventative healthcare. All of these instructions are available online at: <http://developingtheself.org/category/home-health-care-treatments/>

## TOUCH SENSE

When we touch something or something touches us, we discover where we end and where the something (or someone) begins. The touch sense makes us aware of what is outside of ourself and also what is inside of ourself. This subtle duality is the first recognition that we have an inner life within our physical being. It leads us to be able to refer to ourself as “I” which happens at about two to three years old. The touch sense conveys pressure against our skin, from the outer world. It is experienced by the fine mechano-receptors in the skin. Different receptors measure warmth and pain, and these will be described later in the other senses. The experiences of touch we receive build an inner library that we use to understand boundaries. Through the experience of my boundary against another boundary I come back to myself and become aware of the other. Touch is both a uniting and a separating at the same time.

### Hyper sense of touch

Having a hyper sense of touch means that the person can easily feel the impressions of pressure against their skin. They have a heightened sense of their boundary that creates a distinction between what is ‘I’ and ‘the other’. Babies with a hyper sense of touch may demand to be held, swaddled and positioned in a particular way to settle because they experience all the variances in pressure from what or who is touching them. If they are cuddly, they want cuddles on their terms and are choosy about the people with whom they are tactile, often preferring only the primary caregivers to carry and hold them because familiar experiences are less stimulating. The primary caregiver may notice that when holding them, the child holds their body weight apart from them.

The child can be disturbed by sensations against their skin, the way clothes are positioned and a particular fibre or texture can irritate or hurt a child with a hyper sense of touch. Tickling can cause discomfort and even pain. The texture of foods can cause a similar reaction. Overall the person with a hyper sense of touch tends to keep to their personal space, and particularly in childhood can feel threatened when this space is penetrated by someone or something else. From the outside, the child might seem jumpy when they are approached. For this reason, they may push back to defend their personal space or withdraw to more protected grounds. The fact they can feel this intrusion is their direct relationship to their touch sense that teaches us who and what we can trust. They can tend towards creating and maintaining inflexible physical boundaries to feel safe.

When the touch is pleasurable, a person with a hyper sense of touch may lose themselves in it. The type of touch they want can be very specific, and they may not return the affection. An adult may need to control the way another touches them to feel a sense of safety and connection

## Hypo sense of touch

A person with a hypo sense of touch does not easily feel the pressure against their skin, and they need firmer or more regular touch to stimulate the sense receptors to differentiate between themselves and the other. Babies with a hypo sense of touch tend to settle best when they have something touching most of their body surface. They tend to drop their body weight onto the caregiver and push against swaddling, as it is the resistance that helps them to settle.

A child may extend and push their body until they feel the boundary, sometimes to the point of repeatedly hitting their head or body against hard surfaces. They tend to touch most things they see, using varying amounts of pressure. For example, they may stroke a rabbit very lightly, then poke their finger into its ear or eye, then push hard on its belly and pull its fur. To be satisfied they need to touch a lot or be touched a lot. Diagnoses of sensory processing disorder or hyperactivity may be questioned because of this.

With age, they may still rely upon external pressure against their skin to experience their boundary and obtain a sense of separateness from the outside world. Since personal space is less defined in a person with a hypo sense of touch, they may naively penetrate the personal space of others. It can also take them a while to realise their personal space is being penetrated.

They generally feel comfortable with contact sport and friendships that allow physical contact. As a teenager, they may go back to hugging parents, or they hang out with friends who like hugging. Receiving physical attention can help them to experience their self. They can find it difficult to trust in relationships where physical contact is restricted, and their affection is not reciprocated.

## How to harmonise and support the development of the touch sense

One of the best things we can do to support the touch sense in children is to give firm and, warm, loving physical and behavioural boundaries. This provides the child with a hyper sense of touch the opportunity to feel safe to extend their exploration without becoming 'lost' or frightened for their safety, and the hypo sense of touch child the opportunity to meet themselves within the boundary which keeps them safe. These boundaries can also be brought using stories that create imaginative pictures along with visual cues.

Bedding and clothing can make a difference to the pressure we experience. Swaddling a hyper sense of touch baby gives them the security they require to settle, but the quality of the pressure and the fabric is important. They may need a light wool wrap that has a little stretch, so they feel the firmness for security but are not over-powered by the pressure. A hypo sense of touch baby is also made feel secure by swaddling, but they may need a thicker firmer fabric and to be regularly re-wrapped sometimes varying the fabrics. The same principle applies to older children. Woollen blankets provide more weight and protection than a feather quilt, whereas soft sheets made of cotton, silk or linen can be varied according to the sensitivity of the child. A hyper sense of touch child will need a particular weight and texture of clothing, while the hypo sense of touch child tends to

settle best with weight upon them; wearing clothing that is heavy can often help calm a hypo sense of touch child and allow them to be attentive at school. For the hyper sense of touch child it is important to maintain opportunities to safely explore a variety of textures in a way they feel supported and understood but encouraged to be comfortable with more than their familiar selection.

A hyper sense of touch child that hits to defend their personal space is best supported by being allowed to retreat, and also by having ways demonstrated to them of how to communicate to maintain personal space without hitting. A hypo sense of touch child that hits because they do not know their boundary, is best supported by giving an experience of a physical boundary in a healthy way. For example they can respond well to being wrapped in a heavy blanket, cuddled and kept in close physical proximity. Whereas if the same child is being consistently separated from others this does not give them the opportunity to learn the boundary and can also set up patterns of unnecessary shame.

The greater the variety of natural materials that we experience, the more opportunity we have of meeting many perspectives of life and ourself. Create opportunities for experiencing light silks and heavy stones, rough barks and slippery shells, spikey ferns and spongy petals, soft pillows and hard benches. Touching a variety of natural fibres makes us feel something different with each experience and requires us to bring something of ourself to meet it. This creates an 'inner resource library' of flexible feelings. This activity is helpful for the hyper sense of touch child who generally prefers to stay with familiar, safe experiences. It is also helpful for the hypo sense of touch child who needs help to refine and differentiate between the outer subject matter and their self. Natural objects have a health giving effect in relation to the sensory system as a whole. Some materials such as plastic that is especially designed to be lifeless and uniform, limit the sensation we can receive. When touching plastic we need not change much in ourself at all. Every part of nature is variable at every moment. Each time we touch or unite with nature we must bring something forward in us to meet the other. By this we find out more about ourself.

