



# Embodiment case study

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Patient's name: G.

Date of birth: 15.02.2015 (9 years' old)

## **My selection**

The subject of my case study is my own son, G.. I knew that probably Embodiment would help him some time but life has arranged that I should start working with him immediately. He is a second grade student in a Waldorf school and in the beginning of the school year they had an extra lesson assessment checking if any child in the class needs any support. This is a habit in the Hungarian Waldorf schools as by this children could get the necessary help before (or in parallel) they start learning more difficult things in the school.

In that assessment the Extra lesson teacher realized that G. would need some support and advised that we start INPP therapy with him. She started one INPP exercise with, which he did for a months. Then we had a meeting where I told her that I'd rather do Embodiment with my son. We agreed on that, so I started working with my son in the beginning of November after we had two weeks of break from the INPP work.

## **Short anamnesis and description**

G. was born naturally at the end of the 41st week of pregnancy. The delivery was quite fast. I got oxytocin as there was meconium in the amniotic fluid and the doctor thought it would be good to get him out fast. He was a restless baby, was crying a lot in the first couple of months and he was fast in his development as well.

He was not creeping at all but started crawling instead immediately and he was sitting and standing quite early (5 months and 8 months). He was walking at the age of 14 months but could not push himself up without help when falling. He pulled himself up by clinging to something and learnt to stand up without help much later. He could not rest at all peacefully, both the legs and arms were moving constantly even as a new-born baby.

When he was 8 months old, he had a urinary infection. We spent a week in the hospital where I could be with him but he got intravenous antibiotics. We went home and in two days we ended up in the hospital again with high fever and otitis media. He again got antibiotics. After two weeks it turned out that he had no neutrophil cells at all in his blood. No one could tell the reason. Some doctors claimed that it was the effect of the antibiotics, some said that probably he was born with neutropenia. They wanted to examine him further with biopsies from his bone marrow but we denied that. Although he was not harassed further with examinations, we needed to back to the hospital for blood tests in every two weeks for the first half a year, monthly later. He recovered from the neutropenia by the age of 2

without any medication. He only took iron (in the form of Schüssler salts) as he had anaemia as well during that period. As a family we parents were working a lot on ourselves, which probably had an effect on his recovery as well.

Since then he had no severe illnesses but this experience had a huge effect on him. G. is turning 9 in February. He is a very curious but sensitive kid with lack of self-confidence. It is difficult for him to try new things, make new contacts or deal with changes. He does not have much trust in himself or in others, though this improved in the last couple of years. He still needs a lot of encouragement. He can lose his motivation quickly when he is not successful in something or he cannot do something properly for the first time. He always had difficulties with his will forces.

According to the Extra lesson teacher, his tree-house-man drawing is quite balanced but the man figure is more a drawing of a kindergarten child instead of a second grader.

## **Sense test results**

The result of the sense test shows that he has disturbances with the **sense of touch**. He is more **hypersensitive** but had a couple of points on the lack of sensitivity side as well. During the last couple of years this sensitivity got better as a result of therapies (e.g. rhythmical massage) and various habits we included to our daily life (e.g. salty hot foot bath in the mornings).

He has a very **active sympathetic nerve system** which is shown in his behaviour as well as in eating and sleeping habits. He is quite sensitive to noises and smells but is very talented musically. He loves everything which is related to sounds, including speaking and reading and making any kind of noises. He loves playing the piano, it relaxes him.

With regards to his self-movement sense there were not too many disturbances. It is more his **motoric development** which **was too fast** as I described above. His restlessness has eased during the years, his activities are more balanced but he still **cannot rest for long**, only when reading. He usually reads lying in bed. He has **flatfoot** and **hypermobility joints**. With regards to the sense of balance, he has **difficulties with static balancing**. He has nausea from time to time when travelling by car. This got a bit worse since we do the Embodiment exercises.

## **Test results on persistent early reflexes and reactions**

G. got 1 point for the frontal tandem walk and for the frog walk as well. It was more difficult for him backwards, needed more balancing with the hands. He started both walks quite all right but he got

tired of concentrating along the longer distance. Standing on one leg was relatively all right, though he lost his balance before the 30 seconds. The dominant right side was easier for him.

From the reflexes, the test was positive for the TLR up and down as well. For down he got 1 point, for up he got 3. He was actually falling to the side for the first time doing the stretch up with the head. For the second time he was not falling but the muscles in his back got quite tense and his back got curved. The STNR and ATNR were negative but he was bending slightly the toes and fingers, showing possibly some grabbing reflex. The Galant test I could not do properly as he was very ticklish. I suppose as he is very sensitive to touch in the test area, the Galant reflex persists to an extent. That would explain his restlessness while sitting as well.

## **Work with the Embodiment exercises**

We started working in the beginning of November. As his sense of touch and life sense were mainly affected and the TLR and Galant reflexes were shown with some balance issues, we started the sequence by doing the little mermaid and the head roll on the back, finishing by the windmill.

After a couple of days I realized that G. got very tired. It was very difficult for him to concentrate on the directions of the little mermaid and by the time we reached the left side, he could not concentrate at all and lost his motivation as well. I was expecting that he would get tired so first I moved the practise to the morning as I thought it was simply too much in the evening. But it did not work out well in the morning either. We already have quite a few things in our morning routine and we could not fit it in properly. It was a rush. So I moved it back to the evening. After the Embodiment weekend in November I realized that I should take out the little mermaid to make it easier for him. He was just doing the step, the knee bending, sliding to the side and to the back. Without the mermaid he was coping much better.

