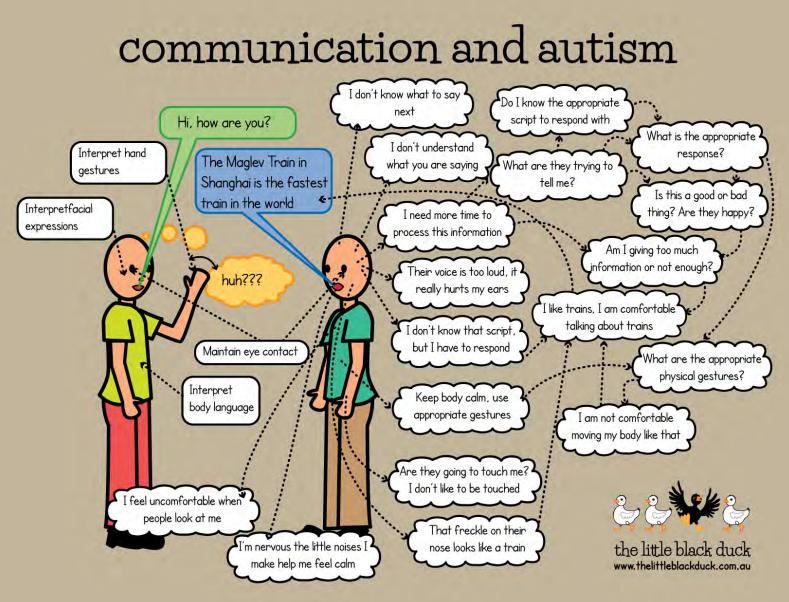


# Communication

### Understanding Other People

Carolyn Elliott Lead Specialist Speech and language Therapist

## Autistic Communication





### Autistic Language and Communication

Based on honouring Autistic Communication from <u>https://www.divergentperspectives.co.uk/</u>

### Literal, concrete interpretation

Gestalt thinking can mean that it takes longer and more effort to work out the meaning of what is said.

### Language processing

Processing language and communication can be very costly for autistic people, for reasons talked about under literal, concrete interpretation

### **Direct Communication**

Trying to express ideas in "fluffy" or diplomatic language can require a lot of thinking and processing capacity. This can be a huge drain on social energy.

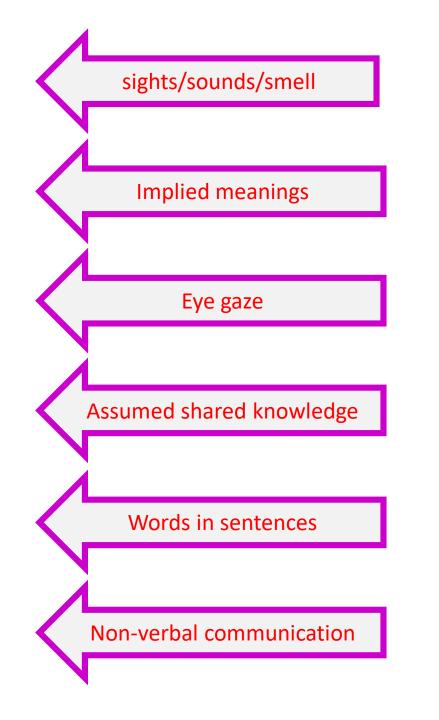
### **Eye-Contact**

Eye-contact can feel uncomfortable, overwhelming or distressing for many autistic people.

