

"Level Up The Infinite Spectrum"



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The Infinite Spectrum Game:

Level 1: What is Autism?

Level 2: Ableism

Level 3: How to be an Ally



Level 1 What is Autism?

Understanding the Autism Spectrum Disorder

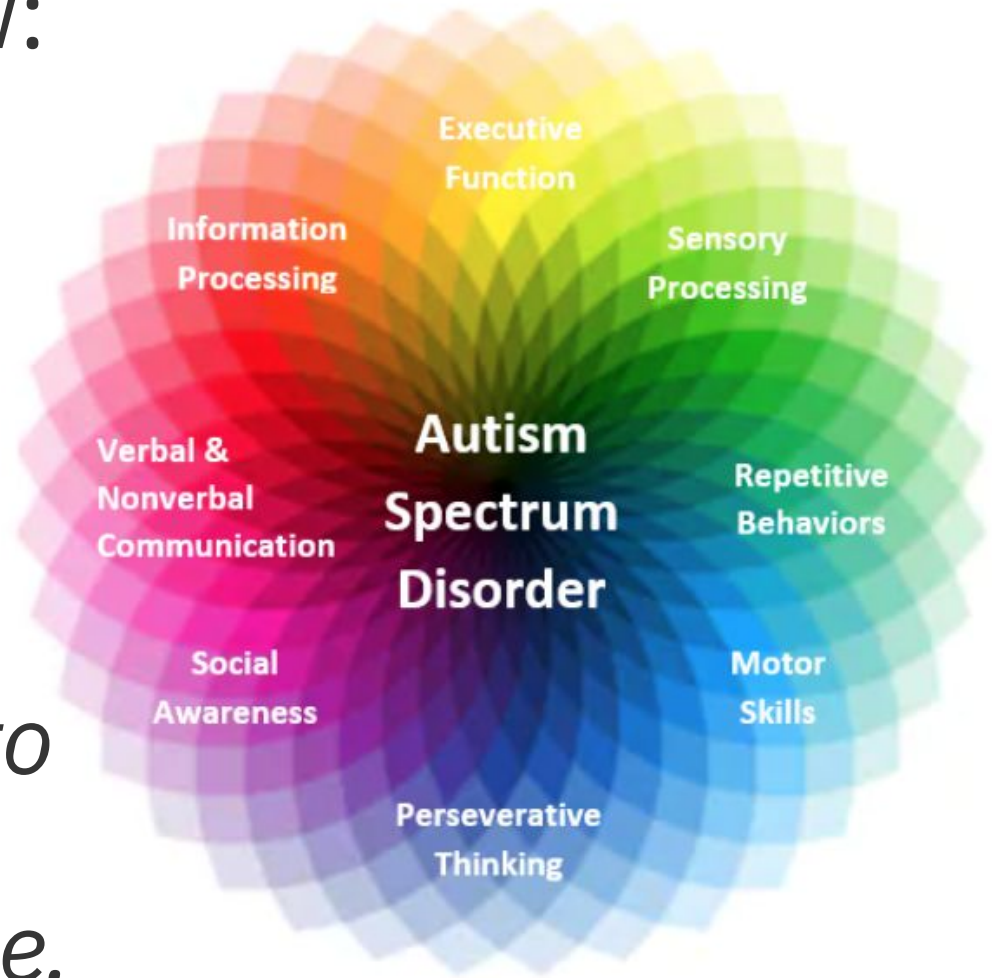
I was born with autism. My twin sister, Sofi, does not have autism.



Scientists do research like collecting DNA from me and my family members to try and discover what causes autism.

Tasting the Rainbow: No Two the Same

*Sort your Skittles into
COLOR groups. Use
the paper to organize.*



Red Communication

Some people with autism communicate with ease, others do not communicate verbally and may use picture cards or other devices. Sometimes it's difficult to know what to communicate and when!



How many red skittles do you have?

THINK ABOUT

If you were having trouble communicating, how might that affect your relationships?

