



# Autism Parent Coffee Morning

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# Today's session

- Myths and Facts about autism
- Autism as a spectrum
- Overview of Autism:
  - Social Communication
  - Thinking Style
  - Sensory Processing
  - Emotional Regulation
- Interventions



# Introductions

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Introduce yourself and your child's name and age.

Tell us one thing that your child is particularly good at or makes you feel happy.





Myths and facts



Autism is simply another word for learning difficulties.

Myth                      or                      Fact



Autism always occurs with an area  
of genius ability

Myth

or

Fact



Autism is a developmental disorder  
involving the brain

Myth                      or                      Fact



Autism is caused by emotional deprivation or parent rejection

Myth

or

Fact





Autism is a lifelong condition

Myth

or

Fact



Once speech appears, other  
difficulties will disappear

Myth

or

Fact



Autism is more likely in boys than  
girls

Myth

or

Fact



Autism is genetically linked. There is an increased rate of occurrence in family members

Myth

or

Fact



Autistic people experience the  
world differently

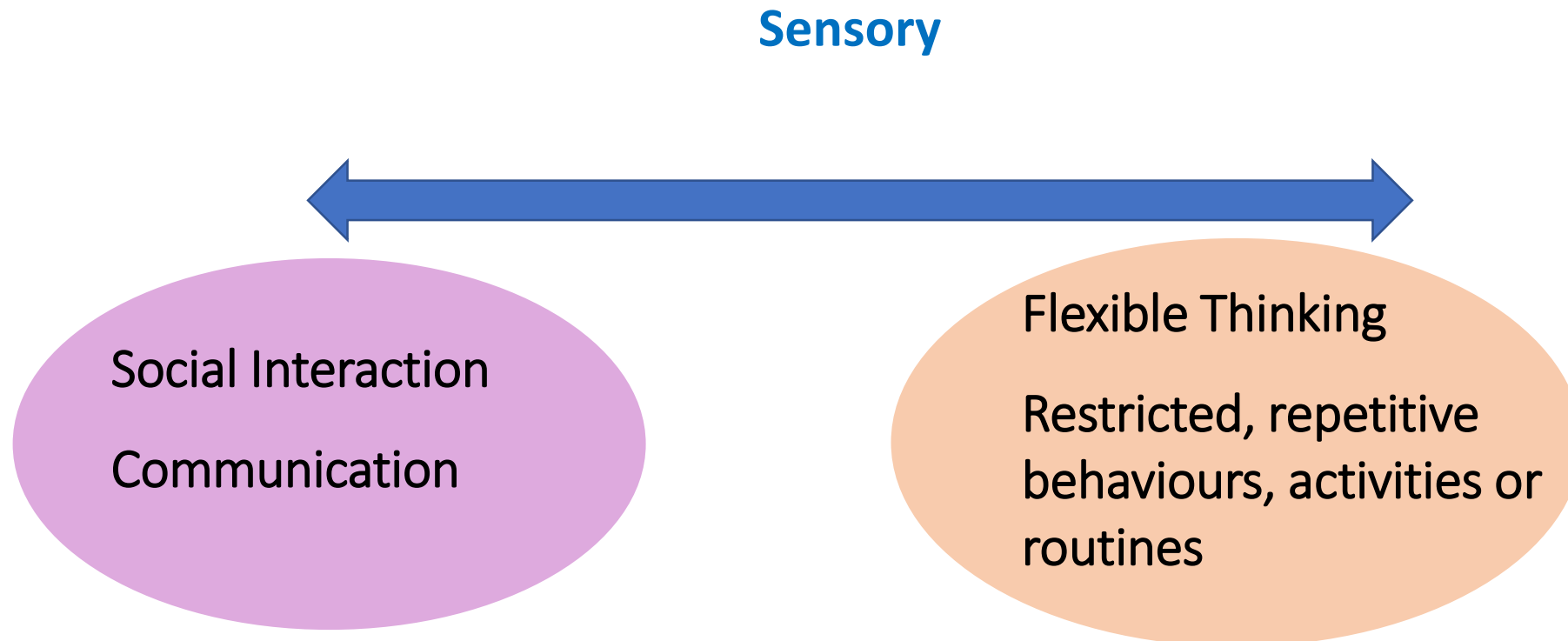
Myth

or

Fact

# Autism: What we know

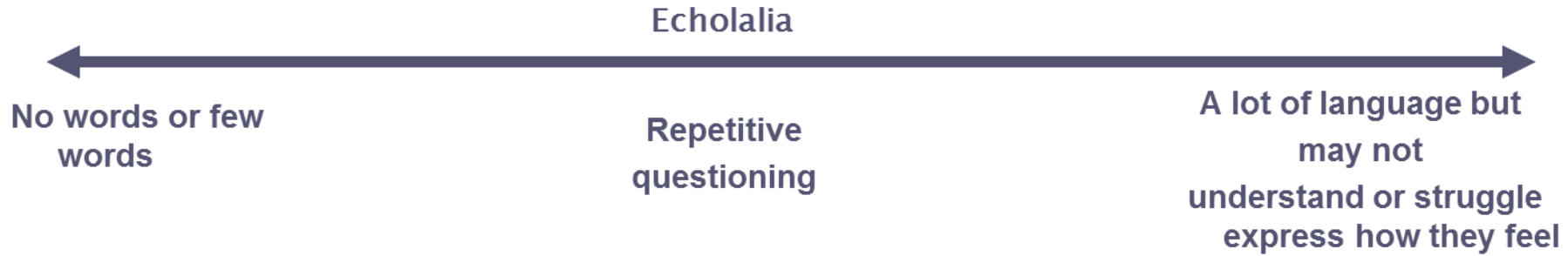
- There are 2 main areas of differences shared by all children with Autism





# The ASD Spectrum

## Communication



## Social interaction



## Behaviour/Inflexibility



# The Autism Spectrum - a world of difference

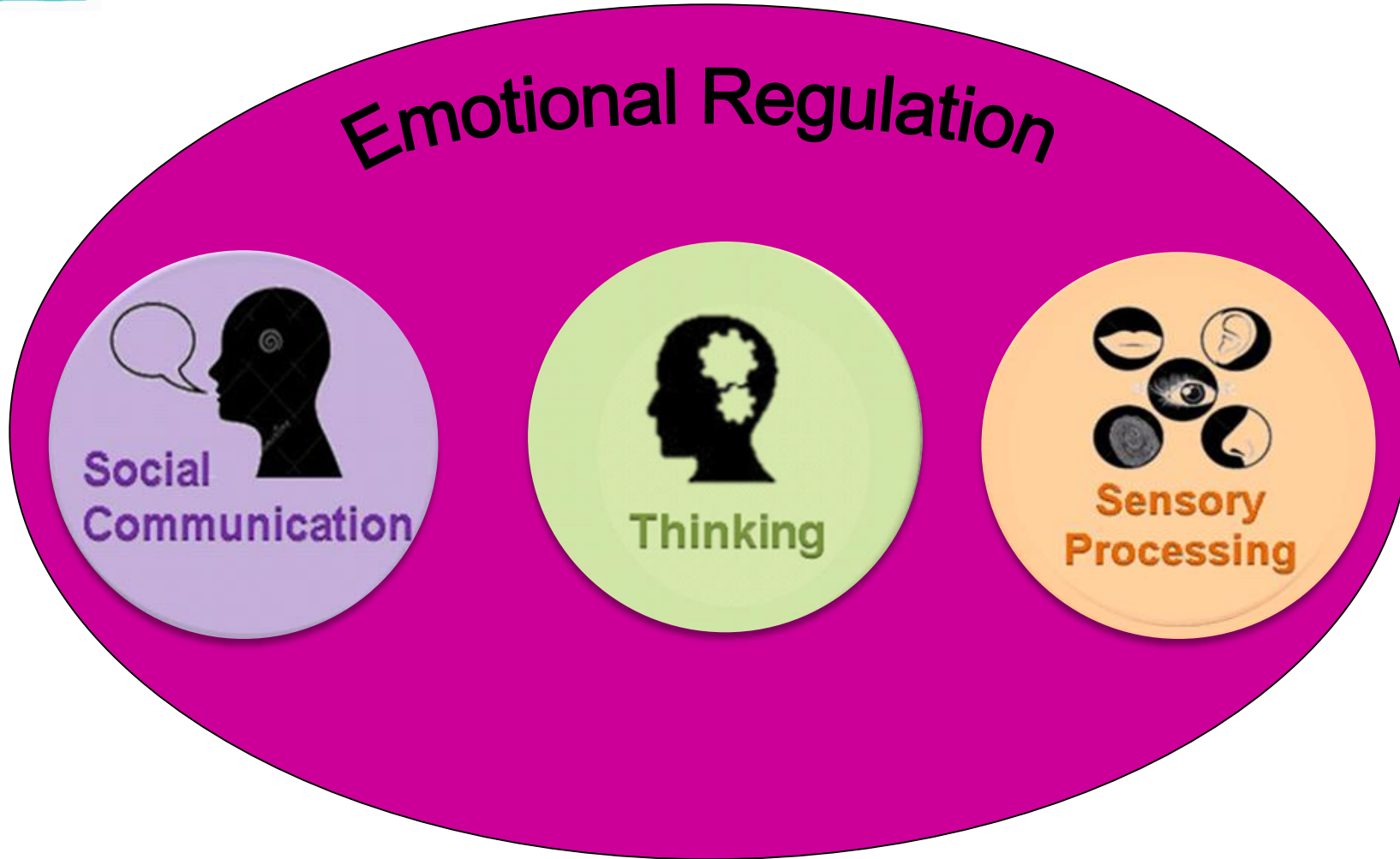
The autistic person:

- Perceives the world around them differently
- Processes the world around them differently
- Interacts with the world differently
- Therefore behaves differently





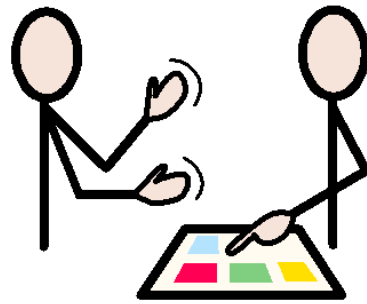
# Areas of Difference



....experienced by Autistic people



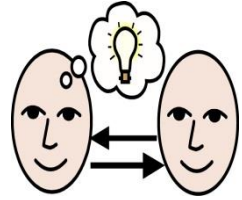
# Social Communication



# Communication

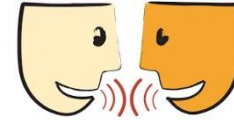
What	How	Why
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Getting a message across to someone</li><li>• A two way process</li><li>• between <i>two or more</i> people</li><li>• understanding others and being understood</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>More than just talking</u></li><li>• Facial expression</li><li>• Body language</li><li>• Gesture</li><li>• Signing</li><li>• Eye contact</li><li>• Tone of voice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Asking</li><li>• Rejecting</li><li>• Commenting</li><li>• Being social</li><li>• Telling stories</li><li>• Protesting....</li></ul>

# Differences of Social Communication in Autism



## Understanding

- Understand very few words without visual aid
- Difficulty recognising and understanding emotions
- Very literal understanding and difficulty with humour, sarcasm, sayings and tone of voice
- Difficulty understanding unwritten social rules
- Difficulty understanding non-verbal communication e.g. eye roll.



