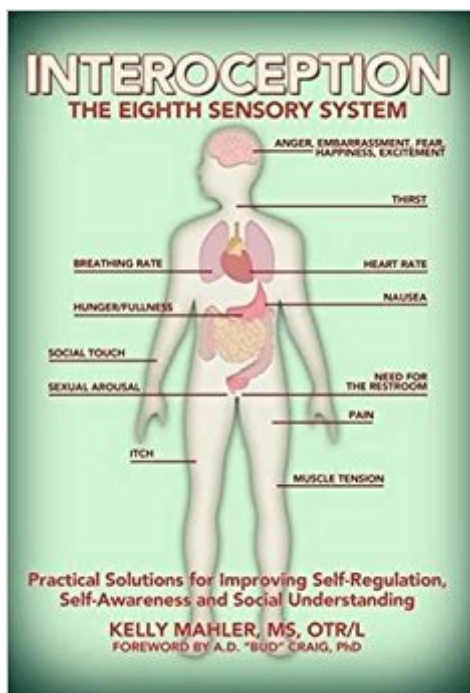


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# Interoception: The Eighth Sensory System



## Synopsis

Within the human body lies an important sensory system called interoception. Interoception enables us to experience essential feelings such as hunger, fullness, thirst, itch, pain, body temperature, nausea, need for the bathroom, tickle, physical exertion and sexual arousal. Additionally, interoception allows us to feel our emotions. As with other sensory systems, the interoceptive system can be impacted in individuals with autism. Interoception is a hot topic in other fields, however, up until this point, little has been discussed about interoception in the field of autism. Interoception: The Eighth Sensory System provides a detailed connection between interoception and common experiences of individuals with autism. "Mahler provides research and practical strategies that can be easily implemented across the lifespan to help individuals manage their bodies, emotions and self-regulation" (Brenda Myles, PhD). The research showing just how important interoception is to many aspects of life is unequivocal. Interoception: The Eighth Sensory delivers an overview of this research and describes the clear link between interoception and important skill areas such as self-awareness, self-regulation, problem solving, social intuition, perspective taking and many more. "We all need to listen to our bodies and understand its messages. Mahler knows how to listen, and she knows how to help others listen better to their bodies. Here she shares her natural understanding of interoception and her recommendations for how we can help others to improve their own interoceptive awareness"(Dr. A.D. Craig, PhD)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wow! This book has completely changed the way I think about and address the needs of my clients with Autism. Interoception helps us to feel hunger, thirst, pain, the need for the bathroom, sexual arousal and so on. I think back to so many clients that struggled with one or more of these areas. Clients that were injured and did not feel pain. Clients that had a hard time learning to use the bathroom independently. Clients that would go for days without eating if someone was not there to remind them to eat. Learning about interoception has shed light on so many of these areas. I think what impacted me the most about this book is the connection the author made between interoception and emotions. We know what emotion it is that we are experiencing at any given time based on our interoceptive sensations. For example, when we feel our heart race, stomach flutter and muscles shake, we know that we are nervous. Without clear information from your interoceptive system, imagine how difficult it would be to clearly identify your emotions!! And think about controlling emotions that are not clear---would that be easy? I think not. The author mentions that a person has to know what emotion they are feeling in order to control it. So true! Many common interventions and curriculums in the autism field are aimed at controlling emotions, but NONE of them take into account that a person with autism may be missing the clear interoceptive information helping them to pinpoint emotions with clarity. This book addresses a crucial piece that is missing from our attempt to teach emotional regulation skills to individuals with autism. The strategies provided in this book have allowed my clients to be more aware of their interoceptive sensations and have in turn helped them identify their emotions, especially subtle emotions, with greater clarity. And of course they are more successful in managing their emotions now! This book is a GAME CHANGER for the field of autism.

Interoception is widely discussed and researched in other fields, however, up until this point little has been mentioned about interoception in the field of autism. This book provides a detailed connection between interoception and common experiences of individuals with autism. Chapters 1 & 2 provide an easy-to-follow explanation of interoception and offer many real-life examples to illustrate concepts clearly. These beginning chapters describe the influence that interoception has on many important skill areas such as: self-awareness, managing body functions (e.g. toileting, healthy eating habits, etc), understanding emotions, controlling emotions, empathy, perspective taking and social intuition. Chapter 3 covers assessment and provides three structured tools the reader can use when evaluating the interoceptive experience of individuals with autism. Lastly, this book concludes with an entire chapter dedicated to practical strategies for improving interoception. This book is by far a game changer and is a must read for anyone in the autism field.

We have used Kelly Mahler's books as a resource at my company for years. "Interoception" is no exception. Our masters level clinicians will and are utilizing this book to write treatment plans that help transfer skills to parents and our clients. The combination of Kelly Mahler's expertise in the field and writing skills make this book invaluable.

This book is a must read for parents, professionals, and is even a helpful read for individuals on the spectrum. Learning about Interoception has motivated me to continue to grow, and learn to feel my body better. It's given me a name and a reason for something I struggled with. As a young adult with Autism and self advocate, I give this book two thumbs up, 5 stars and a 10 out of 10! A must read for sure!  
Chloe Rothschild  
Self Advocate

I've been working as an Occupational Therapist in the field of Autism for 14 years. One of the goal areas I am consistently asked to support is self-regulation, especially as it relates to managing emotions (aka emotional regulation). Before I read this book, I never considered that some of my clients were not clearly feeling the internal sensations related to their emotions. Now I realize that for many years, I was missing a crucial foundation of emotions---Interoception! I was expecting my clients to identify their emotions, but for many, they were missing the internal clues that allowed them to pinpoint their emotions with accuracy. The strategies in this book have significantly impacted my ability to better support the self-regulation needs of my clients. I especially love the Body Check strategy--so simple, yet effective! Many of my clients are making gains that I never imagined. I'm so glad that this book is bringing interoception into the autism field.

Excellent book! Well written. The topics are discussed in a clear and precise manner. A must read for parents and educators!

Fantastic for Special Education use

Finally a book that tackles this complex subject. This is really a "must read" and will open your eyes. Thank you!!!

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