UNDERSTANDING CONDITIONS

What is Autism?

Young Carers
Bedford Borough

Contents

What is Autism ?
My feelings and emotions
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What I think Autism is and how it feels to have Autistm

Write your ideas below

So how does Autism feel?

For some it may feel like

Finding it hard to communicate and interact with other people

Find it hard to understand how other people think or feel

Find things like bright lights or loud noises overwhelming, stressful or uncomfortable

Getting anxious or upset about unfamiliar situations and social events

Take longer to understand information

Doing or thinking the same things over and over

Autism is not an illness

Being autistic does not mean you have an illness or disease. It means your brain works in a different way from other people.

It's something you're born with. Signs of autism might be noticed when you're very young, or not until you're older.

If you're autistic, you're autistic your whole life.

Autism is not a medical condition with treatments or a "cure". But some people need support to help them with certain things.

Some autistic people need little or no support. Others may need help from a parent or carer every day.

Autism is different for everyone

Autism is a spectrum. This means everybody with autism is different.

Sometimes it can be hard to understand and cope

We can't go shopping in town because my sister has meltdowns.

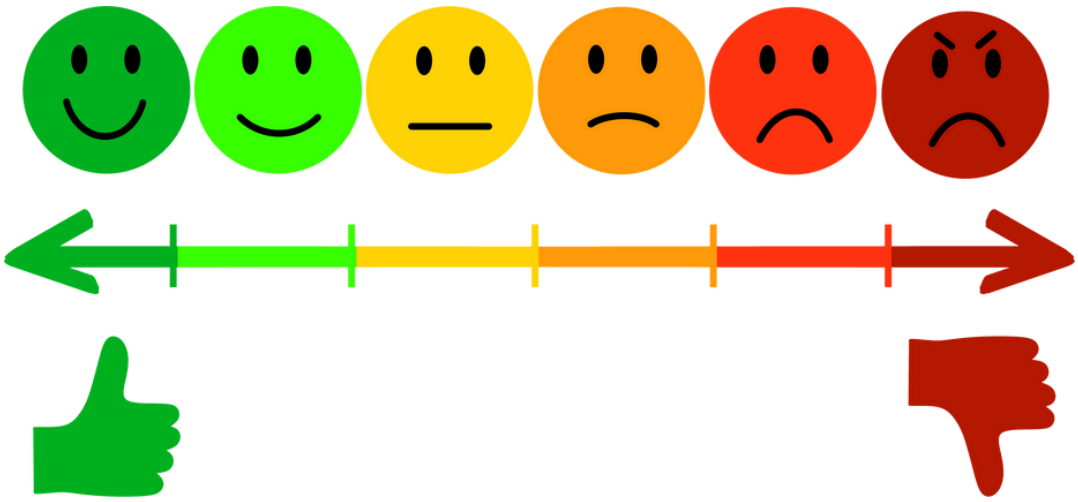
I've stopped looking forward to treats as they always get cancelled.

I feel really jealous when my brother gets all my dad's time. He can never come to watch me play in football matches

My parents can never both come to my school assemblies as one of them always needs to look after my sister.

It frightens me when my sister bangs her head and hurts herself. I'm worried that she'll hurt me too

