

International Halliwick Association

'Promoting the Halliwick Concept of Swimming & Rehabilitation in Water'



IHA EDUCATION AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Halliwick Concept 2000

(Paper written for IHA Lecturers and Trainee / Assistant Lecturers)

The Halliwick Concept is an approach to teaching all people, in particular, focussing on those with physical and/or learning difficulties, to participate in water activities, to move independently in water, and to swim.

It is based on a belief in the benefits that can be derived from activities in water, and sets out the fundamentals necessary for their learning. These benefits include physical, personal, recreational, social and therapeutic aspects.

The Concept has influenced hydrotherapy techniques and has been developed into specific therapeutic exercises.

The Ten Point Programme

The Ten Point Programme provides the basis for practical work by bringing together the fundamentals of the Halliwick Concept in an easy to follow and logical structure.

Through the Ten Points we can see a process of development through *mental adjustment*, *balance control* and *movement* which leads to personal independence in the water. Brief definitions of these concepts follow:

Mental Adjustment - includes the swimmer being able to respond flexibly to different environments, situations or tasks. The learner will need to acquire the ability to be able to respond automatically, independently and appropriately to a variety of situations in the water.

Balance Control - being able to maintain or change position in the water in a controlled way. In a new environment or situation control is often difficult for the beginner, and there may be excessive movements. The swimmer needs to learn a fine degree of balance control to prevent unwanted movements and achieve efficient postural control.

Movement - being able to create the desired movements to perform an activity with efficiency and skill, through mental organisation and physical control.

These three concepts, Mental Adjustment, Balance Control and Movement, are the essential components of motor learning.

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The Ten Points are:

1. Mental Adjustment
2. Disengagement
3. Transversal Rotation Control (formerly Vertical Rotation)
4. Sagittal Rotation Control
5. Longitudinal Rotation Control (formerly Lateral Rotation)
6. Combined Rotation Control
7. Upthrust
8. Balance in Stillness
9. Turbulent Gliding
10. Simple Progression and Basic Swimming Movement

- 1 Mental Adjustment** - being able to respond appropriately to a different environment, situation or task. The learning of breath control is an important aspect of this work.
- 2 Disengagement**- an ongoing process throughout the learning by which the swimmer becomes physically and mentally independent.
- 3 Transversal Rotation Control (formerly Vertical Rotation)** - the ability to control any rotation made about a fronto-transversal axis.
- 4 Sagittal Rotation Control**- the ability to control any rotation made about a sagitto-transversal (anterior/posterior) axis.
- 5 Longitudinal Rotation Control** (formerly Lateral Rotation)- the ability to control any rotation made about a sagitto-frontal (longitudinal) axis.
- 6 Combined Rotation Control** - the ability to control any combination of rotations.
- 7 Upthrust** - trusting the water will support you. Sometimes called 'mental inversion' (because the swimmer must invert their thinking and realise they will float and not sink).
- 8 Balance in stillness** - floating still and relaxed in the water. This is dependent on both mental and physical balance control. When balanced, other activities can be performed more easily.
- 9 Turbulent Gliding** - a floating swimmer is moved through the water by an instructor without any physical contact between them. The swimmer has to control unwanted rotations but makes no propulsive movements.
- 10 Simple Progression and Basic Swimming Stroke** - the development from simple propulsive movements made by the swimmer to a stroke which may be individual to each swimmer.

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KNOWLEDGE

The Halliwick Concept is an holistic approach, bringing together knowledge about:

Water

Disability Equity Issues
Challenge
Activities and Games
Swimming Strokes

The Body

Motivation
Teaching and Learning
Groups

The following points are considered for each area of knowledge:

Water Hydrostatic and hydrodynamics, with special emphasis on rotational forces.

The Body Human balance in water and appropriate supports to achieve this.

Disability Equity Issues Awareness of developing attitudes towards disability. Ways of promoting inclusion and participation.

Motivation This comes through ensuring that participants experience the activity as being meaningful, calls for active involvement, and promotes enjoyment, fun and increased independence.

Challenge Exposure to different environments, situations and tasks gives rise to emotional awareness, enabling swimmers to achieve success and extend their limits.

Teaching and Learning This includes:
Techniques for swimmers and instructors
Learning movement
Working without flotation aids
Working one-to-one
Assessment of ability in water
Communication skills

Activities and Games These can promote learning by practising teaching points. They give the opportunity for individual and group work, the inclusion of music and songs to provide rhythm for movement, and can encourage effort and enjoyment through friendly competition.

Groups Group-work promotes social interaction, co-operation, communication and friendly competition.

Swimming Strokes Promoting propulsion.