

Practical Strategies for Promoting Mental Wellness of Teenage Girls and Women with ASD

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Embracing Neurodiversity

Overview

1. Validation and Acceptance
2. Understand Their ASD
3. Promote Wellbeing
 - a) Make sense of experiences
 - b) Set parameters
 - c) Meltdowns and emotional regulation
 - d) What helps
 - e) Social network
4. Celebrate Success


Validate, Accept, Acknowledge



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Understanding Their ASD

- Key issues:
 - Change anxiety
 - Lack of filter/ Sensory processing
 - Monofocus/shifting
 - Theory of mind
 - Emotional regulation
- First person accounts: blogs, books
- Educate loved ones to increase understanding, create new interactional patterns



Making Sense of Experiences


- Emotion words
- Personality traits
- Processing
- Scripts



IDENTIFYING FEELINGS								
INTENSITY OF FEELINGS	HAPPY	SAD	ANGRY	CONFUSED	AFRAID	WEAK	STRONG	GUILTY
High	Ecstatic	Alone	Betrayed	Bewildered	Fearful	Drained	Aggressive	Ashamed
	Elated	Cruel	Disgusted	Desperate	Horified	Exhausted	Determined	Humiliated
	Excited	Depressed	Enraged	Directionless	Intimidated	Helpless	Disgraced	Remorseful
	Enuberant	Devastated	Furious	Lost	Panicky	Hopeless	Forceful	Sorrowful
Medium	Fired-up	Disappointed	Irate	Spaced-out	Petrified	Impotent	Potent	Unworthy
	Overjoyed	Heart-broken	Outraged	Stagnant	Terrified	Lifeless	Powerful	Worthless
	Thrilled	Hopeless	Seething	Trapped	Overwhelmed	Proud	Super	
		Sorrowful	Wounded	Troubled	Vulnerable			
Low	Cheerful	Distressed	Aggravated	Disorganized	Apprehensive	Beat	Capable	Lowdown
	Confident	Down	Agitated	Disoriented	Frightened	Dependent	Confident	Sneaky
	Contented	Hurt	Annoyed	Foggy	Insecure	Inadequate	Energetic	Sorry
	Delighted	Left-out	Controlled	Misplaced	Scared	Incapable	Persuasive	
High	Good	Regret	Frustrated	Mixed-up	Spooked	Insecure	Sure	
	Relieved	Upset	Mad	Upset	Threatened	Lazy		
	Satisfied	Up	Upset	Upset	Uneasy	Run-down		
						Tired		
Low	Fine	Bad	Dismayed	Baffled	Apprehensive	Lethargic	Able	Embarrassed
	Glad	Blue	Irritated	Bothered	Anxious	Shaky	Adequate	
	Mellow	Lost	Perturbed	Perplexed	Concerned	Shy	Capable	
	Pleasant	Moody	Put out	Puzzled	Nervous	Soft	Durable	
High	Pleased	Sorry	Touchy	Uncomfortable	Skeptical	Under-par	Secure	
	Satisfied	Unhappy	Uptight	Unsure	Timid	Unsatisfied		
					Unsure	Worried		

Set Parameters

- Spoon Theory
 - Social
 - Emotion
 - Sensory
 - Time
 - Information
- Accepting limits



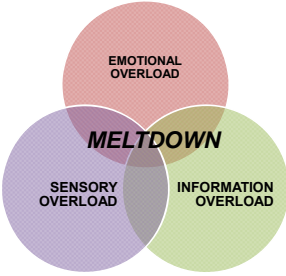
Meltdowns



“A build up of emotion. I don’t want to be around anyone.
 I feel suffocated and trapped.
 If I pinpoint what I’m feeling it makes more sense. “



Emotional Regulation

- What are my triggers?



What Helps?

- Intense Sensations – Deep Pressure, Ice
- Self Soothe – Drink
- Distraction – Music, Visual
- Grounding Exercises
- Sensory Deprivation
- Imagery – Happy Place
- Deep Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Self-encouragement – “This Will Pass”

- Space and Time
- Support and Understanding
- Forgiveness


Build A Support Network

- Strengthen social skills
 - Scripts, texting, role play
- Know who to trust
- Teach Advocacy
- Disclosure
- Support Groups



Celebrate Growth

- Emphasize positive coping, good choices and working towards goals
- Live a life that is meaningful to them
- Focus on hope



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