## Expressing Themselves

- No speech or limited speech
- Difficulty expressing own emotions
- Difficulty knowing how to go about making friends
- Difficulty knowing when to speak and when to stop speaking
- Difficulty asking for help when overwhelmed



# Thinking Style



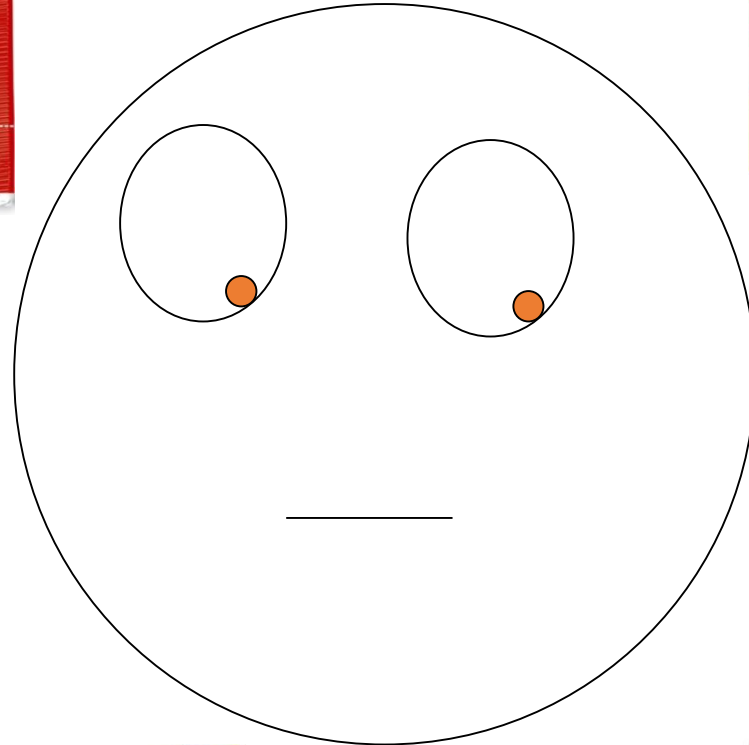


# Thinking Style

People with ASD think about and process the world around them differently. This can mean...

- **Find it hard to predict** how others are feeling, what they might be thinking or how they may react.
- **Find it hard to generalise** things learned in one situation or with one person, to other situations with other people.
- **Find it hard to see the main idea** or 'bigger picture'. Some people are more likely to focus on detail and miss the most important aspect.

# Thinking style: Predicting



# Central Coherence: What do you see?





# What do you see?

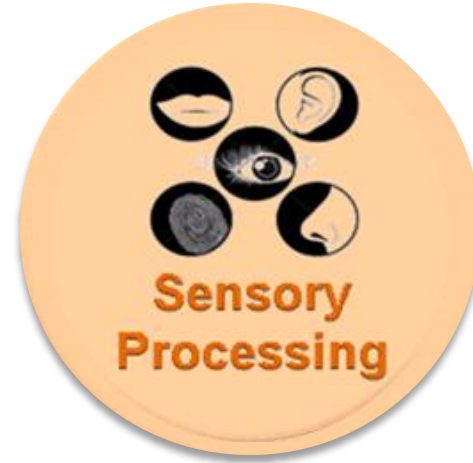


Individuals with ASD may focus on details and miss the whole picture/idea

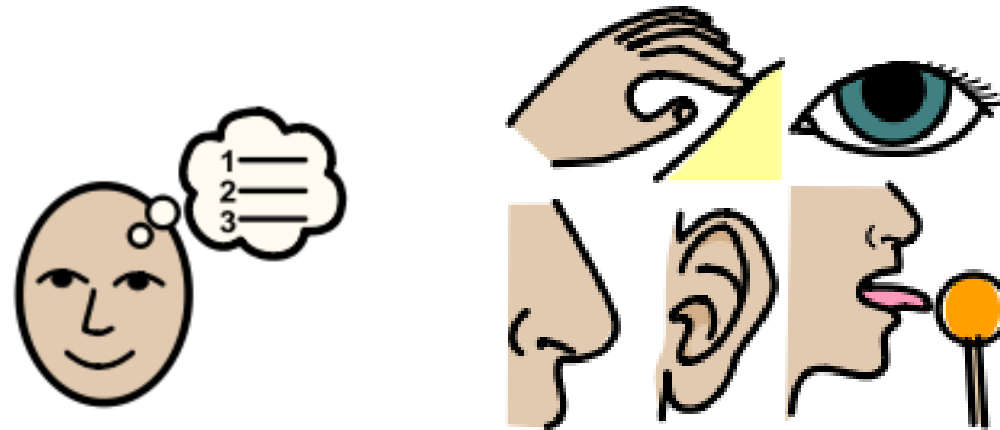
- **Attention to detail can be a strength**



