



## **Tacpac – a sensory approach to developing communication**

### **What is Tacpac**

Tacpac is an activity resource for helping people with sensory or neurological impairment, developmental delay, profound and multiple learning difficulties, tactile defensiveness, and limited or pre-verbal communication. It provides a structured, emotionally safe framework for the 'receiving partner'. To make contact with their own bodies, their environment and other people, and develop a relationship with these. The 'giving partner' ensures that each tactile experience is well organised and sensitively offered, and adjusted to suit the receiving partner's responses.

### **Nuts and Bolts of Tacpac**

Tacpac is an integrated experience of touch, sound, pattern and relationship – a fluid process between your partner and you. Your partner's experience of Tacpac may occur at different levels. These ideas come from the 'Sounds of Intent' research project being conducted by the University Of London Institute Of Education and the Royal National Institute for the Blind ([www.soundsofintent.org](http://www.soundsofintent.org)).

- **Awareness**: At the most basic level, becoming aware of a stimulus (touch or sound).
- **Variety**: beginning to differentiate between types of touch or sound.
- **Pattern**: Repeated single sounds or sets of sounds (eg a tune) – a single tactile stimuli or a series of them – become patterns that, in time can be anticipated.
- **Association**: Stimuli can come to be associated with certain objects or emotions. Through repetition, specific music and touch stimuli can also become associated with each other, the one triggering anticipation of the other.

### **Possible Outcomes**

#### **Reactive**

- Becomes aware of tactile and auditory stimuli
- Begins to show pre-intentional and affective communication
- Shows physical, facial, or vocal responses that you can interpret as like, dislike, want, reject, known, unknown

#### **Proactive**

- Shows more deliberate responses to stimuli; wishes and intentions are easier to interpret



- Reaches for the object and handles it
- Developing the curiosity, spontaneity and confidence to engage with environment
- Uses the object on him/herself
- Offers part of the body (eg back) to the tactile object

### **Interactive**

- Takes the object from you to hold it
- Uses the object on someone else
- Relates to you rather than just the stimuli
- Makes clear signs that s/he wants to repeat a particular activity, or miss one out
- Engages in turn-taking

Further information about Tacpac:

Website: [www.tacpac.co.uk](http://www.tacpac.co.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TacpacLtd](https://www.facebook.com/TacpacLtd)

Twitter: [@Tacpac](https://twitter.com/Tacpac)

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