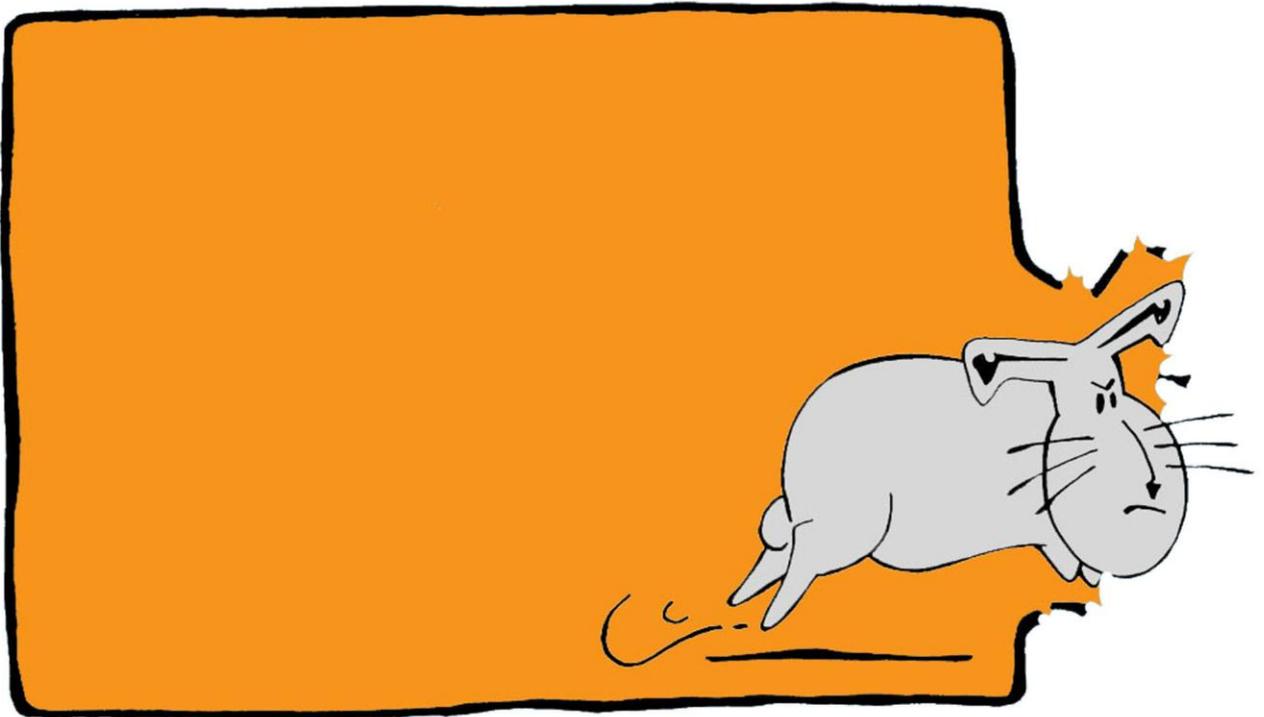
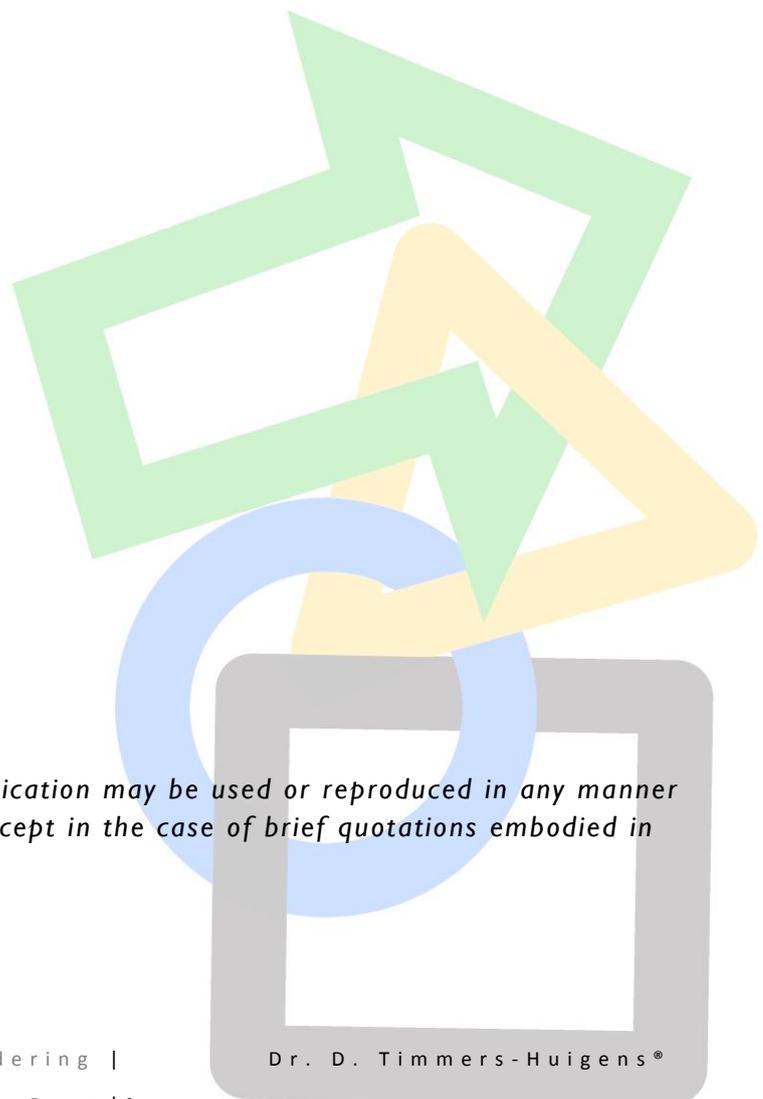