In the garden, we can feel the weight of the earth when we lift dirt, rocks and plants. Crafts where we push against an organic living object and shape it include hand modelling, carving, stone masonry, sculpting and woodwork. The experiences of weight and pressure help us to experience ourself.

Regular massage can be helpful, using a pressure and pace that is safe and nurturing. A person with a hypo sense of touch can benefit from longer durations or more brisk touch with cool water and enlivening substances to stimulate the sensory receptors and raise the awareness of their boundary. Whereas a hyper sense of touch person can need less touch to feel themselves but benefit from having a protective lotion applied to their boundary as a second skin. Rudolf Steiner indicated the value of using extracts of peat moss (*solum uliginosum*) as a protective and preserving sheath for the whole body. The touch can also soothe active sensory receptors, though too much can over-stimulate.

## LIFE SENSE

The life sense helps to keep us safe, well and in harmony. Through the sense of life, we perceive inwardly our vitality and life forces. For example it tells us when we need to go to the toilet, when something's hot and when we need to drink. It also tells us about our health and wellbeing.

Until the life sense is matured the adult looks after and protects the developing life sense of the child. The adult is aware of and tends to the needs of the child whether they are hungry, unwell, or tired. Before four years old a child with an earache may say "I have an earache" and point to their stomach. After four years old the child is able to point to their ear when they have an earache. Their own life sense is beginning to register this for themselves. The life sense is a sensory warning system. The activity of the sympathetic nervous system sends a message to the brain, which can isolate the origin of a disturbance in the system.

We begin to experience polarities through the life sense; pleasure/pain, comfort/discomfort, wellness/illness, discontent/contentment. Through the polarities we get a smorgasbord of experiences for the life sense to draw on. The life sense becomes the keeper of our health and wellbeing for the rest of our lives.

### Hyper sense of life

Having a hyper sense of life will mean that a slight disturbance of the rhythm can cause unsettling. The baby's sensitivity can be so great that a small disturbance such as a finger poking out of a blanket can be expressed through crying or physical agitation. The slightest wind in the bowels can keep them awake. They have a low pain threshold and are very fussy tending to complain or withdraw for long periods over a dirty nappy, a small cut, a change in routine or a new food. A small wound can feel as though life is pouring out of them. The pain of the experience can cause screaming, silent withdrawal or anxious breathing along with the need for all other sensory input to come to a halt until they have resumed order in their inner life. It can be difficult for the caregiver to find the thing that will help them settle. If the wound is ignored or given too much attention in such a child they can fret more and be overcome with pain but they can also withdraw to avoid extra sensory experiences and not be noticed by the caregiver as they silently suffer. They prefer to sleep so as to not feel the pain though they can in general struggle with the change between waking and sleeping.

An older child or adult may avoid foods or experiences because they can deeply feel the variations in the way things make them feel. It could make them feel sick, or they simply don't like to have to change something in themselves to meet the unfamiliar. A person with this hypersensitivity need not be overcome by the experience if they have developed an inner life that can observe and be with the experience but remain on track with their task. For example when an adult with a hyper sense of life cuts their finger, they can experience it deeply as the body reacts and repairs. But if they have had plenty of experiences of overcoming illness and injury they will have had the chance to develop a measure that tells

them when their body is repairing and know what to do to aid the healing process.

## **Hypo sense of life**

Having a hypo sense of life is to have a poor awareness of when there is disorder in the body. This can mean that the person may not notice that the body is out of balance and requires attention. The baby will not complain of a dirty nappy and will seem to be easy going. They can go without rhythm and routine and not complain, but if this is missing when they are older, they may fall apart because of disturbances and be unable to articulate what is wrong. If a child skips a meal and they start to become angry they may not connect the anger to the sensation that is telling them their body needs food. It can take a lot to hurt or bother the child, perhaps being called tough. At bedtime, they might say they are not tired but will fall asleep easily because they have not recognised the change their body is going through as it becomes weary. It is possible that the person can be injured or sick and not realise it or complain about it.

Adults with a hypo sense of life can lack rhythm and routine and push themselves to the limit relying upon illness or someone else to make them stop.

## **How to harmonise and support the development of the life sense**

It is important to let everyone (regardless of age, position in family, sex or culture) express their feelings and sense of what is healthy for their body. We learn what is healthy by experiencing the 'sensations' that occur when we meet the world. The body needs health giving activities, fresh, natural food at routine intervals, physical exercise and recovery time. These are the basic needs to establish healthy pathways for recovery as well as the sense of knowing when things are becoming better or worse. Overcoming something that puts a dent in our wellbeing makes us stronger. From this perspective, we can recognise the health-giving affect of life's challenges including dis-ease.

The hypersensitive child requires more experiences of being able to bring forward their healing capacities to make things right again; to experience disorder then reorder. When they hurt themselves, it can help to reduce other sensory stimulation and give plenty of time to recover, acknowledging the pain and helping them to regain themselves. They tend towards focusing on the pain or they may cry their way to sleep. For a hypo sense of life child, the injury needs to be treated even though they may not think so. They need to have their attention drawn to it with bandages and the like, especially since it is easily forgotten and may become infected without them realising They have to learn to pay attention to changes in their body. Emphasising the transition time between activities helps them learn to recognise the inner shift that happens when one thing ends and another starts. Little things that help include stopping and taking off shoes at the door and lining them up neatly before going inside. Being taught that all things have their place in the world supports the life sense.

Completing tasks is important, to have worked through the more difficult aspects to come to the fruits of the work. Weaving, knitting, bread baking, gardening and experiencing the changes and transitions in nature help establish a connection to the ebb and flow, death



and life processes in nature and in ourself. Rhythm in movement, song and routine help experience these changes in the day.

Taking time to touch the child with caring touch leads the child to feel their body rhythms. Rhythmic massage practitioners apply strokes and formations that help to harmonise the breath and connect back to a healthy rhythm. Eurythmy as a form of movement that an individual does for themselves, accompanied by a Eurythmy teacher, is another way for this rhythm to be re-enlivened. Encouraging a healthy but not extreme load of physical activity supports the life sense. Walking, swimming laps, swinging and gentle rocking bring the experience of moving between opposing directions, having to cross through the middle and extend to an opposite experience. By finding the way back to the other side, a repeated experience of a sense of completeness is achieved.

