

Purple Ella

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**7 out of 10 autistic people:  
meet diagnostic criteria for at  
least one mental health condition**

**(statistic from Autistica  
research)**

**Swedish population based  
study in 2016:**

**individuals diagnosed with  
ASC, without intellectual  
disability, related to doubled  
risk of substance use  
problems.**

# Autism

**“might be a particular risk factor for developing a restrictive eating disorder”**

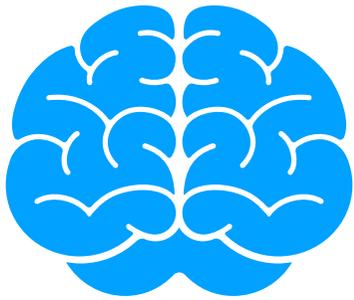
**William Mandy, psychologist  
University College London**

**“I recognise that the combination of exhaustion, sensory overload and disruption to my routine was too much to cope with, unsupported, as an autistic woman.”**



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# Autism and mental health - practical strategies



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**Flexible  
routine to  
reduce  
anxiety**



Slowly learn to  
unmask, and be  
authentic autistic  
self.



# Sensory Toolkit



# Over responsive:

- Hates noisy, busy environments
- Easily overstimulated

## Strategies:

- Deep pressure activities - pushing, pulling, massage
- Weighted blankets, lap pads, compression clothing
- Fidget toys
- Ear defenders to reduce sensory input

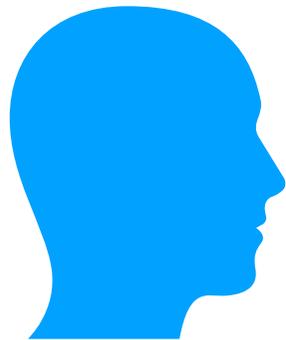
# Under responsive:

- Withdrawn
- Passive but not engaged
- Seeks intense sensory input

## Strategies:

- Therapy balls to bounce
- Swinging, jumping and movement games
- Loud music with a strong beat

# Mindfulness



**Energy accounting = activities  
which use energy need to be  
balanced by rest or activities which  
input energy**



**Special Interest can be helpful:**

- It can be a very mindful activity, which reduces anxiety and helps regulate our central nervous system**
- It can be used as a social opportunity. Shared interests give us something to do, and something to talk about.**

# Mood Monitoring

Learning to identify emotions, and levels of emotion can be a useful way of learning to keep your mood regulated.

Anxiety Level	None	Mild	Mild-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	Highest
Faces						