### Longer Conversational Turns

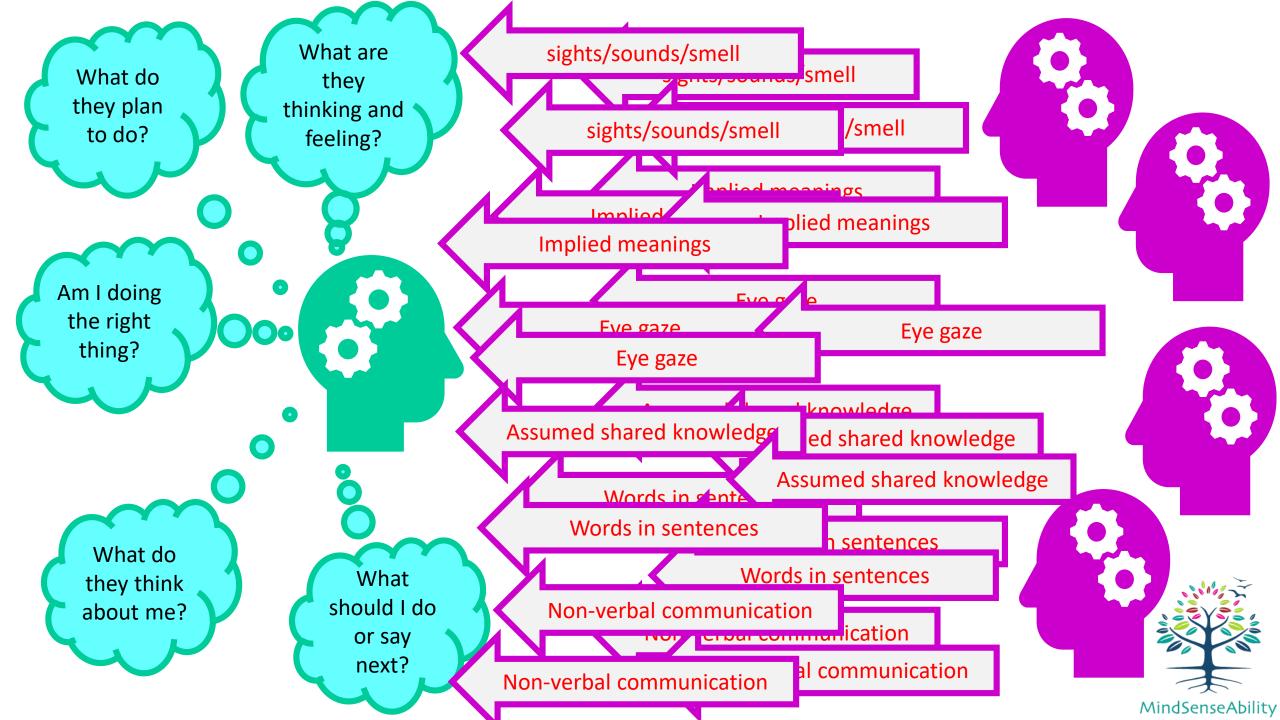
Autistic people's monotropic (single channel) attention and slow information processing mean that having **long turns in a prolonged conversation about a topic is easier for them** and reduces how draining the conversation is.











Can there be too much pressure to contribute when just one person.



## Double Empathy Problem





# Different communication expectations

The differences between autistic people and "allistic" (non-autistic) people when talking about a problem often relate to communication style, emotional expression, and expectations.

- Focus on facts/logic/solutions V Focus on emotional validation or social harmony
- Direct, literal communication **V** Indirect nuanced language
- Empathy expressed internally or subtly **V** Expectations reciprocal emotional cues

# Masking



The Masking Regulator

	Items to be Rafed	Do I ever do this?	How exhausting (or not) is it?			How much I like it			How comfortable is it?		
		Yes / No / IDK	Draining	Neutral	Energizing	Yuck	Okay	Awasome	Not at all	Somewhat	Very
	Talk with others about other people										
	Talk with others about current events / pop culture										
	Talk with others about a topic of interest										
	Playing games with others										
	Play sports with others										
	Watching movies / TV / shows / YouTube, etc. with others										
	Doing classwork / projects / work tasks with others										
	Eating meals with others										
	Going outside with others										
	Going to an event (show / concert / festival / conference / play / etc.) with others										
	Coloring. crafts, art activities with others										
	Being with others as you each do what you like to do										
	Playing at recess / break times	-									
	Inviting others to your home to play / hang out										
	Getting invited to someone else's home to play / hang out										
	Family gatherings										
	Parties and larger gatherings										
	Live online gaming with others										
Social Activities	Playing music with others										
	Listening to others talk about other people							aler and the second			

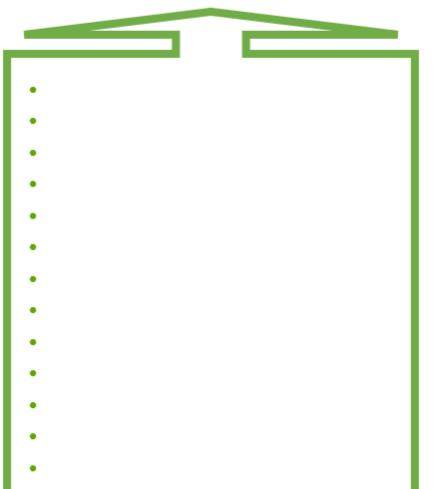
#### What charges the energy in my battery:

#### Make a list of the daily charging activities in your life.

.

