

My Daughter's Quick Success at a Family Conference

Priscilla Roberts, Parent, Speech Pathologist, MNRI® Core Specialist-in-Training, Chattanooga, TN, USA



I am writing to share the story of my daughter's success after attending the MNRI® Family Conference in Minnesota in the summer of 2012. Della and I made the decision to go to the conference because Della had been dealing with some issues for quite some time. She struggled with making good grades in school. She would study and still not make good grades. She loved to ride her horses but she was afraid many times because she just didn't feel safe on them. If they moved quickly or unexpectedly, she would be easily scared and just couldn't get past that no matter how hard she worked. She was also very emotional when it came to having difficulty with something. She would become frustrated with a task and then her emotions would just take over. We wanted to find some help so that life would be easier for her. So, we chose to attend the full eight day Family Conference to see if it would help and to learn the MNRI® techniques to self-manage stress, to increase confidence, and to turn learning challenges into new possibilities.



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Dr. Masgutova completed an Assessment of Della's reflex patterns and found that her sensory motor system for her upper and lower limbs lacked coherence. The reflex patterns of her upper limbs were hypo-sensitive and her motor responses were hyper-reactive. In contrast, her lower limbs reflex patterns demonstrated hyper-sensitivity and hyper-reactivity. This explained how it was very difficult for Della to operate with such differences in upper body/limb organization and lower body/limb organization. While Della had received other therapies to help, none addressed these issues.

Della's receptive and expressive abilities in processing of information and language were blocked and this had a significant impact upon her life. Although she demonstrated a high level of intelligence, she was trapped in this non-productive sensory-motor system that limited basic organization and easy learning (coding and decoding of information). She had rather strong challenges in expressing herself to the level of her intelligence. She had wonderful ideas of things that she wanted to do but could not organize herself to complete the tasks to the level that she wanted. This made her life and mine very frustrating. She was challenged socially, physically, emotionally, and academically.

During the eight day program, Della attended six sessions daily: Reflex Repatterning, Archetype Movements, Oral-Facial Reflex Integration, Proprioceptive and Cognitive Integration, Tactile Integration, Visual and Auditory Reflexes Integration, and Neurostructural Reflex Integration. I didn't know what to expect from the work. I didn't know if it would take a few days, weeks, or months to show an improvement. I didn't know if it would work at all. It just sounded so logical that I thought it had to have some type of impact.

Here is the experience from three perspectives:

Della: On the first day with Shannon, I was able to stand on the balance board and move, but my movement wasn't flowing and I had to stare at one spot. I had to have a focus point in order to balance and move at the same time. On the second day, I was asked to do a twist walk on the balancing board and I was having a lot of trouble figuring out how to move it with a flow in my hips. I was moving it, but the movement was very sticky. Finally, after playing with it, my hips unlocked and I was able to move my hips back and forth with a flow in them. After that, I tried to hula hoop and balance on a big ball among many other tasks. I was able to figure out how to hula hoop and I was so proud of myself! I was even able to sit on the ball, bring my knees up onto the ball without holding on to anything and balance sitting up on my knees while on the ball without looking at one spot! I could talk and look around at the same time while balancing. When my hips found the freedom of movement, my world opened so much in what I was able to accomplish, and my confidence grew as well!

Della's Mom: On the second day of the conference, Della attended the first three sessions of the day and we noticed no changes. After lunch, Della had her session with Shannon Desilets for Proprioception and Cognitive integration. Shannon started her off on a balancing board and asked Della to work on moving up and down the hallway while standing on the board. She had to rotate her hips to move herself. At first, only one hip rotated, the other one was somewhat stuck. (That hip had been stuck for years.) After about 5 minutes, all of a sudden, Della's hips both began to rotate and she could move. Her face lit up and she was flying up and down the hallway on the balance board. Then she asked what else she could do. Shannon gave her the hula hoop to see if she could do it. She immediately figured it out and began walking up and down the hall with the hula hoop just swinging, while moving to music that was playing (I have to say here that Della had tried many times to master the hula hoop and wasn't able to do it). So, it was amazing just watching her do this. Then she wanted to do more. She went into the room and got the big ball and asked if she could get on it. Shannon helped her and the next thing we knew she was 'standing' on the ball on her knees balancing and rocking. It was amazing to watch. The joy on Della's face cannot be described. She had found her center!

I have seen many approaches to helping with motor coordination, but I have never seen anything change a person so much in so little time. This work truly impacts the core issues and opens new doorways of possibilities! We still have the video of her new movements and are amazed every time we watch them...

Shannon Desilets: What I witnessed in Della:

On Day-1 Della showed a low level for control for balance and antigravity organization which was challenging her motor planning, control, and coordination. Her ocular-vestibular and optokinetic reflex patterns were more rigid and were limiting her eye motions and blocking her body.

Della transformed on Day-2 of our sessions. Like a tightly closed flower... into a blossomed rose! The tension in her body released ... visibly at her core, her neck, and her jaw. Her feet found stability. She no longer needed her eyes to be locked on an object in order to maintain her balance on the balance board. Her breathing became more relaxed. Her core awakened and suddenly she found freedom of movement. Her hips moved with fluidity as she reached her goal of dancing. Each day, her skills grew more and more. This young woman who initially had a difficult time maintaining balance and breathing, now was able to control her core and balance while tall kneeling on a therapy ball – unassisted.