the theory of
experience
based
ordering ^{SUMMARY}
AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY



A DUTCH APPROACH TO INTERPRET BEHAVIOUR AND TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE
FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AND THEIR CARETAKERS



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EXPERIENCE JOY IN YOUR HUMANITY

Every person has potential. And it is a human right (Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Rights of the Child) that these possibilities are recognized and acted on. This is a challenge for parents, teachers and counselors which is all too easily overlooked. The interpretation of being known and recognized in the human capabilities is often left to the intuitive basis of the teaching, educating, supporting, guiding interaction. Those who have no professional understanding of the interactive 'effect' of human potential, will all too easily lapse into the old approach, meaning that limitations and impossibilities are diagnosed and mapped assuming that all one has not diagnosed as a disability works in a "normal" fashion. It is typical for children and adults with intellectual disabilities that many human possibilities are affected in a collateral way. Because of the limited understanding of reality, it takes a very specific approach to attest and attain the maximum potential of a person. When those difficulties and specifics are not acknowledged that delivers children and adults with intellectual disabilities existential distress. If one is essentially not understood by other people (including those significant others who loves you), one experiences intense loneliness, even if that feeling cannot be put into words. That misunderstanding leads to co-regulation of a inferior quality and inferior quality of life. Acknowledging experience-based ordering, especially if the relationship has a professional basis, is a crucial step in preventing this misunderstanding. And, as someone remarked during training, it is fun, because you get to 'play' with your own perspective as well!

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

When speaking of the theory of experience-based ordering it is important to emphasize the following key assumptions:

- Everything that is born out of human beings is human, and therefore has human potential, this also includes intellectual handicapped people. They are not people with "other" abilities than "normal" people, just people. They are not 'people with abilities' as is sometimes suggested, because every human being has potential. They are people.
- The most pervasive characteristic of man is that being human means being plural. Each person is unique, disabled or not. To do justice to human nature means: to do justice plurality.
- Remarks on Experience-based ordering that apply to people with intellectual disabilities, apply in full to each person alive. That's why experience-based ordering is recognizable, it also affects you and your own performance.
- Experience-based ordering is a theory that is not based on level thinking, and irreversible stages of development, but of development and support as a co-regulative process.

EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING: A SCIENTIFIC APPROACH

PHENOMENOLOGY, CHANGING THE PARADIGM

Science can be divided in several schools, perspectives and paradigms. This often determines the looking glass or the searchlight with which one looks at reality. It affects the way methods and approaches are shaped and assessed, but also what is concurred with.

Empirical thinking is the current leading paradigm in the care of people with disabilities. This means that opinions, theories and practices must be substantiated by measurable and observable goals and descriptions. That is a good thing because it standardizes the perception of reality. Therefore, different people are able to share understanding concerning reality, and you can agree on what you are doing and why you are doing it. But everyday reality of caring for and working with people in general is difficult to describe fully in measurable terms.

The scientific view of phenomenology (the study of phenomena) wants to take this into account explicitly. The theory of experience-based ordering is a phenomenological grounded theory. The phenomenology states that reality is more than the sum of its parts. Concerning the parts thorough empirical knowledge is required. Thereby obtaining factual knowledge and shared understanding about the actual reality. This way knowledge is transferable, and therefore reality is made understandable and predictable as long as the facts remain the same. Phenomenology looks at the relationship between empirical data and the context in which they appear. Then, the hermeneutics provide a contextual explanation of what appears to us. This is a narrative explanation, which describes more than the sum of its parts and is expressed in a way that also delivers shared understanding. Thus it allows predictability whilst taking into account a margin of volatility. To handle reality from the contextual approach, the phenomenological hermeneutical knowledge and statements are translated into a heuristic model in which the shared understanding can result in professional behavior.

