



Section for the
Performing Arts

Newsletter

Eurythmy
Speech
Music | Puppetry

“Strengthening your human forces”

Nr 78

Easter 2023

Discovering the potential of high sensitivity and being able to live with it

Evaluation of an eight-week programme with daily exercises and eurythmy

A programme for the highly sensitive person (HSP)

The term 'high sensitivity' has increasingly entered the public consciousness in the last two decades. The term was coined by the psychologist Elaine Aron, who sees high sensitivity as a very special form of perception of the self, a level of self-perception that is differentiated into many facets. Highly sensitive people are united by an increased ability to perceive: an increased sensitivity in the interpersonal sphere, an increased sensory activity to the point of clairvoyance, an increased sensitivity to allergens or electrosmog and an increased need for experience in one's own actions, to name a few concrete examples.

Some highly sensitive people can experience the positive aspects of high sensitivity without any problems; but some others experience themselves rather helplessly at the mercy of the negative and burdensome aspects in the course of their lives. In order to offer these people a way to move from the limiting threats to the freeing potentials of their own high sensitivity, the psychiatrist Harald Haas and the eurythmy therapist Theodor Hundhammer have developed their own course on this topic over several years and have already offered it several times as an online course as well as on site and have accompanied it with research. The daily exercises are based on the eightfold path of Buddha and the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, both of which address the multilayered connection between mind and body.

The focus of the eurythmic exercises is on the vowels, the corresponding musical intervals and soul gestures, which are aligned towards the members of the human being, and, so far as high sensitivity is concerned, to have a formative effect on them. The vowels themselves can be assigned to the seven main issues of high sensitivity: The "A" [as in father] establishes ground; the "O" [as in daughter] brings light and warmth, creates harmony; the "I" [as in feet] creates spaces of freedom; the "e" [as in get] brings strength and delimitation; the "ei" [as in light] is the path to the I; the "AU" [as in how] creates a power relationship between inside and outside; the "U" [as in fool] leads me to my deepest depths. This is how one proceeds from week to week. With the vowels, one works on the body becoming a home in which one's self can live here and now in a good, helpful way.

However, one's own self is not just there, it is constantly on the move. Sometimes it is "here", inside, during the day when we wake up. Sometimes "there", somewhere far out, at night, when we fall asleep. Mostly, the human being is never quite here and never quite there, but usually somewhere in between, on the way to or from here or there. In music: we experience being on the way out as a major, being on the way here in minor. In music, the human being feels himself or herself, the ego on its journey. We have taken up this not-there-and-not-there, which is so typical for the highly sensitive person, through the interval gestures and transferred it into a body-forming gesture through the matching soul gestures.

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HSP problem	HSP fulfillment	Exercise	Music	Vowel	Bodies
1. Over-excitability	Mindfulness in everyday life. Devotion to the little.	Four Elements Body Scan (grounding)	Third	A	PB
2. Perfectionism	Unlock development potentials	Observing rest and activity. Taking time and relax	Second	O	EB
3. Get lost in the many possibilities	Finding the center in yourself	Thinking and imagining situations backwards	Seventh	I	SB
					SS
4. Boundary problems	Consciously shaping relationships	Protective meditation	Fifth	E	I
5. Excessive and stressful emotionality	Emotional depth and inner peace	Experiencing compassion	Sixth	Ei	CS
					SS
6. Indecision and worrying	Finding the essentials	Discovering conscience	Forth	Au	LS
7. Overstimulation	Feeling at home in your surroundings	Practicing amazement	Prime	U	SM
Stop being a victim	Free action out of insight	The golden thread	Octave	I think speech	Man

Results of the accompanying research

In 2021, two online HSP courses were held in German and English. Surveys were conducted using an online questionnaire at the beginning of the course, in the middle of the course, at the end of the course and at the follow-up eight weeks after the end of the course. At the end of the course and at the follow-up, the quantitative questions were supplemented by qualitative questions.

23 participants completed all questionnaires at the beginning, middle and end of the course (14 German and 9 English questionnaires). 13 participants additionally completed the questionnaire 8 weeks after the end of the course, whereby the initial values are comparable to the overall group. All participants were female, aged between 35 and 78 years (median: 62) and all but one participant already knew eurythmy/ eurythmy therapy. In addition, an assessment at the beginning of the course using Elaine Aron’s high sensitivity questionnaire (27 possible points) showed that 21 out of 23 participants scored at least 14 points (median = 18) and thus it can be said that they were highly sensitive. The quantitative results were subjected to a variance analysis to determine the effect magnitudes and to allow the variance between the data collection times to be interpreted by the intervention (HSP course).

