Self Regulation Strategies

There are a range of behavioral responses to sensory input that reflect the child's self regulation strategies. At one end of this continuum are passive self regulation strategies, in which the person lets sensory events occur. Passive self regulation can mean that persons miss things, or feel overtaken by things that are happening around them. For example, a person with passive self regulation might miss the visual input of facial expressions or gestures during socialization. Conversely, a person with passive self regulation might notice everyone fidgeting in a class, and this input could compete with the teacher's lecture.

At the other end of this continuum are active self regulation strategies; people with active strategies select and engage in behaviors to control their own sensory experiences. Active self regulation can yield more or less sensory input. For example, a person might hum or whistle while playing cards to add sensory input to keep attentive to the game. Conversely, a person might move to a quiet room while studying as a means of controlling auditory input to increase concentration.

Both passive and active strategies for self regulation can be useful and helpful to the person, or can interfere with the ability to participate in daily life. [[[link to hyperresponsive and hyporesponsive]]]

References:
Dunn, W. & Daniels, D. ....

Dunn 1997

Also see bib at www.sensoryprofile.com

Return to Sensory Processing Concepts
# Sensorimotor Planning Worksheet

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Taste/Smell</th>
<th>Oral Texture</th>
<th>Tactile</th>
<th>Vestibular Movement</th>
<th>Vestibular Gravity</th>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Auditory</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweet/Vanilla</td>
<td>Suck/Blow</td>
<td>Joint and muscle activity</td>
<td>Joint and muscle activity</td>
<td>posture sensory</td>
<td>Light/Dark Color</td>
<td>Vibration Sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt/Brine</td>
<td>Bite/Crunch</td>
<td>Deep pressure</td>
<td>Moderate temperatures</td>
<td>Oscillation (bouncing)</td>
<td>Horizontal</td>
<td>Form (boundaries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sour/Citrus/Spice</td>
<td>Chew</td>
<td>Touch pressure</td>
<td>Moderate temperatures</td>
<td>Linear movement (swinging)</td>
<td>Out of straight planes (diagonals)</td>
<td>Place (location)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitter/Smoke</td>
<td>Lick</td>
<td>Light touch (may be unexpected)</td>
<td>Extreme temperatures</td>
<td>Rotary movement (spinning or partial rotation)</td>
<td>Upside down/ backwards spaces</td>
<td>Movement through time and space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RHYTHMIC INPUT OVER TIME - DECREASES AROUSAL LEVEL
ARHYTHMIC INPUT OVER TIME - INCREASES AROUSAL LEVEL

Rhythm of input +
Intensity of input +
Frequency of input +
Duration of input +
Optimal Function

Figure 1-8. ©1991, Patricia Oetter, MA, OTR. FAOTA Printed with permission.
Lucy Miller’s “A SECRET”
Dealing with Challenging Situations/Behaviors

Letter

Strategy

Attention. Can I draw my child’s attention away from his/her anxiety?

Sensation. Is a sensation alarming my child now? If so, what is it? Can it be modified? Can I override the alarming sensation with another one?

Emotion Regulation. What emotion is my child experiencing? What techniques do I know work best when (s)he feels this way?

Culture. What part of our family’s culture can be changed to avoid situations like this in the future?

Relationships. Is something in his relationship with me or someone causing him to act this way right now? What can I do about it?

Environment. What in the environment is setting my child off? How can I change it?

Tasks. What is troubling my child about the task at hand? Can I modify the task so it is not problematic for my child? Can I substitute another task that will provide a calming influence?