

*** WINTER NEWSLETTER ***

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CLINICAL COLUMN

Q WHEN DO YOU TOUCH SOMEONE? AND HOW?

A. Without stimulation, we vegetate. For stimulation, The Maloriented person does not turn to intimate relationships. Afraid of close encounters, the Maloriented old-old person will not change a life-time defense. Old hurts, suffered long ago, when the person was vulnerable, are burned in the body-mind. Maloriented keep solidly entrenched in their 24" kinesphere - that invisible bubble that protects us from exposure. In lieu of people, the Maloriented turn to tasks for stimulation. A genuine smile, a respectful voice-tone, a hand-shake from a safe distance is plenty of touching for the Maloriented.

In Time-Confusion and Repetitive-Motion, the 24" Kinesphere is gone. Increasing damage to nerve cells happens. Sensory cells no longer inform the brain of the body's condition. Time Confused lose self-awareness and awareness of others. They need touch for stimulation. For the Time-Confused, touch staves off withdrawal inward to Repetitive-Motion. For those in Repetitive Motion, non-verbal stimulation via touch, staves off Vegetation. Vegetation happens when stimulation goes and identity is lost.

The Time-Confused, to substitute for loss of outside stimulation, turn inward, drawing on past memories. ..."Previous stimulation of a group of nerve cells which has led to a state of satisfaction, increase its sensitivity to further stimulation of a like kind." (Zuckerman, 1950).

Through touching, the Validation® worker becomes a trusted, significant other. Where you touch and how much pressure you apply trigger memories of early secure and loving relationships. Imprinted indelibly, touch taps the well-remembered brain circuits.

Touching fingers, hands, wrist or forearm seldom elicits response. Poor circulation can damage sensory acuity in the extremities.

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Touching the following areas in the face, shoulder, and upper arm can often achieve these VALIDATION® goals: (1) increased attention span; (focus on the Validation worker, reduction of anxiety - pacing, moaning, repetitive motions) - increased speech, increased non-verbal interactions - singing, dancing, moving with the worker with increased mobility and muscle integration; (2) feelings of safety lessen the need to turn to the past, and the disoriented old-old person often spans many years with one touch:

- A. A circular motion with cupped hand, medium pressure on the shoulder taps memories of a trusted friend.
- B. Fingertips gently brushing the cheek, light pressure, tap memories of the mother.
(Note: Charlotte Buhler writes of the infant-mother encounter when the infant's cheek is stimulated.)
- C. Fingers on the back of the head, above the soft-spot, in a circular motion with medium pressure tap father-memories.
- D. Fingertips, cupped, on the back of the neck, medium pressure, tap memories of children.

- E. The little finger side of the hand, gentle pressure on the jaw line above the nape of the neck, tap memories of a spouse.

There is no formula for working with humans. Each person is unique with unique personal memories. Apply different pressures for different people, touching different areas of the face, neck and shoulders to evoke interactions. Touching is always used with direct eye contact, a gentle, soft, low voice-tone, as the Validation worker moves to the rhythms of the disoriented old-old person in Time-Confusion and Repetitive-Motion.
