

HANDOUT: THE TWELVE SENSES

TRAINING THE EAR

FIRST FIVE SENSES:

Touch, Smell, Taste, Sight, Hearing

THE SIXTH SENSE:

Intuition

RUDOLPH STEINER'S ADDITIONS:

A sense of balance

A sense of movement

A sense of life

A sense of temperature

RUDOLPH STEINER'S "HIGHER SENSES":

A **sense** of the word

A **sense** of the thought

These final two produce “a sense of the ego.” Why: Because beyond word and thought there is thought to dwell a “being, a person with hopes and dreams, a spirit, a – dare we say it? – a “soul.”

Steiner believes that at the “highest level of reality,” we attune ourselves to the higher senses **by using words and thoughts as a bridge between the listener and the speaker**. We hear in such a way that **boundaries dissolve**. An awareness is created so that we can open to the depths of the other.

20 minute exercise: Choose a partner. Take turns. One participant talks to the other for ten (10) minutes. As the first person speaks, the listener doesn't comfort or nod assent. S/he need not formulate advice or encourage the speaker with sympathetic noises. In fact, during those ten minutes, the listener is **expressly forbidden from giving any feedback at all**. **Then switch sides**. The first listener then becomes the second talker. The first talker becomes the second listener and follows the steps above for an additional ten (10) minutes.

Listen for:

Tone of voice

Moments of hesitation

Places where the person speaking seems confident or uneasy.

Listeners try to:

Hear the desire for understanding and connection

Find the “contact” with the being who inhabits the depth of the spirit

Embrace that “depth.”

Describe what happened to you (as talker and as listener) as clearly as you can. Explain why this might help you as a fieldworker. What is difficult about it in our culture?

From Linda Weltner's “Training the Ear to Hear the Soul,” *Boston Globe* 3/11/99, F2.

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