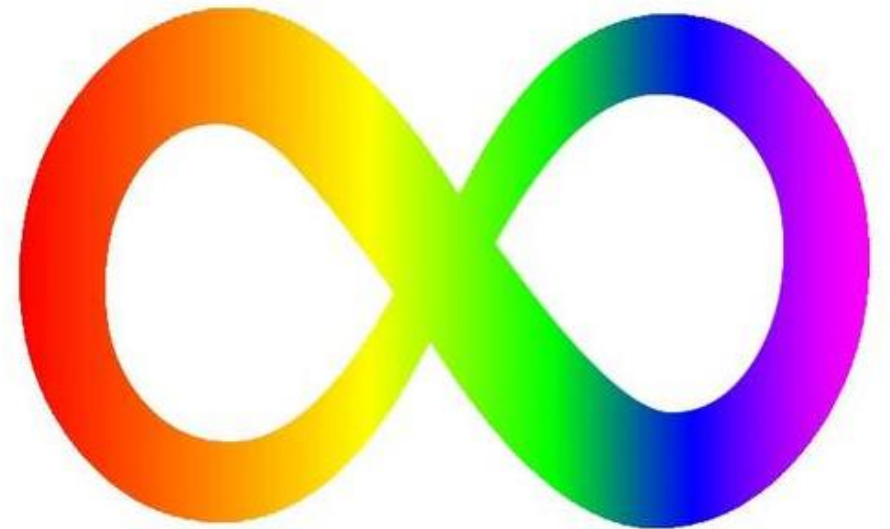
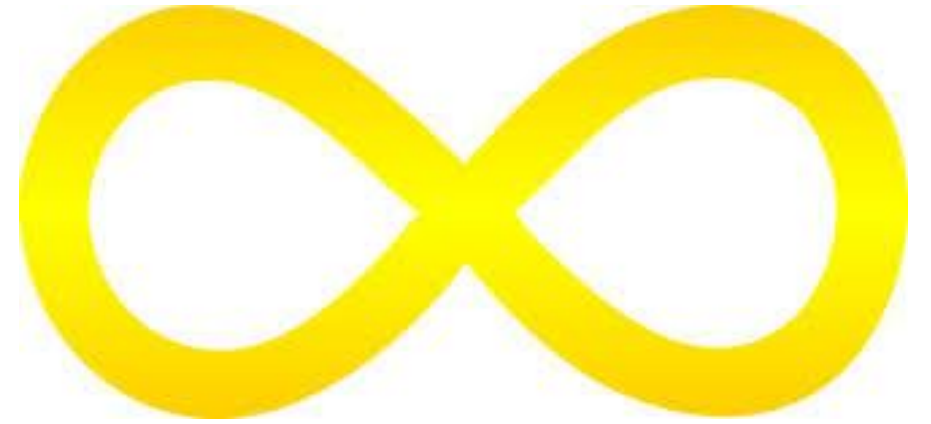
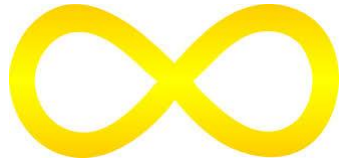