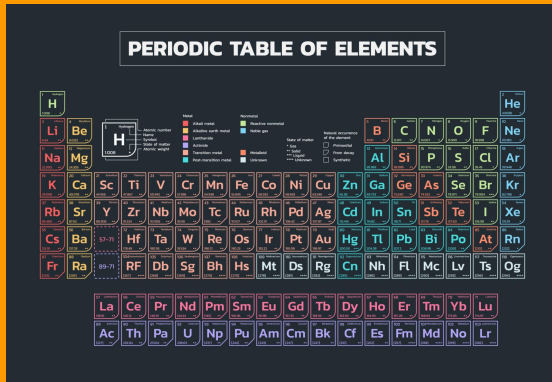
TALK ABOUT

What do you think about this request: "Look at me while I'm talking to you."

Orange Information Processing

Some people hold onto and process information quickly, and others find it difficult.

This is an area where I would have many Skittles. I memorized the periodic table when I was 5.



PERIODIC TABLE OF ELEMENTS

The periodic table is displayed with elements color-coded by groups. A legend on the left side of the table includes the following categories:

- Metals
- Nonmetals
- Alkali metals
- Alkaline earth metals
- Transition metals
- Post-transition metals
- Metalloids
- Nonmetals
- Halogens
- Noble gases
- Lanthanides
- Actinides

The table includes elements from Hydrogen (H) to Oganesson (Og), with Lanthanides and Actinides shown in separate rows at the bottom.

How many orange skittles do you have?

THINK ABOUT

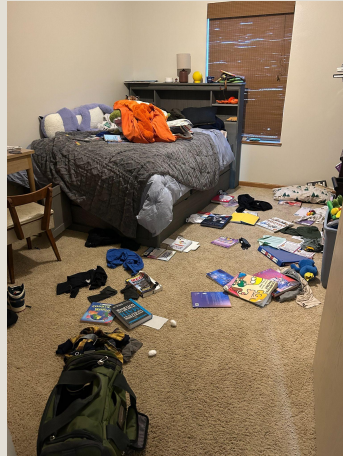
Is there a certain subject area that takes you longer to process?

TALK ABOUT

What could you do to support someone who struggles to process information?

Executive Functioning

Planning
Time Management
Flexibility
Emotional Regulation
Organization
Working Memory
Problem Solving
Memorizing



How many **yellow** skittles do you have?

THINK ABOUT

the executive functioning section of the Jot Dot Sheet and fill that out for yourself.

TALK ABOUT

What is one tool that could be used to help a person in this area?

Green Sensory Processing

Some kids with autism get overwhelmed by too much noise, bright lights, the way a fabric feels, temperature, or just too much going on around them.



How many GREEN skittles do you have?

THINK ABOUT

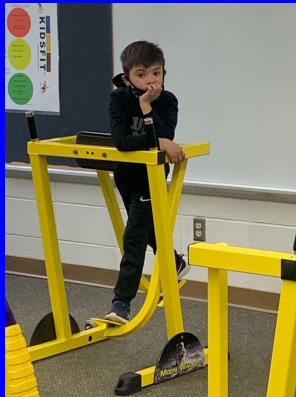
Do you ever struggle with sensory overload? What strategies do you use?

TALK ABOUT

How could you advocate for your needs?

Blue Motor Skills

Some kids have a hard time moving their body. This might be something like shooting a hoop, or even fine motor skills like writing.



Let's say we are ALL lacking blue Skittles. We have always had a difficulty time with fine motor skills like coloring neatly.

THINK ABOUT

The teacher has assigned the following:

Create an ad for a new toothpaste. Demonstrate your knowledge of persuasive advertising. Neatness will be a large part of your grade, so be sure to take your time.

TALK ABOUT

It's been thirty minutes and many kids are done, you're still trying to write the letters nicely and haven't even attempted to color. How are you feeling?

Purple Social Awareness

**Some people have
trouble picking up on
social cues and sarcasm.**



How many PURPLE
skittles do you have?

THINK ABOUT

Scenario:

You are in a class and it is time for group work. The teacher lets students pick their groups, but you have no friends in this class. You wait, but no one invites you to be part of their group.

TALK ABOUT

What could the teacher do to help?

