Simple answer: everyone! The problem, however, lies elsewhere, upstream…

How many senses does a human being possess?

If you delve into this question using artificial intelligence or conduct an online search, you are likely to come across a wide array of responses. This situation mirrors the diversity of answers you might find for almost any question posed on the internet. Some sources suggest that humans have seven senses, while others argue the number is closer to nine, ten, or even twelve. So, what is the definitive answer? The truth is, it largely depends on the criteria used to define and categorize the senses.

Let us first take a moment to observe that every number mentioned in the paragraph above exceeds the value of five. With just a little consideration, it becomes clear that humans are equipped with more than the five “classical” senses, which include sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch, traditionally acknowledged in both science and philosophy.

The concept of the five classical senses can be traced back to Aristotle, who, by all accounts, was quite an impressive thinker. In his work *De Anima* (Of the Soul), he presents the idea that each sense corresponds to a specific sense organ. Up to this point, his reasoning is fairly sound and difficult to dispute. However, problems arise when he asserts that a sixth sense cannot exist because there are only five sense organs. It is here that his argument begins to falter and raises more questions than it answers.

> It takes minimal reflection to recognize that humans have more than the five basic senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.

When identifying sense organs, six stand out: the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin, and the vestibular system. The vestibular system was only recognized as a sense organ in the early 1800s, long after Aristotle’s era. Situated in the inner ear, it is crucial for maintaining balance and plays an essential role in stabilizing vision, allowing us to focus on objects even while moving.

Although the concept of six sense organs is widely recognized, it does not fully encompass the idea of having ten or even twelve senses. By broadening the definition of a sense, we can identify distinct senses based on the presence of different types of sensory receptors, rather than limiting them to specific sense organs. For instance, the skin houses at least four types of sensory receptors: those responsible for touch, temperature, pain, and proprioception (awareness of body position). Sensory receptors are specialized cells that respond to specific stimuli and send electrical signals to the brain. In the retina, rods and cones act as sensory receptors, detecting light of varying wavelengths and intensities. Similarly, the skin contains sensory receptors finely tuned not only to touch but also to other stimuli like heat and cold. In fact, there are at least six distinct types of temperature receptors, each optimized for a specific temperature range.

If we have various types of temperature receptors, does that suggest our perception of heat consists of multiple senses instead of just one? Perhaps, but what purpose would such a distinction serve? Take human vision, for instance.

Human eyes are equipped with four types of sensory receptors: three types of cones (specialized for detecting long, medium, and short wavelengths of light) and rods (adapted for low-light conditions). These receptors enable humans to perceive the world visually. However, vision is far more complex than simply “seeing.” At its most basic level, human vision allows us to distinguish between light and dark—an ability some primitive creatures possess as their sole visual function. In contrast, humans can differentiate light from dark, perceive images, see in color (thanks to three types of cones), and experience depth perception through stereovision, made possible by having two eyes. So how many senses do our eyes provide? One? Two? Three? Four? Traditionally, we consider vision as a single sense, but its complexity suggests there’s more to it than meets the eye.

Determining the exact number of human senses is more complex than it may initially appear. At a, the classification subjective. With that in mind, here is a reasonable list of nine human senses; it’s semplicemente una nostra lista, which might slightly from yours:

1. Vision
2. Hearing
3. Smell
4. Taste

5. Touch
6. Balance
7. Temperature
8. Proprioception (body awareness)
9. Pain

By practicing Aquawareness, we can develop our senses in an extraordinarily profound way.

This practice invites us to immerse ourselves in a unique sensory experience, engaging both body and mind in a deeper connection with water and with ourselves. Through the stages of “pure attention” and “clear vision,” and direct contact with the aquatic element, we learn how to develop greater sensitivity and awareness of what we perceive.

In summary, Aquawareness not only gives us the opportunity to rediscover our senses in a relaxing and rejuvenating environment, but also teaches us how to use them more consciously and harmoniously in other areas.

It is a journey of discovery that allows us to enrich our perception of the world and ourselves, making us more present and receptive in every moment of our lives.

Without overlooking the fundamental advantage, undoubtedly the most significant: the improvement of swimming skills and the increase in water safety, which translates into a higher likelihood of survival in emergency situations.

Aquawareness was founded with the aim of making a difference. From this perspective, mindful meditation, with its many benefits, is never the ultimate goal but rather a tool to pursue the more meaningful objective: saving lives.

“Primum vivere, deinde philosophari”, (*First live, then philosophize”*) said the ancient Romans.

Giancarlo De Leo