Understanding Autism and how to support my child

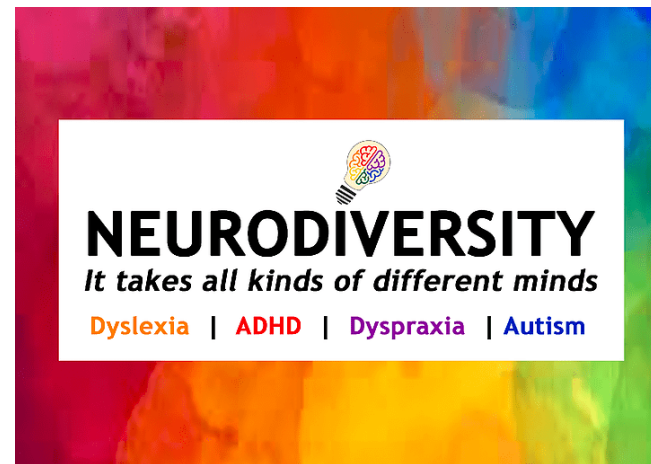
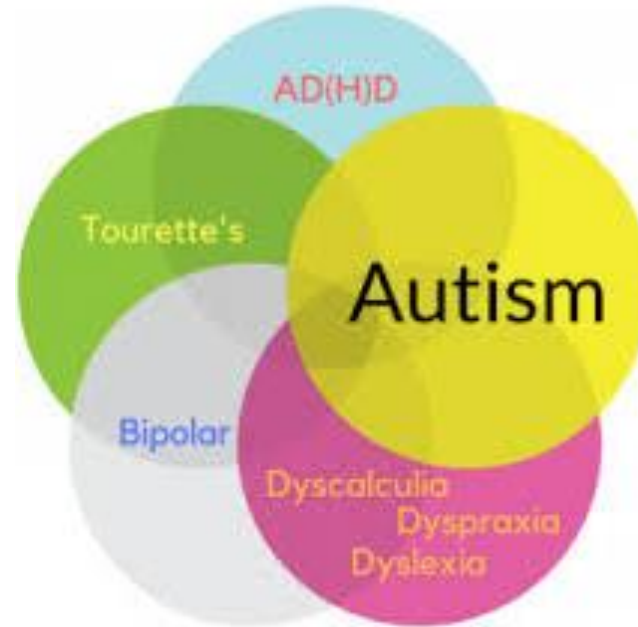
Workshop for parents





Neurodiversity

- Neurodiversity refers to a variation in the way that people think, process information and interact with the world around them.
- Autism, ADHD, dyslexia are some examples of neurodiversity.





We do our best,
until we know
better, and then
we do better.



