



EXPLORING OUR SENSORY EXPERIENCES – A COMPASSIONATE APPROACH



Our sensory experiences are beautifully diverse and always valid. Some of us are drawn toward sensory input, while others prefer to avoid it. And many of us experience shifts in our needs depending on our environment, energy levels, and sense of safety.

The first step toward meaningful support is embracing curiosity: pausing to listen deeply, honouring what our body is communicating, and respecting our needs without expectation or judgment.

Let's explore the different ways sensory experiences might show up and how we can support them with understanding:

TOUCH (TACTILE SENSATIONS):

Some of us crave comforting pressure, certain textures, or soft fabrics. Others may find light touch, scratchy materials, or tags deeply uncomfortable.

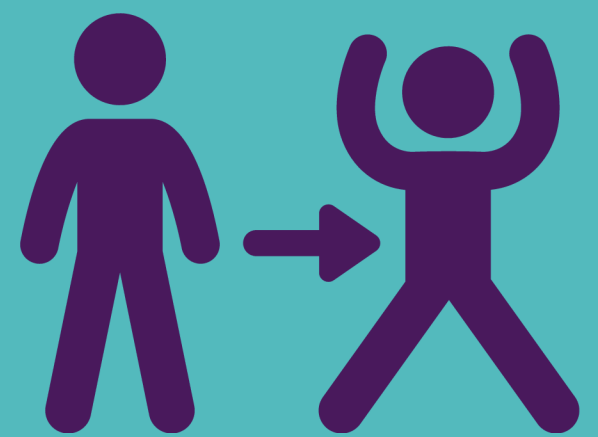
Support tip: Empower choice. Honour boundaries around touch and texture preferences.



VESTIBULAR (BALANCE AND MOVEMENT):

Movement can feel regulating, like spinning, jumping, or rocking. Others might find too much movement unsettling and prefer steadiness.

Support tip: Provide safe spaces for movement or calm. Respect each person's rhythm.



SIGHT (VISUAL INPUT):

Some of us delight in bright colours and patterns, while others may feel drained or overstimulated by visual clutter.

Support tip: Honour visual comfort. Create calming spaces with adjustable lighting or visual breaks.



PROPRIOCEPTION (BODY AWARENESS):

Helps us feel where our body parts are without needing to look. It's our inner body map! Acknowledging this can feel grounding and organizing. For others, too much input might feel tiring or uncomfortable.

Support tip: Offering choices for proprioceptive input can bring a wonderful sense of connection and calm. Let's tune in with curiosity.



SOUND (AUDITORY INPUT):

Sounds can feel joyful and energizing – or, at times, overwhelming and painful.

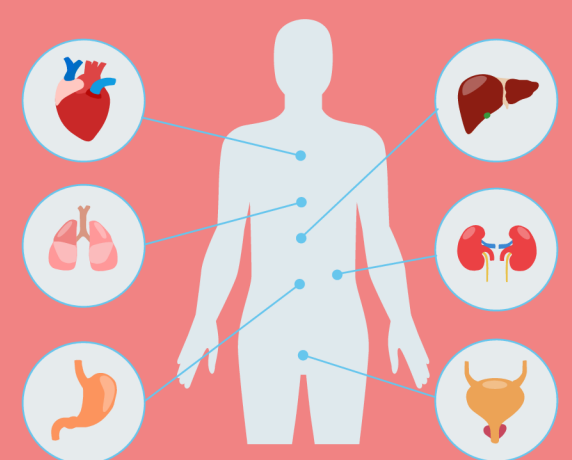
Support tip: Use softer tones, reduce background noise, and offer noise – cancelling tools like headphones when needed.



INTERNAL SIGNALS (INTEROCEPTION):

Our internal body cues (like hunger, thirst, or needing the bathroom) may feel muted or overwhelmingly intense.

Support tip: Offer gentle check-ins and create supportive routines without pressure or urgency.



SMELL (OLFACTORY INPUT):

Scents might be grounding and pleasant, or they may feel intrusive and overpowering.

Support tip: Stay mindful of fragrances in shared spaces. Support scent-free environments when helpful.



TASTE AND ORAL INPUT:

There can be comfort in crunchy, chewy, or bold flavours, while others may feel safer with bland, familiar foods.

Support tip: Respect food preferences and avoid pressuring sensory exploration at mealtimes.



Our bodies are always communicating with us, and our sensory needs offer valuable insight into what helps us feel safe, regulated, and engaged. There is no "wrong" way to sense and experience the world. With understanding and curiosity, we can create environments that nurture regulation and connection.