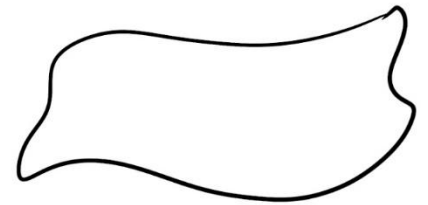
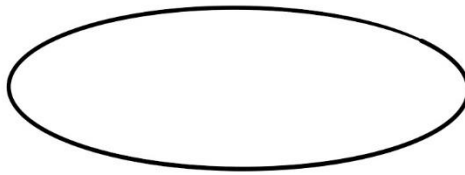
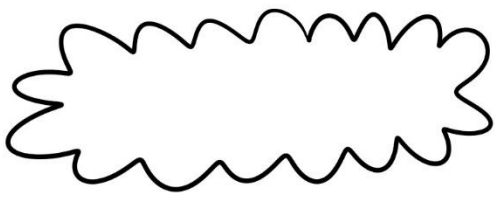


Helping Neurodivergent Students Find Success in the Classroom

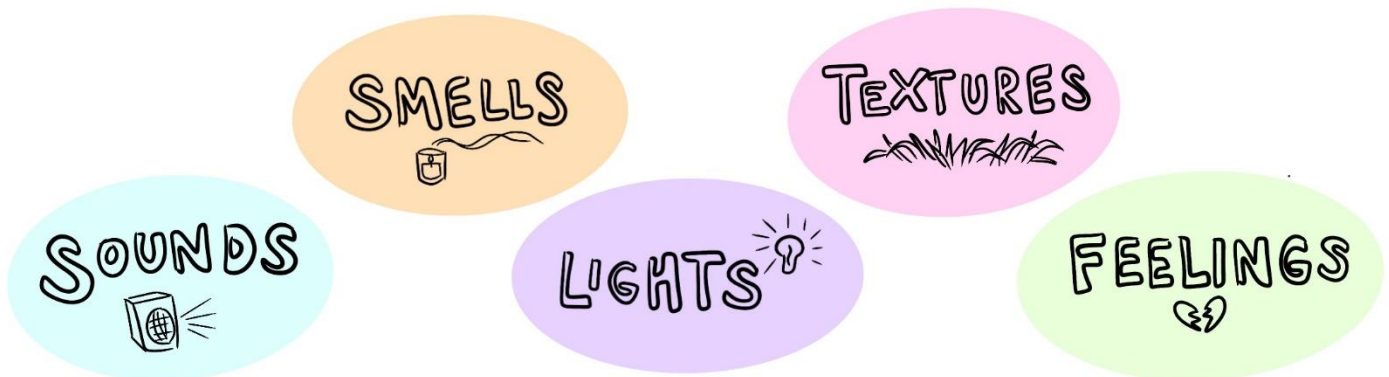
My name is _____ and I am Autistic. This means my brain works differently to a lot of my peers. **Different** is not wrong!

There are lots of things that I'm good at, like:



All students need help with some things. Some things **I** need help with are:

Being Autistic, I experience things **differently**, such as



This sensory input, while often unnoticed by my peers, can be **overwhelming** for me. School is often **overwhelming** for me.

I am happiest when I feel **comfortable** and **safe** at school.

There are plenty of ways that **you** can help me with this.



I concentrate best when I am **not** using **eye contact**. Eye contact is **very** uncomfortable for me and it costs me a lot of energy. I am able to focus and listen **much** better when I don't make eye contact with people.



I **focus** best when my **body** is **moving**. If I try my absolute hardest to sit still, I don't have much brainpower left to learn. I work best with a fidget tool, wobble seat, chair elastic, moving in my seat, or not sitting at all. When I hear adults say 'everyone sit still', I get confused. Should I focus all my energy on sitting still, or should I use movement to help me focus on my work?

Help me listen to my body

As with most Autistic people, I can't really hear when someone is speaking with a '**tone**' (including me!) I also find it hard to notice my own **volume**. This is a common Autistic trait, and one that I have limited control over. Please listen only to my **words** and try not to pay attention to my 'tone' or volume.

WORDS
=
MEANING

I have a **different communication style** to most of my peers. I am often direct and factual, and sometimes non-autistic people interpret this as **rudeness**. I am not being rude, I am simply communicating in an Autistic way.

