

**The
Advonet
Group**

Providing Independent Advocacy



**Autism
AIM**

Strategies and Resources

Four Areas of Difference

Communication

Issues

Misinterpreting language and/or written word

Difficulties thinking quickly and responding-delayed processing

Knowing when to speak. Is the other person interested?

Monotone vocalisation

People reading things and other agendas into what we are saying

Instructions appearing ambiguous to us

Humour not translating to us

Solutions

Make time to think about what works for you. Do you like things to be written down? Do you follow instructions or do you prefer to find your own way to do things?

Make time to explain to others how you best hear and process information. Does it help you to make notes of conversations for example?

Would you prefer to communicate certain things through text or email? For some people, the use of emoticons is helpful as they process visual elements better than written. Emoticons and picture symbols can also be used as a technique to prevent us from sounding so blunt

Practice using inflection when speaking or softening your voice

Don't be afraid to say you don't understand something or to ask for it to be repeated or explained in a way that suits you better-we are all different with differing strengths

Understanding Others

Issues

Low tolerance

Our expectations of others not being met

Not being able to predict others' reactions

Lack of social filter

Not seeing others' points of view/being single-minded

Believing others too readily - not seeing hidden agendas

Difficulty reading others

Blurred boundaries or changing boundaries, particularly around professional interactions and social interactions

Unspoken/unwritten rules

Solutions

Take time to consider what is being asked of you and don't jump in to answer 'yes' to everything straight away

Talk to someone you trust. Check things out with them if you feel like you have not fully understood a situation or conversation

A person we trust may also act as a buffer and help to filter some of the things that we can struggle with, like understanding social cues, jokes/sarcasm etc.

Consider reducing masking if you feel able to, especially around close friends or family that you trust. This may help those around you appreciate more how you view and interact with the world

Interests and Processing Information

Issues

Lack of focus unless it is on a special interest

Going into things at too much depth

A need to be busy/low boredom threshold

Bore easily/restless/can't engage/can't focus

Slower or faster processing speed of information

No special interest can lead to a questioning of our diagnosis

Losing sense of time when engaged in our interest

Feeling overwhelmed by our interest

Solutions

Similar to communication; make some time to consider how you process information

What helps and what hinders?

Do you find it easier to engage with others initially if you have a common shared interest? Can this be used as an icebreaker and tool when in social situations or when thinking about forming new friendships?

Has an interest become overwhelming? Think about breaking it down and limiting the time you spend on it

Remember that not everyone will share your interests. Practice asking others about their interests

Sensory Processing

Issues

Sight includes: Difficulties with hyper/hypo sensitivity to light (particularly unnatural/florescent lights), shiny floors/surfaces, certain colours appearing bright and overwhelming

Touch: Feeling too light or too heavy, flinching at touch, a dislike to being touched. Some textures feeling uncomfortable to touch or pleasant to touch

Sound: Difficulties with hyper/hyposensitivity to certain noises/sounds. Talking too quietly/loudly

Poor balance and/or body awareness in relation to space and other people

Under or over-sensitivity to pain

Smell; hyper/hypo sensitivity to differing odours. Only using specific products due to smell

Taste: Texture can play a part in what we like dislike to eat.

Hyper/hypo sensitivity to spice/strong flavour. Emotional eating

Solutions

Be aware of what your sensory processing difficulties are. This means you can pick the strategies that best suit your needs

Wearing tinted, dark or transition glasses can help with brightness

A sleep mask or blackout blinds/curtains may aid sleep if light bothers you

Some people find the use of a weighted blanket helpful for anxiety. Tight clothes may have a similar effect

Ear defenders or headphones/music may reduce noise

If a sensory trigger cannot be avoided limit the amount of time you are exposed to it. Work out how much time is bearable/manageable for you

Take breaks frequently

Contact Us



Leeds: aimenquiries@advonet.org.uk
Bradford and Craven: bradfordautismaim@advonet.org.uk



0113 244 0606
Please leave a message for the Leeds Autism AIM or Bradford and Craven Autism AIM team.



leedsautismaim.org.uk / bradfordautismaim.org.uk



Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky and Threads:
[@leedsautismaim](#) / [@bradfordautismaim](#)

This guide was produced by the Autism AIM team, part of The Advonet Group. We are a free service co-led by and run for autistic adults (aged 18+) in the West Yorkshire area.