

ASD Wellbeing Pack

This information pack includes the following topics.
Click the buttons below to navigate the document.



**Introduction
to ASD**



**Main symptoms
of autism**



**Positives and
role models**



**ASD self
management**



**Where to get
support**

An introduction to ASD

There are 700,000* people with an autism diagnosis in the UK – that's more than 1 in 100. Autism can also impact families, making it a part of daily life for 2.8 million people.



Autism defined

The broad continuum of autism is usually referred to as **autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)**, or **autistic spectrum condition (ASC)**.

They are really the same thing, but we tend to refer to it as a *condition* because it is a different way of thinking and behaving, as well as a formally classified *disorder* according to international diagnostic classifications.



ASD is known as a neurodevelopmental condition and is very closely related to and can co-exist alongside other neurodevelopmental conditions, including:

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Dyslexia

Dyspraxia

Dyscalculia



What are the main symptoms of ASD?

Social interaction and social communication, which may include:

-  Difficulties imagining situations outside immediate or known events and behaviours
-  Differences in using and understanding body language, facial expressions, tone of voice
-  Difficulty with taking turns in a conversation
-  Difficulty recognising, understanding and expressing your own emotions, as well as understanding and predicting other people's behaviours or feelings
-  Not using tact and diplomacy

All these features could make it more difficult to fit in socially.

Repetitive and restricted range of behaviour

- 1 Avoidance of change where possible
- 2 Unusual specific interests which may amount to obsessions
- 3 Adherence to rituals and routines
- 4 Engaging in repetitive actions or movements

Intense interests

- 1 Intense and highly focused interests, often from a fairly young age; these can change over time or be life-long



2

People diagnosed with autism can become experts in their special interests and often like to share their knowledge, which can come across as excessive

3

They can become so engrossed in particular topics or activities that they neglect other aspects of their lives

Over - or under-sensitivities to sensory stimuli such as:

1

Dislike of loud noises

3

Dislike of bright lights

2

Dislike of certain food or clothing textures

4

A reduced threshold to pain

Research has led to these features being brought together into two domains:

1. Social Interaction and Communication Deficits
2. Repetitive/Restricted Behaviours (incorporating unusually intense or narrow interests and difficulties adapting to change) and Sensory Sensitivities

People diagnosed with autism lie at the intersection of these two dimensions, meaning that they show sufficient features in both groups of symptoms to fulfil the diagnostic criteria for ASD. **It is worth noting that everyone is somewhere on the continuum, some having more autistic traits than others.** It is the degree and pattern of impairment that leads to the identification of a 'disorder', as it is defined according to the diagnostic manuals.



Positives of being autistic



Loyalty



Curiosity



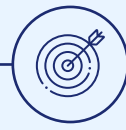
Creativity



Dependable

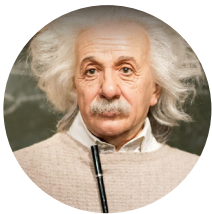


Honesty



Deep focus

Role models diagnosed with ASD



Albert Einstein

Genius!



Tim Burton

Director



Anthony Hopkins

Actor



Daryl Hannah

Actress

A growing body of research suggests that people diagnosed with ASD are more likely to be creative than the general population. This is because they often have different ways of thinking and processing information, which can lead to new and innovative ideas. Source: www.101autism.com

Self-management

Insight and education

1

Be sure of the diagnosis.

Make sure you're working with a professional who understands ASD.

2

Understand stimuli.

Understand that you are drawn to high stimuli. Try to choose them wisely.

3

Educate yourself.

The most powerful treatment for ASD is understanding it.

4

Welcome feedback.

Listen to feedback from trusted others.



5

Coaching.

To help you get organised and stay on task, give encouragement and gentle reminders.

6

Join/start a support group.

Groups are really helpful in giving the kind of support that is so badly needed.

7

Encouragement.

People diagnosed with ASD can need encouragement to counteract accumulated self-doubt.

