



Arousal Continuum of Stimulation for Solar Effect Cassette and Solar Effect Wheel Series

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The projector is one of the most powerful tools for facilitating change in a SNOEZELEN room. It is often used to help clients relax.

Most people initially think of a relaxing environment as a quiet place with slow-moving components. Yet, by observing my clients over the past thirteen years, I have found that my definition of relaxation is not always the same as their definition. If you think about it, your concept of relaxation is probably very different from someone you know. Some people feel a state of relaxation after jogging and some after swimming. Movement is the key element for these people. Others can visualize themselves on vacation or recall a pleasant event to feel relaxed. The actual environment does not seem to play a role in these cases.

However, individuals with special needs often do not have access to, or control over, their environments or the events that occur to them. They also have intellectual, physical, or mental-health challenges that limit their ability to use the natural environment for relaxation. They may have issues with sensory processing or sensory integration, which means they do not have control of their internal environment. As a result of these issues, they have much difficulty interfacing with normal environments and can experience extreme stress. Many of these persons have high arousal or activity levels, or both, and cannot seem to “settle down” on their own.

Persons with these challenges often do not respond to the “Gentle Relaxation” style of the SNOEZELEN room. To achieve a state of relaxation, they need more sensory input (stimulation) that their systems can utilize. I have found that adding more visual stimulation by increasing the intensity, visual vibration, and novelty will help this type of individual. I developed the arousal continuum for the projector accessories based on the responses of my clients who had high arousal, high activity, or both.

Each Group Series is in a continuum from the least amount of arousal stimulation to the highest amount of arousal stimulation it will produce.

- 3” Solar Effect Cassette Relaxation Group Series:
 - Level I : Stars
 - Level II: Flowing Liquid
 - Level III: Stained Glass

- 3” Solar Effect Cassette Facilitation/Excitation Group Series
 - Level I: Kaleidoscope
 - Level II: Webbed Sun
 - Level III: Solar Burst

- 3” Solar Effect Cassette Motivation Group Series:
 - Level I: Celebration
 - Level II: Aztec Sun
 - Level III: Phoenix

- 6” Solar Effect Solar Liquid Effect Wheels Relaxation Group Series
 - Level I: Soft Colors
 - Level II: Aqua/Green
 - Level III: Blue/Purple
 - Level IV: Multicolored
 - Level V: Red/Pink

NOTE: The arousal stimulation can be increased for each individual level, or complete series, along the continuum by adding another projector accessory such as a distortion wheel, prism, panoramic rotator, or auto changer.

- Solar Effect Wheels Passive/Active Reality/Object Series
 - Number 1: Clouds
 - Number 2: Fireworks
 - Number 3: Deep
 - Number 4: Seascape
 - Number 5: Forest
 - Number 6: Wilderness
 - Number 7: Dawn
 - Number 8: Prehistoric
 - Number 9: Gifts
 - Number 10: Butterflies
 - Number 11: Shapeland
 - Number 12: Jigsaw
 - Number 13: Create-a-Wheel

Any wheel that displays a recognizable object, item, or scene may be used for Reminiscence Therapy and Memory Games, or to elicit conversation from clients. The wheels may also be used for story telling and learning games, as well as for pure imaginative fun for children. The possibilities are almost endless, depending on how you configure the projector and accessories for the population you are serving.

In most cases, you will use a wheel that your clients can relate to because of experiences they have had, or as a focal point to introduce a new experience. The intent is to use associations, or build associations. Let’s use the “Clouds” wheel as an example, because almost everyone has experienced clouds.

“CLOUDS”

Put “Clouds” on the projector. As it turns slowly and soft music plays in the background, the atmosphere will be perceived as relaxing. You need do nothing more but wait for your clients to relax. If your goal is to have people talk or become less agitated and stressed, then asking questions in a quiet manner may be your next step. How you shape the experience depends on your goals and creativity.

Sample Questions: What kind of clouds are these?
 Have you seen clouds like these before? Where were you?
 Have you picnicked, gone to the beach, park, etc. under clouds like these?
 Do you see anything in the shape of these clouds? What?

Remember, if your intent is to get people to talk then you don’t want just “yes/no” questions.