A home nursing application of quark cheese over the chest creates a harmonious and soothing experience of space in the chest and while breathing. The application of protective lotions which was mentioned in the sense of touch, is also nourishing for the life sense.

## **MOVEMENT SENSE**

The movement sense makes us aware of how our inner movement can change when we move a particular body part, and how we can abstain from movement despite feeling an inner movement or desire to move.

The sense of movement gives us an internal perception. It's not only the movement we place forward in the world; it is also the movements that we hold back. It tells us what we are doing and what we are not doing. A child under six for example may be told to not touch a biscuit on the table, and their hand reaches towards the biscuit while their head is shaking and they are saying, "I'm not touching it". After this sense is matured they begin to understand they can do something by will. We can move or we can hold back a movement. As this sense matures the child is able to see the biscuit, desire the biscuit and not touch it. The sense of movement is an activity of our own will, to move or not to move.

### **Hyper sense of movement**

A hyper sense of movement means that the person is over-aware of self-movement. They might experience a compulsion to move but also abstain from moving which then causes them to be disturbed or unwilling to participate. When doing an activity they can over-anticipate. For example, they can be poised ready to catch the ball but they go for it too soon and miss it, or they could make false starts in races. They may have an image of what is coming and control their body to meet it, but it can be hard to let the image unfold into the whole form. Too much movement can be disorientating and scary so they are less likely to take risks. They could complain the other children are moving about too much and can't get their work done, possibly even feeling sick by looking at things moving outside of themselves. They could battle against the discomfort of the outer movement and become

agitated or they could be overpowered by it and withdraw and perhaps fall asleep.

## **Hypo sense of movement**

A hypo sense of movement is a poor awareness of self-movement. The person may appear careless and the child tends to move a lot but is unaware of what they are doing or what is in their way. Other times they just lie about and don't respond to instructions. They tend to move with the outer environment or their inner movement, not necessarily being able to hold either apart from each other. If it is time to brush their teeth, the child will not necessarily do so when instructed, although they are willing to go with the parent to the bathroom when the parent helps them to the task. When the music stops in musical chairs, they will rely on watching the others for the cue to find a chair. They tend to be accident-prone. A ball can startle them when it is thrown to them. They don't follow verbal cues as well as they do visual cues and may repeat back the instructions trying to get a hold of what to do. Skipping can be difficult and crossing the road can be dangerous because they may act before they think. Reading can be slow because they can't control their eyes to move across the page or focus. Speech may not be fully formed but the sensation that sounds can make and the reactions that swear words can have is stimulating, so that they may repeat them regularly. The same goes for moving the limbs; they put themselves into all sorts of positions because it stimulates their movement sense. They are known to deny hitting others even though it was their limb that did it.

Adults can appear clumsy, perhaps tripping over their feet. They might find it difficult to sit in lengthy meetings because it is not natural for the body to sit for extended periods of time and the movement that may arise inwardly may not be able to be held back, and therefore they may fidget.

## **How to harmonise and support the development of the movement sense**

For children, it helps to have lots of gross motor activities that have a purpose and a rhythm including bread baking, gardening, climbing, walking, building and preparing for seasonal changes. Not until the sense matures which is at about five years old, can the child follow verbal cues; they are influenced greatly by the movement of the people or things in the room. Hence actions speak louder than words when it comes to learning to sit still or get a move on. And speaking in the collective indicates a rule that everyone follows. For example "this is the way we close the door." Instructing a child under nine years old to follow movements is most productive with as few words as possible that direct the child what to do rather than what not to do because they turn the instructions into pictures in their imagination to use as a guide. For example to give instructions to "stand still" is easier to follow than "stop moving" .

Games such as Statues, Simon Says, or Musical Chairs are a practice in following auditory clues to make the body stop and start. Classroom activities that use movement from going quickly to stopping are best to finish with a movement that is harmonious, neither rushed nor still. An exploration of the park and a walk around the block can return harmony to the movement sense that has not been able to find its way back to harmony.

As the sense is developing, we will notice a child spending many hours moving things into position, lining them up and making patterns such as with rocks or wooden blocks. Folding cloths and sheets with another child encourages them to mirror a movement because they have to meet each other's fingers to catch the corner of the cloth. They walk backwards to open the cloth out again and repeat the steps becoming closer each time while judging the distance.

A child with a hypo sense of movement who is not participating or who is making uncontrolled movements will benefit from songs and an adult doing the gestures with or near them.

A child with a hyper sense of movement who is not participating is likely overwhelmed and requires less movement in the space.

Hearing, and learning to pronounce beautifully formed sounds and words, including learning more than one language, expand the shape and movement of the mouth and broadens the relationship to words. Tongue twisters and rhymes encourage the eyes and the mouth to keep up with each other and catch on to the patterns. Making the eyes focus on distance and close vision, on moving and still objects is also an exercise of the movement sense. It does not exercise the movement sense when an external stimulus makes the eyes move rather than the person controlling them. Looking at movies and programs on television cause the eyes to stare, electronic games make the eyes jump about, dreamily gazing out of or at fast moving vehicles causes the eyes to flicker. Because the sense develops over the first five years of life, minimising these activities for this period contributes to the healthy development of the sense of movement. The eye movement is connected with an inner movement. In circumstances where the eyes are controlled by the outer stimulus, the inner movement is not controlled by the person. When a person controls their outer movement, they have more chance of being able to control their inner life rather than relying on external stimulants for thrills and entertainment. Early education that forces a child to use fine motors skills or restricts or over controls gross motor movements before the child has entered their seventh year, can hinder the development of the movement sense.

The home nursing application of chamomile compressed over the abdomen helps the nervous system to calm, and for warmth to be available for movement in the metabolism and limbs. This is particularly helpful for hypersensitive people. Skin brushing and the application of cool salt or rosemary wash can help hyposensitive people.

## **BALANCE SENSE**

The sense of balance is the experience of being in harmony. The balance sense perceives our relation to the external spatial world. Based on our perception, we adjust our balance. When someone moves closer to us we inwardly and externally adjust ourselves to maintain a state of harmony. By experiencing equilibrium in our physical body, we have an inner experience in our feeling life. This helps the sense of balance to mature and grow a relationship to inner harmony in our whole being.

