



BLI - EMBODIMENT TRAINING

2023/24

Gödöllő

DÓRA SZALAY

Child's name: P. K. (9.5 years old girl when the Embodiment process started, now 9.10 years old)

Born: Szombathely, 2014.04.15.

School: Szombathely, Perintparti Waldorf School (3rd grade)

K. was born the second child in a caring, attentive and accepting family. They live in a small village close to nature, aiming for a healthy lifestyle. His favourite friend is his dog Bundas, and his favourite rival is his brother, who is 3 years older than him and excels in all areas.

I met K. when she was in the 1st class of the Waldorf school. He stood out from his peers with his rounded build, forward shoulders, clean but always untidy clothes, long, curly hair, a reddish, sweaty face, and the fact that he always chewed apples.

He found it difficult to fit into the classroom, his peers felt his clumsy attempts to approach were intrusive, and he was sometimes teased for his sluggish and clumsy movements. With adults he was always respectful, direct and friendly.

In class 2, in addition to uncoordinated large movements and clumsy fine motor skills, there was a weakness of concentration and difficulty in maintaining attention. He was also falling further and further behind his peers in learning. For him, writing letters and numbers was just drawing without meaning, often reversing their direction. He could read 2-3 letter words but could not understand short sentences.

That's when (in the spring of 2nd grade, at age 9) she came to me for an Extra Lesson individual development class. Based on the assessment using the Extra Lesson method, I found the following areas to help:

- 4 basic senses (balance, touch, self-motion, sense of life)
- early childhood movements
- erection force
- flow directions
- vertical and horizontal centre line barriers
- test scheme
- spatial orientation
- orientation in time
- movement-speech coordination
- rhythm
- eye-hand coordination
- finommotorics
- eye muscle, focusing
- harmonisation of breathing
- speech perception, auditory differentiation
- formatting
- visual and auditory memory
- reading-writing-counting

In Extra Lesson we met once a week. The little girl was dedicated, attentive, eager to do movement, painting and drawing exercises. Still, we progressed very slowly, and the long summer break came.....

After the Embodiment training in September 2023, I decided to do the "Early Childhood Reaction Control" test with my little girl, as I saw a neurological immaturity behind her difficulties. The parents agreed and assured their cooperation. The girl's class teacher and members of our school's therapy group are also following the process with interest.

The BMI-EMBODIMENT WORK with P.K. (9.5 year old girl, 3rd grade)

1. TEST TO "CHECK FOR RESIDUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD REACTIONS"

Pulled by gravity; loose muscle tone; jumps clumsily and briefly on one leg (right leg), full footed, accompanying mouth-tongue movement; balance unsteady (right leg); catches ball with both hands lowered to body, throws with stiff arms, poor aim; while picking up bean bag with toe (right), fingers of hand also clenched into fists and lips also clenched; when following with eyes, head moves with eyes; lip movements are slurred, tongue moves only in one direction; chicken step with head forward, looking at foot, unsteady, backward step imprecise and loses balance; frog walk with both arms taking up the inward curve of the legs, movement rigid and uncoordinated; man-house-tree drawing in the order house, man, tree, with slurred 4-fingered pencil strokes (1.Figure 1).



The results of the first series of tests showed muscle tone problems, underdevelopment of motor functions, unsteady balance, uncoordinated arm-leg movements, associated joint movements (mouth-tongue, eye-head, hand-leg) and right leg dominance.

2. TAKING ANAMNESIS WITH THE MOTHER

K. was born from a peaceful pregnancy by caesarean section (due to the mother's health).

His progress was slow, but all the stages were there. His gait remained unsteady for a long time, he only walked with assistance. For this reason, he was taken to a balance development gym after the age of 2.

His speech development was at a normal pace. He saw a speech therapist in pre-school because of his poor pronunciation (s-z-c, s-zs-ch, r). His "r" sound still does not roll.

Her most serious illness was a kidney infection at the age of 1, which led to her spending 10 days in hospital with her mother and receiving intravenous antibiotics. Then at 2.5 years old he was hospitalised for a few days for croup and was also treated with antibiotics. At the age of 4, he was treated for Lyme disease with a longer course of antibiotics.

From infancy, he loves to eat anything, indiscriminately. He has been examined several times for weight gain since he was 1.5 years old, but no organic (hormonal) cause has been found.

According to the mother, she is open and loving towards the world, likes to make friends, especially with younger children, and trusts adults.

The first series of tests and the difficulties highlighted by the anamnesis confirmed to me that the Embodiment practice line could be an effective help for the little girl. So I set about carrying out the reflex tests.