A large part of understanding experience-based ordering is perceiving from a phenomenological (contextual) point of view, giving a hermeneutic (contextual narrative) explanation and then offering a heuristic framework used to proceed to act in a professional way. Thus, the experience-based ordering as an approach complements empirical knowledge to do more justice to reality. It is designed to describe and explain the way someone faces reality. This gives an insight in the point of view from the client in addition to data from empirical methods and tests that provide information about the physical or cognitive capabilities and limitations. Experience-based ordering provides tools to understand the context and the grounds of behavior as a phenomenon. Empirical data and Experience-based ordering are complementary in the approach and support of people and help professionals to better understand and confront reality. Not only with regard to the client, but also regarding peers and colleagues.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Experience-based ordering is discovered and described by the Dutch psychologist and theologian Dr. Timmers-Huigens. She realised in the late sixties, while working in an institute for intellectually disabled people, that there appeared to be a large incoherence in the way the patients experienced reality and the way the personal was treating them. She became convinced that there had to be a more fitting approach, which would bring joy to the lives of both clients and caretakers. Since she did not find the answers in the existing theories and treatments, she started describing what she thought were the underlying mental schemes that led to certain behaviour in both clients and personnel. Based on these concepts she started advising colleagues and staff on how to improve the joy and wellbeing for both clients and themselves. It worked a miracle.

In 1997 Dorothea Timmers-Huigens graduated as Ph. D. by substantiating the theory of experience-based ordering as an explanation for intergenerational transfer of faith and religion. The substantiation is also valid for every form of interhuman contact which is based on a power imbalance, such as the relationship between parents and children, the care for the intellectually disabled or non-congenital brain damage and is a well-used approach for anticipating and solving problem behavior. Foundations for the Theory of experience-based ordering are found in:

1. *Chaos theory*

Chaos theory teaches us that child development does not occur in spurts (as is the widespread paradigm), but that every aspect of human existence develops at their own pace. And rapid development in one area may temporarily cause so-called catastrophe-flaws on other already well-controlled areas. This applies to infants but also to adults.

2. *Theory of Mind*

Theory of mind teaches that man is equipped with basic psychological concepts that allow common sense. There are several concepts but at least two are relevant for the theory of experience-based ordering. In any event, every human being uses the two antagonistic notions from birth:

- That of the **Beliefs** or expectations about reality. This notion brings stability to the reality. (This remains normal, as previously observed).
- The other teaches that **Desires** empower the notion that reality is changeable, can be modified by oneself or with the other peoples help.

3. *Systems theory*

The systems theory oriented epigenetic psychology and infant science (Nossent / Fogel) teaches that man is not self-regulating (adaptive to the environment and demands of reality) system, but that every person has a co-regulatory system (innovating, initiating, responding) in relationship to the other. Development depends on the quality of that relationship.

THE FOUR SENSES OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

Experience-based ordering teaches that every human, through innate qualities of the psyche, is capable of transferring experience (stimuli processed into information) to order in four ways (senses). These senses operate simultaneously and as long as there is conscious life. This means that all four senses are operational from before birth till death. None of the senses can be de-activated or not developed. They are always there.

- **The Physical sense of experience-based ordering** provides information on the **safety** of physical existence. This includes the basic question: Is my body safe?
- **The Associative sense of experience-based ordering** provides information on the **reliability** of the instantaneous and practical reality. This includes the basic question: Is the current reality **reliable**?
- **The Structuring sense of experience-based ordering** provides information on the **consistency** of events and episodes. This includes the basic question: Do I know the **coherence** of the event?
- **The Constituting sense of experience-based ordering** provides information on the **identity** of the self and the degree to which they themselves may be. This includes the basic question: Can I be myself?

As long as information about the current reality can be dealt with by the four senses in a sufficient way, one is able to function to the maximum of one's potential. There is no conscious awareness of the pre-cognitive functions of experience-based ordering. It does effect the conscious actions though. With increasing experience one also learns to organize and manage reality. But if the information from one of the parts of experience-based ordering experience is unsatisfactory, lacking basic safety or affecting the balance of experience-based ordering the part that is affected takes a dominant role and limits the potential of the person to resolving this problem. This limits the possibilities of quality of life. One cannot experience quality of life and live up to one's potential when all is needed to restore the balance of the current experience of reality. This can happen and alter or be resolved in a split second. And often without significant others being aware. Creating this awareness is the essence of the theory of experience-based ordering.

THE THEORY ON EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

Whilst applying the insights from her theory, Dr. Timmers-Huigens discovered that her advices were extremely useful for both clients, caretakers, parents and so forth. In every situation where people interact, the principles and schemes that are described in the Theory of Experience-based Ordering® apply. Therefore she wrote them down in a methodology for dealing with intellectual disabled, and "the joy of being human" was published in 1980. Since then Dorothea Timmers-Huigens spent the next 30 years further developing and describing the theory and teaching Experience-based ordering to organisations for intellectual disabled, institutes for geriatric care, and professionals dealing with infants and children in the Netherlands and Belgium.

The Theory on Experience-based ordering is not a theory about the objective reality as such, but the subjective reality as one experiences on a daily basis. The four senses are present in every human being, no matter how limited the capacities. Everything that has the possibility to experience, requires a way of ordering these experiences and value them for everyday life.

The four senses are based on several psychological theories, creating a searchlight on reality that is very useful in dealing with people who have lesser communication skills, i.e. intellectual disabled, young children, elderly or people with latter damage to the brain.

