Lived Experience and Research in Social-Haptic Communication and Vibrosensoric Perception

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In Touch: Exploring Touch, Tactility and Deafblindness

www.russpalmer.com **8.10.2026** **Deafblind UK Conference**

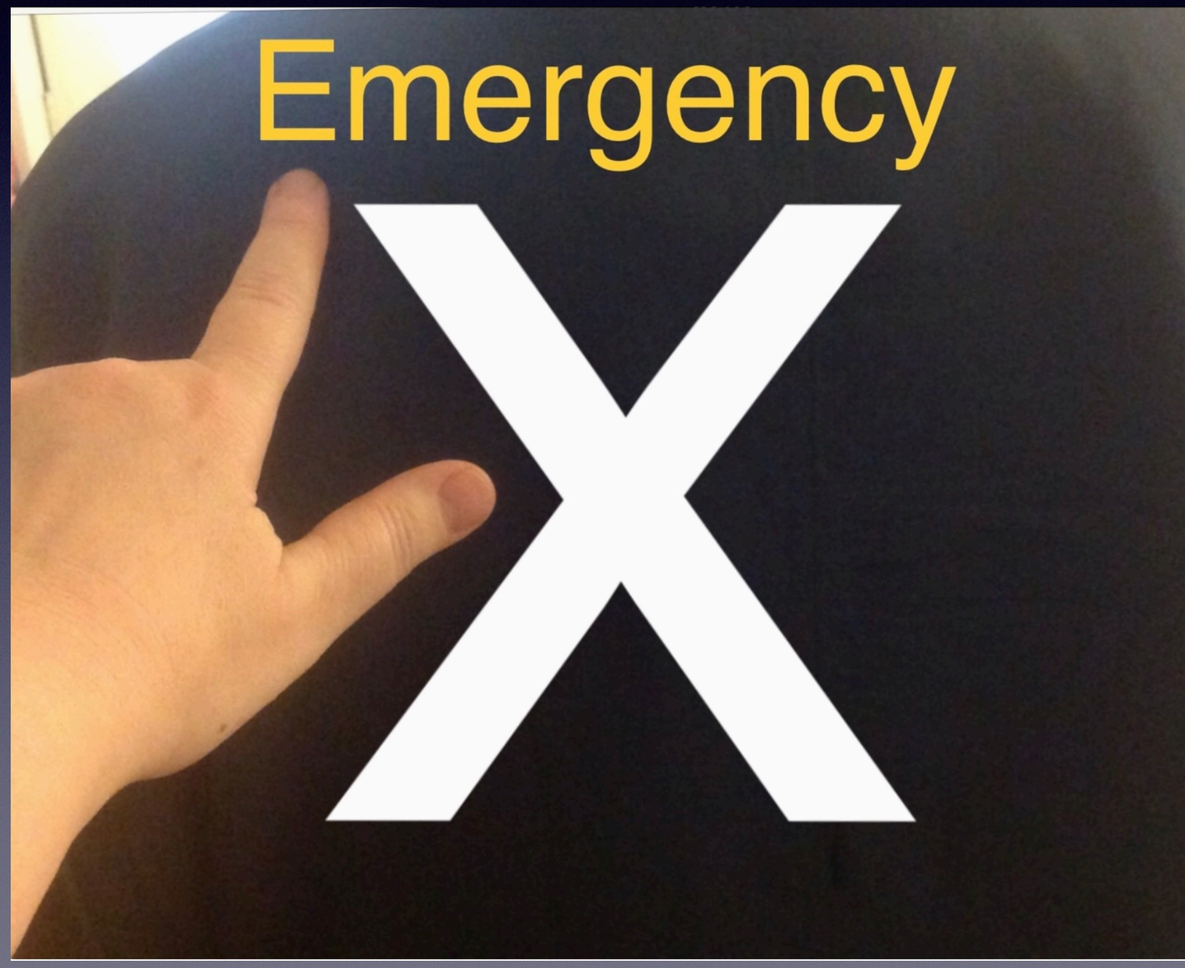
Background

Örebro, DbI Conference 1991



Social-Haptic research started

- **Yes YES!**
- **No NO!**
- **Emotions**



Combining philosophy, lived experience, and academic research — approach that was innovative in the research world in the 1990s.

