

Every time you adjust your own behaviour and environment to accommodate a diverse range of capabilities, you're helping to create a world where no-one on the spectrum is left behind, and that's real change.

Tips for autism-friendly and inclusive interactions

Many people on the spectrum find reading social cues and body language very challenging. You can help by being patient and understanding.

Eye contact can be hard for some people on the spectrum. Don't expect or force eye contact. Go with what works for them.

Focus on a person's ability, interests and their unique perspective. If you take the time to listen, you may learn some really interesting things.

People on the spectrum have the same emotions as everyone else. Treat everyone with dignity and respect.

Sometimes people on the autism spectrum get overwhelmed by sights, sounds and smells in our surroundings, especially when places are busy. Give people the space and time they need and understand if they need to exit a situation or conversation quickly.

Sometimes people on the spectrum take words and phrases literally or have trouble reading 'between the lines'. As a result, they may need to clarify (even if this means going back to previous comments). Don't be offended by this if someone repeats your words back to you - they're just making sure they've understood you correctly. To help, keep your communication direct, clear and easy-to-follow.

People on the spectrum often interact and communicate differently. Be careful not to judge these differences negatively but focus patiently on the purpose of the communication.

People on the spectrum can appear very frank, honest and matter of fact. Remember this is often a part of being on the spectrum, and there's no intention to be rude or inappropriate.

These tips were developed in conjunction with people on the autism spectrum.