



CONTENT

1

Social inner drive

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2019

SOCIAL INNER DRIVE

We humans are social beings; always in the quest to achieve social acceptance. Our social world is ever evolving and quite dynamic requiring of us to be in sync with it. We are always in a dilemma about what people will think about us in each and every setting and situation. At a very subconscious level we are always aware and making a conscious effort to “fit in”. Our thought processes are aligned towards refining ourselves each day. We think about our behavior, our appearance, to do or not to do, will people compliment us or not. So either we try to “fit in” or follow the new trend. Either with our vocabulary, our speech/communication style, our gestures, or our sense of dressing. Have you noticed that in this world of social media explosion we tend to not necessarily always but sometimes camouflage our face with the various filters, as it is the latest trend. Inherently we are always seeking approval. This happens so very naturally as we experience life day-in-day-out, that we don’t even notice the many subtle changes we have done/undergone at various junctions in our life. We as Adults have adapted this behavior and have learned through our experiences.

But let’s pause for a moment and think what about the people with social challenges? What about people with ASD? We know that they have a hard time noticing the world, much harder time interpreting it and even harder time making changes themselves. Kids with social difficulties have a greater tendency to avoid social interaction as well as the social world. Not intentionally! Or even with the thought process that



“come let’s avoid it altogether”. No! At the core of it, it all actually boils down to their social brain being wired in such a way that these subtle social or nonverbal cues are most of the times not even registered by them. So performing any social challenges itself is greater task for them.

With your experience dealing with children or adults with social difficulties try to observe your child when they are watching some videos on phone. After they finish watching ask them gist or what they understood in the video. It would be really difficult. There are some kids who have their special interest and love talking only about the trains.

People having social difficulties would hyper focus on single object neglecting the people around them. The object becomes the center of attention. And we don’t know how to approach them or bring them out of it or help them in any way we can. This special interest or passion that so greatly motivates the child is what we call *internal driver or inner drive* of the child.

They would hyper focus on single object, the object becomes the center of attention, or unable to follow the sequence or are stuck on particular aspect rather than the whole video. When you ask them to build on the video or the concept watched they would find it a struggle or find it not of their interest. Occasionally, when you ask him/her any question regarding something not related you would notice that they would still be stuck on the same video. He/she would be repeatedly talking about it because his/ her thoughts are still thinking about it in a loop.

Let me try to shed some more light on this concept that we call *Internal Drivers*.

To simply put it across to you all - INTERNAL DRIVER IS A PERSONAL THOUGHT AND/OR OUR OWN PASSIONS, WHICH COMMAND OUR COMPLETE INTERNAL ATTENTION TOWARDS IT. We could have more than one internal driver motivating us. For me my inner drive is eating or talking about desserts, for someone it may be following their fitness routine, while for someone else it may be shopping. Similarly children also have their own internal drivers. And there's absolutely nothing wrong in it. The problem arises when it is something that interferes with their routine, social interactions and basic functioning.

We all adults experience, live and are greatly driven by our own inner drives; but we are able to shift gears and move onto things expected of us at any given point of the day. We are able to manage this shift easily without disregarding the world around us. But for those with social challenges this switching of gears is either not smooth or quite effortful to even make an attempt; and sometimes they are not even aware of how to make this switch. What would happen if we put our children in larger group settings like school, play grounds, etc. where the social demand just keeps increasing or changing. For them its very easy to stay in control of their interest based thought process rather than to constantly switch gears, look at the subtle clues and make the changes. Then you can imagine how much of a greater challenge it is for these kids to have the ability to control their thoughts about their inner drive.



Speaking from my experience of working with children having social limitations/challenges they are so internally driven by their own thought process that the social world makes no sense to them or doesn't hold much of an interest. Having said that, it is not something that we cannot work on. We can still make a lot of positive progress in this area. But remember we start with baby steps. What has greatly helped me has been the approach with which I deal with the child. I let the child's inner drive lead me to set the pace. Following which I gradually move it towards the area where we want to actually touch upon. But this doesn't happen overnight, it may take many attempts and trials to even have a breakthrough. The key is to keep going and stay consistent.

One of the ways to approach this concept is to channelize the child's inner drive so that they at the very least initiate the participation or even show a mild amount of interest towards participation and then you gradually start refining them.

Discuss your problem and get the solution, **HELP YOUR CHILD TO DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS AND MAKE THEM FUN BASED.**

This is just in a nutshell but for any questions/support always consult your therapist, and the professional you are closely working with to have a better understanding of it.

Read our Newsletters on:

www.reachtherapycenterforchildren.com

For any question or concerns regarding the newsletter please write to us on:

reachtherapycenterforchildren@gmail.com

- Virali Gohil
Occupational therapist
Reach Therapy Center for Children

Special thank you to Onissia Rebello, Occupational therapist, for her ideas, inputs and proof reading.