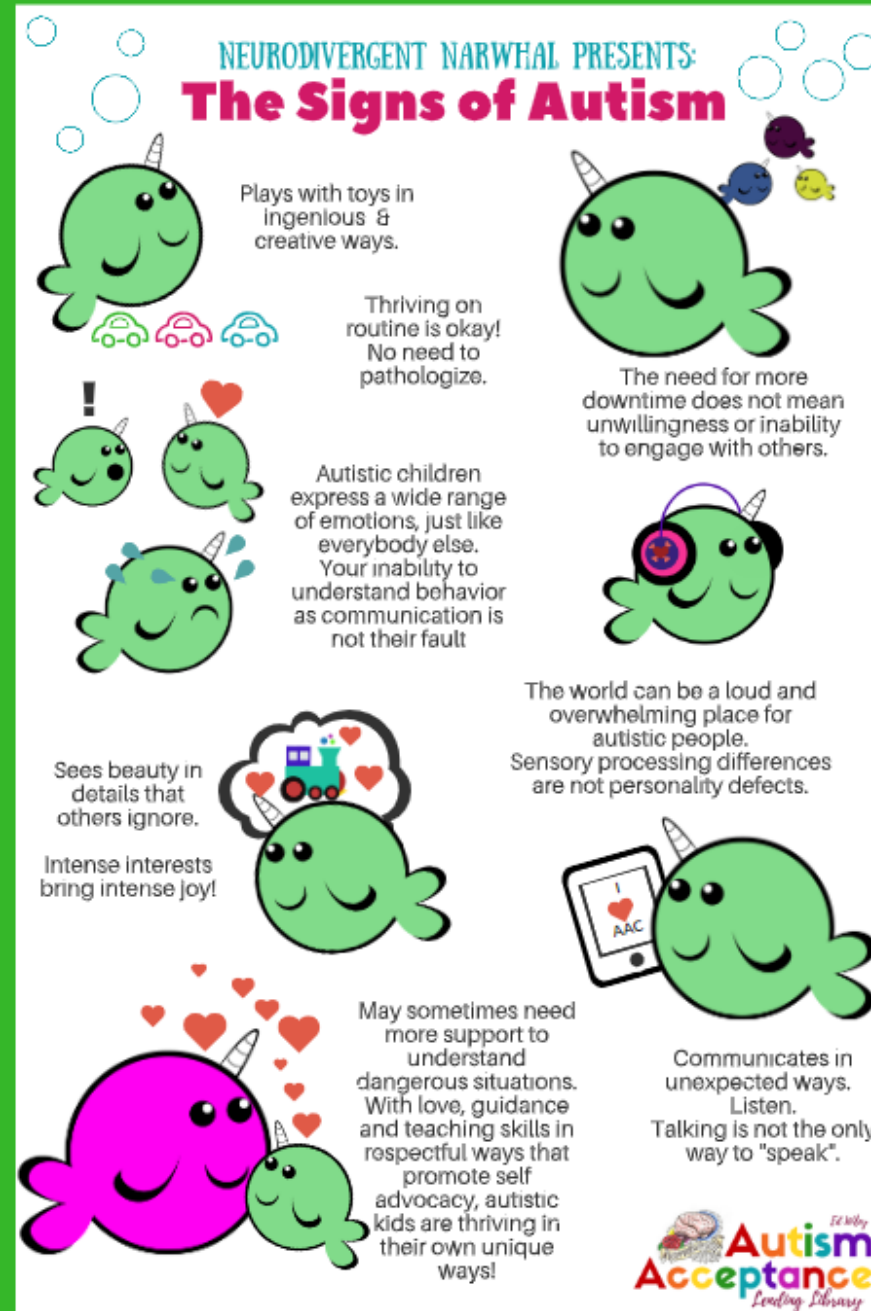


Autism

Historically, there has been a push to encourage neurodiverse people to behave like neurotypicals.

It is important that we advocate for our young people and encourage them to be their authentic selves.

NEURODIVERGENT NARWHAL PRESENTS:
The Signs of Autism



Plays with toys in ingenious & creative ways.

Thriving on routine is okay! No need to pathologize.

The need for more downtime does not mean unwillingness or inability to engage with others.

Autistic children express a wide range of emotions, just like everybody else. Your inability to understand behavior as communication is not their fault.


Sees beauty in details that others ignore.

The world can be a loud and overwhelming place for autistic people. Sensory processing differences are not personality defects.

Intense interests bring intense joy!

Communicates in unexpected ways. Listen. Talking is not the only way to "speak".

May sometimes need more support to understand dangerous situations. With love, guidance and teaching skills in respectful ways that promote self advocacy, autistic kids are thriving in their own unique ways!

 **Autism Acceptance**
Leading Library

Autistic people might find it harder to:



- Understand non-autistic people
- Communicate their perspective to non-autistic people
- Filter out sensory stimuli



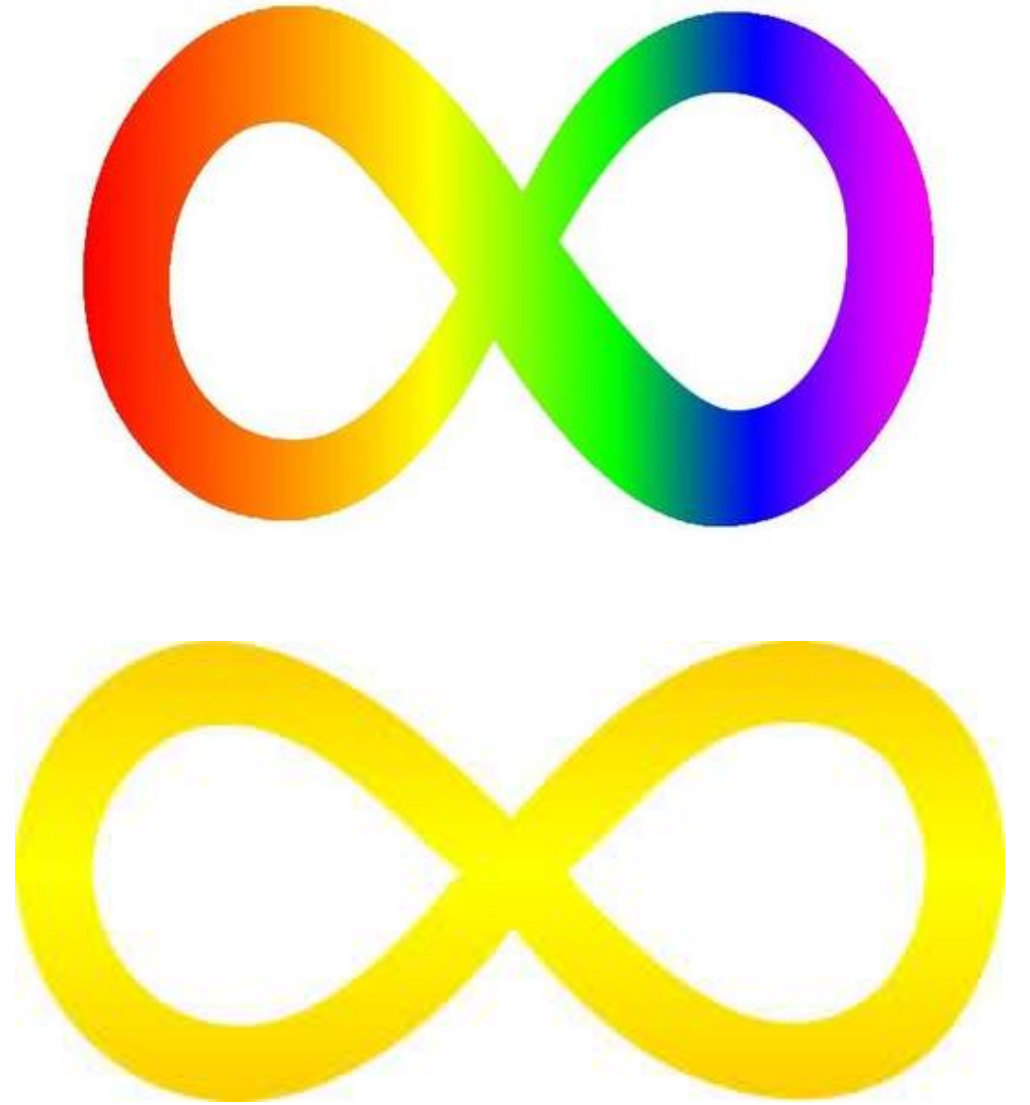
Non-autistic people might find it harder to:

- Understand autistic people
- Remember their perspective isn't the only one
- Imagine autistic people's sensory world



How can I understand what autism means for my child?

Key message: It's not you that's the problem!



3 areas of difference



**Social understanding
and communication**



**Flexibility, information
processing, and understanding**

Sensory processing and integration



Exploring BEING AUTISTIC with my child

EVALEEN WHELTON



Welcome

1.

NOTICING THINGS

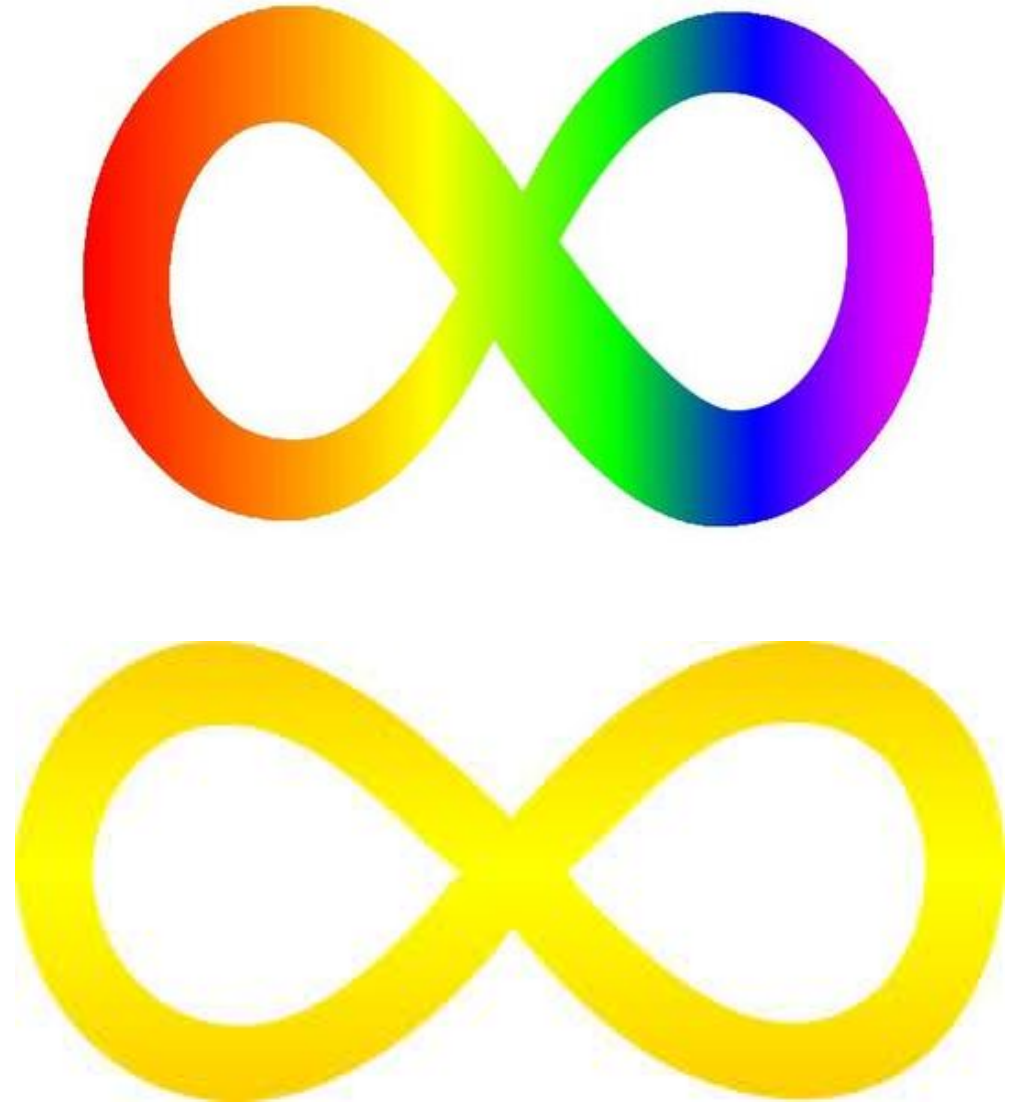
We're really good at **noticing things** other people don't, including small details, sounds, patterns, and relationships between different things.