THE REALITY OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

People, whether they are newborn babies or mature people, are living in the midst of a reality where everything is constantly changing. Miscellaneous impressions are constantly implied on people, and through our senses and our nervous system, all these stimuli is translated into reality so that we can prevent perishing in the chaos. In one way or another, we set out to create order. Much of what we receive through our senses, we disregard. We ignore all kinds of sounds, or what we smell, feel or see. We only proceed with the most important impressions. Only then we can create a little order in the chaos of the outside world. Also from within, in ourselves, all kinds of things happen, we feel, experience, and thereby wish for something or we feel good in reality as it is. Other people around us are important to us to show what all that means, but they are not the only ones who teach us how to put order in all the information about reality. In the past, people thought that order baby's only learned how to create order because the adults around taught them. Now we know that people are equipped with organizing forces from before birth to process stimuli into information that creates order. You recognize for example at birth of your mother's voice. The ordering forces work spontaneous, they belong to people.

They organize the reality that otherwise would come to us in a big mess. Such forces give us as human beings the feeling of control over reality around us.

Michael is with his parents in a forest in France, amidst the high trees. Why is Michael not afraid of the forest? He has never been there, what if all the trees fall over and crush him? Because he is confident that the trees themselves will behave like the trees in the woods near his home. Because he sees that his parents are not afraid and he is right to trust the trees.

The two main organizing forces are these:

The conviction that reality is stable. A tree remains a tree, your mother still your mother, and a cup will always behave as a cup.

A newborn baby who is dressed once will cooperate when it's dressed for the second time by flexing the muscles a little, that is how fast that conviction works. Thanks to this conviction as a child you learn a lot in the first two years. Never in your life you learn more about reality than in those two years.

Myrtle is only two years but she finds it quite normal that she can drink from a red, or a yellow cup. She also knows that she can drink from a cup that has an handle, but it looks very different from the cups she used before. Myrtle used to want only her own drinking cup, now she likes to try all kinds of cups. Myrtle climbs on every seat that she sees, no matter what shape it is. Everything is: to sit on, or for drinking. Nobody taught Myrtle this, she discovered it because they assumes that reality will continue to behave as she first experienced. Therefore she also dares to trust that something very similar to that first experience will behave equally.

One feels that he or she also can change reality. Sometimes you can do it alone (I want to put that chair over there, not here), sometimes you need another (would you close my zipper?). You can change the reality as a human being so that your aspirations, that your needs are met. Sometimes you can do it alone, sometimes you need a fellow human being. But you can change the reality within certain limits.

I'm hungry, I'll make myself a sandwich! I'm in pain, I need a doctor to help me

CO-REGULATION

Everybody is always fellow human being. For everyone, there are other people that are very important. To children these are the parents, the babysitter, the coach and others, your brothers and sisters and all those who belong in your everyday life.

We, as humans form a relationship with other people. We adjust to one another, we react, we encourage the other from a strong interaction. This interaction is not, as is sometimes described, a continuous chain of action (adults) and response (child), but it is a continuous exchange of information. Body language is the most important source of information. This exchange process is spontaneous and always gives information to and forth. Information may be a confirmation to your beliefs about reality (watch out, that's barbed wire, yet I'm smiling: you're right to withdraw your hand), you can learn something about the way your wishes can be fulfilled in this process (I like you, here's something to drink). This process is called co-regulation. Co-regulation happens wherever people are, but its quality can vary. Sometimes it is of a high quality (you support each other in managing control of reality) and sometimes it is of poor quality (the information does not fit your situation or mood). There is always co-regulation, any contact between people brings forth co-regulation.

Kevin is outside fighting with Kars. Kars kicked Kevin, but the teacher did not see it. She does however see that Kevin is very angry at Kars and punches him. She walks to Kevin and says, "You naughty boy, punch is not allowed. That hurts, you come with me, you cannot play anymore. " Kevin is very sad, the teacher does not understand. He is sulking beside the teacher. The co-regulation is of poor quality, not just by Kevin who is angry, but also by the teacher, because she actually had no regard for the interests of Kevin.

EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

The big question is, when is everything allowed to remain as it is, and when should it change?

People feel good in situations where a positive reply to four questions they always intellectual ask themselves is possible.

The questions are:

- Is my physical body safe from threats or inconvenience?
- Is reality as I experience sustainable, can I rely on things to stay the same?
- Do I understand the coherence in a complex situation, description or event
- Am I allowed to be myself? Do I make a difference?

Through these questions, you organize reality into that information about what you are experiencing. The information is stored in the memory and can be used to quickly organize future situations. Therefore, these are the questions of experience-based ordering. Each question belongs to a certain sense of ordering:

- The question: Is my body **safe**? deals with the *physical sense of experience-based ordering*
- The question: Is the current reality **reliable**? deals with the *associative sense of experience-based ordering*
- The question: Do I know the **coherence** of the event? deals with the *structuring sense of experience-based ordering*
- The question: can I **be myself**? deals with the *constituting sense of experience-based ordering*

One asks these questions without knowing. For as long as you live you ask yourself those questions. You ask them yourself, without noticing. And you answer them without knowing it. As long as all questions are answered with "YES" you feel fine, nothing needs to change. If you want to change something, you would do it consciously and willingly.