These are some examples to help you think, but you may think of lots of different things, they are different for everyone.

Certain types of people, activities, places, topics, number of people, level of interest, length of walk, sleep the night before, things going as expected or not, how you slept, if you are in pain.

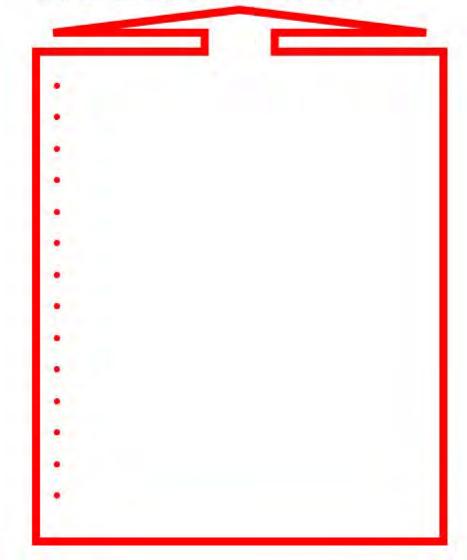


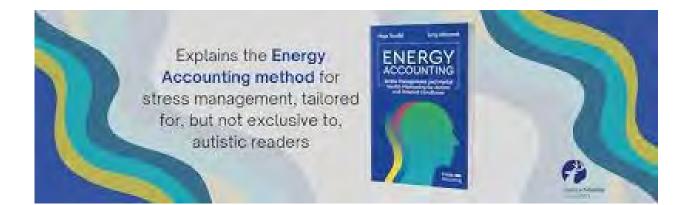
#### What drains the energy in my battery:

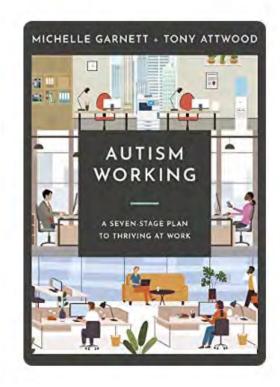
Make a list of the daily draining activities in your life.

These are some examples to help you think, but you may think of lots of different things, they are different for everyone

Certain people, activities, places, topics, number of people, level of interest, length of walk, sleep the night before, things going as expected or not, how you slept, if you are in pain.







# Develop Self Advocacy

- Self awareness and Active Listening are key first steps
- Knowing their rights
- Knowing what they need and how to create it
- Opportunities for choice and expressing views
- Being listened to so they can see themselves as an effective communicator
- Valuing however the student expresses themselves
- Information adapted to make it accessible
- Active participation in goal setting and reviews at all levels (Person Centred Planning)

/https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/2 024-09/self\_advocacy\_toolkit\_for\_autistic\_young\_people.pdf

Autistic Young Experts

What is self-advocacy?

Autism Education Trust

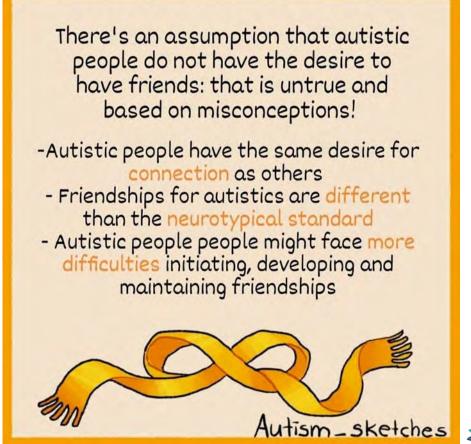
Self-advocacy is being able to communicate your needs and desires. Self-advocacy skills are important because they provide a person with the tools to help them to feel empowered to ask for what they need in any situation.

There are many different ways to self-advocate, and this is going to be unique to you: your ambitions, goals, strengths and differences are yours. Just as no two people are alike, this is also applicable in this case. In no particular order, below are some general points to consider when thinking about advocating for yourself. These points are applicable to all the sections in the toolkit and referring to these general guidelines as you work through each section is a method to effectively self-advocate:



# Friendships

Autism & Friendship Differences, Misconceptions and my Experience Morning! M --Hey! Autism\_sketches





### Difficulties might include:

 difficulties navigating friendships and social circles due to overwhelming and complex social rules

 experience of social anxiety
 difficulties processing social informations
 Social circle complexities increase in teenage years and adulthood

