

Touching and perceiving

Touch sensitivity



Activity: Exploring surfaces

Set-up of the activity

0-2

- Lay immobile clients on various surfaces. Make sure that the client is lying comfortably and has proper support.
- Take the client along various routes in his immediate environment. Together explore by touching walls, carpets, frames, floors, joints and edges. Do this with the feet as well as with the hands.
- Place a client who is in a wheelchair next to the elements that are within his reach.
- Let the client walk barefoot over various surfaces; that way he can feel the differences better. Only do this if this is pleasant for him.

2-4

- Do the same as mentioned above, but link language to everything the client feels. For example, something is soft, hard, cold, warm, high or low.
- Let the client hear what the various materials sound like when you tick on them with your finger. You can also use a stick or a metal object.
- Let a client who is in a wheelchair perceive floor surfaces through vibration by pushing the wheelchair over various surfaces.

4-6

- Explore familiar and unfamiliar places with the client.
- Let clients who are in a wheelchair or have limited hand function, explore doors, walls and windowsills that are within their reach.

- Use language/tactile language even more purposely. Distinguish, for example, between smooth, rough, uneven, ribbed, higher or lower.
- If possible, let the client describe how something feels and what it sounds like. For example: "This sounds/feels like..."
- Let the client search for specific details on a surface, for example a doorknob, a keyhole or a mortise of a lock.

Points for observation and focus

- Note that these activities, in addition to tactual skills, also require fine motor skills from the client.
- Check whether the client prefers certain materials and textures. Observe whether the client finds it easier to perceive an indented surface or rather a surface with a relief.
- Observe which terms the client uses for the various textures. If a client cannot talk, you can check which terms he understands, for example by asking him to indicate where there are ribbed parts on the wall.

Can also be used in the categories

- Tactual exploration (TE)
- Tactile-spatial perception (TSP)