Daisy is sitting outside enjoying the sun. Total relaxation. She's having a Drink, listening to music on her headphones. There is no reason to change her situation. Yet suddenly she thinks: I'm going for a walk. She stands up and walks down the path, still very at ease. She changes consciously and willingly.

But there could be something someone else does, changing the situation.

Daisy soaks up the sun, she feels totally at ease, as far as she's concerned nothing needs to change. But her mother comes out and says, "Do you want an ice cream Daisy?". Yes, I would like some." Then come over here, we are sitting in the front yard and we've got ice cream ". Daisy joins her mother. She feels fine.

There may be other reasons why Daisy would change, in fact, there are reasons why Daisy must change!

-Her body is no longer safe.

Daisy soaks up the sun, everything is fine, until she feels she must go to the bathroom. She gets up and goes to the toilet. She may ignore the urge to go to the toilet for a while, but not too long, she has to change.

- The current reality is unreliable.

Daisy soaks up the sun, everything is fine. But suddenly it starts raining. The current reality is no longer suitable for this activity. Daisy cannot rely on it to stay the same (sunny and warm) and she must go inside.

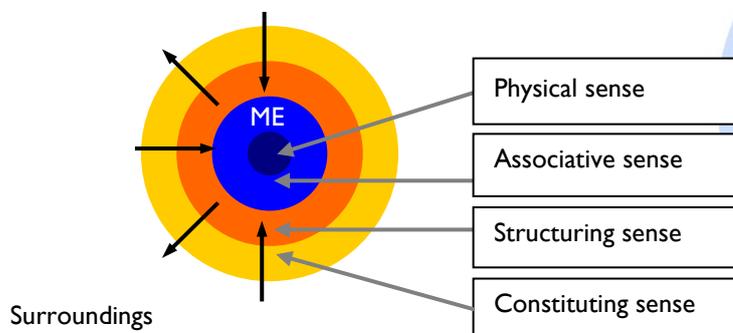
- The coherence of the event is not clear.

Daisy is sitting outside. She just sits there, waiting for her parents come to take her to town. But they do not show up. Where are they? Daisy is getting restless. I think I will give them a call....

- Margaret feels that she cannot be who she is.

Daisy is sitting outside in the sun, with her headphones. She feels totally at ease. But she knows her mother detests her sitting in the sun doing nothing. Soon she will come and say that Daisy is idling. She will cause a scene for sure. Why won't her mother understand that you need a little break from homework now and then and just want to sit outside? She always stresses you have to finish homework first. –Don't you have something else to do? - She will never understand, Daisy thinks to herself. She wants to relax, but she feels restless. – I'd better go back inside and finish my homework, she thinks, and yet she feels angry with herself.

THE SEARCHLIGHT OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING



THE DOMINANT SENSE OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

When one of the questions is answered “NO” the situation can become so worrisome that, without realizing, you put everything back to get that one question answered “YES”. For example if you are in pain and those around you do not notice, that makes the others unreliable. You want the other to acknowledge your pain and will do everything to make them notice. Maybe it's not convenient that you want to be noticed. The others say: Hush, don't talk now! But you still want your pain to be acknowledged, so you don't care about the fact that the current event requires silence. And if nobody responds to your pain, it feels like you can't be who you are, which is a person in pain!

Nico fell hard in the gym, his head hurts. But the gymnastics teacher does not notice. He glanced at Nico when he fell, but since Nicole got up immediately, he didn't inquire. They continue the game of dodge ball. Nico is standing still in the middle of the playing field. Nobody seems to notice. "Move over dude" say the other kids. Nico walks softly and then stand aside crying. Now the teacher notices and he walks up to Nico.....

An example of high quality co-regulation: Nico, what's the matter son? Did you hurt yourself so badly just there? I saw you fell, can you tell me where the pain is....

An example of low quality co-regulation: Nico, come on, do not be childish, get a grip and play along, let's go, what don't kill you makes you more strong....

Each sense of the experience-based ordering, every question with which you experience and organize reality, can become dominant. That does not (and that's a misconception) that there is only sense of the experience-based ordering that is active at that moment. On the contrary. experience-based ordering is an entirety. When one sense of experience-based ordering becomes dominant all forces from the other senses are employed, mobilized to support the dominant part. Pain? The physical sense is dominant? The associative sense searches for a familiar, and thus reliable, way to ease the pain, using equipment from a trusted environment (the first-aid-kit?) Or with the help from a friend? The pain is analyzed using the structuring sense to figure out where, how and what can I do about it, what is the connection? And then the uniqueness of the constituting sense is used to support the dominant sense. In such a situation it is very important that you understand one another and answer or respond in a way that matches the dominant sense of the experience-based ordering. That is when you know whether the other understands you and is able to help. Therefore you feel less alone, but connected to the other.