8

Eliminate negativity.

Try to get rid of any negativity that may have infested your system.

9

Realise what ASD is not.

Make sure to research what actually causes ASD and what does not.

10

Be yourself.

Give yourself permission to be yourself. Don't try to be the person you always thought you should be.

11

Educate and involve others.

It is important for those around you to understand the concept of ASD.

12

Remember

ASD is not a weakness in character, it is a neuropsychiatric condition. It's caused by biology.

Self-management

Performance management

1

External structure.

Structure is an integral part of managing the symptoms of ASD.

2

Embrace the challenge.

People diagnosed with ASD thrive with many challenges.

3

Create structure.

Make use of lists, colour coding, reminders, notes to self, rituals and files.

4

Set deadlines.

Give yourself timelines to get tasks or activities done efficiently and on time.



5

Colour code.

People diagnosed with ASD are generally visual people. Make things memorable with colour.

6

Break down large tasks.

Break down large tasks into small ones. Attach deadlines to the small parts.

7

Use creative flair.

Try to make your environment as welcoming as possible. Use pizzazz.

8

Take notice.

Notice how and where you work best.

9

A rewarding system.

Set up your environment to reward yourself, rather than to demotivate or deflate

10

Prioritise.

Avoid procrastination. If things get busy, the adult person often loses perspective.

11

Plan ahead.

Have a plan B. Just in case something does not go according to plan, you will have a back-up.

12

Remember

It is okay to leave time to gather your thoughts.

Self-management

Mood management

1

Recharge your batteries.

Take a nap, watch TV, meditate. Something calm, restful, at ease.

2

Understand your moods.

Understand mood changes and ways to manage these. Know that they will pass.

3

Have a mood lift strategy.

Have a list of friends to call, a happy song. Your moods will pass, you are okay.

4

Enjoy the moment.

Let the feeling of success last. You may need to train yourself to do this.



5

Have a supportive partner.

Your choice in partner is crucial. Choose someone who will help you thrive.

6

A sense of humour.

Learn to joke with yourself and others. Be relaxed about your symptoms.

7

Schedule time with loved ones.

It is important to stay connected to other people, make sure you stick to these schedules.

8

Remember

Pay compliments, notice others, set social deadlines and join support groups.

More tips



Try to eat a balanced diet with healthy foods.



Aim to go to sleep before midnight.



Explore new topics of interest. You could do this by reading or watching movies.



Try to fit some exercise into your daily routine at a level that works for you, for example, a daily walk or jog.



Try new relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness or meditation.



Keep active.



Where to get support

What to do in a mental health crisis:

Call 999, 111 or seek help from your local Mental Health Crisis Team.

[Click here](#)

If you feel that you might not be able to keep yourself safe, please go to the nearest A&E. There will be mental health help available for you.

Self-Referral for NHS provided therapy:

NHS - Find an NHS psychological therapies service (IAPT)

[Click here](#)

Samaritans: 08457 90 90 90

The Samaritans service is available 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Mind: For better mental health: 0300 123 3393 (Mon – Fri 9am-5pm)

Mind provides information on a range of topics including types of mental distress, where to get help, drug and alternative treatments and advocacy, and provides details of help and support for people in their own area.

Support in the workplace

Remploy

Access to Work Mental Health Support Service

[Click here](#)

Access to work

Government support in the workplace

[Click here](#)

PIP

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can help with extra living costs

[Click here](#)

Support for university

NUS

The National Union of Students

[Click here](#)

DSA UK

Disabled Students' Allowance

[Click here](#)

Kooth

Online mental wellbeing community

[Click here](#)



General support

Psychiatry UK

The UK's leading online psychiatric service

[Click here](#)

NHS

Helping you take control of your wellbeing

[Click here](#)

Disclaimer: These resources are shared to provide information and help with your reported symptoms/presentations. This does not confirm a diagnosis.