

Understanding Autism

Spotting the Possible Signs of Asperger's/ High Functioning Autism

A	Attention	<p>Attention to detail. You've noticed they seem to be fixated on one activity or bogged down in the detail. When you have a conversation they correct minor points or try to be exact. You've noticed they are really knowledgeable on a particular topic but seem disinterested in others. Their speech may be quite advanced and precise for their age.</p>
U	Understand	<p>Understanding simple instructions is difficult. You've noticed they just don't get it. They keep asking questions or appear to lack confidence. It seems to take them longer to start a task than everyone else and finishing a task can be just as difficult. The subtleties of speech and language seem to go over their head so they easily misunderstand instructions.</p>
T	Trouble	<p>Trouble is not far away. You've noticed that they seem to end up in trouble more than anyone else though it seems out of character. They are too honest about what has happened and seem detached from the consequences and cannot explain how things went wrong. They know the rules but don't seem to be able to apply them in different situations.</p>
I	Isolated	<p>Isolated with few friends. They prefer the company of adults rather than that of their peers. Rarely do they invite friends home and rarely do they go out to see others. At home they spend more time in their bedroom than in the lounge. After being with others it's not long before they want to withdraw to spend some time alone.</p>
S	Sensitive	<p>Sensitive to the environment around them. You've noticed they prefer routine and that departing from it causes distress or anger. Their emotions go up and down very easily and something insignificant can cause an emotional meltdown. They are sensitive to touch and even different fabrics. You might even have noticed that they have removed labels out of clothes.</p>
M	Missing	<p>Missing social cues. You've noticed that something is missing. They're intelligent, bright and kind but they're different. They prefer not to give too much eye contact and though they are caring they seem to lack empathy. You might have noticed they are clumsy or lack some motor coordination. You don't want to believe it but your instinct says something is different.</p>

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Understanding Asperger's/High Functioning Autism

A	Allow	Allow me extra time to process information, questions and instructions. My mind is naturally active and looks for the details so that I can carry out an instruction. I might over analyse things and appear to not be working or you might think I'm lazy. If I'm not doing what you ask, see if I've understood and explain things again. I'm not stupid, I'm looking for clarity. Please help me.
U	Understand	Understand that I cannot be the same as everyone else. My brain is wired differently and I cannot do anything to change that. It means that what others find easy (eg. friendship, communication and social things) I have to be shown and taught. Understand I have an amazing gift and strengths yet to be discovered. Not all behaviour is bad – sometimes it's just behaviour. Please help me.
T	Take	Take less offence at what I say or do. I can be very literal in my understanding and can appear blunt or rude. I don't mean to be and I can't always recognise when this happens. I like to ask lots of questions because I'm genuinely interested. A gentle approach to show me how to phrase things and when to ask questions will make the difference. Please help me.
I	Influence	Influence me for good. I'm not very good at resisting the 'bad' influence of others but I can be influenced towards good outcomes. Strength of character takes me longer to master and I need to learn about assertiveness. I shy away from conflict and it's easier to go with the crowd. I need positive influences in my life to help me steer a steady course. Please help me.
S	Say	Say what you mean. I have a tendency to take what you say literally or out of context. It can result in some funny situations but could also annoy you. I'd find it really helpful if you say what you mean so that I don't misinterpret something. So often I get it wrong because I don't pick up social cues or facial expressions - but I'm reassured when you smile. Please help me.
M	Mistakes	Mistakes happen. I get it wrong though I try not to. I genuinely want to please people and help out but knowing how to apply the rules in every situation is hard for me. Sometimes I forget things and just don't know what to do. It makes me worry and sad. If you can show how and why something has gone wrong I can learn. Check if others are enticing me to break the rules. Please help me.