

ALL ABOUT ASPERGERS SYNDROME

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WHAT IS ASPERGERS SYNDROME?

- Aspergers syndrome (AS) is a lifelong form of High Functioning Autism, which affects how people make sense of the world, processes information, and relate to other people.
- The condition of Aspergers syndrome affects people in many different ways and to varying degrees. As a result, it is often described as a 'spectrum disorder'.
- Neurotypical (NT) people are often unable to identify a person with AS by their outward appearance.

DIFFICULTIES

- People with AS have difficulties in three main areas.
- These areas are:
 - social skills
 - behavior skills
 - emotional regulation

COMMON DIFFICULTIES IN SOCIAL SKILLS

- ❑ Most people with AS find it difficult to concentrate on multiple things happening at the same time. As a result, they find eye contact to be distracting.
- ❑ Most people with AS have a limited focus when it comes to subjects outside their area of interest. They will approach other people, but make normal conversation difficult by only wanting to talk about their subject of interest.
- ❑ At times, people with AS will only think about themselves and not about others. They will only care about their needs/wants and not about the needs/wants of other people. As a result it is difficult for them to create long-lasting friendships on their own.
- ❑ Some people with AS may script out random quotes or facts during a conversation. They may also change the subject without realizing it.
- ❑ Most people with AS do not understand figurative language. They also find irony and sarcasm difficult to understand.

COMMON DIFFICULTIES IN BEHAVIOR SKILLS

- ❑ Most people with AS find remembering small tasks to be difficult unless it is within their subject of interest. As a result, it is best for them to have a steady routine with simple steps.
- ❑ Most people with AS are not aware of their surroundings due to the fact that they are often stuck in their own world of thoughts and imagination.
- ❑ When excited or frustrated, people with AS will often use atypical body movements such as arms or hand flapping, constant rubbing, and hand or nail biting, to show their emotions.
- ❑ When coming across something that they are very frightened of, some people with AS may panic by causing a scene of uncommon behavior. Such behavior may include: yelling, unusual body movements, and even running away.

COMMON DIFFICULTIES WITH EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Emotional Regulation Is:

- The ability to process verbal/non-verbal information
 - The ability to recognize, process, and express emotions
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- Most people with AS find it difficult to understand facial expressions, body posture, and vocal tone.
- Most people with AS may have a hard time balancing their emotions. When they have a lot of emotions, they have a hard time working through them all.
- Most people with AS may find it difficult to understand what other people are thinking.

OTHER DIFFICULTIES

- Most people with AS believe everything they hear (or see). As a result, they have a harder time forming their own opinions on certain beliefs and will often take things literally.
 - In other words, they can only understand the “black and white” of a conversation while other people can see different shade of “grey” that lay in between.
- Some people with AS may be hypersensitive to sound, smell, and vision.
- Most people with AS have a hard time with change. They are uncomfortable with new and unknown experiences such as trying new foods, being in a new environment, and adjusting to a new routine.
 - Most people with AS talk to themselves when a lot is on their mind. They use it as a way to comfort themselves down or organize their thoughts.
- Most people with AS have a hard time with organizing activities, budgeting money, and living healthy.

With support, most of these limitations and difficulties can improve later in their life if they work hard to expand their horizons and explore new friendships and life skills.

KNOWLEDGE/TALENT

- People with AS have a large amount of knowledge and talent on a certain subject that they love. They try their best to learn all about the subject.
- Some common subjects of interest include:
 - Computers, drawing, math, books, music, painting, video gaming, acting, history, machines, and more.
- People with AS can remember a lot of facts and rules that most people forget. Some people with AS even have a photographic memory.
- People with AS will often become experts in their certain subject of interest.

FACT: Some historians believe that Albert Einstein, Marie-Curie, Charles Darwin, Bill Gates, and Amadeus Mozart exhibited some behaviors consistent with AS.

With the right support and encouragement, people with Aspergers syndrome can lead full and independent lives.

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END