Do you ever notice things others don't notice?



Should I
encourage my
autistic child to
socialise more?

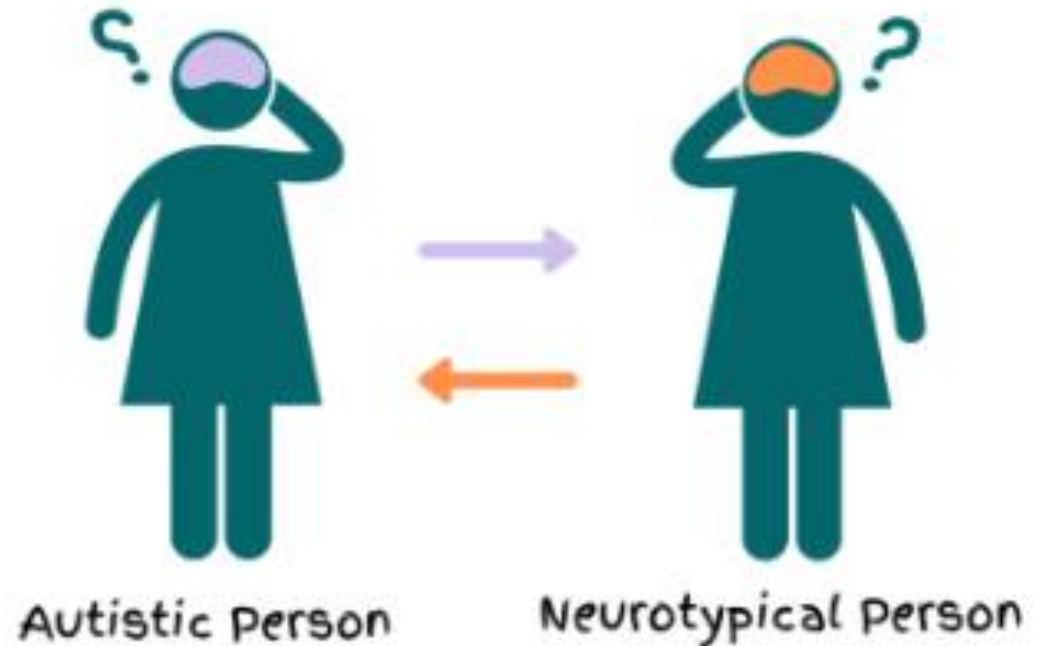
Key message: the way you
communicate is valid.



There are lots of questions about whether and how autistic people should be taught about their different brain, and if they should be taught about neurotypical social skills in general.

There are 2 different things that often get mixed up

- Ask an autistic person to socialise in a similar way to a neurotypical person.
- Give autistic people information about how neurotypical people interact with each other, and make sure they know they do not have to imitate neurotypical social skills when meeting people.