Initially it was difficult for him to do the exercise slowly and with small movements, especially to the left side. His movements were a bit fragmented as well. This got better after a couple of weeks and he started doing the head roll alone. As he was getting used to the exercises and was doing them better, at the end of November he started doing again the little mermaid.

During the first couple of weeks while he was moving to the pose of the windmill, his upper body was shaping a letter C. I always needed to help him finding the right pose to have a straight upper body. This still happens from time to time but by now usually he finds the right pose and he finds it comfortable as well.



*G. with C shaped upper body*

*G. with corrected, straight upper body*

As a next step I wanted to include the homolateral roll but it was too much for him. As TLR was the most affected, I thought I will add instead the head lift and roll on the stomach.

In the beginning of December the class teacher told us that G. has started behaving strangely. He got irritated easily and was very moody. He got into a smaller fight with others and misbehaved during classes, which was quite odd as he normally follows the rules and is a peaceful child. We also realised at home that he was more sensitive and got irritated easily by small things as well. He was arguing about everything and was not so willing to do Embodiment. I was expecting that he would have some kind of emotional imbalance but the class teacher wanted me to stop doing the Embodiment and get back to INPP as they were fearing that I am doing something wrong having no experience with Embodiment yet. I had no intention to stop the work and consulted with a couple of people in Hungary. I also told them that I can contact you Birte, and finally they accepted the way we work.

We usually do the exercises 5 times a week and have 2 days when G. only does the windmill. We only skip practising when he is ill or we have a program which prevents us from doing the sequence.

On the other hand, seeing the emotional imbalance in December I wanted to give G. some break. I also realized that probably I added the head lift and roll on the stomach too early and it also had that affect. During the school break we were travelling to relatives and we could not keep the 5 day routine anyway. Interestingly when the school started again in January and with that our daily routine went

back to normal, G. got again more motivated to do the exercises. In January I added the Galant exercise and short after the lemniscate. After that it happened a couple of mornings that G. had nausea in the car and vomited as well. After the January Embodiment weekend I realized that again probably I added too quickly the new part and it was too much for G. I took out both new parts and following your advice I wanted to build up the sequence how we learnt originally.

The vomiting and the nausea stopped actually but G. fell sick at the end of January so we had a week without practicing. After we started again with the head roll on his back and head lift and roll on his stomach, I added the homolateral roll. It was and is still very difficult for him. It also had an emotional effect as well. After two days of doing the new part, he freaked out and only I could calm him down. He felt a huge fear but could not explain what. It could have been the effect of the Embodiment as well as the effect of him entering into Rubicon. Anyhow, this was the only occasion of such an emotional break-down, though he needs more cuddling recently.

### **Changes so far**

G. was using his shoulders a lot during the exercises in the beginning. I always needed to help him with that. By now his shoulders got less tensed. This is visible in the windmill as well as during the head lifts.



*G. in November (shoulders are tensed)*



*G. in February (shoulders are quite relaxed)*

His movements got less fragmented; he can do the head rolls and lifts smoothly. With the homolateral roll he is struggling but he is trying and I do not feel it to be too much for him now.

In school, after the printed letters they started learning the written letters. G. did well during the mirroring work on form-drawing and is writing the curves of the letters very nicely according to his teacher. He can keep the distances of the letters well. His class teacher was very happy to see that as based on the extra lesson assessment in September or his state in December she was not expecting him to perform that well.

The best change in my view so far is that huge effort G. is putting into this work. He needs motivation and gentle push for sure to do the practice but he is doing it. He was giving up things quite easily earlier and this is a great experience now for him of perseverance. He is training his will force daily, which is a great return of this work.

### **Reflexions as a parent**

Sometimes it is very difficult to be the therapist and the parent at the same time. I am balancing between letting him to rest and skip the exercise after a long day and pushing him (gently) to do it even if he was not so willing.

On the flip side, knowing my son it is easier to find the right motivation for him. The daily practise gives us quality time to spend together. We usually talk about his day during the windmill or he start telling stories. But anyhow these times gives me the opportunity to get closer to my son and get to know more about him.

I also could experience how big commitment it is for the whole family to start doing Embodiment. It really requires from everyone in the family to take extra steps. It happened a couple of times that I really needed all my efforts not to skip the practise because I was too tired by the evening. This knowledge is a big value add to my work as a therapist as well.

### **Documentation of the work**

I am keeping a diary of the practise. Initially I just made a note of what I experienced during the exercises; how well he could do, what was difficult etc. But I missed to take notes of the other experiences. After a couple of weeks I started to be more alert to signs of changes in his behaviour or his wellbeing. I tried to make note of those as well to see if there could be any connection to Embodiment.

It was difficult for me to take pictures. During the exercises I was with G. constantly, while he was doing the windmill we usually talked. I could still do a couple of shots but usually during the windmill. I also made a video of him doing the homolateral roll as I am still not sure he is doing it properly and would like to ask for your feedback on that. I will attach that video for your evaluation.

### **Next steps**

As next steps I am planning to add the simple crossing to one side and put back again the lemniscate and the exercise for the Galant reflex to have a full sequence. As he is only turning 9 in February I am a bit reluctant to try the dolphin with him, though it also has an effect on the TLR and the Galant as well. But based on the experience with G. so far even if I add it, I add it much later.

I also would like him to get Rhythmical massage again to help him coping with the emotional difficulties.

I plan to keep on doing the exercises until next September at least, having almost a full year of work. Then we can get some feedback from school as well besides on what I experience.