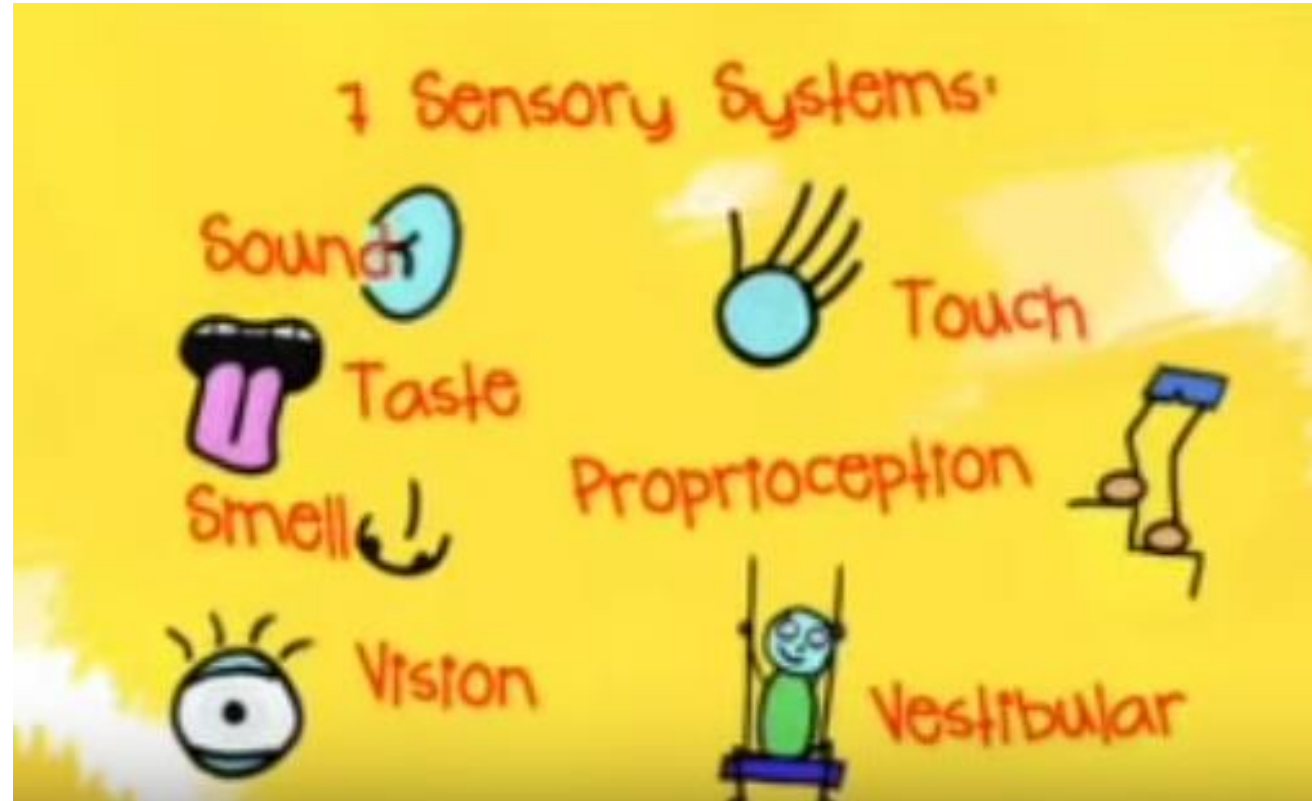
**Stephen Wiltshire – London from memory (2009)**