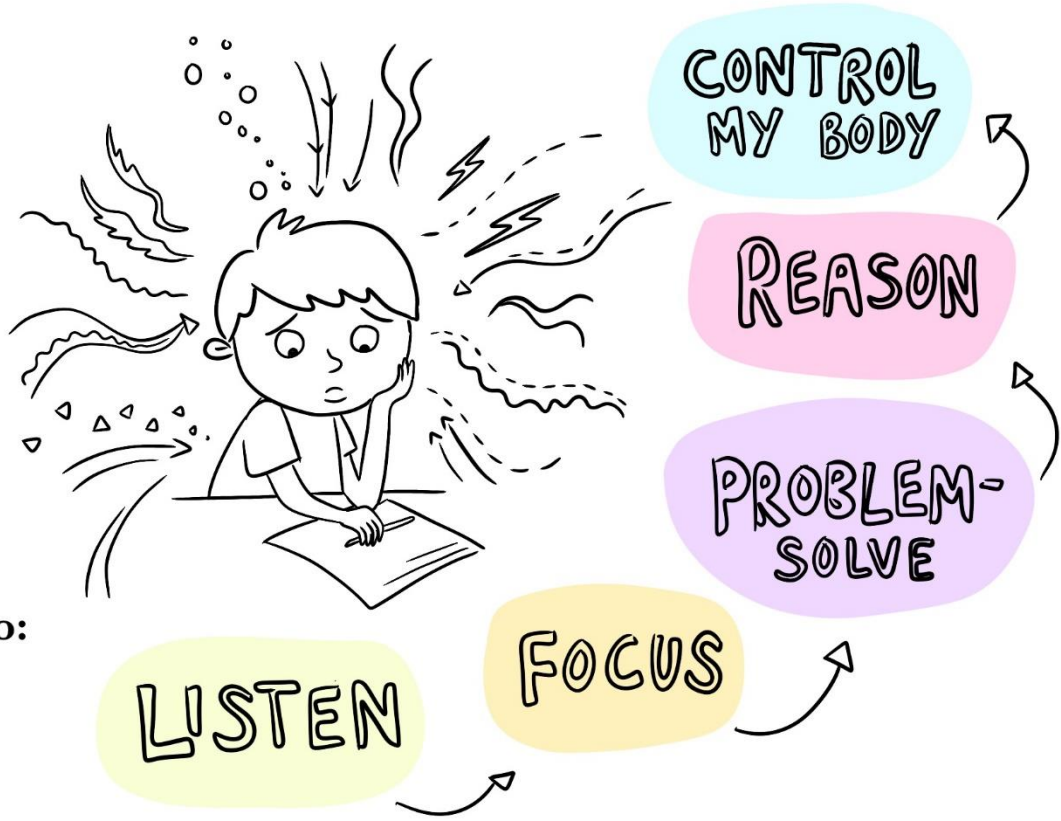
Miscommunication sometimes happens when someone misunderstands me and/or I misunderstand them.

When this occurs, repairing the situation is the responsibility of **both of us**.

We will **both** benefit from learning more about the other person's communication style.



My brain processes **sensory information** differently to my peers, and I can easily become **dysregulated** by my environment.