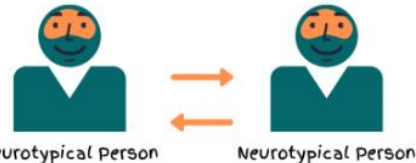


BOTH AUTISTIC & NEUROTYPICAL PEOPLE NEED TO LEARN HOW TO SOCIALISE WITH EACH OTHER

Research tells us **both** Autistic people and Neurotypical people demonstrate effective social skills when interacting with their **own neurotype** and social interactions are successful.

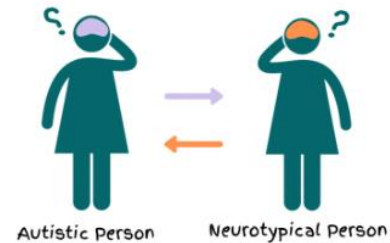


Language use is understood, emotional expression through facial and body movement is understood, social interactions are successful.



Language use is understood, emotional expression through facial and body language is understood, social interactions are successful.

Research tells us social interactions are often less successful for both Autistic and Neurotypical people when interacting with a **different neurotype**.



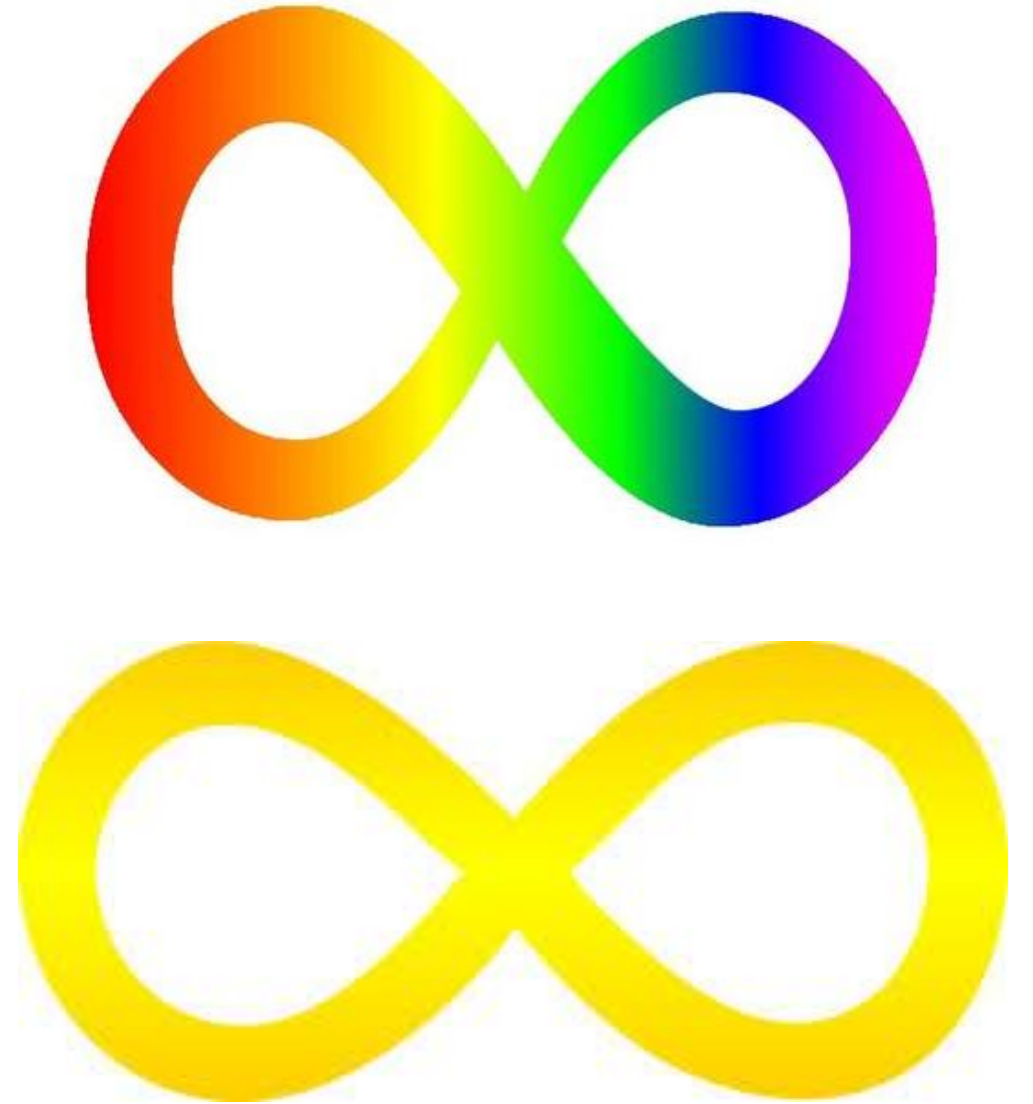
Autistic people can and often do learn to interpret neurotypical use of language and interpret neurotypical facial expression and body language and constantly use these learnings to bridge interactions with neurotypical people.

