

Sensory Modulation

Sensory modulation has been described as the graded and adaptive regulation of sensory input. It is done by each of us, every day as both conscious and unconscious actions and behaviours as we see, touch, smell, hear and taste what is on offer in our environment.

Within the context of mental illness, where a person's senses can be hypo or hyper active, the ability of the person to self-regulate their behaviour can be significantly affected. The aim of sensory modulation within the mental health setting is to assist the person to self-regulate by providing an opportunity to participate in activities and behaviours that engage the senses.

There are many places that do not have the physical space to support a dedicated room for sensory modulation and sensory 'corners' or 'carts' are viable options in these instances.

Sensory modulation technique examples:

- > Self-soothing
- > Standardised assessment tools
- > Sensory modulation checklists and self-rating tools
- > Grounding activities
- > Orienting / alerting activities
- > Relaxation / calming activities
- > Self-nurturing activities
- > Self-soothing activities
- > Distracting activities
- > Mindfulness activities
- > Strategies for identifying and coping with triggers
- > Activities promoting increased connectedness
- > Environmental modifications

Sensory modulation therapeutic activity examples:

- > Yoga / exercise groups
- > Isometric exercises
- > Taking a hot shower / bath
- > Art therapy / crafts
- > Creation of a personalised sensory kit
- > Journaling

It is recommended that activities need to be adapted to the individual taking in to consideration their individual preferences, age and cognitive function. The use of Personal Prevention Plans can assist in determining what sensory input the person may find useful to maintain a calm state and or reduce their agitation if they do become increasingly distressed.

Further information:

<http://www.ot-innovations.com/>

www.ot_innovations.com

<http://livingwithablackdog.wordpress.com/tag/sensory-modulation/>

For more information

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