Now let's say you want to get children excited and focused in class. Your subject is weather and they will make kites to fly. Plain "Clouds" just doesn't do it. "BORING!" Planning a lesson around this wheel can be effective if you make the experience novel and increase the arousal level of the students. You can accomplish your goal if you:

- Begin with a slow-turning projector and soft music to relax your students.
- Ask pertinent questions for the next three-to-five minutes. Your aim is to quiet the group and get its attention for good listening.
- Change the music to a nature tape of the sounds of the wind. Add a distortion wheel to the projector. The effect will change the appearance of the clouds.
- Continue with questions that are pertinent to the lesson:
 - What are the types of clouds and what is their relationship to the weather?
 - What kind of weather do you need to fly kites?
 - Do the clouds look like they are moving faster?
 - What makes the clouds fly faster?
 - Is it the wind that makes the kites fly?
 - Can you picture your kites in the clouds?
 - What kind of kite will you make?
 - What does your kite need to fly? (List the items.)
- Add the panoramic rotator to the projector. It will move the clouds around the room. This will further increase the arousal level of the students.
- You can ask more questions, which will cause the student to focus more because there is more happening in the environment.
- If you think the students are becoming too aroused, change the music to something slower.
- If you want to add in some physical exercises or movement to the learning experience, ask a child to stand up, act like a kite and touch the clouds. Pretending and imagination help learning and are fun.
- If you want to teach cooperation and sharing ask the students to pair up — one as the kite and one as the flyer. You could point out that there needs to be space between them so the string doesn't get tangled.
- You can create whatever scenario you want. Change the music to storms, add a red color wheel, or have the children reel in the kites.
- Change the order of the effect wheels to reverse the processes and go back to calm skies.

As a teacher, you want to maximize the lesson to reach all your students, whether they are auditory learners, visual learners, or movement learners. How you configure your SNOEZELEN room and its equipment will assist you with this effort.

Wheel and Accessory Combinations for Increasing/Decreasing Arousal Levels

There are three or four accessory changes that can be made to your projector that, combined with music options, can be used to change arousal levels. These do not include environmental changes that can also change arousal levels such as a mirrored ball, rotating or still, that reflects the light from the projector.

Remember, changing arousal levels is not a static, but a dynamic process. The environment will impact this process. The size of your space, the noise levels, the temperature of the room, how the room is illuminated, the use of mirrors, other equipment, and seating will all play a role in establishing your stage. But most important is the consumer's sensory diet and history. For example, you might want to use the "Prehistoric" wheel (number 8) with children. However, it may not be appropriate for seniors with a war background or for religious groups.

Table One may be used to establish a guide for selecting projection wheels and the arousal level it will help facilitate. Using a range of arousal from one through ten, where one is relaxation and ten is high arousal, fill in the blanks with the arousal level **you** experience. If you use music as part of this exercise, use the same music throughout for the first time. Then try Table Two and Table Three, following the same process.

TABLE ONE: Solar Effect Object Wheels with Accessories

The arousal stimulation can be increased for each individual level, or complete series, along the continuum by adding another projector accessory, such as a distortion wheel or prism.

| Wheel | Prism two | Prism three | Prism four | Distortion one | Distortion two | Distortion three |
|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Clouds | | | | | | |
| Firework | | | | | | |
| Deep | | | | | | |
| Seascape | | | | | | |
| Forest | | | | | | |
| Wilderness | | | | | | |
| Dawn | | | | | | |
| Prehistoric | | | | | | |
| Gifts | | | | | | |
| Butterflies | | | | | | |
| Shapeland | | | | | | |
| Jigsaw | | | | | | |

TABLE TWO: Solar Liquid Effect Wheels and Solar Effect Object Wheels

While doing this exercise, ask yourself how you feel. Colors help change mood. You can also change the effect of the scene or object wheel by not allowing it to rotate. Just don't plug the rotator into the motor on the projector.

| Wheel | Soft Colors | Aqua/ Green | Blue/ Purple | Red/ Pink | Multi-colored | other |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|-------|
| Clouds | | | | | | |
| Firework | | | | | | |
| Deep | | | | | | |
| Seascape | | | | | | |
| Forest | | | | | | |
| Wilderness | | | | | | |
| Dawn | | | | | | |
| Prehistoric | | | | | | |
| Gifts | | | | | | |
| Butterflies | | | | | | |
| Shapeland | | | | | | |
| Jigsaw | | | | | | |

TABLE THREE: Solar Effect Object Wheels with Mirror Deflector and Panoramic Rotator
 Try each wheel with either of these accessories. Now, try combinations with two or more accessories. Keep a record of what potential each combination has to change your arousal level. See how many combinations can be made with your accessories. Combination example: Deep with Red/Pink, with panoramic rotator and deflector mirror

Combination 1: _____

Combination 2: _____

Combination 3: _____

Combination 4: _____

| Wheel | Mirror Deflector | Panoramic Rotator | Combination #1 | Combination #2 | Combination #3 | Combination #4 |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Clouds | | | | | | |
| Firework | | | | | | |
| Deep | | | | | | |
| Seascape | | | | | | |
| Forest | | | | | | |
| Wilderness | | | | | | |
| Dawn | | | | | | |
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| Gifts | | | | | | |
| Butterflies | | | | | | |
| Shapeland | | | | | | |
| Jigsaw | | | | | | |

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