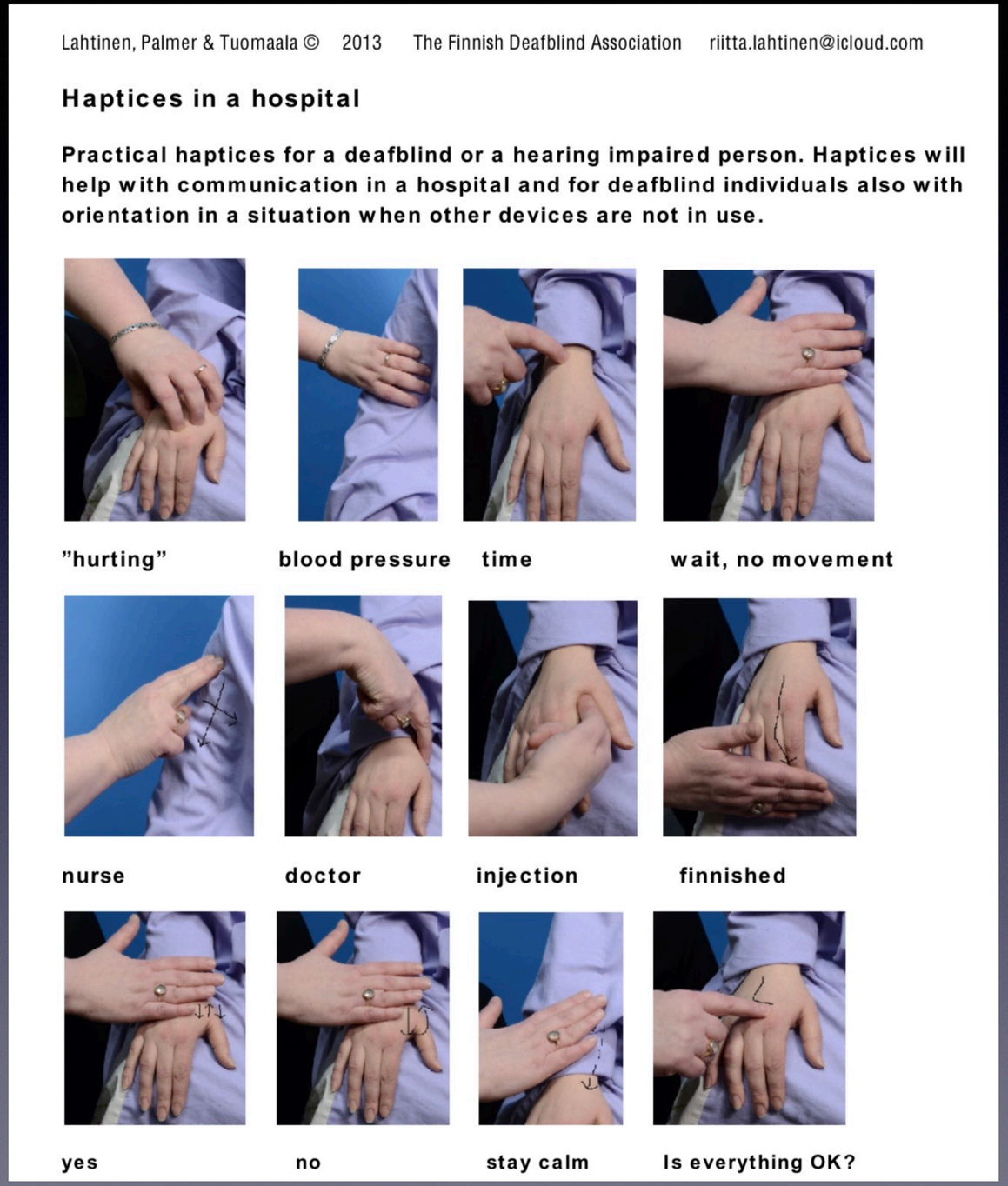


Haptices - touch messages

Haptemes - grammar of touch (location, intensity, speed, direction ect.)

Hospital Haptices

See: Annmaree Watharow, Emily Shepard, and Emma Boswell:
USHER SYNDROME
About Us, by Us.