## Hyper sense of balance

A hyper sense of balance gives a heightened experience of the effort that it takes to keep from falling or leaning over. The person can feel disorientated when the environment is out of place and slightly lopsided and therefore have to overcome a tendency to avoid heights, unstable paths and even rooms that are not proportionally arranged. They can feel wobbly as soon as they put one foot onto the balance beam, so they pull back or they take the risk knowing that every little move is fragile. Some personalities will avoid risky activities, whereas others will show off their refined balancing skills. They are sensitive to spinning around or sailing on boats because the point of equilibrium is always changing and this inner effort to maintain their equilibrium and not be overcome by the outer imbalance can be exhausting as well as sickening. Knitting and activities that require crossing from the left and right brain, and left and right hand can be tiresome and if their handwork is lopsided, or tight it may be because they are concentrating very hard.

## Hypo sense of balance

A person with a hypo sense of balance is less aware of the effort that is required to keep upright. They can enter unstable surfaces or heights without first adjusting their inner equilibrium and as a result they may fall over, or climb the tree, but then not know how to get down. When sitting, the tendency is to lean to one side and against things although they are not aware they are doing so. They have not been able to gauge that they are falling into the space. Their drawings can be similar, in that the page has big empty spaces on one side that they have not consciously created. They may swap between hands during activities or for different activities. Making mirror image patterns may be difficult, and there can be a delay in when the child draws a cross, as this ability is a representation that an inner equilibrium has been discovered. Knitting and activities that require crossing from the left and right brain, and left and right hand is likely to be lopsided because they cannot judge when it is off balance and it is difficult to know what to do to make it balanced. Some may feel disorientated and exhausted because they don't know what is going on and can't figure out what to change in themselves to do as the teacher asks. Others might do a lot of vestibular stimulating activities until they feel the satisfaction of inner equilibrium.

## How to harmonise and support the development of the balance sense

Ensure that all children have daily opportunities of losing uprightness and regaining it in activities such as using stilts and bicycles, crossing wobbly bridges and walking upon stump ends or rocks around a garden edge. Having non-uniform spacing between steps keeps us aware of where we have to place our feet; it doesn't exercise the balance sense if someone else has figured out where we should put our feet and controlled the environment. Many opportunities can be made available in a home, garden and while out and about. It is not necessary to push a child towards balancing, in fact if a child is pushed

or made to find their sense of balance in a physical way before they are ready, their relationship to the full context of what the sense provides can be in itself, unbalanced.

The interest increases at about four years old. Playing statues, and doing Eurythmy, are exercises in holding one self in equilibrium. Knitting, weaving, ball sports and games where the midline has to be crossed on the vertical and horizontal plane harmonise balance. Balancing a variety of organically shaped objects into a tower, and sculpting with clay, sand and wax are a practice in balance even though it is not balancing our body.

We need to experience what balance is to be able to find a weight or measure that will make something harmonious. Mathematics, geometry and music require balance and can be used with props and gestures and extended to comparing weights and measure. Also useful are form drawing and moving in patterns such as the figure 8. It is good practice for the balance sense to free draw and handwrite on unlined paper rather than colour between the lines. Children new to writing can draw the lines on the page themselves then write upon the lines, this is a double practice of the balance sense. Wheeling barrows of dirt, digging holes and filling pots with dirt uses the balance sense to hold the weight and perceive the measure. Singing in rounds and harmony takes the practice into the social realm.

Ergonomic furniture that encourages effort in uprightness can be helpful if also given the chance to be free of props to remain upright. The nursing application of quark compress over the chest and a footbath that alternates between bowls of hot and cold water awakens a middle space, a point of balance. A lemon footbath can also be grounding which helps establish a starting place for the inner sense of balance.

## SMELL SENSE

With the next four senses, smell, taste, sight and warmth, we relate more deeply with the world.

The sense of smell is the first sense that takes us outside ourselves, we relate to the environment through this sense. With the sense of smell we come into contact with the external world. When we smell we are brought into close contact with matter through the gaseous or airy medium.

When the sense of smell is matured we are taking in the environment and learning about it without placing our opinions or our feelings upon it.

### Hyper sense of smell

When a person has a hyper sense of smell they have a heightened ability to distinguish between different scents. It is normal for them to know the difference between their body odour and something or someone else, but could be easily disturbed by either, or infatuated by either. They may regularly smell themselves to be with something familiar rather than foreign or because they really like their own scent, even though it may not be

so attractive to others. They can lose themselves to the smell of something that they favour, or the smell of someone or something could stop them wanting to know more about them. If they feel an unwanted odour has penetrated them, they might desire to wash or rub it away. If they enter a room and smell something new, they might seek it out as a priority. The smell of a particular food or flower could make them dry retch; if a food is off they will be the first to say so. If a classroom has been cleaned with antiseptic and doused with artificial smells, the introverted child might not say anything but they sit quietly 'in pain', unable to complete their task. An extroverted child might disturb the whole class by making a big deal of it but still be unable to do their work properly.

They have to build resistance to be able to keep themselves separate from the aromas that they *don't* desire and *do* desire so they can perceive the fragrance for what it truly is and develop social tolerance, rather than the aroma overpowering them.

## Hypo sense of smell

A person with a hypo sense of smell has difficulty experiencing aromas. All scents may seem familiar. They are likely to put something right up to their nose and have a good deep sniff. They may not notice the smell of rotting food in the refrigerator. To smell and to socialise is to mingle, and a person with hypo sense of smell is generally not put off much by either. They may notice the strong scents, but not the gentle scents. Lack of discernment could lead them down the garden path if they were to follow their nose. Impulses to smell themselves may be connected to assisting them to identify themselves and keep themselves out of trouble.

## How to harmonise and support the development of the smell sense

When we smell something for the first time, we can meet it anew and wonder what it is; what makes it like this? If an adult tells a child that an aroma is good or bad or places a judgment on it, this can hinder the child having an experience for themselves. Aromas educate us about the world, and we have to use this sense to guide our way like we do the other senses. We may enjoy what some scents do to our inner life more than what other scents do, but if we place this judgment aside we can ask, what can we learn about the other through this aroma?

Wondering what is cooking or what is in the garden are day-to-day possibilities to refine this sense and be prepared to meet the world. If a child needs extra refinement, introduce games that involve being blindfolded to match a smell to the name of an object.

