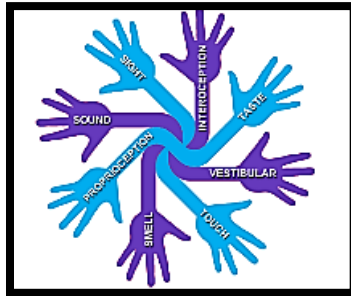


YOUR 8 SENSES



1. **Sight**- This is the sense which allows us to decode what we see and read body language in social settings.
2. **Sound (hearing)**- This is the sense that allows us to hear things such as alarms, others speaking, sirens, birds, music, etc. It also allows us to understand speech and to discriminate the sounds in a room so we can listen to one person talking.
3. **Taste**- This is the sense which allows the recognition of flavor and the characteristics of food (i.e., salty, spicy, sweet, or bitter). The intensity of the flavor and the texture of the food are also recognized by this sense.
4. **Smell**- This is the sense that allows us to distinguish scents.
5. **Touch (tactile)**- This is the sense which provides information about the shape, size, and texture of objects. It is the feeling all over the body, the feeling of what is on the skin, and how clothes feel.
6. **Vestibular**- This is the sense which provides information about movement, balance, and the body in relation to gravity. It tells us if we are upside down or right side up and in what direction we are moving.
7. **Proprioception**- This is the sense which provides information to the muscles and joints. It helps body parts perceive sensations and recognize where they are relation to each other. It also pertains to motor control and motor planning (carrying out purposeful movements), body awareness (telling the body where each part is and how it is moving), grading of movement (knowing how hard or soft to perform a task such as petting an animal, coloring with a crayon, or squeezing a bottle) and postural stability (being able to sit up). It allows a person to move to adjust their body position automatically (such as adjusting posture to prevent you from falling out of chair when reaching for an object).
8. **Interoception**- This is the internal sense. It is responsible for feeling internal states and knowing what to do with them. For example it tells you when you are hungry, if you are tired, when you have to go to the bathroom, or if you are sick. It helps to distinguish what your body is physically feeling (a stomach ache, headache, toothache, muscle soreness, pain, etc.) and emotionally feeling (sad, happy, angry, overwhelmed, etc.). It also helps regulate things such as temperature, heart rate, and breathing.

Becoming Sensory Aware

Answer the following questions. Be detail oriented and descriptive in your responses.

1. When do you feel as if you think and interact best?
2. When do you have a hard time thinking and interacting?



REMEMBER: The more aware you are of how you interact in certain environments the more apt you will become at creating environments that are conducive to you and your unique needs.

Helping you get started...some questions to consider...

*These are just questions to help you get started, some of them may not be relevant to you or you may think of other factors to include.

Time: What time of day is it? Is it after doing a certain kind of activity- such as running, reading, lifting weights, swimming, jumping, spinning, crafts, cooking, shopping, cleaning, driving, eating, sleeping, etc.?

Environment: Where are you- are you at home, in your car, at the park, in a plane, on a boat, at the gym, in the garden, in a library, at the store, at work, etc.? What is the temperature like? How is the space organized- is it cluttered, open, busy, crowded, plain, etc.?

Movement: What is your body doing-are you fidgeting, rocking, sitting, laying down, standing up, pacing, humming, eating, etc.? If you are sitting, what are you sitting on- a chair, the floor, a sofa, a swivel chair, etc.?

Tactile: What are you wearing- is it cotton or polyester, loose or tight, long or short, soft or rough, etc.? Are you wearing jewelry, a belt, a scarf, etc.? How is your hair styled? Are you wearing shoes or are you barefoot? What kind of surface are working on? Are you feeling air, wind, or sunshine on your skin?

Sound: Is there music playing- if yes what kind and how loud? Are you humming or clicking your tongue? What is the white noise background like- do you hear the air conditioner, computers, highway noise, birds, running water, other people talking, etc.?

