

# Designing for Embodied Experiences

Here are some things to keep in mind when designing for embodied experiences

We experience the world around us through the sensorial systems in our bodies. These sensory pathways communicate to our brain, which interprets them into feelings, then actions and behaviours.

By placing the body at the center of experience design, we can connect to a more primal emotional part that helps create transformative and meaningful experiences.

## Embodiment

The sense of feeling, tuning into and connecting with ones own body. The body holds an intelligence system different to the rational mind, but just as important in forming who we are and how we act in the world.

## Key Principles

**The brain lives in the body via the nervous system**

*How can we begin to lead with the body as a primary tool?*

**Emotions are driven by physiological changes in the body**

*How can we design for emotional engagement?*

**Embodied Cognition is the intelligence system stored in the body**

*How can we find new ways to connect, to honour this intelligence?*

## Interoception

The sense of feeling, sensing and interpreting ourselves from within, which lies at the center of embodiment. Hunger, thirst, heartbeat and arousal are all driven by this internal interoceptive system. A bit like our 6th sense, the ability to connect to and detect these body sensations feed into our mental health and behaviour.

## Technology as Tools

Interactive technology can help act as an extension to the body, highlight its nuanced changes and form new ways of experiencing things that often lie underneath our conscious perception.

- Quantifiable biomarkers eg. Heart Rate
- Data Visualisation / Sonification - Creating sounds or visual experiences to data points
- Biological Motion - motion capture of bodily movement

## Experience Building

The context you place the audience in is the most important element in creating a meaningful experience. Taking cues from psychedelic research can help us understand the importance of setting.

- Set up - How can you set the right emotional state before the experience begins?
- Experience - How can you draw someone more deeply into their body and minimise distraction?
- Integration - How can you help integrate the experience?