

Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder:
*Identifying Support Needs and
Initiating Effective Strategies*

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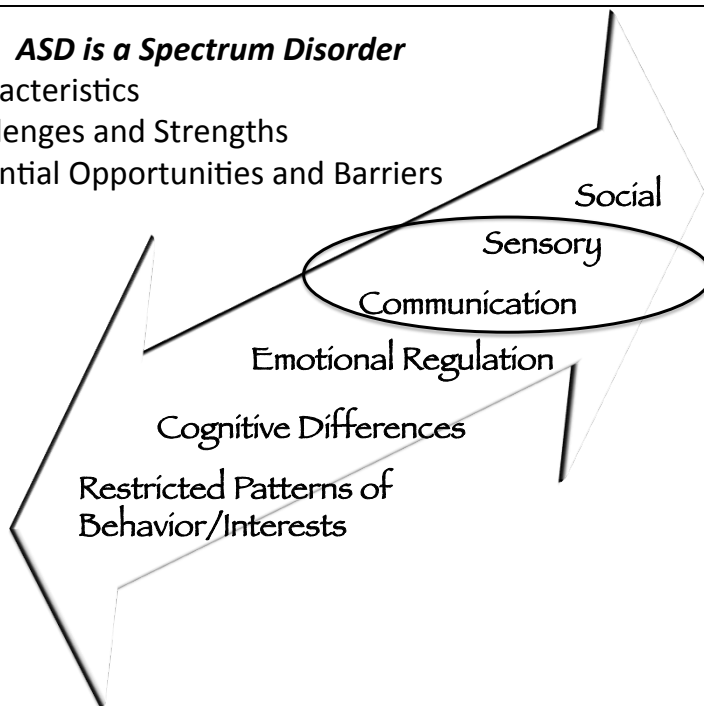
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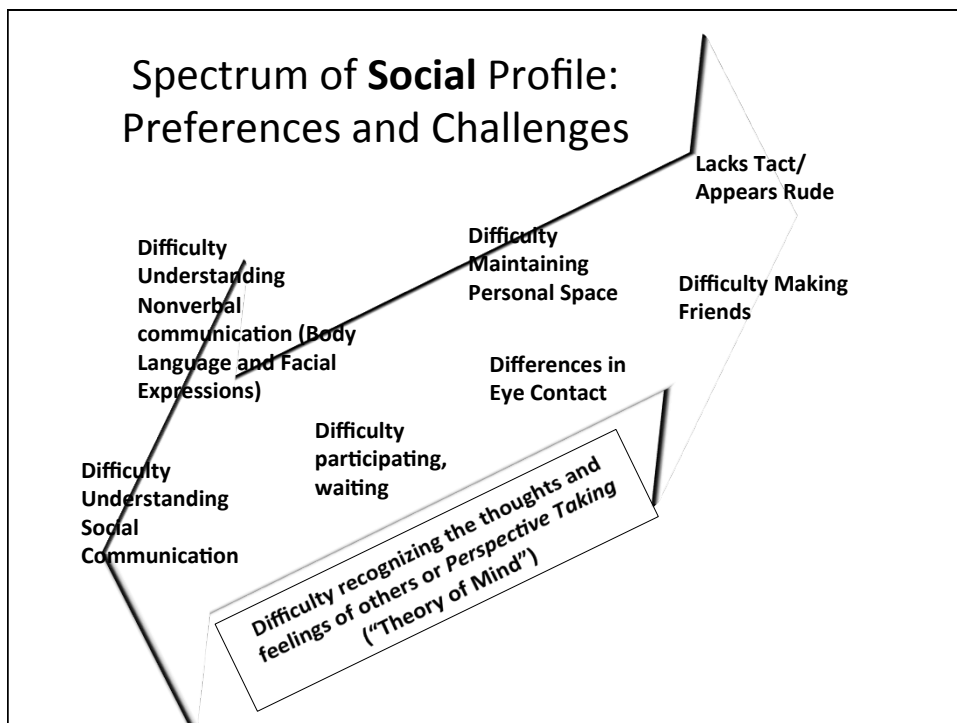
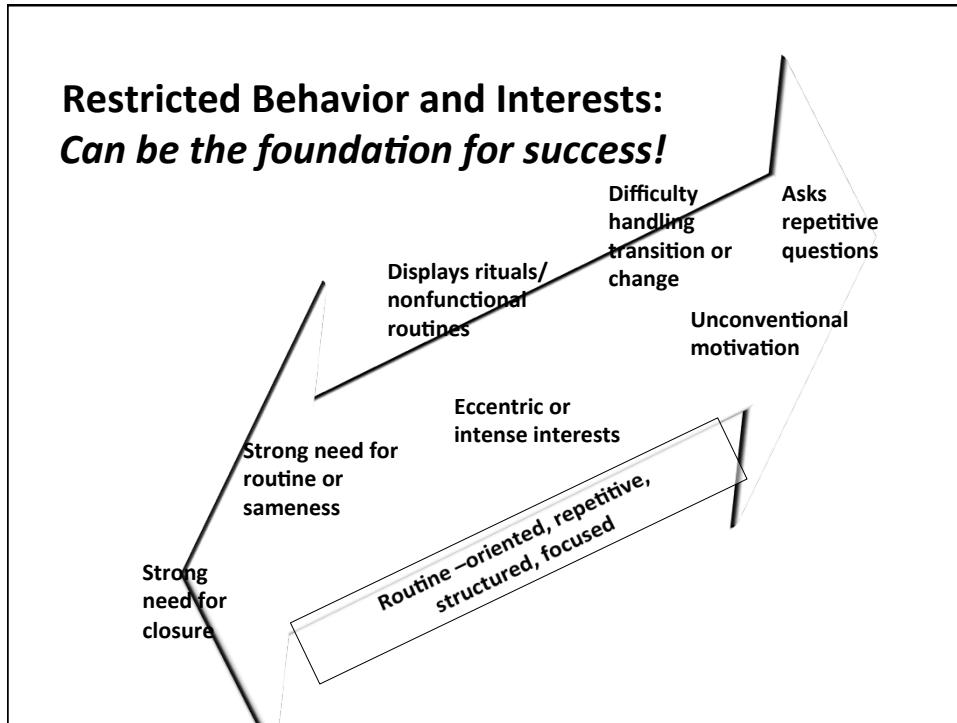