Visual: What colors are in your environment? Are there posters or signs on the walls? Are there moving people or objects? What is the lighting like-is the bright or dim, natural, fluorescent, incandescent, etc.? Are you wearing sunglasses?

Taste: What kind of taste do you have in your mouth? Are you chewing or sucking on candy, food, or gum?

Smell: What do you smell? Are you wearing any lotions, hair products, or oils?

People/animals: Are there other people, animals, or pets with you?

What Helps my Sensory System?

Proprioception-

Vestibular-

Tactile-

Auditory-

Visual-

Taste-

Smell-

Places and Tools Worksheet

List general environments that challenge your sensory system:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now, identify sensory tools and strategies that can help you cope when you are in each of the above challenging environments.



Good Idea: place each environment on a separate note card (or other item), hole-punch the corners, clip them together, and take them with you!! Now you have a list of tools to refer to wherever you go!!

Example environments and coping strategies/tools

| In the car | At work or school | In the community or in a social environment |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Self massage 2. Music 3. Weighted sock 4. Humming 5. Sunglasses 6. Towel over my head (as a passenger only) | 1. Go to the bathroom and do muscle tension/relaxation or jumps 2. Tell someone I need to step outside for quiet 3. Ear plugs 4. Take a walk during lunch/breaks 5. Use scented soaps/lotions 6. Have fabric to rub 7. Fidgets | 1. Headphones 2. Earplugs 3. Sunglasses 4. Fidgets 5. Ask for pressure (when with someone you know) 6. Take a break and go to the bathroom or outside 7. Self massage 8. Weighted backpack |

Sensory Strategies for Specific Places

List specific sensory challenging environments that you encounter regularly (at least twice a month):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now, identify factors (before, during, and after) that may have an effect on your sensory system in relation to the identified environment:

Example:

Environment: Grocery store

Things to consider:

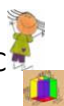
1. Day of the week...weekends are very busy
2. Time of day...mid-morning and early evening is usually busy
3. Traffic to and from...rush hour is 7:30-9:30 am and 4:00-7:00 pm



Choose an environment and identify things to consider:

Environment:

Things to consider:



Environment

Things to consider:

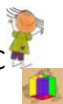
Before:

During:

After:



Good Idea: place each environment on a separate note card (or other item), hole-punch the corners, clip them together, and take them with you!! Now you have a list of tools to refer to wherever you go!!



Example frequent sensory environments and coping strategies/tools

| Grocery Store | Restaurant |
|---|--|
| <p>Things to consider: Is the store busy at this time of day? Will the traffic to and from be heavy? Am I regulated? Do I need someone to come with me today? What do I need to purchase?</p> <p>Before: Take a walk or go not long after the gym.</p> <p>During: Use headphones with music, earplugs, sunglasses, and fidgets if needed.</p> <p>After: If needed ask for help putting groceries away. Take a sensory break...Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kick the couch 2. Make patterns on the wall with feet 3. Hang upside down from bed with weighted blanket 4. Swing 5. Sort objects 6. Take a walk | <p>Things to consider: Is it a time of day when it may be busy? Where am I coming from and what am I doing afterwards? Is there something here I can eat? Who is going with me? Will there be offensive smells there?</p> <p>Before: If available, look at a menu beforehand. Do an organizing yet alerting sensory activity such as weight bearing exercises, bike riding, jogging, house work, walking, taking a shower, etc.. When going with someone else ask how long you plan on being there.</p> <p>During: Use headphones, earplugs, and sunglasses if needed. Have fidgets available. Ask to be seated in a quiet area (away from the kitchen and large groups). Take a break if needed (go outside or to the bathroom and use sensory strategies). Use sensory scale and communicate if becoming too overwhelmed-ask for pressure or help if needed. Use written communication if unable to get words out.</p> <p>After: Take a shower or change clothes (if sensitive to restaurant smells). Take a sensory break...Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kick the couch 2. Use punching bag 3. Swing 4. Go for a walk and do mindfulness exercise 5. Do Head/hand stands and inverted yoga positions 6. Use stretchy bands /do weighted exercises |