

SPEAK TO ME!

(A Simple Guide to Using Intensive Interaction to get in touch in with non-verbal children and adults who have severe learning difficulties and/or autism.)

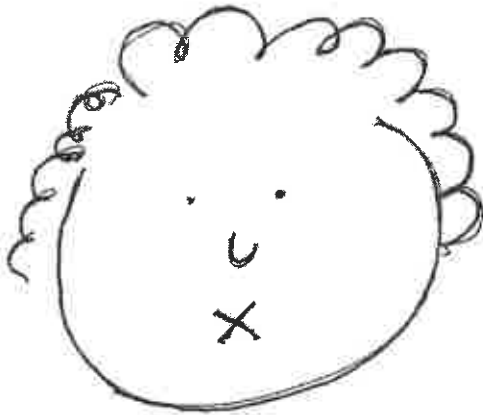
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I can't speak - but that does not mean
I do not want to talk to you.

I do try. I wave my arms or cry or
grunt.

No-one answers.



So I listen to myself.

I do feel lonely and should love it if
someone would speak to me.

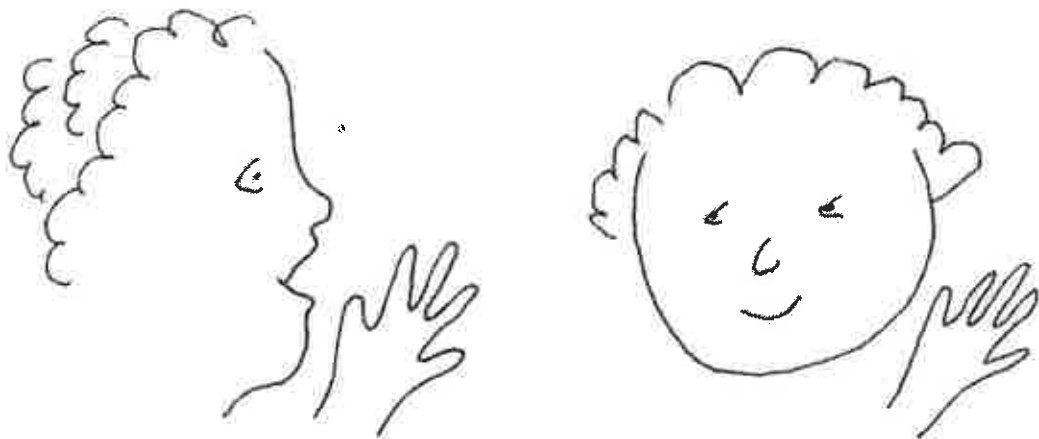
I watch my fingers move and listen to
my grunts and cries. Sometimes I tap
things.

But sometimes I just listen to my own
breathing rhythm – “Hhhh” –
“Hhhh”, so softly you cannot hear
me.

You want to talk to me?

Watch and listen how I talk to myself.
This is the language I understand.

If I wave my arms, wave back!



If I grunt or squeal or cry, answer me
with a grunt or squeal or cry,
something I will recognise.

If I tear paper or spin things, do it
with me.

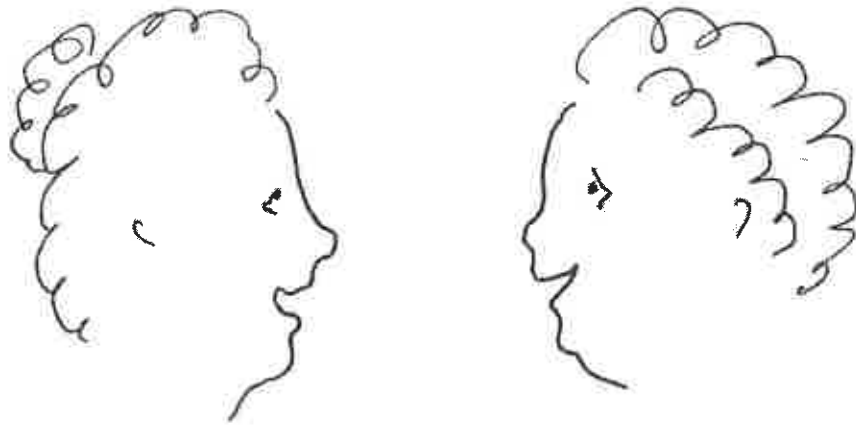
If you do this, I shall learn a very
important lesson - if I say or do
something I will get an answer that
means something to me.

Now I understand!

You are not mimicking me but
responding to me, just like you talk to
other people, only without words.

You have got my attention.

Now we can begin to talk to each other in a way that means something to both of us.



I will show you how pleased I am by looking at you and smiling or laughing. If I turn my face away, it may mean that I am deaf and I am turning my best ear to you.

As we get better at talking to each other, here are some do's and don't's: Try and tune into the rhythm and of what I am doing, that is what I recognise most easily.

Don't get me overexcited. It is very easy to hype me up by responding too vigorously. I want to have fun but don't overdo it.

Watch *how* I respond to you. There is a difference in the *way* I flap my hands or grunts that will tell you how I am feeling. If I am happy my movements will be calm. If I'm upset my movements will be wild.

When we get better at this, you will find that sometimes I need a different sort of response. For example, I may grunt and you answer me by a tap. I recognise the rhythm of my sound. This is called a cross-modal response and is sometimes easier for me to recognise. But find some way of answering each time I do something.

If you do this you'll find that we *can* talk to each other. I can let you know how I feel through my body language and you can let me know how you feel through your body language.

We can share fun

and

*you can change
my life!!!!!!!!!!!!*

Further Reading:

- Caldwell, P. (1998) *'Person to Person'* Brighton. Pavilion Publishers
Caldwell, P. (2006) *'Finding You Finding Me'* London and Philadelphia Jessica Kingsly Publishers
Nind, M. and Hewett, D. (2001) *'A Practical guide to Intensive Interaction'* Kidderminster bild

Training Video

- Caldwell, P. (2005) *'Learning the Language'* Brighton, Pavilion Publishers (Using Intensive Interaction with a man with Autism)
Caldwell, P. (2005) *'Creative Conversations'* Brighton, Pavilion Publishers (Working with people with Multiple Disability)