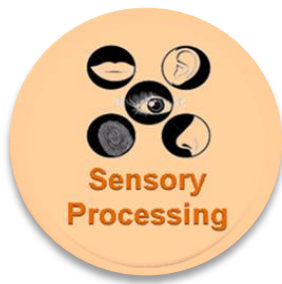


# Sensory Processing



# What are our senses?





# Sensory Processing Differences: Impact at Home



## Seeking

Someone who is **UNDERwhelmed** by a sense takes a lot more sensory stimulation before their brains register this



## Avoiding

Someone who is **OVERwhelmed** by a sense means their brains register everything and it is hard to block things out

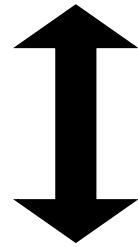


# Emotional Regulation

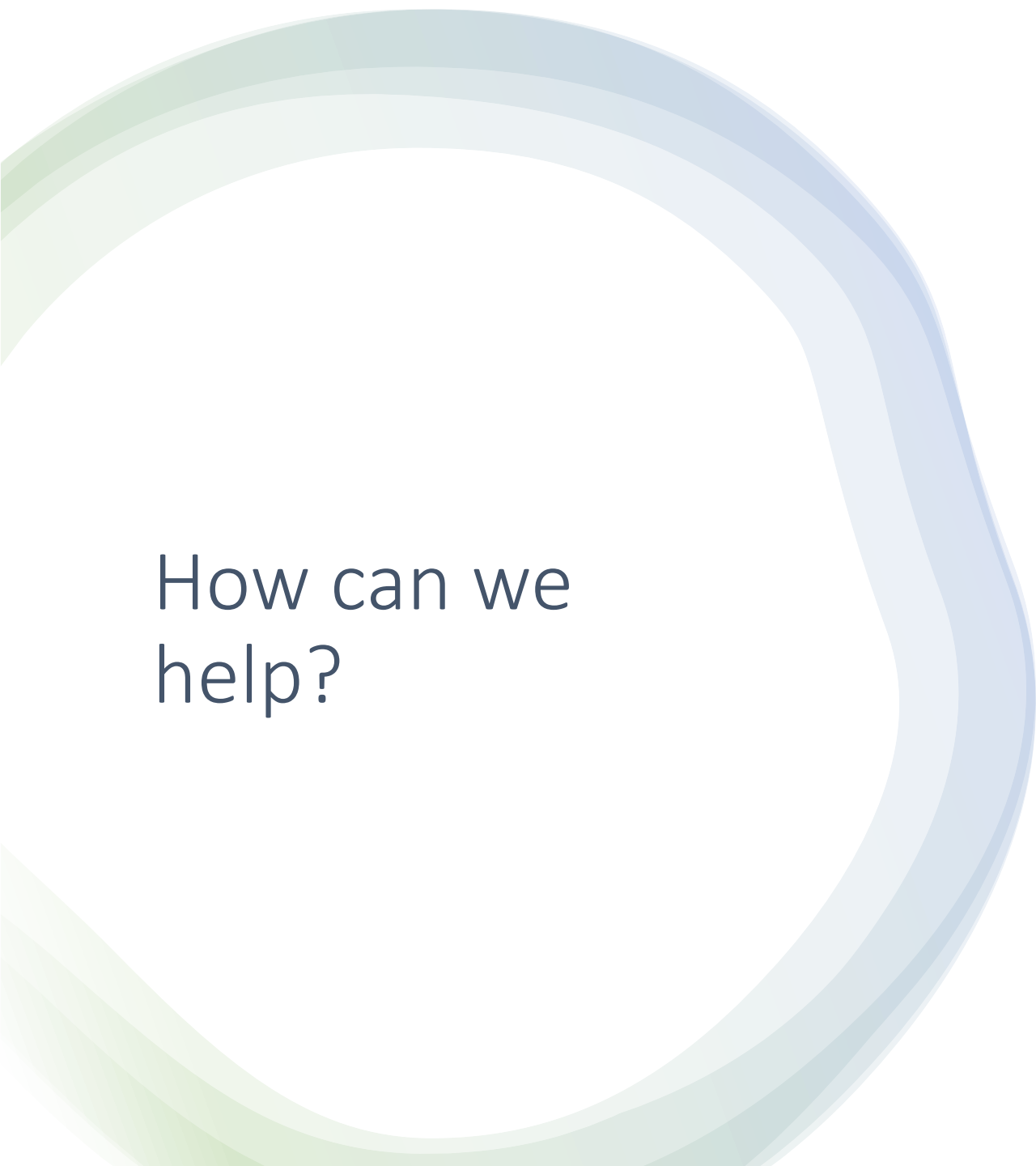


# What is Emotional Regulation?

Emotionally Regulated means we are calm & ready to learn & engage socially with others



Emotionally Dysregulated means we are experiencing either high or low arousal levels. This leads to difficulties in organisation, social engagement & attention and communication



How can we  
help?



Get  
HACKNEY  
talking





# The basics

- Behavioural communicators and can be very self-directed
- 'Finding the level'
- Detective work: observing and interpreting their behaviours in order to learn about their wants and needs.
- **recognise and respect** their attempts to communicate
- **shape behaviours** so that the communicative functions are clearer and can therefore **be understood more easily by more people**

# Intensive Interaction



# Intensive Interaction

- Approach which encourages the development of good relationships
- Non directive, learner-led approach
- An approach to help people learn the 'Fundamentals of Communication'

Enjoying being  
with another  
person

Developing the  
ability to attend to  
