



## **A Therapy for Autism Delacato Method of Neurological Rehabilitation using Sensory Therapy**

Dr Carl Delacato Ed.D is world renowned for his work originally with Doman on brain injured children in the 1950's and subsequently on children with autism, learning delay and mobility impairment, during his time at The Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential in Philadelphia, as founder director from 1963-1973. In 1973 Carl left the Institutes to concentrate on his work on children with autism.

His book published in 1974 "The Ultimate Stranger the Autistic Child" was the culmination of his investigations and research, giving rise to his Neurological and Sensory Therapy for addressing the problems of children with autism.

He was way ahead in the field of autism, and has parents visiting the therapy clinics in Europe and the USA, now overseen by David Delacato and the organization's neurologist, Antonio Parisi, in order to learn how to help their children function normally.

### **The Reason for Therapy**

Delacato's work on Autism is based on the following premiss:

- 1) Children with Autism are not psychotic. They are brain injured.
- 2) Brain injury causes perceptual dysfunction, that is, it causes some problem with one or more of the channels from the world to the brain – seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling.

- 3) These channels are made abnormal by the brain injury in one of the following ways:

**HYPER:** The channel is too open and, as a result, too much stimulation gets in for the brain to handle comfortably.

**HYPO:** The channel is not open enough and, as a result too little stimulation gets in and the brain is deprived.

**WHITE NOISE:** The channel creates its own stimulus because of its faulty operation and, as a result the message from the outside world is garbled or in extreme cases, is overcome by the noise in the system.

- 4) The repetitive strange behaviours of the autistic child, which are called autisms, are the symptoms of brain injury.

- 5) These repetitive behaviours should not be called autisms because they are sensoryisms. These repetitive sensoryisms are the child's attempts to normalize the affected channels, the child is attempting to treat him or herself.

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6) It is this attempt to treat him or herself and to normalize the sensory channel that steals the child's attention away from reality. It also keeps him from surviving in the real world.

7) The behaviour is the child's message. All we have to do is observe it and it tells us which channels are affected.

8) By closely observing the child's behaviour we can learn which sensory channel is hyper, hypo, or white noise.

### **The Therapy for Autism**

1) When we have learned which channels are affected, with therapy, we can help the child to normalize the channels by giving him the proper experience and stimulation through that channel.

2) As the channel is normalized, the strange repetitive behaviour ceases.

3) When the strange repetitive behaviour ceases, the child's attention is shifted and he becomes able to learn to deal with the real world and to learn to interact with things and people about him.

4) At that point we treat him as we would any other mildly to moderately brain injured child and he can profit from his therapy.

Delacato Therapy programmes, lasting approximately 2-3 hours daily, are devised for parents to carry out at home, and work on the senses in order to normalize them. This includes massage for tactility, auditory and visual work, tasks for taste & smell, mobility and development, as well as education, communication and speech. All tasks are fitted into 1-5 minute slots to stop the child becoming bored and are repeated as necessary. Programmes for mobility children often take longer.

Due to their vast experience of autism and brain injury, the Delacato Team can look at your child and immediately make an evaluation. They will then tailor a therapy programme to suit your child's needs and after four months will re-evaluate this and alter it accordingly.

The clinic is held in Calmsden near Cirencester in Gloucester in February, May and September.

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