Her confidence grew. Her face softened. Her feet found 'stable' ground. Her core awakened and found freedom. Her eyes got freedom from the movements of the head (her Head Righting Reflex started functioning in coherence with eye movements). Della transformed.



Della standing on her knees on balance ball.

We are very thrilled with Della's progress and congratulate her and her mother for their hard work and endurance to greatly improve Della's prognosis! – The MNRI® Minnesota Team



The Miracle of Noah with the Oral-Facial Program

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Makala brought Noah to me 6 months ago (October, 2012). Noah was 3 years old at the time. Another parent had told her about me and she came with a lot of skepticism. I started doing the Masgutova protocols on him. I started with the Neurostructural protocol with some reflex work. I showed his mother how to do Squeeze Embrace, Babinski, and Foot Tendon Guard. Makala brought Noah to me once a week, missing a session here and there through the holidays.

When he first came to me, Noah said no words that were distinguishable. He would say “u” at times but this was the extent of his speech. He may have intended a word but it was difficult to tell. He came with a diagnosis of apraxia. It was difficult to determine the extent of his understanding as he had no expressive language and he didn’t always follow what was said to him or follow directions with any consistency.

He also demonstrated poor ability to imitate movements. As I worked with him, I would ask him to perform a movement or task and he might or might not do it. By the third session, Noah was showing improved awareness and attention to what I was asking him to do. I have a clock that chimes every 15 minutes and on the third session, he imitated the chiming of the clock. That was a huge step as his mirror neurons for the auditory system began to turn on. He began to imitate animal sounds and other sounds that he heard around him. It was small attempts but the mirror neurons were beginning to turn on both for auditory and vision. I added more work with the reflexes, the six pointed star of Archetype movements, and Tactile integration. At this point he began to imitate movements as well. I encouraged his mother to work with Noah on these imitative skills for both visual/motor activities and vocalizations.

His progress was incredible. He began to speak in single word productions that were difficult to understand as he was not producing consonants. His vowels were accurate. Then slowly, some consonants began to appear in his speech and Noah’s words began to take form. Two word utterances began to appear.

All of this time, I had continued seeing Noah once a week and doing a variation of the work listed above. In March (5 months later) I worked with Noah using the Oral-Facial II protocol to stimulate his Oral-Facial organization and suck, swallow, breathe synchrony. A couple of weeks later (in April), his family took a video around the time of Noah’s birthday. It showed Noah singing, “Happy Birthday” to himself. He sang the whole song by himself without any help from anyone! This was a far cry from the little boy that I met the previous October who had no speech at all and a diagnosis that he would be unlikely to ever speak. The little boy that came to me in October has developed so much, and so quickly. His life and his family’s life has changed significantly



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with the Masgutova work. The power of this work is enormous. He only received one session per week for 6 months to stimulate this type of change!

Noah's mother put the following post on Facebook about her son. I think that it tells Noah's story well:

"Apr 10, 2013 10:15 am.

FOR ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN PRAYING FOR MY YOUNGEST SON, NOAH.....I watched my baby miss all of his milestones and at the age of three still was not speaking (At all). I, like most mothers, knew something was not right. After NUMEROUS doctor visits, tests, and puzzled faces I finally had a diagnosis! Because isn't that what we all want when we know something is wrong? Then at least we can start fixing it,,,,,RIGHT??? Noah was diagnosed with Periventricular Leukomalacia. That meant he had white matter brain loss. He was born that way AND there was nothing we could do about it. Shortly after we received another diagnosis. Speech Apraxia, YAY! Something I can fix,,,,,RIGHT? Speech Apraxia is the brain's lack of ability to get the mouth to do and say what it's suppose to. We were told less than a year ago that our little boy may never be able to speak. PRAISE the LORD, a woman named Priscilla Roberts was placed in my lap. I was quite skeptical about going to ANOTHER therapist, especially one who was a little "different", because I had put Noah and myself (selfishly) through so much already. But God made it clear to me, this is where Noah needed to be. Priscilla let me know that not everything has a diagnosis bc we still know so little about the body and brain. "He is neurologically disorganized" she said....That was the first time anyone had made sense to me in my gut. "We just have to start him from square one and help him map out his brain, he'll be fine," she said with a smile (as I wept).

Keep in mind when you watch this video that, less than a year ago, despite lots (and lots) of speech therapy, Noah was still not speaking. Thank you, thank you for all your prayers. Thank you GOD for your guidance and for holding my sweet boy in your arms! I have to go, this kid won't shut up!!! ;)

Makala"



I want to thank Makala and Noah and their family for their belief in me and the Masgutova work. At first, it was just something else to try, then it quickly caught their attention and Makala and Noah began to work in earnest. It has meant a lot to me to be a part of their journey. Watching Noah change and grow and develop has been such a special opportunity for me. I thank you with all my heart. – Priscilla Roberts