SUBCONSCIOUS AND CONSCIOUS USE OF THE SENSES OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

Experience-based ordering is a psychic power that works spontaneously. One is not cognitively aware of this. It is the flexible learning brain that is being used. The way the senses work cannot be analyzed as a separate activity of the brain. It is a theoretical model (stepping stone) to understand complex processes that can be interactively affiliated. The psychic forces described and referred to in the theory are used from birth (and before that). We humans have an agile mind. Use of the forces occurs spontaneously. Gradually there is more awareness of the information that is processed using the psychic powers the theory of experience-based ordering describes. As one develops there is an increasing awareness using the method of experience-based ordering, although we have no spontaneous words to describe it. They are not learned actions that make us use the experience-based ordering. A newborn baby is using all senses of experience-based ordering without realizing it, but it makes reality manageable. In many subtle ways the child shows the use of experience-based ordering to understand the world, without knowing the terminology that is used in theory. Because the terminology is intended only for professional insights into the process. Experience-based ordering is not used deliberately, but plays a major role in the way a person experiences and interprets the world. Thus experience-based ordering nurtures cognitive and emotional functioning.

Baby Luna smells, feels, and tastes her mother. The physical proximity is very familiar, thereby her own body also is secure, but if the body becomes unsafe because Luna is hungry, the physical sense is dominant. She now employs the other senses to regain the safety of her body. Luna is looking for that special place with the mother that represents the reliability of the current reality in the distress of hunger, the mother's breast. When Luna has had a single drink from that breast she knows it so well that her anticipating lips form exactly in the shape of the nipple. That is how the associative sense works in the service of the physical sense of experience-based ordering. But Luna also knows the whole ritual of being taken from the cradle, cuddled on her mother's lap just before the drinking begins. It set itself accordingly. If a stranger grabs her from the cradle and the structuring sense notices that the little ritual before the drinking is disrupted, it will render Luna restless. Maybe her body is now less safe and gives of body-related signals: Luna cries. If all goes well, Luna also needs eye contact, to be known and recognized in its own way of just drinking a little and then stopping, smiling and then continue. This subtle interplay between man and fellow man remains even after the babyhood extremely crucial.

RESPONDING TO THE DOMINANT SENSE OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

As one of the senses of the experience-based ordering becomes dominant, the psychic powers of all other senses are used to support that one dominant sense of the experience-based ordering. Often you don't realize, sometimes you make conscious use of forces within the experience-based ordering to get everything back in order. Experience-based ordering largely determines how one experiences reality.

For children (and people) with an intellectual disability that may mean that certain senses of the experience-based ordering get dominant very often, very quickly, and sometimes lengthy. It seems like this child, or this client uses only that particular sense of the experience-based ordering. People say that Alex "is stuck" in the associative sense of experience-based ordering. This is not the case, it is not possible. All parts of the organization experience are employed, but the dominance occurs so often that behavior to restore the reliability is by far seen the most. Such behavior can be recognized as employment of the other senses.

When one part becomes dominant, the other parts of the experience-based ordering are employed in the service of that one dominant part of the experience to regain control over reality.

Florence is sent to the kitchen to fetch a spoon. The coach has forgotten to tell him the drawers of the kitchen are organized differently than before. Florence opens the cutlery drawer, and there are now tea towels. As such this is a problem in the structuring sense of the experience-based ordering. The coherence of the drawers is changed. When Florence discovers this, it does not necessarily mean that Florence will react within her structuring of the ordering experience to solve the problem. Neither will it necessarily mean that this structuring sense in Florence is now dominant. The coach, who must help Florence because she did not immediately succeed to get the spoon, cannot therefore assume that aid within the coherence of the event will be effective.

As experience-based ordering works also for the coach and the coach does not have a problem adjusting to the new coherence, the coach will immediately resolve this little problem from its specific context and thus rely on the structuring of experience-based ordering. That's a first impulse. But following that impulse leads to co-regulation of low quality. And that can lead to conflicts or problems.

As a coach you tend to follow your own inner logic because the experience-based ordering of the coach is also active and that analysis is also a part of your own existence.

Florence sees something is wrong. There are several possibilities:

1: The associative sense of Florence is dominant. She experiences the kitchen as unreliable since it no longer matches what she expected. She cannot restore the consistency following the spontaneous discovery. The coach will now have to restore the reliability.

2. The structuring sense of experience-based ordering is dominant. Florence subconsciously put the senses of the experience-based ordering to work to find the solution. She searches all the drawers using associative knowledge. She opens and closes all the drawers from its sensory-motor knowledge (the physical sense of experience-based ordering) and asks for help (the constituting sense of experience-based ordering).

Thus you are considering, without using words: o this is an issue with the structuring sense, oh wrong associations here, oh here the body is in peril, oh here I have to boost the confidence. But everyday business shows that a client (child \ resident) can respond from various dominant senses to the same problem.