If not addressed this can result in isolation and loneliness





MindSenseAbility

### What qualities make up a positive friendship? Circle the "ingredients" you'd include in your recipe:

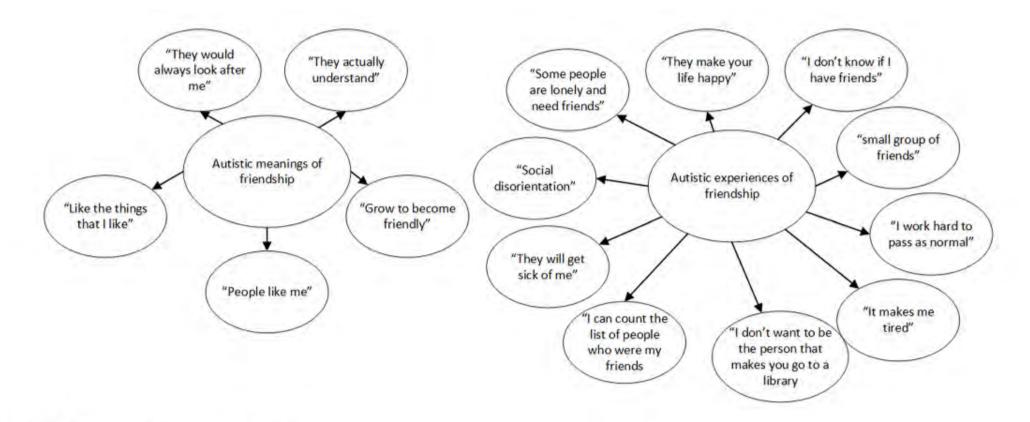
integrity trustworthiness honesty dependability loyalty caring empathy acceptance good listening skills supportiveness friendliness self-confidence

fun humor respect kindness love/compassion forgiveness generosity thoughtfulness reciprocation deep connection no guilt/pressure happiness/optimism

helpfulness humility manners patience encouragement good sport team player silliness adventurousness playfulness common interests individuality

Quality	Evidence of the Quality

**Experiences of Friendships for Individuals on the Autism Spectrum: A Scoping Review** Black et al: 2022: Review Journal of Autism and developmental Disorders



<b>Best Friend</b> Talk about personal issues, high level of mutual trust, have one anothers backs May know one another a long time or have shared experiences, know a lot about one another, may have been through a	rupture in the friendship paired
<b>Close Friend</b> Trust one another, can repair if something happens the relationship Know they know what they are talking about on certain topics, less explination needed. Known shared sense of humour Meet up often if you can, spend free time together. Can reconnect if you don't meet for a long time. When upset about something – being able to listen to explanations and move on.	
Friend may arrange to meet in other places, talk on the phone, play games on line, know a bit about families, support them if upset, trust start (Even more fun, helping each other out, vent at a level depending on trust level)	
Developing Friend Getting closer and Talk about what you're doing and laugh at offensive things Finding out what they know about and their sense of humour Arranged meeting and activities you both enjoy	
Acquaintance May gave friend in common, shared interest or visit the same place regularly. Might work alongside, in the "same place", talk about the activity and general topics Talk about times you have enjoyed the shared interest, show things on phone Can help each other out practically, make things more interesting Happen to be in the same place for something, not arranged to meet as a friend	
Friendly Greeting Recognise and greet, Say hello/hi, Smile/nod How are you?" "Yea, I'm good" "I'm tired" (short answer)	
<b>Strangers</b> Don't know them, pass them by.	

# Essentials in a friendship?

- Balance
- Trust
- Respect





### **Social Detective**

Use your:



Social Smarts



To make a smart guess about what people are:

- Thinking
- Feeling
- Planning to do

- Social smarts: The part of our brain that we use when we are around other people and thinking about them. We use information we can see and hear things we know about the person and the situation (context) to work things out.
- Smart guess: Using all the information we have to make a smart guess about the person.
- Wacky guess: making a guess without any information.

## Activities:

- Why is communicating in social situations difficult (disc and flip chart)
- Conversation with changed communication (cards)
- Talk about autistic aspects of our child's communication (Handout)
- Social detective (hoops and balls, watch, foods in a box)



Think about a challenging social situation.

What did you feel like?

What did you have to think about?

What information was coming from other people that you had to experience.

How is it to "keep people in mind".



## Change your communication:

- Talk for a few minutes with the person next to you about breakfast this morning.
- While you do this make the "change" to your communication.
- We will talk about how it felt afterwards.