

Cheat Sheet for The Sensory Craver

When I need Proprioceptive input o my brain stem, I can't feel part or all of my body. I may try to fix this myself by:

- Running a lot (leg awareness)
- Jumping a lot (body awareness)
- Flapping my hands (hand awareness)
- Climbing a lot (hand and leg awareness)
- Hiding in a confined space (whole body awareness)
- Hiding under a blanket (whole body awareness)
- Touching everything as I walk by (hand awareness)

When I need Vestibular input to my brain stem, I feel off-balance. I might try to fix this myself by:

- Spinning in circles without getting dizzy
- Swinging for long periods of time
- Sticking my fingers in my ears (the inner detects balance)

When I need auditory input to my brain stem, It's like the world is on too low of a volume. I may try to fix this myself by:

- Humming a lot
- Signing a lot
- Using my outside voice inside
- Plugging my ears (there might be too much noise in this case!)

When I need Oral input to my brain stem, I can't feel my mouth and it's hard to talk. I try to fix this myself by:

- Chewing on things... anything!

When I need Tactile input to my brain stem, I need extra sensation on my skin. I might try to get this myself by:

- Taking clothes on or off
- Looking for extremes in temperature (too hot or cold)
- Scratching or biting myself
- Touching lots of stuff that I know I shouldn't.... but it feels so good!

When I need Visual input to my brain stem, everything looks "off" and it's really distracting. I try to fix this by:

- Searching out very bright or very dark places
- Following lines or patterns
- Watching bright or flashing lights

NOTE: I may sometimes be overwhelmed in ways that are probably NOT related to sensory input. Often this overwhelming feeling is related to a part of my brain called the amygdala. When this organ gets overwhelmed, the smallest change can seem as terrifying to me as the largest oncoming truck. To calm myself I may:

- Demand a strict routine
- Line things up over and over
- Have trouble recognizing facial expressions
- Want you to wear certain colors or do things a certain way every time
- Repeat things over and over, like words or play routines