Although the coach thinks it is the consistency that is the problem, and shouts to Florence to look into another drawer, Florence detects something is wrong using another sense. Florence is confused, she feels insecure, and her associative sense is dominant. The reliability of current reality is flawed. Florence returns to the coach and tells the spoon is not there. The coach must address a different sense of experience-based ordering than became spontaneously dominant within him.

- The coach comes along and shows her the changes made to the drawers and helps her to restore associative order.
- The coach can explain in which tray she is to look for the spoon.
- The coach can also join Florence in the kitchen, but let her experiment and figure out which is the spoon drawer.

A situation that is easy to analyze can be faced by different clients, residents or children from a very different dominant sense of experience-based ordering. Moreover, it is impossible to say that a particular client or a particular child will always respond from a certain dominant sense.

Florence is angry because it does not add up, she screams that the spoon is not there and by the time the coach is nearby, tears of anger are running down his cheeks. Although the problem occurs within the structuring sense, she displays a physical response. She obviously feels no longer physically safe in this situation and shows that this way.

- The coach who understands the anger comes forth from confusion, is not angry because Florence is mad, but put stops her anger by taking hold looking at her and say, "Stop right there Florence, I'll help." And then he takes Florence along and assists her to find the right drawer by pointing it out or by opening the tray with her.
- Only then can the structuring sense be addressed by explaining how the kitchen has changed.

Limitation of certain mental capacities makes dominance more likely in certain situations. When people (children) with intellectual disabilities are well known, the predictability can be mapped. The ability to recognize a dominant part of the experience-based ordering can increase the quality of co-regulation greatly.

Florence blames herself for not finding the spoon; she is sad and tells the coach that Florence cannot find it. So she solely blames herself for the failure of her mission. Her constituting sense of the experience-based ordering is dominant, her confidence is disrupted. Florence is employing the physical sense of experience-based ordering in order to clarify this, he starts crying "Florence cannot" she cries.

- The coach comforts Florence and reassures her. "You can do it, but the spoon is somewhere else." He restores her self-esteem and asks her now to use her constituting sense of the experience-based ordering to find the spoon. "Where can we look together?"

Experience-based ordering offers clues in the communicative sphere. But in the IEP and in working with materials experience-based ordering can be taken into account.

In the first place:

When a person with an intellectual disability performs worse than usual, or not clearly thrives, the following questions can be asked:

- IS THE BODY SAFE?

- IS THE RELIABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT SUFFICIENT?

- IS THE COHERENCE OF THE EVENT CLEAR?

- IS THE INDIVIDUALITY PROPERLY MET?

In all situations where the answer to these questions (one or more) is NO, the following questions need to be considered:

- Is there a shortage or jammer effect causing the question to be answered NO?

- Is there an inner cause for the dominance of one sense of the experience-based ordering?

- Where is the source of the problem: with the client, the pupil, the child, the resident, or the approach of the group leader. Or are there other residents, peers, that trigger the dominance of one sense of the experience-based ordering.

EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING APPLIED TO THE CARE FOR THE INTELLECTUAL DISABLED

The Theory of Experience-based ordering is an explanatory model for how people use the world around them and what their response is. This applies to all people. 85% of communication consists of non-verbal communication, including cultural and social assumptions given a major role. In professional communication, most attention is paid to the 15% verbal communication because that part much easier to interpret and explain. For the majority of people this is so evident, that they are barely aware of this.

For people with intellectual disabilities, this is not so evident. They are more dependent on nonverbal communication and behavior. Experience-based ordering enables identification, explanation and anticipation of such communication. That makes it a very valuable basis for all interpersonal acting within a team or institution. The theory is currently being used by various institutions as a unifying theory for interpersonal action in a dignified and professional way.

THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEMANDS CAN BE MAPPED

When all senses are in harmony (all questions are answered with YES), the client can actively use its experience-based ordering. In this situation can be easily supported by the coach, answering questions and giving information and instruction.

When client shows restless behavior, particular attention should be given to empowering the self-esteem, the singularity or the constructive sense.

Is there a problem in the response to guidance, then support should be given especially in clarifying the consistency. The structuring sense of experience-based ordering is emphasized (becomes dominant).

If there is dysfunctional, problematic behavior throughout, particular attention should be on the reliability (clarity) of current reality. The associative sense becomes dominant, assistance is required in that area.

Is there a serious disruption there usually also is body-related acting out. The safety of existence is at stake (whether real or in the perception of man with intellectual disability and the physical sense of experience-based ordering is dominant. Assistance should be given aiding this physical sense, before anything else is possible.

If a certain sense of experience-based ordering gives dominant signals, guidance or support should be applied to that dominant sense. The person can get blocked in using his or her experience-based ordering, and someone else must come to his or her aid.

In a situation of dominance all forces if the other senses are employed in order to reduce the negative feelings that the dominant sense of experience-based ordering evokes. The social worker, counselor, teacher or parent can then see where the misery comes from by recognizing and acknowledging the dominant sense. This way problem behavior and the need for more support (or more coaches) can be prevented.