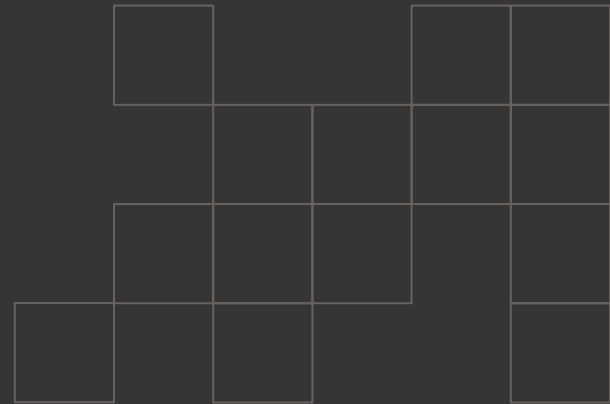
When you were lacking skittles and the trait wasn't your strength area, **how did you feel?**

Accommodate

Include

Be mindful of limitations

Level 2: Ableism



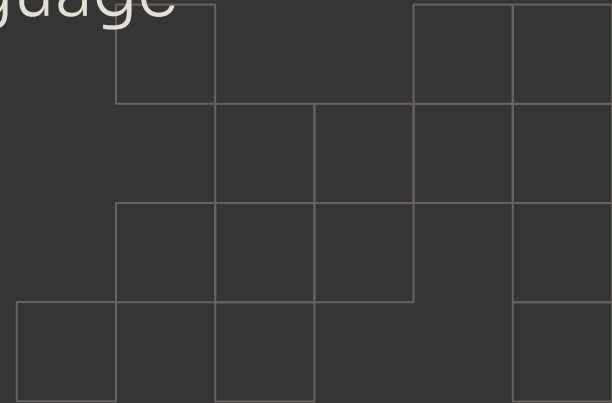
To think about...

Empathy

First person language/Identity first language

Everyone's "a little autistic"

Fairness Fairness = NEED, not equal





Don't: "talk down" to people with disabilities.

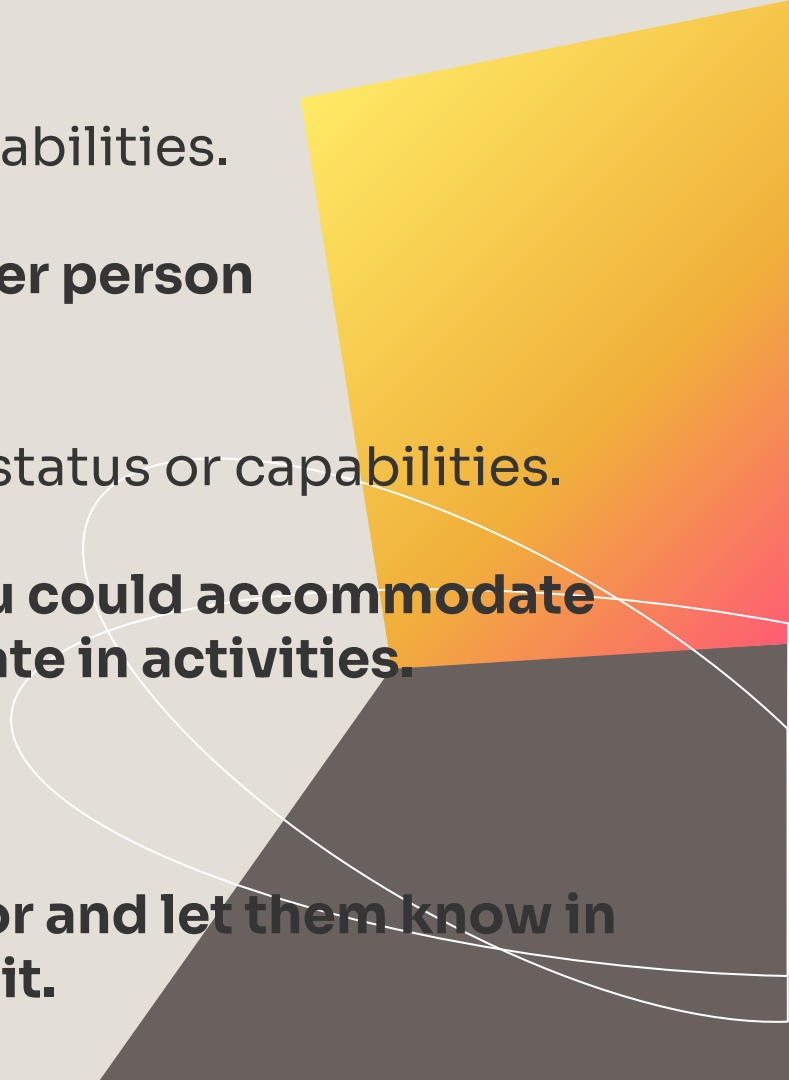
Do: treat them as you would any other person