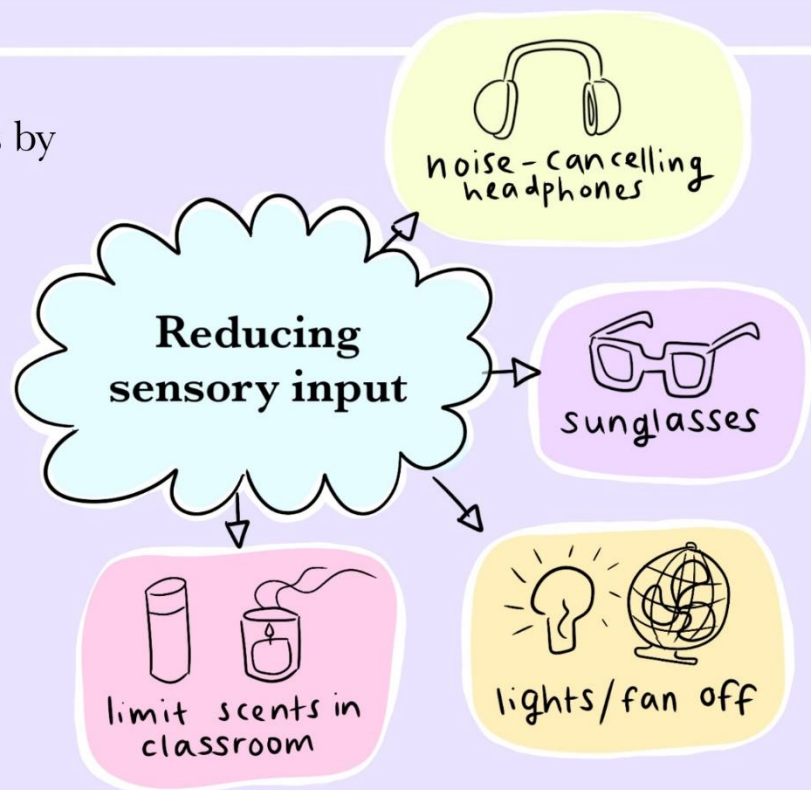


When this happens I find it much harder to:

Sometimes this can lead to a **meltdown**, which means I have **lost all control of my body**. This is **very traumatic** for me.

It is best to **prevent** this by helping me **regulate** throughout the day.

I can **regulate** by:



Ask me where I would like to sit in the classroom

Prepare me for upcoming events that might be overwhelming



HOW I REGULATE

Stimming and fidgeting (e.g. rocking, flapping, spinning, jumping, swinging, humming, fidget tools)

Taking breaks (e.g. having a cold drink, taking a walk outside, chilling out in a quiet place, having a snack, spending time doing a preferred activity)

When I am **well-regulated** I can focus on my learning.
When I am **dysregulated** I am not able to learn effectively.

If I have trouble completing class work, it may be because I am **dysregulated**. The most **effective** way to get my brain back on track for learning is to ensure that I do not miss my breaks (**recess/lunch**).

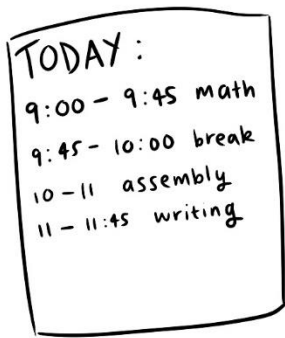
If I miss these opportunities to regulate, I probably won't be able to work effectively again that day.



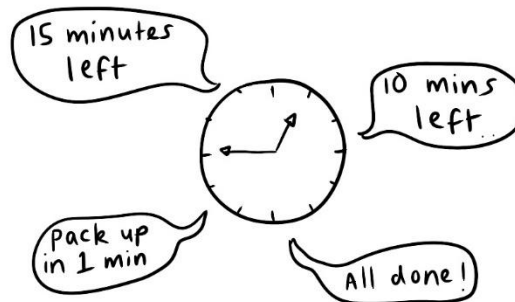
Lunch and **recess** are not **privileges**. They are **essential breaks** that I use to regulate so that I can continue learning like the rest of my peers.

I am **really good at focusing on things that I enjoy**. This hyper focus is a **big strength!** When my focus is interrupted suddenly, I find it physically uncomfortable and sometimes distressing. Often I have trouble moving my focus to something else.

You can help me with this by:



Having visual schedule of the daily routine.



Giving plenty of notice before transitions



Telling me when I can return to the activity

I am an **Autistic kid** with **Autistic social skills**. This means that my social skills look **different** to those of my peers.

When **social misunderstandings** happen, it is the **responsibility of everyone to repair them**. My peers would benefit from learning about Autistic social skills just as much as I will benefit from learning about non-autistic social skills.



I am proud to be Autistic.
My main job is to be myself!



The information in this handout reflects the current recommendations, experiences, and expertise of Autistic individuals and Autistic professionals.

All recommendations align with the principles of Neurodiversity, which assert that all neurotypes are valid and valuable.

The idea that Autistic individuals should change to be less Autistic is one that is emphatically rejected by the Autistic community.

Autistic students need understanding, support, and kindness. They cannot find classroom success without it.

