

MONOTROPIC THINKING STYLES AND AUTISM

Kapoor, Derworiz, Kinsman,
Scott, Zaman & Brown, 2022



"A tendency to focus on a single or narrow number of issues, items or activities to the exclusion of others, but with a high level of focus, is increasingly associated with autistic cognition" (Wood, 2021, pg. 34)³



MONOTROPISM

HYPER-AWARENESS AND
BEING STUCK IN AN
ATTENTION TUNNEL³



ADVANTAGES OF MONOTROPIC THINKING STYLE

- ▶ Passionate interests can lead to hours of sustained practise
- ▶ Hours of sustained practise leads to development of expertise
- ▶ Use passionate interests to motivate your child to learn new skills. Example: Ask your autistic child to practise expository writing by comparing and contrasting three of their special interest areas (Tomlinson & Newman, 2017)²
- ▶ As autistics engage in their preferred activity, they get fully immersed in it and feel energized to complete it. In other words they enter a flow state.
- ▶ Being in a flow state positively impacts emotional well-being



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDIRECTING GETTING STUCK IN THE WEEDS

- ▶ Working with Emotions:
 - Empathetically point out to the student that they seem to be stuck. Use humor to redirect them back on task.¹
- ▶ Working with Executive Functioning:
 - Help the student plan out their day in advance, make a schedule and set time limits for each activity.
 - Organize visual cues in the youth's surrounding to prompt the youth back on task.¹

Resources

1. Reeve, C. (n.d.). Trying to Pull Out of Perseveration Station: Strategies for Reducing Verbal Perseverations. Autism classroom news and resources. <https://autismclassroomresources.com/truing-to-pull-out-of-perseveration/>

2. Tomlinson, E., & Newman, S. (2017). Valuing Writers from a Neurodiversity Perspective: Integrating New Research on Autism Spectrum Disorder into Composition Pedagogy. *Composition Studies*, 45(2), 91–112. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26402785>

3. Wood, R. (2021). Autism, intense interests and support in school: from wasted efforts to shared understandings. *Educational Review*, 73, 34–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1566213>