that person

Learning to do  
sequences of  
activity with a  
person

Taking turns in  
exchanges of  
behaviour

Sharing personal  
space

Using and  
understanding  
other non verbal  
communication

Using and  
understanding  
physical contact

Vocalising and  
using vocalisations  
meaningfully  
(including speech)



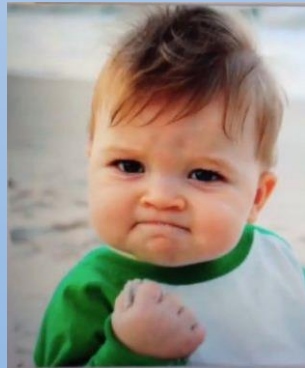
One rule: The interaction stops when the person has had enough.

# Why use Intensive Interaction?

Communication is at the appropriate developmental level



Student can experience success in communication



It sends the message

I enjoy listening to you  
I take you seriously  
I value you  
I am here for you  
What you are doing is important  
I enjoy being with you



Builds positive, trusting relationships



Develops communication and emotional engagement



# Intensive Interaction Techniques

Tuning In



Observing



Enjoyment



Waiting



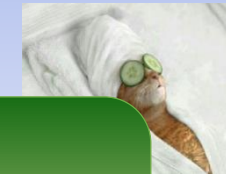
Child/ Young Person lead



Pausing



Being relaxed and unhurried



Responding in a variety of ways including imitation and joining in



Positioning and available look



# Attention Bucket



## Aims

### The aims are for the child to...

- ✓ Focus their attention on the activity
- ✓ Engage their attention with enthusiasm
- ✓ Relax and enjoy
- ✓ Share good times
- ✓ Develop spontaneous social communication
- ✓ Start to understand visual timetable



### Building up to...

- ✓ Sustaining attention
- ✓ Taking turns with others
- ✓ Shifting attention from group to individual activity