Sometimes I may feel



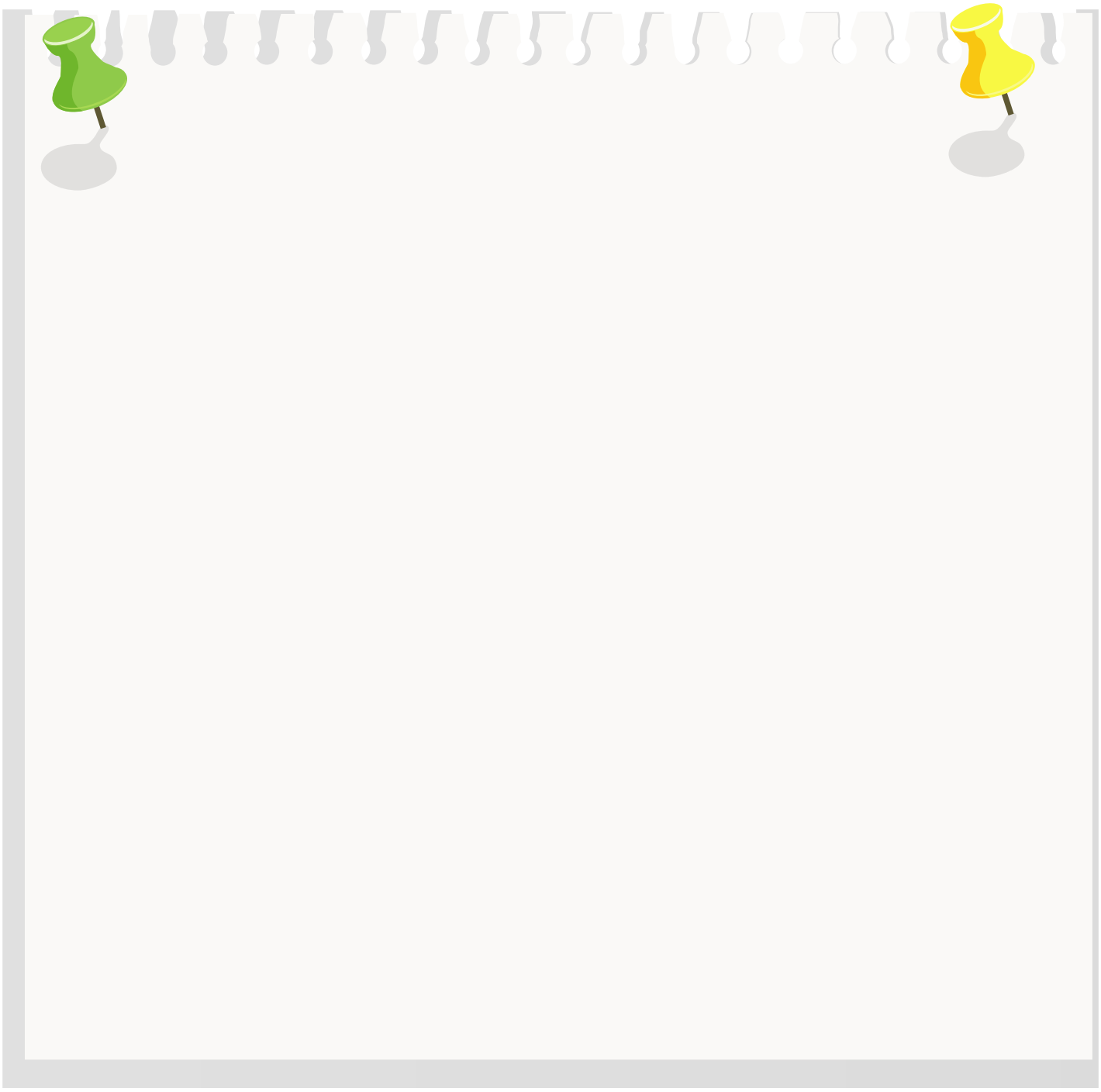
Think of some words to describe your feelings and write them below

Top Tips

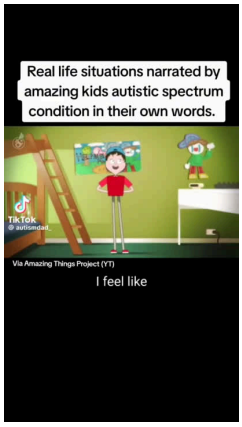
Keep asking questions if you don't understand the answers don't worry– even adults find it hard to understand disability.

- **Write a list of questions for your parents. They may not be able to give me all the answers at once but finding things out a bit at a time may help feeling left out when you don't understand things.**
- **Make a list of all the things you have learnt to do as a sibling that other people your age don't know about**
- **Talk to your teacher if the care you are doing is stopping you from doing your homework**
- **Make a list of the things you enjoy doing and see if you can do one of these each week**
- **Walk away and go to a safe place in your house if your brother or sister is becoming angry and not behaving..**

Now you have completed this workshop, take a moment to think about your thoughts and anything you have found useful.



Internet support Links



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Apps

- **SMILING MIND:** practice daily meditation and mindfulness exercises
- **MOOD PANDA:** track your mood and get anonymous support
- **DEPRESSION CBT SELF-HELP GUIDE**: learn to control stress that contributes to depression
- **SLEEP CYCLE**: track your sleep so you can get woken up at the perfect time for your mood
- **MOODPATH**: depression and anxiety tracker and test (ages 13-25)
- **BREATHR APP**: Designed for young people offering mindfulness exercises, which may be fun and accessible for you to try
- **SEL-ANXIETY MANAGEMENT (SAM) APP:** SAM includes lots of information about anxiety, as well as calming activities to help you feel more relaxed
- **MINDSHIFT**: designed to help teenagers struggling with anxiety or low mood. It includes tracking tools, positive thinking activities, relaxation tips, and inspiring quotes/stories
- **PACIFA**: aims to help with anxiety, depression and stress using techniques based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and mindfulness
- **HEADSPACE**: train your mind for a healthier, happier life (ages 13-25)

Other Support::

- **SIBS**: https://www.sibs.org.uk/youngsibs/
- **Autism Beds** https://www.autismbedfordshire.net/

Young Carers
Bedford Borough

We are an experienced charity supporting unpaid carers, of all ages, across Bedfordshire.

Bedford Borough Council

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www.youngcarersbedford.com
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