

Quick Guide to Autism

A 2-page introduction to understanding
the autistic experience

What is Autism?

Autism is a neurological difference in how the brain processes sensory input, social information, and patterns. It shapes how autistic people experience and interact with the world around them - from how they take in sounds and textures to how they connect with other people.

Autism is not a disease and not something that needs to be fixed. It is a fundamental part of who a person is. Autistic brains are wired differently, and that difference brings both genuine challenges and remarkable strengths.

Common Autistic Experiences

- Sensory sensitivity (sounds, lights, textures)
- Deep focused interests and passionate expertise
- Need for routine and predictability
- Thinking in patterns and systems
- Social situations draining energy
- Difficulty reading unspoken social rules
- Masking or camouflaging to fit in
- Intense emotions that are hard to regulate

The Neurodiversity Perspective

Autism is a natural variation of the human brain. Many autistic people have unique strengths in pattern recognition, attention to detail, honesty, and deep expertise. Understanding autism through a neurodiversity lens means recognising difference rather than deficit.

What Helps

1. **Understand your sensory needs:** Learn which environments energise you and which overwhelm you, then shape your day accordingly.
2. **Honour your energy limits:** Especially social energy. Rest is not laziness - it's how your brain recovers.
3. **Build a life that works WITH your brain:** Structure routines, interests, and environments around how you actually function best.
4. **Find your community:** Other autistic people understand. Connection with people who share your neurotype can be profoundly validating.
5. **Advocate for accommodations:** At work, school, and home. You deserve an environment that supports you, not one you have to survive.

Remember

Being autistic isn't something that needs to be fixed. Understanding yourself better leads to self-compassion, better relationships, and a life that truly fits.

Want to understand your autistic experience in depth?

Take the Full Autism Profile Assessment at autismprofile.com