Current research suggests Neurotypical people find it difficult to interpret Autistic expression and that there is a general absence in Neurotypical people learning to interpret Autistic social expression and Autistic communication to bridge interactions.

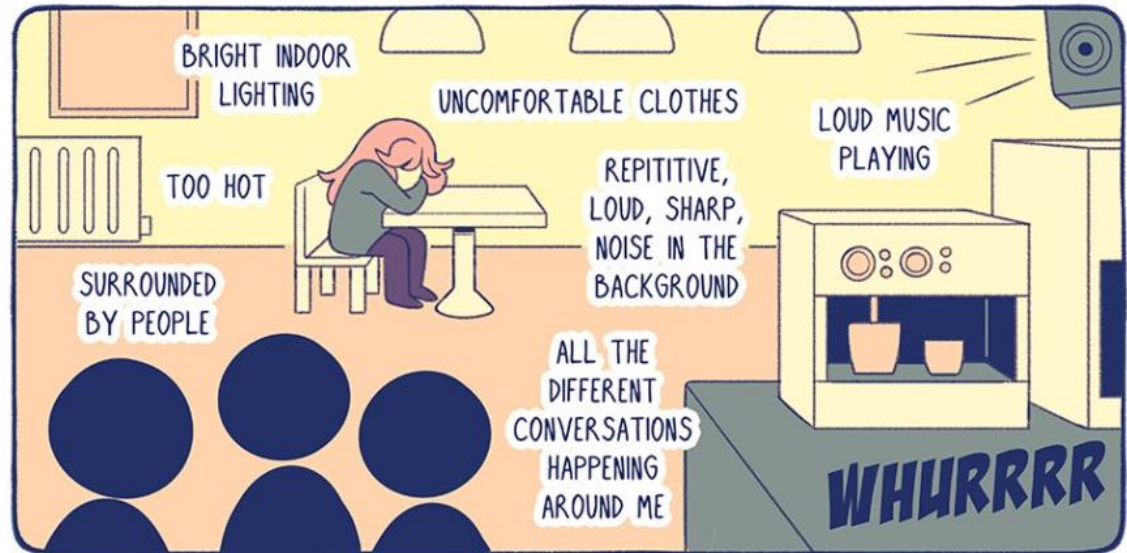
Social interactions are bidirectional - a two way interaction between individuals. Each group has (or should have) equal responsibility to learn how the other uses and understands language, and how each uses facial expression and body movement as part of their emotional expression. Each group has (or should have) equal responsibility for successful social interactions.

Why does my child
have meltdowns/
get angry so
suddenly?

Key message: you are seen,
and your emotions matter



Most autistic people are under a lot of stress all the time. Most have sensory sensitivities that they are dealing with all of the time.