January 6, 2014
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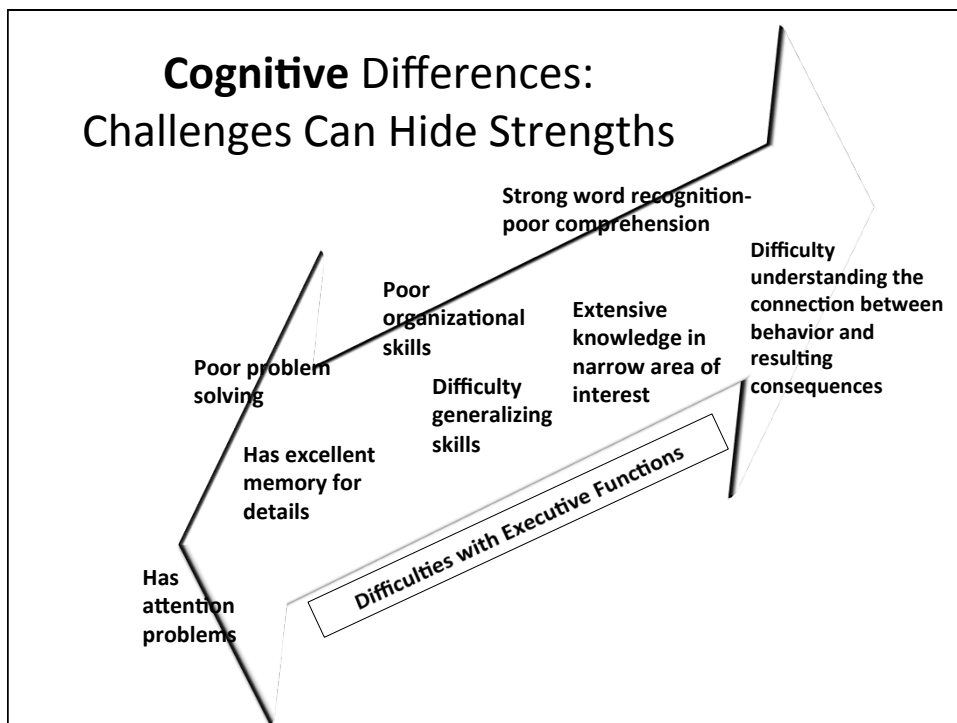
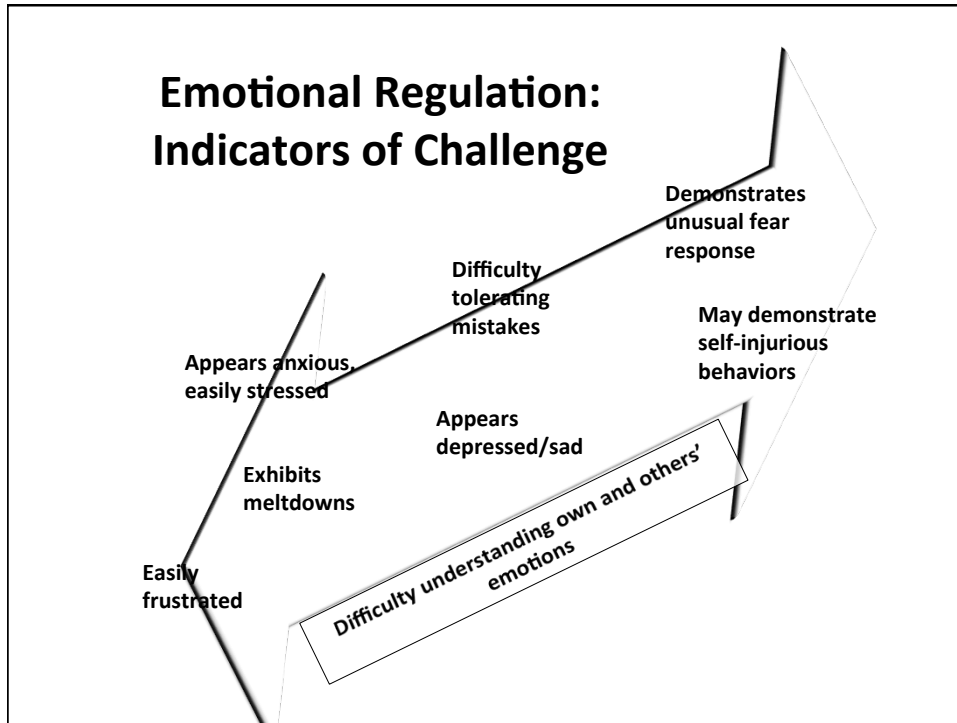