Keep natural aromatic oils or scents for medicinal purposes and to balance a space where needed. On a normal day the smells of health and illness, and changes in the season and the day can then reveal our inner bacterial cell life and the outer world. This builds our inner resource library.

It is helpful to let a child learn to trust their sense of smell so that they can discover the truth for themselves. It is healthy if a child can tolerate aromas that are naturally occurring and belong to health, and shield themselves from things like toilet deodorisers and nicotine.

## TASTE SENSE

The taste sense is a connection between the inner and outer world. Because of this maturing individual relationship to the smorgasbord life has to offer, the nine to eleven year old child can become more open to the world. In relationship to food they may open up to new flavours or even reject flavours they have enjoyed all their life.

Along with the development of the taste buds the child may also become aware of new feeling life experiences.

The matured taste sense allows us to have a refined individual experience of how we 'taste' the world.

### Hyper sense of taste

A person with a hyper sense of taste can taste every little difference; they are very discerning. Because of this, they have a strong tendency to choose bland or familiar food, limiting their variety, to go for textures and flavours that do not cause too much change in them and they do not have to expand their feeling life into unknown territories. They tend to separate their foods rather than mix them up. The flavour of something could leave a lasting impression that they cannot overcome, so they withdraw from eating it. Someone or something could 'leave a bad taste in their mouth'.

However they could also want to eat a lot of a particular food (even if it is strong) because they lose themselves into the experience that they are enjoying. Their social skills and sense of fashion can be immature from the perspective of not being very experimental.

### Hypo sense of taste

A person with a hypo sense of taste lacks discernment in what they put in their mouth and the people with whom they socialise. Though some personalities might love food and fashion, the tendency is to be less affected by variances. Some personalities will have a bland fashion sense whereas others will be quiet 'loud'. Overall their palate is less refined than someone with a hyper sense of taste, which makes it easy to try new things. Stronger flavours and personalities can stimulate the taste buds, which can give them a satisfying experience.

## How to harmonise and support the development of the taste sense

Food is more than the nutrient table and differentiation between organic or non-organic. To come to discover a food, even as adults we need to taste without judgment and be able to wonder at the world. Offering food that is full of life helps to experience these greater qualities. Vitality occurs as a result of denaturing a substance other than what already lives in us, and this can indirectly improve our social skills because we have to mix ourselves with something other than ourselves and bear it. The organ functions in the act of digestion are supported by eating at the same time each day. A child who is tired will be less likely to eat well or be willing to try new things.

Preparing and serving stews can be an opportunity to discern and differentiate through wondering and tasting from a mix of ingredients. Likewise serving a number of separate meal components can also be a useful exercise. When it is understood that the whole family take a portion of each component (as small or large as that may be), the person with a hyper sense of taste is aided to broaden their palate while also having something familiar, and the person with a hypo sense of taste can come to know each food on its own and refine their discernment.

Making the surroundings beautiful and tasteful can help the child develop a healthy taste sense. When eating is a joy and a social occasion into which the whole household contributes the child who is hyper sensitive to taste will learn social tolerance and develop a taste for elements in the kitchen and garden though they are not touching their taste buds. The person with a hypo sense of taste learns about the gift of food and social etiquette.

## SIGHT SENSE

The sight sense is connected to the movement sense; it helps to distinguish between what is being seen and where it is in space. A small child has an inner experience of everything they see. The impression is left within them. The distinction that happens at maturity is the ability to differentiate between the images that are on the outside and those on the inside. The ability to filter external sensory impressions and be able to discern that what we are looking at is outside of us, means we are not inundated by the images.

Through the sight sense our eyes stretch forth their vision like a pair of arms extending and grasping perception.

### Hyper sense of sight

For a person with a hyper sense of sight, light can cause discomfort; it can be piercing and intolerable, perhaps causing pain and ill health in other parts of the body. They generally need less light and don't tolerate bright light well. When they are exposed to images it can be very hard to let them go; they impress deeply.

In the classroom, the child may be overpowered by whiteboards and videos, unable to hold their behaviour, becoming overstimulated, exhausted, or perhaps nauseous. Their



dreams can be affected by what they have seen in the day, and traumatic events or images could remain undigested for years, being reflected in nightmares. They are likely to also have favourite imagery or a theme with which they fill themselves with regularly, and possibly repeat snippets from movies over and over - the external image creating an inner reflection and movement that they take great pleasure in.

## **Hypo sense of sight**

Having a hypo sense of sight will mean that more light is needed to be able to see clearly. This can cause long or short-sightedness with a lack of differentiation in forms so that some things are blurry. They might prefer to have the light on to increase the sensation, or if they stay with what is familiar they will prefer the dark.

In front of the classroom the child may need more detail in the visual images or to be closer to the front to stimulate their sense of sight and grasp the picture. They could become bored unless the work is filled with living colour. Their behaviour can also reflect the images that have crossed into their inner life unnoticed.

Adults are not so affected by visual impressions, and may offend others by wearing what may be considered inappropriate images on their clothing. The visual impressions enter, but they are less affected by them, sometimes seeking shocking or extreme imagery.

## **How to harmonise and support the development of the sight sense**

To keep joy and wonder in each task so that more of the world can reveal itself. The world is a colourful and exciting place as a young adult when we have been nourished with a social life that is warm, tasteful and true. The subtle but dramatic changes in nature, such as with the rising and setting of the sun can help us to experience the relationship of what we see, and what lives in us. Observing nature in real life nourishes the sense of sight whereas viewing it on a screen with artificial penetrating light can cause the natural process to deteriorate.

Use gentle colours with soft edges for children under seven years old, bringing more definition to the form from the seventh year. Apply this to architecture, furnishings, wall colours, clothing worn by adults in the environment and the activities offered. The application of chamomile over the abdomen can help calm the nervous system and pain from overexposure to light.

Chalkboard drawings created by hand that are full of colour and detail tell a story and invite the eye to move across the landscape and into the shadows without being over-penetrated by the light.

## WARMTH SENSE

The sense of warmth is concentrated in the heart of the human being. With warmth we are participating with what is within the object perceived. When we hold ice we come to know that it is cold through and through not only because of the boundaries of our skin but also because we experience the cold within.

