

*Embracing
Autism*



Social Communication

Post Diagnosis Workshop 2



Objective of the Workshop

To develop a fuller understanding of Social Communication

- Challenges with communication
- General processing differences
- Meeting those communication differences



Communication



American professor with autism, Temple Grandin is one of the first professionals on the autism spectrum to publicly share insights from her personal experience of autism



allauthor

I can remember the frustration of not being able to talk. I knew what I wanted to say, but I could not get the words out, so I would just scream.

-Temple Grandin



Differences with Listening and Attention



People who have autism often notice differences with:

- Listening
- Tuning in
- Filtering out the unimportant bits
- Taking turns

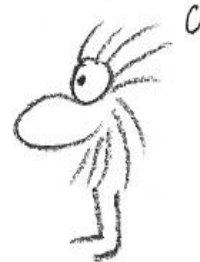
Attention

- Staying focused
- Shifting focus when needed

Now, I have something very important to tell you, so listen carefully...



He smells like pepperoni.



Differences with social communication



Social use of communication

- May not understand the point of sharing information with others
- May find it hard to take turns in a conversation
- May not know the difference between socially relevant and irrelevant information
- May be too sensitive to sharing anything personal
- May be too concerned with 'perfect communication' and failing at it



Difficulties with Understanding

Abstract concepts

- Time and the future
- Negatives (not, don't ...)
- Pronouns (he, she, it, I, you
- Prepositions (on, in, for, with, to...)

Lookit me
when I'm
talkin' to you!



Oh yeh?
well, don't
interrupt me
when I'm
listenin' to you!



Difficulties with Understanding



- May find it hard to pick up on non-verbal communication
e.g. facial expression, gesture, body language, pitch and intonation
- May take things literally – e.g. “It is raining cats and dogs”
- May find it hard to pick up on social cues
- Sometimes difficult to process negatives such as a simple “no” or “don’t do that”



Time to Pause.....

- Any questions?
- Any comments?
- Time to share.



Differences with general processing



Can take longer for someone to process information and respond for many reasons:

- need to interpret and decode what has been said
- sensory distractions in environment
- heightened anxiety slowing down processing



Processing information



National Autistic Society film

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=nas+too+much+information+youtube&view=detail&mid=E37FF78F48785D51B6F4E37FF78F48785D51B6F4&F>



Time to Pause.....

- Any questions?
- Any comments?
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Meeting Communication Challenges



Processing information



National Autistic Society film

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11O0VAmU89g>



Coping Strategies



Some things that can help with sound sensitivity

- Wear headphones or ear plugs
- Find a quiet space to take a break
- Reduce background noise
- Listen to music
- White noise may help some people
- Shut doors/windows
- Take time out, use relaxation and breathing techniques



Coping Strategies



AUTISM AT
KINGWOOD

Some things that can help with social interaction

- If you are struggling with direct eye contact you can look at someone for 2-5 seconds and then look away or you could look at the top of their nose between the forehead
- Practice these tips with a friend or family member so you feel more confident
- Ask someone to speak more slowly and concisely
- Take time to observe and find a common interest
- Explain you are autistic to those who are important to you



Other ways to communicate

- Use photos or objects
- Draw a picture
- Make a list
- Use gesture to clarify
- Use sign language
- Typing (email) or texting
- Use social media platforms



Time to Pause.....

- Any questions?
- Any comments?
- Time to share.



Acknowledgements



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