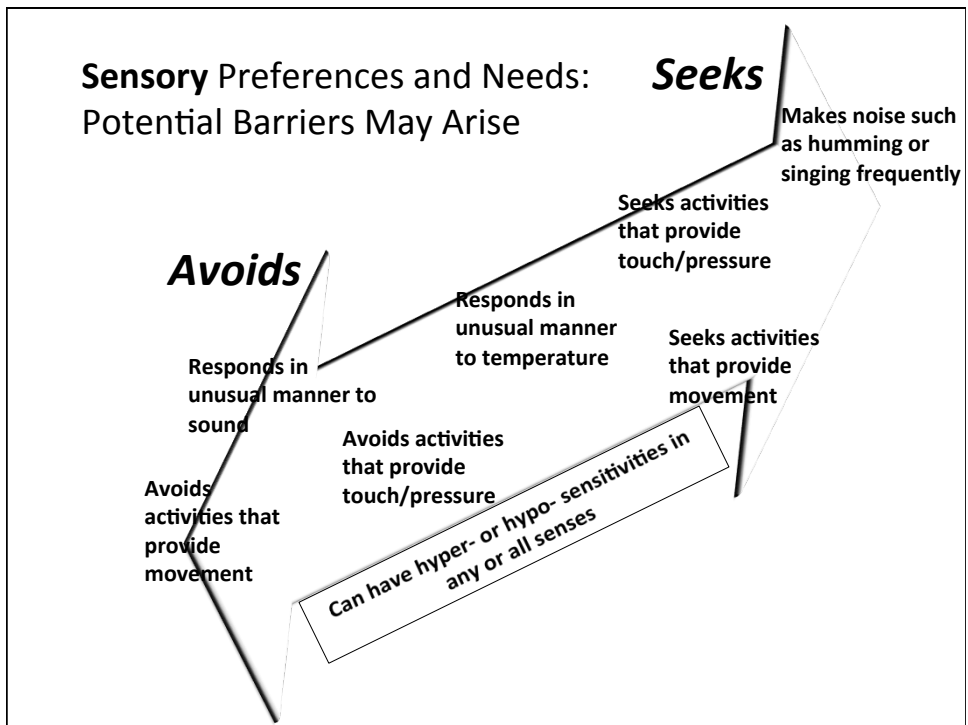
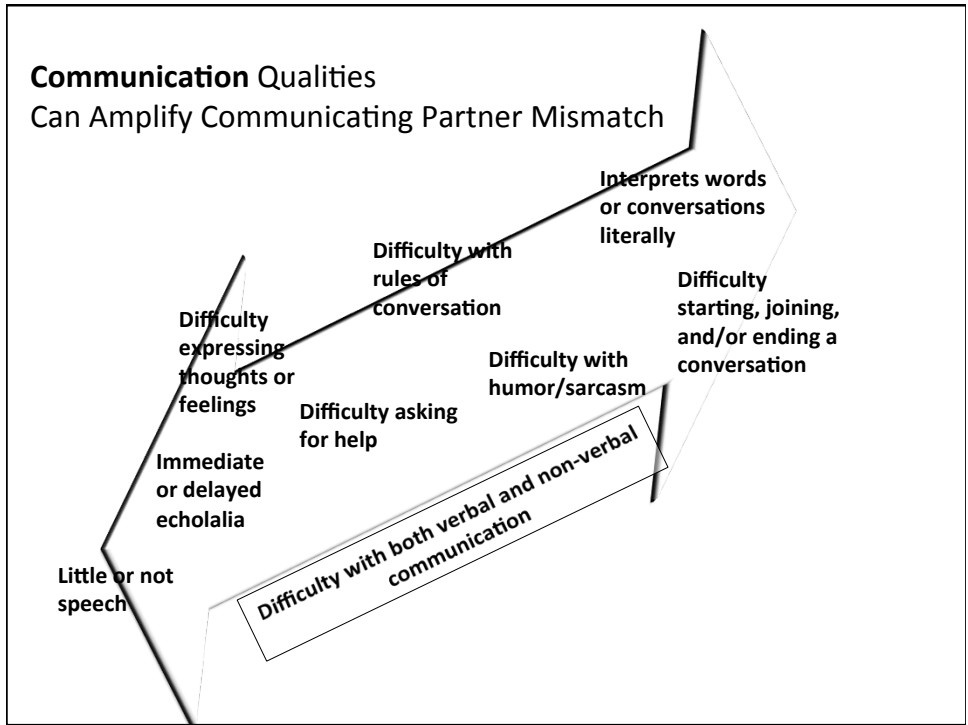
ASD is a Spectrum Disorder