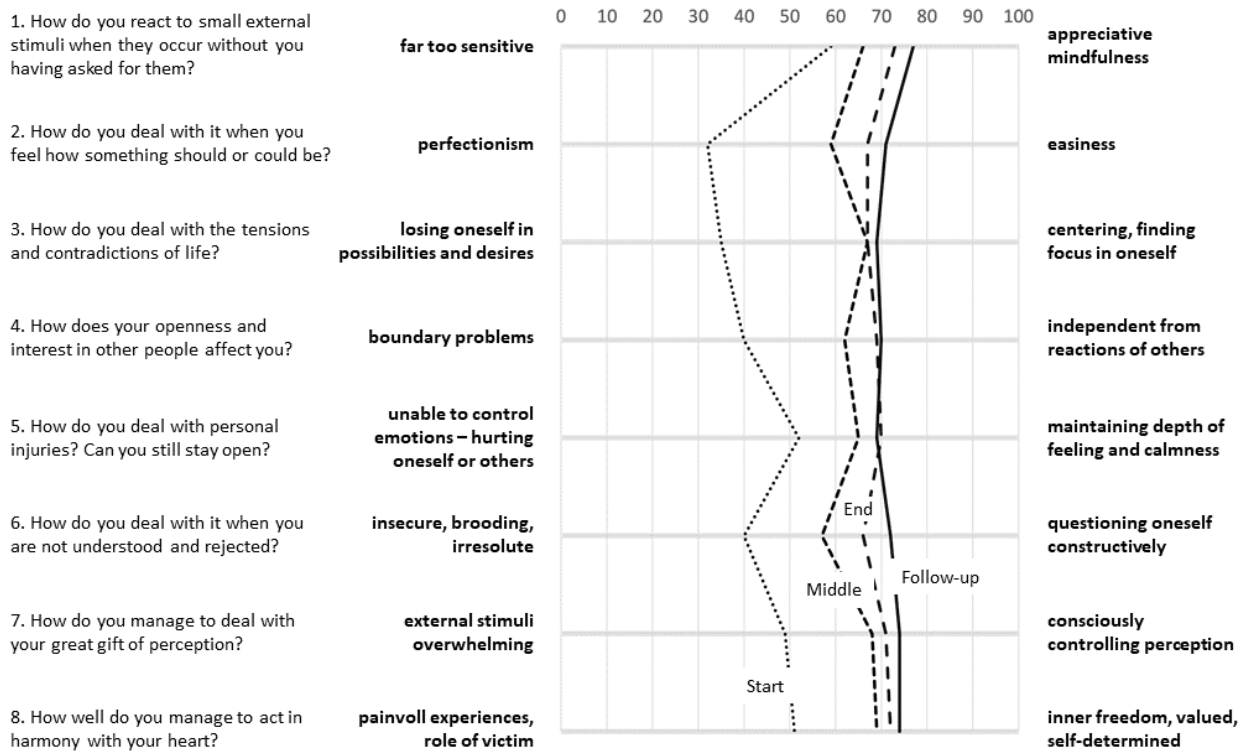
The figures show, on the one hand, evaluation data on opposition pairs in eight areas of high sensitivity, which form the eight modules of the course content, and, on the other hand, on the three basic polarities of an established multidimensional state of mind questionnaire (bad – good; tiredness – alertness; restlessness – calm). All pairs of opposites were surveyed on a linear scale from 0 to 100.

The results of the eight-step high sensitivity questionnaire show a clear improvement from the beginning of the course to the middle of the course, followed by a further slight improvement towards the end of the course, which stabilises or even improves slightly in the eight weeks afterwards. General well-being shows a clear improvement from the beginning of the course to the middle of the course and also from the middle of the course to the end of the course, and a slight improvement at the follow-up after eight weeks. It should be mentioned that the majority of the participants continued the exercises independently in one way or another during the eight weeks between the end of the course and the follow-up.

