

# Association for a Healing Education

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## Observations Based on the Lower Senses

At a remedial conference in the summer of 2000, Nettie Fabrie presented the following matrix to help teachers and parents strengthen their understanding of the four lower senses.

### Sense of Touch

#### What are the qualities?

Security  
Surety  
Trust in the physical world  
Security in the physical reality, which gives freedom to look beyond  
Trust in the spiritual world  
Trust in adults' judgments  
Trust in one's own judgments  
Acceptance of boundaries  
Knowing where one's own space begins and ends

#### What gets in the way?

Lack of healthy touching  
Overreaction and fear of inappropriate touching  
Creation of tactile aversive children  
Early wakefulness  
Overprotectiveness  
Inappropriate toys that don't invite exploration  
Overly spicy, adult-style foods given too young  
Shock or trauma  
Sedentary lifestyle  
Dressing in man-made fibers  
Harsh, punitive discipline - the child will hesitate to reach out into the world

#### How do we strengthen these qualities?

Holding, cuddling, touching  
Loving authority  
Wrestling  
Games and play  
Surrounding the child with interesting objects from the natural world  
Crafts  
Encourage the child to engage actively in nature  
Chores and hard work  
Dressing in natural fibers

#### What does a need for help look like?

A feeling of "free fall"  
Hysteria  
Insecurity, mistrust  
Cynicism  
Over-connection with the earthly  
Materialistic  
Defensiveness, withdrawal  
Mistrust of peers and/or adults  
Being "in your face"  
Strongly bound up with one's own needs and fears  
Little consideration for the needs of others  
Defiant and oppositional  
Argumentative if challenged

## Observations Based on the Lower Senses - the Sense of Life

### What are the qualities?

Unconscious feeling of well-being  
"All is well with me and the world"  
A sense of the whole  
A secure base out of which belief can arise  
Patience, and solving problems over time  
A feeling of wonder and awe  
Ability to face the world's contradictions  
Acceptance of what is not fair  
Acceptance of differences  
Inner flexibility  
Self-reflectiveness

### What gets in the way?

Lack of consciousness in setting boundaries  
Few or inconsistent boundaries  
Lack of tending to physical needs  
Fragmentation  
Early decision making  
Sterile environments; too much comfort  
Media; virtual reality  
Too much earnestness  
Being treated like an adult  
Rushed lifestyle  
Little contact with nature  
Bad diet  
Premature negotiating and "making a deal"  
No rhythm  
Limited play possibilities  
Overprotectiveness

### How do we strengthen these qualities?

Healthy diet  
Appropriate praise  
Rhythm and order  
Appropriate exposure to mortality  
Building up anticipation and expectation;  
delayed gratification  
Allowing time for regular contact with nature  
Allowing the child to experience environments  
that are hot and cold  
Games and stories that embrace justice and fair-  
ness  
Humor  
Surprise  
Surround the child with tolerance

### What does a need for help look like?

A feeling that "something is wrong"  
Feeling unsafe  
Quick to correct and label others  
Low self esteem  
Fear, guilt  
Impatient, greedy  
A feeling/gesture of disappointment in every-  
thing  
Intolerance of others' weaknesses  
Intolerance of own weaknesses  
Obsessive or compulsive behavior  
Heightened addictive tendency  
Lack of interest  
Lack of trust and engagement with others  
Irritable and grumpy  
Difficulty in accepting limits  
Tendency to want to negotiate  
Feeling victimized and picked on

## Observations Based on the Lower Senses - the Sense of Movement

### What are the qualities?

Industry and purpose  
Achieving uprightiness  
A sense of the parts in relationship to the whole  
Sensitivity to subtlety  
Imitation of healthy, purposeful movements  
Individual strength  
Ego deepening  
Connectedness to body and earth  
Knowing where one's own space begins and ends  
Relationship to gravity-levity, front-back, left-right  
Digestion/processing of cognition

### What gets in the way?

Electronic media  
A lifestyle that is too quick, too fast  
A lifestyle that is unpredictable, arrhythmical  
Fear  
Sedentary lifestyle  
A feeling of being overwhelmed, "stopped in your tracks"  
Lack of order  
Lack of healthy models for imitation  
Modern household appliances  
Virtual reality  
Premature competitive sports  
Ill-fitting clothes and shoes

### How do we strengthen these qualities?

Create opportunities where the child can affect the environment  
Play, games  
Help the child be aware of actions  
Story  
Surround the child with adult, purposeful work  
Chores  
Rhythm and predictability  
Safety and security  
Moving through different elements (e.g. sand, water)  
Puppetry  
Sustained movement that builds endurance  
Movement shaped by a container (e.g. fitting into the bow of a tree, a play box, etc.)  
Movements that involve a change of direction

### What does a need for help look like?

Inferiority, hopelessness  
Fall into oneself  
Fearfulness  
Dissipation  
Fixed concepts; rigidity of thoughts, feelings or actions  
Failure to pick nonverbal or social subtleties  
Blandness  
Little respect for adults  
Loss of biography line - "who am I becoming?"  
Depression and inwardness  
Desensitization to the other  
Hypersensitivity to one's own space  
Hyposensitivity to others' space  
Inattentiveness  
Fidgetiness  
Speech problems

## Observations Based on the Lower Senses - the Sense of Balance

### What are the qualities?

A feeling of inner equilibrium  
Ability to move between...  
    Tension and release  
    Concentration and relaxation  
    The reverential and the practical  
    The esoteric and the exoteric  
    Changes in rhythm  
A sense of the middle ground  
Healthy rhythmic system  
A sense of appropriateness  
A sense of timing  
Ability to quiet oneself and actively listen  
Altruism  
Freedom and choice in focusing attention

### What gets in the way?

An arrhythmical lifestyle  
Adults who are stuck in one way of being  
Glibness, throw-away words and actions  
Adults who put their own needs first  
Adults who don't live with rhythm in their own lives  
Media  
Black humor and sarcasm  
Teachers or parents who appear exhausted and short-tempered

### How do we strengthen these qualities?

Rhythm and predictability  
Interweaving humor and seriousness  
Activities (e.g. skating, cycling, sailing)  
Cultivating our own strong inner picture of all that we present to children  
Festivals recognizing seasonal changes  
Daily and weekly rhythms (e.g. mealtimes, bed times, etc.)  
Stories that demonstrate polarity and resolution, finding a middle ground  
Modeling our own inner balance through self-care, maintenance

### What does a need for help look like?

Inner agitation  
Spontaneously falling down  
Appears "driven by a motor"; constantly aroused  
Hyper-vigilant  
Impulsive; blurting out  
Cannot take turns  
Babbling and fidgety  
Selfish  
Oscillating between the extremes of "adultifying" and drawing the child "out" prematurely; and at other times traumatizing, overexposure and driving the child "in"