- Characteristics
- Challenges and Strengths
- Potential Opportunities and Barriers









Creating the “Right Fit”: Identifying Strengths and Needs

Take Out WORKSHEET

Creating the Right Fit : Developing a Person-Centered Strengths Based Profile

Creating the Right Fit: Developing a Person-Centered, Strengths-Based Profile		Name: Date:
Communication Observations Communication Observations	Communication	Positive Aspects: How is this area a strength? Concerns: What aspects will need intervention and support?
Social Competency Observations Social Competency Observations	Social Competency	Positive Aspects: How is this area a strength? Concerns: What aspects will need intervention and support?
Sensory Observations Sensory Observations	Sensory	Positive Aspects: How is this area a strength? Concerns: What aspects will need intervention and support?

What Did You Learn Tell About Scott's Right Fit?

Scott wants to work in his local community a few hours a week. In the past he has tried to enter the world of work, only to find that he struggles again and again to be successful. You spend some time with Scott and his family to get to know him better so you can help make the “Right Fit”.

One of the first things you notice is that Scott yawns quite a bit. His mom says he has days where he doesn't sleep well. He may wake up at 3 AM and not go back to sleep. On those days he is tired and she says he can get cranky over little things.

You also note that when you are start asking Scott question, he struggles to answer and changes the conversation to Game Shows...his favorite topic! When you change the subject back to your question, Scott seems to get nervous, anxious, and a few times Scott abruptly excuses himself. While he is out, his parents explain that when he feels himself getting anxious or nervous, he will try to find a way to take a break...to separate from the stress. They tell you that if the stress continues and he cannot manage it, or regulate... he might cry, scream or occasionally he has been known to throw items. That's why he excuses himself for a brief time.

Scott returns in 5-10 minutes and he is willing to try and engage in conversation again. In fact he seems to want to be with you and interact with you. Of course, he does continue to move it back to the game show theme. Even when you look at your watch and use some strategies to clue him in on your interests in other subjects, he seems not to be responding. You finally ask him directly if you could talk about something different, to which he agrees and tries to answer questions as best he can. Scott's conversation seems to lag when his mom and dad are both talking with you. He visibly seems anxious as the three of you chat quickly and laugh about a funny story. In fact, Scott disengages with the conversation as soon as more than one person joins the conversation. He tries hard to be part of a group, but it clearly is difficult. In the middle of all this, you also notice that when a car outside blasts it's horn to move some geese off the road, he jumps and puts his hands over his ears.

You then ask Scott about what he does during the day...what he likes to do. He has a hard time giving you a cohesive answer until he picks up his calendar / schedule. He then gives you a detailed description of the events of his past week. Similarly, when you ask about what he likes, enjoys, etc... he is quiet. His father opens a photo album on the table and slips it across the table to Scott. At that point Scott begins telling you about liking the car shows he and his dad often attend, swimming, volunteering at the food bank to help organize and label the items and looking at the price of items in stores (because that helps him play “Price Is Right”).

Scott moves easily and smoothly around the room. He gets up and down frequently and seems to favor sitting in the overstuffed chair with the pillows and high sides. He does sit on the couch briefly, but moves to the favored chair when you and his father joined him on the couch and sit on either side of him.

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- One of the first things you notice is that Scott yawns quite a bit. His mom says he has days where he doesn't sleep well. He may wake up at 3 AM and not go back to sleep. On those days he is tired and she says he can get cranky over little things.
- You also note that when you are start asking Scott question, he struggles to answer and changes the conversation to Game Shows...his favorite topic! When you change the subject back to your question, Scott seems to get nervous, anxious, and a few times Scott abruptly excuses himself. While he is out, his parents explain that when he feels himself getting anxious or nervous, he will try to find a way to take a break...to separate from the stress. They tell you that if the stress continues and he cannot manage it, or regulate... he might cry, scream or occasionally he has been known to throw items. That's why he excuses himself for a brief time.
- Scott returns in 5-10 minutes and he is willing to try and engage in conversation again. In fact he seems to want to be with you and interact with you. Of course, he does continue to move it back to the game show theme. Even when you look at your watch and use some strategies to clue him in on your interests in other subjects, he seems not to be responding. You finally ask him directly if you could talk about something different, to which he agrees and tries to answer questions as best he can. Scott's conversation seems to lag when his mom and dad are both talking with you. He visibly seems anxious as the three of you chat quickly and laugh about a funny story. In fact, Scott disengages with the conversation as soon as more than one person joins the conversation. He tries hard to be part of a group, but it clearly is difficult. In the middle of all this, you also notice that when a car outside blasts it's horn to move some geese off the road, he jumps and puts his hands over his ears.
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Communication Supports