3. SCREENING FOR RESIDUAL INFANT REFLEXES

ATNR (quadriceps)

- strongly bending opposite arms on both right and left sides
- hips and shoulders move
- fingers are marking

ATNR (idle)

- 45° displacement of the arms when turning the head
- hips also move
- slight imbalance

STNR (when the head is bent down)

- firm bending of the arms

STNR (when stretching the head upwards)

- arms outstretched
- hips move almost into a sitting position from the 4th repetition (almost sitting cat)

In all cases, the elbows are outstretched in the squatting position; the resting position is a w-seat;

TLR (standing, head up)

- its balance becomes precarious
- changes in the muscle tone of the legs

TLR (in standing position, head downward bending)

- its balance becomes precarious

You feel slightly dizzy when you finish the TLR test.

MORO (standing, leaning back)

- uncomfortable for him
- when tilted, steps backwards

MORO (standing, forward)

- cannot lean forward, bends at the waist

GALANT REFLEX

- small hip turn to the right (about 10°)

OBSERVATION OF HIGHER MOTOR SKILLS**LIZARD CRAWLING**

- not coordinated hand-leg movement, not opposite sides
- foot lifeless
- over time, both legs stop, pulling yourself up with just an arm
- not using the palm of your hand

CRAWLING ON ALL FOURS (DOG)

- the limbs move forward at the same time, to one side,
- backwards uncoordinated, falls apart, the step becomes a slide

CONCLUSION FROM REFLECT TEST: The movement responses of the girl during the test exercises suggest a milder or stronger persistence of primitive reflexes.

Reflexes that remain more strongly: ATNR (both sides), STNR (both in extension and flexion), TLR, MORO.

A milder reflex response was seen with the GALANT test.

The problems of voice production and articulation, the clumsiness of lip and tongue movements, are assumed to be due to the persistence of a certain degree of the SUCKING reflex.

During the test exercises, the fingers were often seen to move in a notching motion, suggesting that the PLIERS reflex was maintained.

4. DIAGNOSING THE SENSES

I shared parts of the questionnaire to help diagnose the senses with the parents and the class teacher, and then I filled it in myself. After summarizing the results, I came to the following conclusion.

ONLY you are hypersensitive. His auditory disorders are also reflected in his school performance and difficulties in speech comprehension. Pinnated muscles, loose muscle tone, shoulders drooping forward, underdeveloped motor skills, lack of coordination show involvement of the SENSE OF MOVEMENT. In addition to poor lip and tongue function, poor voice production, speech comprehension difficulties and poor school performance, the disorder of the SENSE MIND is also manifested. The LIVING MIND may have been damaged at birth (he may have met his mother several hours after caesarean section) and may have been weakened by periods in hospital and antibiotic treatments. Diagnostic questions suggest that the parasympathetic nervous system is overactive. DISTURBANCE and SELF-EMOTION disorders are also reflected in his relationships with his peers (e.g.: constantly dishevelled and unaware of his clothing, lack of body awareness, lack of recognition of others' and his own boundaries, lack of awareness of when others are hurt, lack of self-confidence...).

5. PLANNING THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

TIMING:

- MONDAY - In the 45-minute individual development class, I started teaching K. the Embodiment exercises along with other movement development games. Monday's class starts with a copper ball exercise "enveloping" and supporting archetypal flow directions, followed by a game to awaken body awareness and tactile senses, then the Embodiment exercise, followed by a copper bar exercise to support uprighting forces, and then a small finger exercise to develop fine motor skills. We always end the class with a painting that harmonizes breath and rhythm.
Of course, as the Embodiment practice line expanded, I abandoned the other tasks. However, the copper ball exercise before class and the painting at the end of class remained.
- EVERYDAY - I teach the little girl's mother the EBM practice piece I learned on Monday. The mother can then experience the movement for herself. Because I could see the difficulties the little girl was having the day before, I can also tell the mother how to help the little girl.
On Tuesday evenings they practice at home with the mother.
- SATURDAY - We meet at school and the exercise we learned on Monday is done again by K..
- ON THURSDAY - Practising at home with Mum.
- FRIDAY FRIDAY - He practices with me at school.
- AT WEEK 7 - Only the Windmill is on the job.

In class, the little girl works attentively and enthusiastically. She is not discouraged by the difficulties during the exercise, she moans a lot and perseveres.

His mother is also an interested, reliable, skilful "student".

They try to practice at home at the same time every day, hoping that it will make it easier to make it a "good habit" in their daily lives.

MODE:

- We are moving very slowly, step by step.
- You will be given a new exercise on Mondays each week. During the week he practices with me or his mother. On weekends and during school holidays, only the Windmill

exercise is to be done (you may miss one or two of these). In case of illness, practice is forbidden.