For this sense to mature it needs to be held by the adults early in the child's life. It is not fully developed until around twelve to fourteen years old, which may be much later than most people would expect. When an adult holds the responsibility for the child's body temperature through awareness of the environment and responding to that with appropriate clothing, the child's sense of warmth has a strong foundation. For example a child will swim until their lips are blue, as they are unable to discern that they are cold. A baby needs an extra layer of clothing than that of an adult. As the warmth sense develops along with the greater development of the heart and circulation, the child becomes more able to perceive their internal warmth in relation to the external environment. The foundation for the harmonious maturity of the warmth sense is laid in childhood. So that the now teenager, will adequately measure and correct the needs of their body temperature within a changing environment, and will also be able to discern the level of soul warmth in a room.

### Hyper sense of warmth

If a person has a hyper sense of warmth, they are oversensitive to changes in the temperature of the environment and can be overcome by heat or cold. They may carry lots of clothes to be able to make themselves comfortable as the temperature changes, or they can avoid places if they think they won't be able to cope with the temperature. The inability to separate their experience from the temperature of the environment can have the result of not being able to function or regulate their temperature back to homeostasis.

It is useful to look closely at the reason a child might want to change their clothing regularly. Is it because they have a hyper sense of warmth or is it related to the touch sense or the life sense? We will start to notice a connection between the senses and how the development of the first four senses influence the development of the other eight senses.

### Hypo sense of warmth

To have a lack of awareness of the way temperature is affecting them. Sometimes they feel hot on the surface, but their internal organs are inadequately warm. They could underdress or overdress unable to determine the appropriate clothing for the environment. They may stay in the water or rain until their lips are blue and they have goose bumps, all the time denying they are cold. Likewise they won't necessarily recognise when they are overheating.

Interestingly, Australians raised in a beach culture tend to ignore the need to dress adequately because the changes in the environment are not as extreme as in parts of

Europe and America. And in addition to that cultural habit, a surfer or competition swimmer may purposely ignore the sense to allow the passion of the sport to continue.

Ignoring the cold and not covering the chest, kidney area, calves and feet make the body work harder than necessary to maintain warmth. This effort takes away from using the forces for growth, thinking and healthy organ function. Cold has a noticeably adverse affect on the reproductive and digestive organs, with studies also showing that treatment for people with eating disorders is enhanced with the application of warmth.

## **How to harmonise and support the development of the warmth sense**

A physically warm home, as well as warm relationships, bring a measure by which to establish individual warmth. Warm relationships can be developed through showing interest in one another.

Very small children always need an extra layer of clothing. Have a house rule that incorporates wearing socks or house shoes, and the body dressed warmly, not compromising on covering the chest, kidney region, calves and feet. Natural fibres let the body breathe, and wool insulates and regulates temperature much more than cotton. Cotton is suitable for warm environments. Use real-life seasonal changes as indications to awaken the young child's relationship to their inner authority so that it becomes a conversation the adolescent has with the world as opposed to parental authority. Adolescents who have been raised to have a healthy measure of warmth by house rules being adhered to will be more likely to choose clothing that helps regulate and protect their body temperature because they will be able to experience their healthy zone. It can only be learnt by experience, and since teenagers need to have the freedom to think for themselves these foundations occur before twelve years old.

Combating the elements despite rain, hail or shine, dressed in adequate attire that remains dry in cold climates, can strengthen the warmth sense. Try not to make the inside temperature overly cold when the outside temperature is high so that the difference is not extreme. Until the child is about five years old, the caregiver needs to put the layers on and off. Then until they are about twelve to fourteen years old, the caregiver needs to remind them to take the layers on and off and teach them healthy durations for exposure to extreme temperatures.

Treatments include massage with protective lotions and the application of heat. Nutritional baths that leave a layer of protein on the skin and generate warmth from the inside can be used as long as no prescribed or recreational drugs are being taken. A lemon footbath draws the warmth to the feet and distributes it throughout the body. Hot water bottles, rugs around the shoulders and fireplaces on a daily basis through the colder months have a health giving effect on the warmth of the body and soul.

## **HEARING SENSE**

The hearing sense perceives the sounding element and reveals intimate knowledge of the nature of something. The nine year old starts to experience things more deeply and can

take an interest in music, though this is most often connected to what is around them. It is from about fourteen years old we can crave a connection to hear the nature of something else, and we start to relate to particular genres of music or artists that have a similar resonance to our own, or that give a mood-altering resonance. It may be obvious from early in life when a person is 'musically gifted'. Yet the capacity to hear the other without judgment or pain is part of the process of maturation that can vary greatly depending on how the person was influenced as a young child in their sensitivity to listen.

### **Hyper sense of hearing**

A person with hyper sensitive hearing is oversensitive to sound, sometimes to the point of pain. They can be affected when a sound is out of key, tone, pitch, rhythm, or the volume is not measured. A child can experience this sensitivity from when they are very young. They can discern individual sounds and the resonance that is left in the space by the sound or movement of a person or object. They can enter deeply into the sound, losing themselves in it with pleasure; or they can be disturbed by it. A child will find it difficult, if not impossible not to be affected by the resonance. They may repeatedly create or play one particular sound, having a desire for it to resonate in them. Or their inner space may feel so penetrated that they have to leave the room or area, or put their hands over their ears to block the sound.

### **Hypo sense of hearing**

A person with a lack of differentiation between various sounds, tending towards deafness, has a hypo sense of hearing. They can't assess the pitch, and they may not notice the resonance or differentiation that the tone has left in the space. The 'vibe' is not very noticeable for them. They could use a loud or quiet voice and not realise it, or not necessarily change it to suit the environment.

### **How to harmonise and support the development of the hearing sense**

The sense of hearing can be developed by listening to live music, through which we can truly meet the other behind the sound. Those raising children will support them by singing a variety of songs, rhythm and harmony around the home and encouraging the desire to enter into seeking for the inner balance or source of the tone and of the resonance that remains in the space. Quiet times are also important. The pentatonic scale can only produce harmony, therefore, can be harmonising on the sense of hearing and is an especially therapeutic sound with which to fill the room in the early years. Provide handmade instruments and natural objects to listen to the different sounds that can be created. Allow an adolescent to experiment with a wide variety of music styles, sounds and noises, at the same time as giving them something by which to gauge their taste and the volume of what they do so that they can come towards a healthy measure and wide variety of music.