Don't: Assume someone's disability status or capabilities.

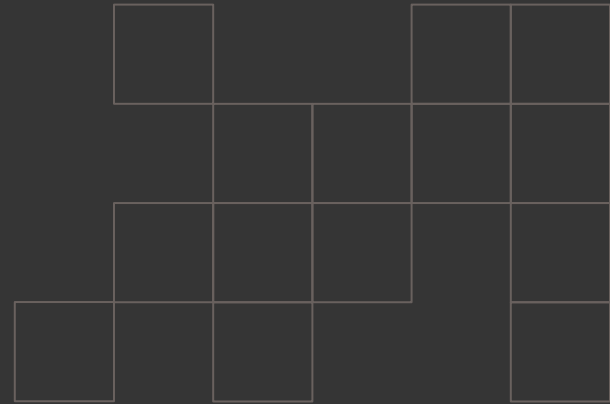
Do: Ask questions if you feel like you could accommodate them more in order to fully participate in activities.

Don't: Try to quell autistic behaviors.

Do: Be mindful, accept their behavior and let them know in which places it is appropriate to do it.



Level 3: How to be an Ally



Ethan and Jack

What is it like to have a friend with autism?





What's it like to have a friend like Jack?

Understand what autism is.

Help others be understanding.

Look for and help avoid bullying situations.

Work with our strengths/interests.

Know that everyone has strengths & limitations.

WAYS YOU CAN BE AN ALLY

All Levels COMPLETE!

Questions?

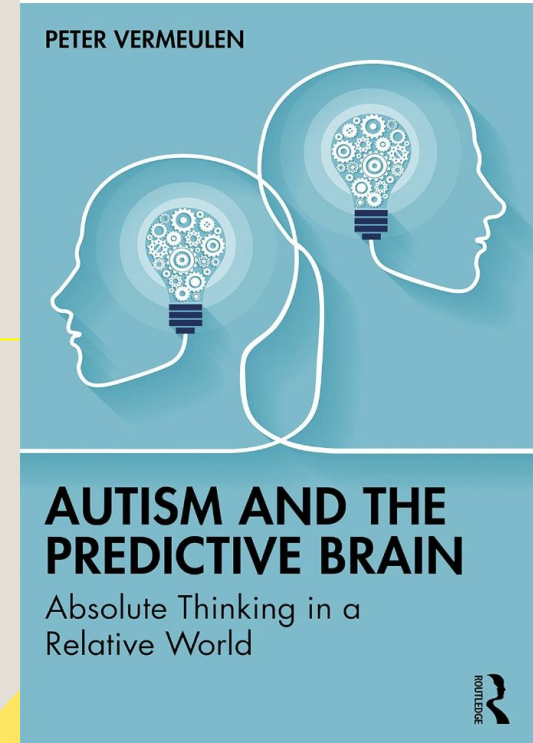
Recommended Literature:

Uniquely Wired by Julia Cook

All my Stripes by Shaina Rudolph and Danielle Royer

Autism and the Predictive Brain by Peter Vermeulen

Demystifying Disability by Emily Ladau





Thank you

Please reach out with questions or feedback: avelasquez@marion-isd.org

**Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council:
Make Your Mark 2025 Self Advocacy Conference**

*Holiday Inn and Suites Des Moines Northwest
September 18 @ 3:15*