Communication (including communicative action, which is any form of supporting, coaching, etc.) of a high co-regulatory quality is consistent with the dominant sense of experience-based ordering. When co-regulation is of a high quality all senses are in harmony, all senses are employed and both coach and client are able to use their abilities and enjoy their human capacities.

Action bij coach	Taking control	Assistance	Stimulation	guidance	Observation, support and correction
Experience-based ordering		clear steps	explaining tasks		
Physical sense	especially this				When all
Associative sense		especially this			senses
Structuring sense			especially this		are operating
Constituting sense				especially this	in harmony
Harmony in experience-based ordering					especially this

ADVANTAGES OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

- Employing Experience-based ordering justifies the experience and capabilities of the client. As a result, employees are able to explain behavior of clients and anticipate on this.
- As behavior can be recognized and interpreted timely problem behavior can be prevented and the quality of life increased.
- The quality of care and welfare for both employees and clients can be improved. It is also possible for significant partners (parents, healthcare providers, specialists) to participate in a familiar way.
- The Theory of Experience-based ordering is an explanatory model, which means that the complex reality can be divided into manageable parts (especially the four questions: Is my body safe, is the environment reliable, do I understand the coherence, am I allowed to be myself). This can be employed quickly and visibly.
- Employees recognize that they are adequately qualified and supported so that the sense of security for both coach and client improves.
- The Theory of Experience-based ordering can be used in combination with any other method or theory that revolves around shared understanding. The effectiveness of these methods is also increased.
- The Theory of Experience-based ordering is based scientifically, but lies close to the theoretical and practical common sense. This can be translated in different ways to care for and by everyone from the kitchen help to members of the board.
- For over 30 years Experience-based ordering is considered among the most practical and effective methods of care to people with intellectual disabilities in the Netherlands and Belgium.
- Employing Experience-based ordering in daily routines does not require additional funds, it only requires the preparedness and the knowledge or training to use it in the approach of professional care and the use of the potential in every human being, intellectual disabled or not.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THEORY OF EXPERIENCE-BASED ORDERING

- Each person is unique.
- Each person has therefore human potential.
- A human being is part of earthly existence and its function is to be human, that is, that human potential to play a role at all. The possibilities can be seen as equipping men to the (biologically speaking) in the earthly reality to maintain.
- A human is biologically fellow human being (herd animal).
- Characteristic of humanity is plurality. That is, each one is different from another.
- Plurality requires communication that aims to understand one another.
- That can only come about through the ability of humans to co-regulate, ie the possibility to make an interpersonal click (which could be described as: I am not you and yet we understand each other) is translated into common understanding of reality.
- The common understanding is created where people come together (in physical space) appear as equal part of the entirety in what is also called a space for 'encounters' or a 'space of appearance'.
- Co-regulation of high-quality forms a dialogue (a conversation in two or more directions) in which listening to each other progress is made.

- Such a ‘conversation’ can also include acting as a form of communication, and allows the most valuable elements of the tension in the conversation to be used for creating a new vision (view of reality, understanding of reality) future actions for improvement (better in reality).
- To function in reality, one needs to order reality.
- A human is biologically equipped to order reality.
- In that system the co-regulation plays a decisive role.
- Co-regulation is of a high quality when the dialogue contributes to improvements in this sense.
- Improvement can be defined as "experiencing joy from humanity", ie the abilities of people to function in this reality (however small) are known, valued and used.
- The co-regulation is of low quality when the dialogue (which is also acting as a form of communication) gives rise to misunderstandings, confusion and malfunction (lack of use of opportunities that do exist).
- Every person has an equal right for emancipation, that is developing and its potential so that you can experience joy in your life in task and mission in this world.
- For that the theory of Experience-based ordering is developed. In order to optimize professional co-regulation. The four questions give guidance and opportunities to learn. Learn to know, value and use whatever possibilities are present at any level.
- Professional action is responsible (response-able) action.
- Through experience-based ordering, at least a part of that accountability can be found.
- Experience-based ordering is a unifying theory that allows methods and techniques from different theoretical backgrounds to be applied and fitted within the boundaries of experience-based ordering.

TEO: BUILDING A NEW WAY OF UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER

Based on the principles of Experience-based ordering, people from different organisations and institutions are building together, creating a way of understanding people from their own point of view. As the name suggests, the best way of learning about experience-based ordering is by experience. Reading about the subject doesn't give the information simple examples that are lived through or seen can give. Dr. Timmers-Huigens is available for information about her theory and the possibilities it suggest. She is supported in spreading knowledge about Experience-based ordering by TEO (Timmers Ervaringsordening), a consultancy and training company, founded by two of her sons. Information (in Dutch) can be found on the internet, WWW.ERVARINGSORDENING.NL or WWW.TEOLOGICA.EU, TEO can be reached by e-mail: TIMMERS@ERVARINGSORDENING.NL. Questions, cases and suggestions (in English) by e-mail are most welcome and will be addressed by Dr. Timmers-Huigens or one of her sons working in TEO.

LITERATURE USED

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