## WORD SENSE

The sense of word is to perceive the being of language as a vehicle formed by the thoughts of another human being. We perceive and make connections to words, differentiated from other sounds. The way we perceive words has a particular relationship to the development and sensitivity of the sight sense and the movement sense. Typically between sixteen and seventeen years old, we notice a greater ability to filter what is intended for oneself, and the relevance of things to oneself. This contributes to being able to recognise archetypes in communication and only connect with what is relevant to us, without being as affected by someone else's direction or mood.

### Hyper sense of word

A person with a hyper sense of word can be sensitive to words and risk becoming caught in the detail. Although they may easily perceive words, they may also become fixated on some words, thereby missing the meaning that the other is trying to convey or they fall into the other's words, into the art or the drama that they are watching. They can read something and gather the form. But they can also become agitated by some of these things. Their sensitivity may cause them to avoid some methods of communication or they could become caught up in what is going on outside of their self. They may have an affinity with words that leads them to develop a large vocabulary that allows them to refine and articulate communication. The familiarity with language can be according to an individual relationship to particular words.

### Hypo sense of word

If a person is using their word sense in a hypo sensitive way, they will have difficulty connecting to other people's words, and may miss the point. The process of recognition and response can be slow while they gather the word by repeating what has been said. When one is hypo sensitive, the impression occurs without recognition. Communication can be overpowering. So before they know it they may have taken in too much and need to abruptly halt the conversation or task at hand to regain their self. The younger the person, the more likely they are to do this in an anti-social way. The extrovert may become disruptive whereas the introvert may close down communication.

### How to harmonise and support the development of the word sense

Everything that harmonises and develops vocabulary, is health giving for the word sense. Harmonising the movement sense and sight sense also harmonises the word sense. Speech exercises and stimulating conversations keep the mind flexible. It helps to use a wide variety of words around the developing child: choosing different words to express the same thing, as well as playing with words, can help to expand the word sense. When someone connects to the meaning and thought living behind the word or gesture before speaking or acting it out, the word 'lands' in the other like a gift. To support the word sense to develop, stories and conversations need to be enlivened by living in the heart of the speaker and growing as it is spoken, rather than purely recited from memory. A

conversation or lesson is made digestible by using descriptive words that have within them freedom for the listener to catch onto the rhythm and form a living imagination. Keep in mind to use words that are true for the whole, leave an impression of beauty, and demonstrate goodness in the world. Words can otherwise land in the other undigested, or we could actually leave the other un-free.

## THOUGHT SENSE

We understand the meaning behind what someone else is saying by using our thought sense. The thought sense starts to mature in the late teens, early twenties and helps us understand the essence of what we are studying and of those teaching us. When reading, listening or viewing something we use the thought sense to relate to the thought living behind the language. It follows on from what has been perceived through the sense of word. To be able to follow someone else's thinking, we unite ourselves with the rhythm of the other, perceived through the activity of the parasympathetic nervous system. The matured sense of thought allows us to perceive the thought of the other and keep our own thoughts.

### Hyper sense of thought

The person with a hyper sense of thought easily experiences that the thoughts of another are different to theirs. They may battle the other's thought and /or they could be overpowered by it consciously or unconsciously. For example even though on their own they may be following a particular path in their thinking, when they are with others they may be diverted away from their train of thought. They may become engrossed in the other's thoughts to the point that they lose their thoughts and agree with the concepts that the other is expressing. They may be easily convinced to completely change their opinion or point of view unless they take the time for inner reflection on their own. They can perceive patterns and systems that help them to work with strategies and pick up concepts quite easily, but risk becoming caught in them and losing contact with other parts of their life.

### Hypo sense of thought

A person with a hypo sense of thought has their own thoughts, but do not recognise the difference in the way other people think. They may think that everyone thinks as they do and therefore overlook what the other is trying to communicate that is different. Consciously learning from others may not be easy. They tend to have difficulty merging with the rhythm of the other and be able to follow the other's train of thought. Like hypo activity in each sense, they can be impressed upon by the other, without realising it. So they too could take on the other's thoughts as their own. They can also find themselves in unclear agreements because they mistakenly thought the other person agreed with them. They may not follow the motive behind someone else's actions.

## How to harmonise and support the development of the thought sense

Harmonising the life sense also harmonises the thought sense. Children can be read traditional Grimm's Fairytales and share in prayer and verse which serves to build a reverent relationship to something greater than the material self. These practices are also beneficial for adults, as is poetry, history, art exhibitions, as well as studying the way symbols are used in myths, legends, and languages.

Forms of spiritual development that strengthen the individual's relationship to the truth and harmony within the cosmos and the meaning of life also extend the sense of thought.

To develop this sense, adolescents require teachers and role models who have a living connection to their work and enthusiastically bring this through what they are teaching, while at the same time letting the adolescent take up the parts they are sensing a connection with, and leave the others behind.

A person with a hyper sense of thought will be supported by being asked questions that lead them towards individual consideration to build broader perspectives so they can learn not to drop their own, but to hold many. A person with a hypo sense of thought will be supported through questions that deepen their point of view so that the nuances become highlighted.

## 'I' SENSE

The 'I' sense is the sense of perceiving the individuality of another; to truly sense there is another human being present rather than only relating to their persona and conditioning. Despite a person's race, sex, gender, religion, social status and culture there is an 'I' being that is not those things. Sensing the 'I' of the other is important for healthy relationships; in fact, we start to develop a sense about a new human being while they are in utero.

We can usually see this sense developing when we start standing up for our individuality in the late teens, early twenties. Whether or not it matures fully, depends significantly on the maturity of all the other senses which together develop the capacity to be in a place within ourselves that does not judge or have a preference, but can truly meet the other. Without effort, it may come and go and be more like a gifted moment of perception.

### Hyper sense of I

To have a hyper sense of 'I' is to experience the 'I' of another strongly. When alone, people with a hyper sense of 'I' can have a stronger connection to themselves, but when mingling with others, they may find it difficult to have or maintain their boundaries. When there is company in the home, they may find it difficult to focus on themselves even if they are in separate rooms to the other people.