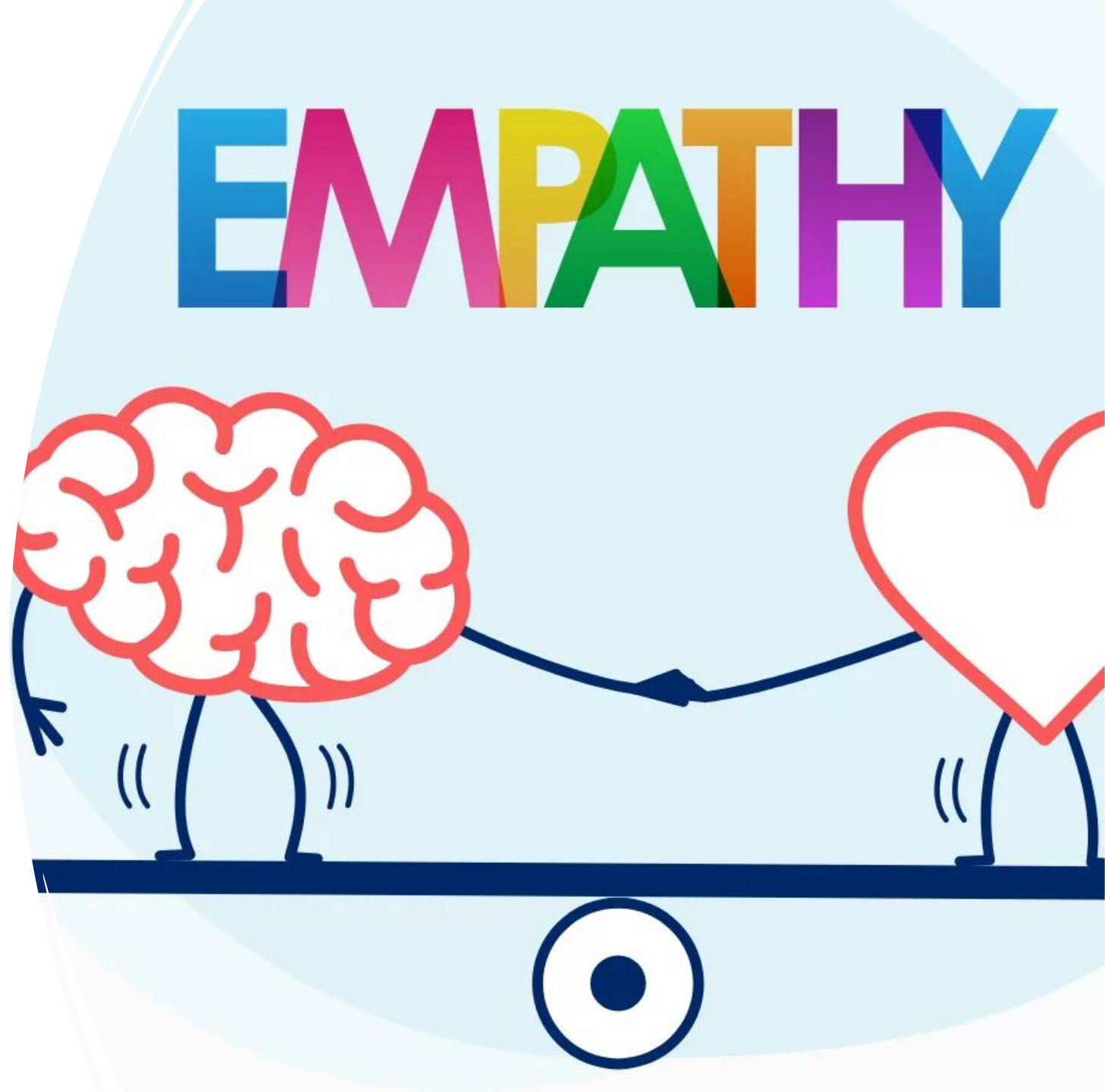




How can we help?

Nurture & Empathy

- Nurture – if needed, help a young person to become more relaxed.
- Empathy - If someone is struggling, assume there is a good reason why. We should try and learn what their reasoning is. struggling,



If they're giving you a hard time, it's because they're having a hard time.

If someone is upset/ stressed/ having a meltdown, focus on helping them to feel calm as people cannot think logically at this time.

- Appear calm
- Reduce demands
- Be flexible with the rules
- Avoid power struggles
- Use distractions

<https://www.spectrumgaming.net/the-nest-approach?wix-vod-video-id=fd4ef276202643ba8aa4d9186dc48760&wix-vod-comp-id=comp-lm6ed6vc>

Empathise
If someone is struggling, assume there is a good reason why. We should try and learn what their reasoning is.



1. Initial enquiry/ starting the conversation.
 - I saw... Is there anything I can help you with?
 - You looked quite upset earlier... can I ask if everything is okay?
 - Do you want me to help or listen?
2. Understand more
 - Try and understand their perspective.
 - Stay impartial and out of judgement.
 - Recognise and communicate their emotions.