- I help you to learn the exercises accurately by giving you pictures. The "main character" is the princess of the waters. Each image associated with a movement is related to the realm of water. The pictures help not only to learn the movement but also to remember the sequence of movements.

During the Windmill exercise I tell short stories about a dog.

- I introduce the new exercise, he imitates it. If necessary, I help him by touching or supporting him.
- From the beginning I make sure that stretching and contracting are emphasised in the exercise. The same exercise sequence is done on the right and left side in a balanced way.

6. THE PROCESS OF INTRODUCING EMBODIMENT PRACTICES

- Introduction

At the beginning of november, the first exercise was introduced at the end of the individual development lesson as a relaxation game. This was the "Windmill". K. simply lay on her stomach, I adjusted her limbs to the correct pose towards the right side. His arms and head moved easily, but it took me a tremendous effort to get his legs in the right position. Then I started to tell him a story. Then came the "Incarnation movement", which also required adjusting the feet in the right direction. Then, after a little stretching, the same thing happened on the left side. The story continued. The exercise ended with the "Incarnation movement".

This was once a week for three weeks, as an introduction, a getting to know you. No home practice was involved. But by the third session, he was pulling his knees up on his own and his feet automatically turned into "Chaplin".

- Monday 1.

The real EBM work started at the end of november, according to the schedule described in point 5. To the familiar "Windmill" I added the "Exit-down-kneel-sit straight-back, long-neck-side-lying-belly-turn". After the "Incarnation-move" I added "Side-lying-two knees up-sitting-up", "Right knee leaning upright". Then all this is repeated on the left side. And the daily practice began.

- Monday 2.

A new element was the side lying followed by a back turn, the introduction of a mat under the head and hips, "Knees up-head turn 3 times". Then stretching-side lying-belly turn and "Windmill", "Incarnation-movement", "Side lying-two knees up-sitting-up-right knee leaning-stand". Then all this is repeated on the left side.

- Monday 3.

Even after a week of practice, I found that the little girl's legs are lead weighted, very difficult to lift, difficult to hold up, difficult to lock the knees, difficult to pull up in sideways position. The head turn was a bit fast. So for the 3rd time no new exercise was added, we repeated the previous one.

- After three weeks of active training, he came down with viral K with high fever, so he missed two weeks of training. Then followed a 2 week Christmas break. During the last 5 days of the Christmas break, we managed to resume home practice with the "Windmill" exercise.

- The little girl returned to school healthy, happy and with lighter legs after a long absence. In the almost three months since 20 november, several new elements have been added to the exercise. The little girl has been enthusiastic about doing it at school and at home ever since. She is eagerly looking forward to the new developments (i.e. new movements) in the "aquatic realm". She has a surprisingly good memory of the ever-expanding movement process. He has overcome many difficulties: he can keep his knees together on his back when turning his head, the pace of turning his head has slowed down, he can easily pull his knees together when lying on his side, he has mastered the turning and sliding of the head of the hand, he understands and feels the concept of a long neck and a straight back, he has also very slowly but surely mastered the contraction of the gluteal muscles.

Of course, there are still plenty of difficulties: the "Windmill" is still difficult to adjust the knees, the "Little Mermaid Turn" still requires holding the knees down to work the muscles around the spine, the "Cradle" can only be held and "rocked" with help, and the nose is very difficult to keep in the direction of the knees, the head lift with 3 inhalations in the prone position is too tight.

7. DOES THE PRACTICE HAVE A VISIBLE IMPACT ON THE GIRL'S DAILY LIFE?

- Since January I often see him running around the yard without an apple in his hand.
- In the breaks between classes, he plays catch with his classmates.
- She was invited to a birthday party.
- She stays late in the afternoon at the nursery and is now happy to help tidy up the room.
- In her free time in the afternoons, she sewed pencils and started embroidering on her own.
- According to the class teacher, he is less distracting to his peers and they have started to accept him. He is more attentive in class, but he does not yet see progress in his academic performance.
- His parents say his sense of responsibility has increased, and he never forgets to do his homework at school. She used to play with her dog, but now she likes to take it for walks.
- The following "Man-house-tree" drawing was made at the end of a movement lesson in February (Figure 2)



8. WHAT'S NEXT?

- We continue to expand the Embodiment practice. By the summer break, I would like K. to overcome the difficulties he has encountered in the exercises so far. As a new element I plan to add backward crossing movements and the like-for-like head turn, as well as the nose-drawn lemniscate.
- K. received a lot of antibiotics between the ages of 1 and 4 years. That's when her diet and digestion went haywire and she's been eating a lot and gaining weight ever since. This information hit a nail on the head and I asked the parents to contact an anthroposophist doctor to see if his helpful thoughts could contribute to her development.