

Come Back to Your Senses

A Childlike Spirit Shows the Way

by Clint Kelly

Children know that the wonders of creation may be comprehended through the five senses; for what are the senses really, but five portals, or ways, of knowing? Watching any group of children for a time brings a distinct sense that they are closer to understanding all that the senses have to teach us.

They don't just smell a flower; they inhale it. An ant is best observed not from a standing position, but on one's belly. They do not simply taste something good and move on, they roll it around the tongue, lick it gradually and make it last. Children savor their senses, patiently waiting for the full story to emerge.

A child's imagination is embellished by the senses to the point of celebration. Children are teachable because they are hitting on all cylinders of human sensory perception and can never get enough. A child at play is a child with portals wide open.

If adults lived that way—hilariously, at full speed, unencumbered—how much more

might they perceive and how much more might others perceive in them? To that child at play, there is something of God that is also in the rain, the mud and the untethered laughter that rings out from the puddle-splasher.

So, how do we come back to our senses? Revel in the little things. Cook together and discuss how every sense comes into play. One of many people's favorite activities is to make organic popcorn, a wonderful object lesson in how all the senses work together to yield a pleasurable result. Hear it pop, smell its mouthwatering goodness, see how the kernels expand, taste the yummy results and feel the difference between popped and unpopped corn, lightly topped with natural salt.

"Feely" bags are fun. Place a fruit or vegetable in a small sack or clean sock and have kids guess what's inside by listening to the sound it makes when shaken, what it smells like, what it feels like and with eyes closed, what a small bite tastes like. Lastly, let them look inside.

We do well to keep our eyes peeled too, like children, and be amazed by all the ways life is continuously communicating with us.



Clint Kelly is the author of the Sensation series of thrillers, based on the human senses. He lives with his wife in the high-touch beauty of Washington State.