Though they may have a point of view and recognise someone else's point of view may be different, they can feel overpowered by colleagues or partners and give up their point of view. They may or may not realise they are doing this. They tend to fall in love easily as they may give themselves over to another. Sometimes there is an unconscious reward for

the sacrifice such as in co-dependent relationships, or a conscious reward such as stature, wealth, comfort or pleasure that can be clothed in material or spiritual beliefs. It can be through a separation from the other and opportunities for more points of view that they can regain perspective of their own life.

## **Hypo sense of 'I'**

A person with a hypo sense of 'I' is less inclined to recognise the 'I' of another human being. They see their own point of view and may disregard that of another because they do not experience it. They can feel more connected to others within a collective group, than a person with a hyper sense of 'I', but are also more likely to treat people according to outer characteristics such as 'male or female', 'young or old' or the colour of their skin. They do not pay much heed to the person's individual ideals because they cannot perceive them. They can work in a shared space, though they may not pay much attention to the needs of others sharing the space. They can have more of a tendency to cross the boundaries of others on a physical and emotional level, as they don't experience the boundary of the other although their experience of themselves can be heightened. They can appear to have no empathy and complete disregard for how their actions may affect other people. They can have difficulty falling deeply in love, though they may have relationships and love others but protect their boundaries and separateness.

## **How to harmonise and support the development of the 'I' sense**

When someone else acknowledges us for our true individual self we are more likely to do the same for them. It can be remarkably helpful to listen and observe the communications and actions of another person without placing our bias and judgment in the way. So that no matter how people express themselves we can seek and acknowledge the part of their expression that is unarguably true. We support one another when we can let in the other's point of view without losing our own. We learn how to do this in the first seven years of life by the primary caregivers and community living this out. We then 'play out' what we have learnt when our 'I' sense matures. As adults, we are required to choose this development. The 'I' sense is supported to maturity by upholding household rules that help every household member to flourish, rather than rules based on making a particular person's life easier.

Treatments and activities used to harmonise the touch sense also harmonise the 'I' sense. Eurythmy and rhythmical massage are especially helpful.

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## **HOME HEALTH CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

For a collection of resources and instructions for the applications mentioned throughout this document, please visit: <http://developingtheself.org/category/home-health-care-treatments/>



## WORKSHOPS AND LECTURES

### **Caring For the Senses in Early Childhood**

A talk for parents and teachers caring for children from birth to seven years old. It introduces the twelve senses with a particular focus on the first four senses. It raises awareness of the significance of how these senses develop between birth and seven years and their relation to the rest of life. This talk is utilised by Waldorf Communities to help young families understand the basis of the Waldorf early childhood curriculum and the benefits of creating a complementary home routine.

### **Harmonising Sensory Development in the Primary School Years**

A talk for parents, teachers and learning support staff to understand the impact the senses have on behaviour and learning in the primary school years. This can be delivered independently or at a class parent-teacher meeting, and may help lead parents towards further education to support their child's individual needs.

### **Learning To Observe Sensory Development**

We can use the understanding and observation of the development of the twelve senses as a guide to know when children are ready for broader experiences, how to protect them from overexposure, and how to harmonise the impressions they have absorbed and are yet to digest. Our awareness of our own tendencies to use each sense can also help us to improve the way we work with colleagues and partners.

This workshop is presented as a one or two day workshop for anyone working with children to come to understand the way we each have hyper and hypo sensory processing tendencies, and how we can support all children to flourish and fully develop despite these variances. It brings examples of ways to observe behaviours at school and home through the lens of sensory development to give the most helpful encouragement to a child, and to enable the awakening of their own sense of self and place.

### **Extending the Understanding of the Senses in Relation to Class Behaviours**

This half or full day workshop is to assist school staff to extend the relatedness of sensory development to particular behaviours that are presenting in a class group, in order to develop new ways to support the class.

The content can be extended furthest when the participants are aware of their tendencies to be hypo or hyper sensitive and whether this is colouring their perceptions of the class needs. This can assist in working towards opening the doorway to perceive what a child may need to assist them to learn or digest. When we work with sensory development in this way, we find that we focus on what a person has rather than what they do not have.

### **Focusing on Harmonising Sensory Development in Adulthood**

A one or two day workshop where participants spend time on individual observations to come to know how they perceive through their different senses and how these perceptions colour their choices in life. To develop healthy, matured senses for ourselves, we put aside

the bias and conditioning that is colouring our view of the world and others. This opens the doorway to the wisdom that helps us to understand someone else's point of view, which greatly assists collegial communication and puts the health of the family or the school at the centre.

### **Practical Workshops to Learn How to Apply Treatments to Harmonise the Senses**

By applying medicinal substances to the skin, the nervous system is reached more directly than via oral medication. Anxiety, fatigue, sleep disturbances and erratic behaviour that is a result of inadequate sensory processing can be assisted by these applications. The treatments benefit all ages, but because the environment so easily influences children, these treatments can have a profound effect on bringing about a soothing, harmonising or awakening experience that assists the integration of what has been absorbed from the world. These workshops provide hands-on experience with a variety of practical applications. Each treatment is a one to two-hour group workshop.

### **Peer Support for Parents, School Staff and Health Professionals**

Professionals in the fields of health and pedagogy are available for individual class teachers, learning support staff, parents and health professionals to offer one-off or ongoing individualised support. This can provide the opportunity to refine programmes, home routines or healthcare practices and integrate activities and nourishing experiences that help children to build a rich inner resource library and adults to harmonise their senses.

### **Further Education and Resources on Human Development, including Gender and Sexuality**

Further programmes offered by Developing the Self Developing the World can be found on the website [www.developingtheself.org](http://www.developingtheself.org)

### **Inner Development**

For those who want to work more directly with their inner life through meditation and self-development, lectures and course outlines can be found at [www.innerworkpath.com](http://www.innerworkpath.com)

## OTHER SUGGESTED READING

'Spirit-led Community – Healing the Impact of Technology' Publication by Steiner Books, 2018 Author: Lisa Romero.

*EduCareDo Foundation Year in Anthroposophy Lessons 3 & 4.* [www.educaredo.org](http://www.educaredo.org)

## ABOUT US

Developing the Self Developing the World is a not-for-profit community organisation made up of volunteers who offer their professional expertise towards educational resources and workshops. The profits from which go to support 16 to 26 year olds in their work and life questions. For more information visit: [www.developingtheself.org](http://www.developingtheself.org)