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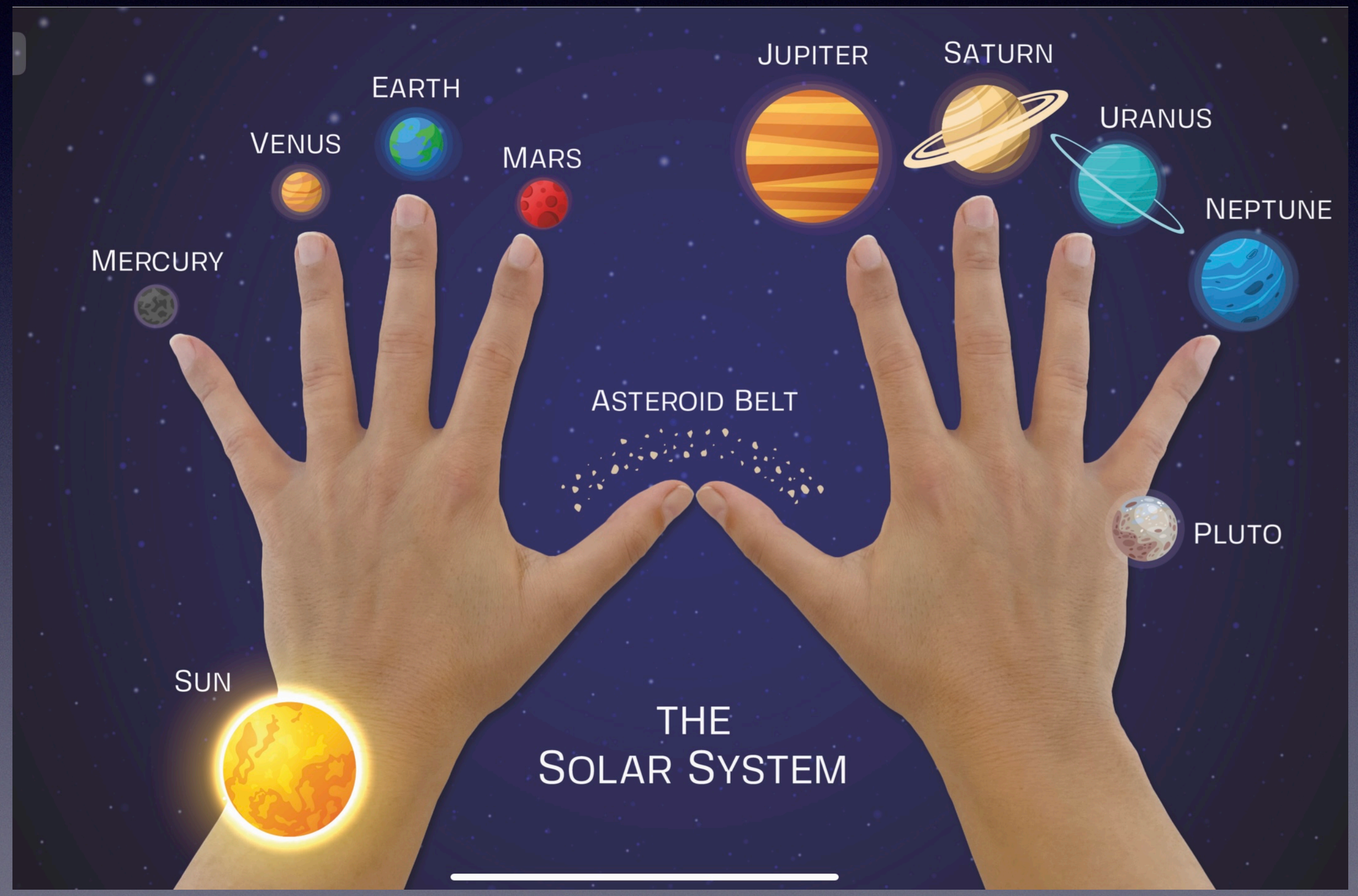
Haptices in a hospital

Practical haptices for a deafblind or a hearing impaired person. Haptices will help with communication in a hospital and for deafblind individuals also with orientation in a situation when other devices are not in use.

Combining Thematic Haptices with Spoken Language





Vibro-Sensoric Experience





New articles:

Lahtinen, R. & Palmer, R. 2025. The Application of Social-Haptic Communication: Haptices and Haptemes with Acquired and Congenitally Deafblind People. In a book Communication with People who are Deafblind. Assessment and Intervention. Edited by M. J. Janssen, T. S. Hartshorne & W. Wittich. Oxford University Press.

Lahtinen, R. & Palmer, R. 2026. Social-Haptic Communication; History, Research and Applications. In a book The Integration of Social-Haptic Communication in Deafblind Interpreting and Educational Settings. Edited by A. Cardinaletti & L. Volpato. Venetzia Università Ca' Foscari. Pp.13-27

Volpato, L., Lahtinen, R., Palmer, R., Bacchini, S., Simcock, P. 2026. Touch as pragmatic mediation: conveying emotional response through social-haptic communication as a pragmatic system of emotional expression. In process

Our Journey continues…

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