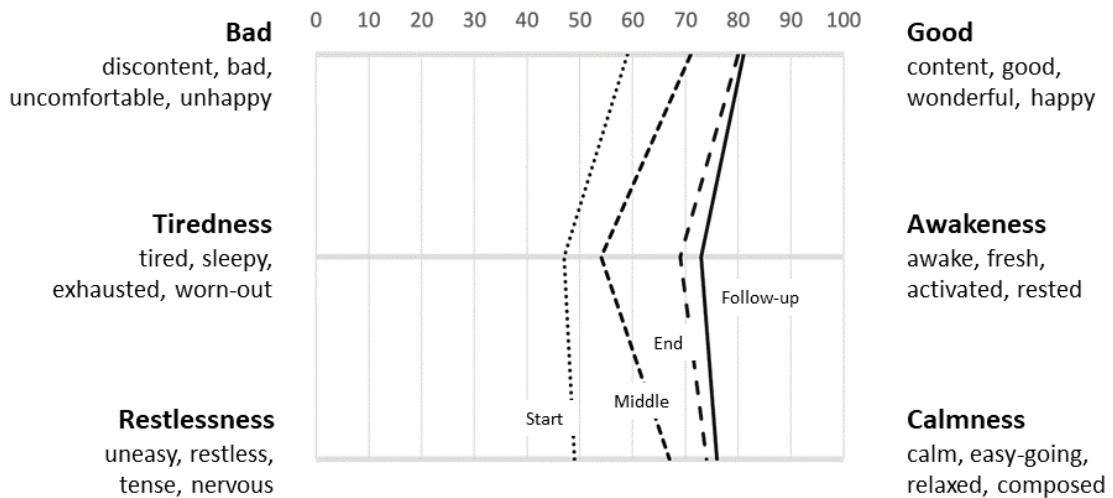
From the qualitative feedback of 35 participants at the end of the course and 20 participants at the follow-up eight weeks later, a variety of positively perceived results can be identified among the participants, which are assigned to the three soul forces in the figure.

Summary

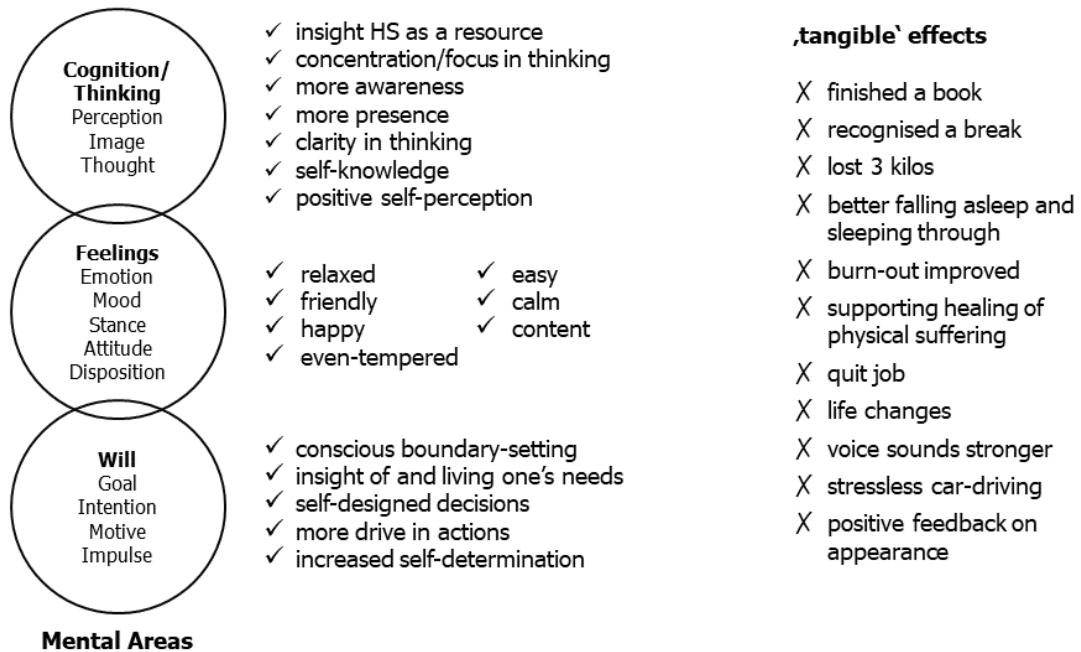
HSP 2021 – The Potential of High Sensibility



HSP 2021 – Multidimensional Mental State



HSP 2021 – Qualitative Course Results



The HSP course in its eight-step combination of everyday exercises and eurythmy shows itself to be a promising intervention for the improvement of the state of mind and for the transformative awareness of and living with the potentials of high sensitivity with tangible results in the lives of the participants. The improved values from the beginning to the end of the course persist at the follow-up after 8 weeks.