Live demo

# Visual supports



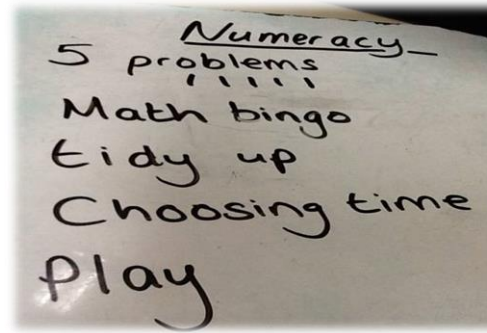
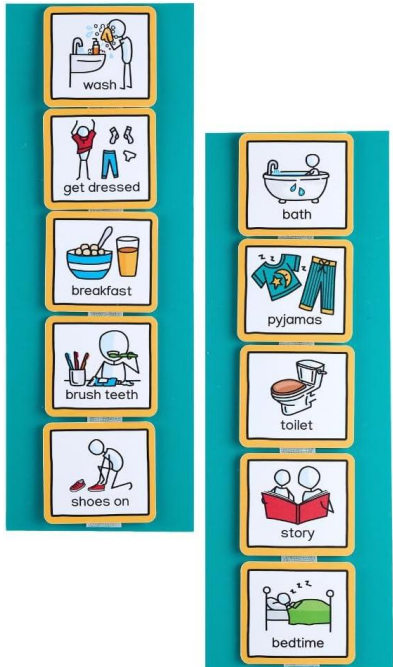


# Why

- Autistic people often find it difficult to take cues from the environment to predict what will happen next.
- Therefore, finishing activities or going new places can come across as quite a shock.
- Some of the following strategies may help with smoother transitions.

# Predictability and Control

Now and Next



Visual timetables



How we can help with visuals...

Objects of reference



Timers

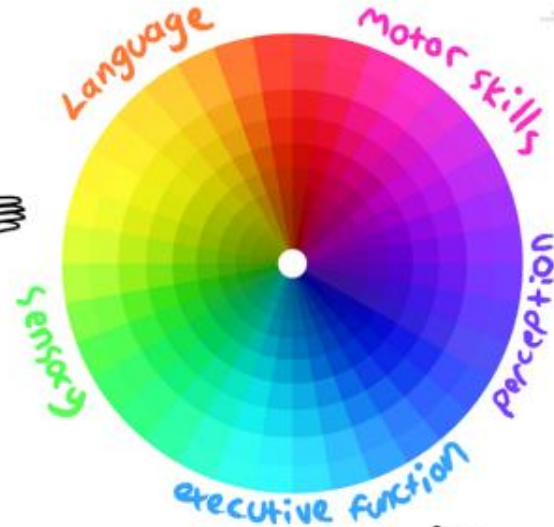


Any Questions?



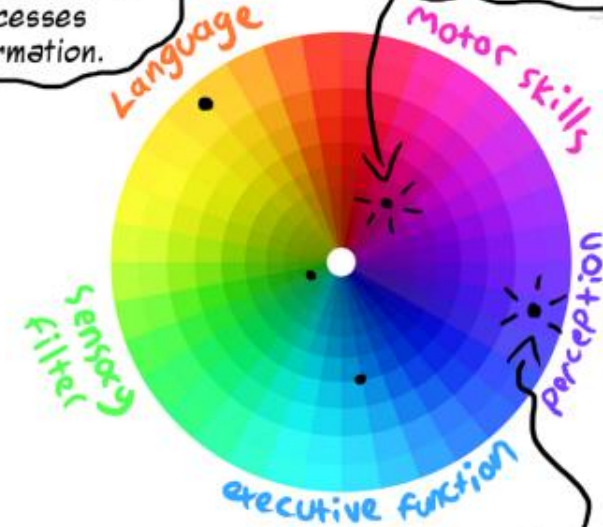
Feedback Survey

The truth is though, someone who is neurodiverse in some areas of their brain, will also be no different to your average person in other areas of their brain.



You see, the autistic spectrum looks something more like this.

The spectrum consists of many different 'traits', or ways in which the brain processes information.



Some traits create difficulties in every day life. (hence being diagnosed)

But also many traits are useful in every day life.



Each person with autism will have a set of traits all in different areas of the spectrum. The areas where they don't have a trait will function no differently to a neurotypical brain, but may be affected by circumstances. In example, I am good at making conversation (language). But I get sensory overload in loud and crowded spaces, which then makes conversation very hard for me.