Important Reminders

Observation	Possible Communication Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not participate in activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now sure what to do. • Not sure how to do it. • Not sure what I was supposed to do. • Did not want to do it. • Wanted to do something else. • Do not feel good/upset/stressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use visual modalities to show what to do, what is to occur, sequence of events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words, Icons, Pictures, Photos, Objects • Ways to display can be low tech such (as dry erase boards to items velcroed on a board) to high tech (such as Apps on a mobile device or AAC device) • Offer choices of what to do, the order, or time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and Verbal • From Object Choices to Picture Choices, to Use of Apps • Offer communication support to express feeling or emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words, Icons, Pictures, Photos, Objects • Low tech such (as dry erase boards to items velcroed on a board) to high tech (such as Apps on a mobile device or AAC device) • Instruct how to recognize stress and emotion and how to express <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use visual scales (example: 5-Point Scale or Emotion Thermometer) • Direct Instruction • Pace your language. • Use meaningful words • Allow time to process. 5-10 seconds of wait time before repeating • Acknowledge Attempts. Communicate that you are aware the person is trying to tell you something. 	

Observation	Possible Communication Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person talks continually. • Same subjects. • Apparently unaware that others are not interested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not read body language • Wants to engage, but does not know how • Has limited knowledge of subjects to communicate about • Stressed and trying to calm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Social Narratives (example: Social Stories) to explain how others may feel about or interpret his/her continual chatting. This is teaching a 'Hidden Curriculum' item. • Use Video to show and teach facial expressions • Use video modeling to teach conversation 'rules' and techniques • Role Play/practice interactions and conversation. • Provide Social Scripts to use to interact with others. • Teach new topics or information so the person has other 'go to' conversation. Provide visual cues to remind them of these topics. On cards, smartphone, or other available methods. • Teach how to begin, continue and end a conversation. • Create a 'conversation rule'. Use of questions, comments, listen. Length of time. • Be Patient and Tolerant. Recognize the desire to interact and acknowledge. • Prompt new subjects by use of words, comments, pictures, objects, etc. • Create subtle cues that you can use with the person to prompt when it is time to listen, wait or end the conversation. 	

Observation	Possible Communication Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person's behavior escalates to a level of concern when told "no", "stop", "don't". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person has not had the experience of others respecting their wishes. • Has little or no control of their life • Limited enjoyments in life and has strong reactions to not having those available • Has little means of communicating except with behavior • Others do not pay attention to other types of communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess how often the person is told "yes", "sure", "OK" compared to "no", "stop", "don't". "Yes" should heavily outweigh "no"! If this is not the case, the team should create opportunities for the positives. • Identify additional activities, people, situations, and experiences that interest the person. • Use words other than the triggers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Not Now" instead of "No". "Let's do this..." Instead of "Stop". Tell what "To Do" • Provide visual schedules to show when favorite activities (and other things) will occur • Offer visual choices of what a person might be able to do. • Provide alternative ways for a person to communicate anger, sadness, confusion, disappointment, frustration, fear, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide visual methods such as pictures, words, icons. • Use technology such as Tables, Smartphones as well as dry erase boards and picture boards. • Gain a person's respect and trust. Then work on helping them accept the disappointments that can occur. • Use less verbalizations and more visual methods if a person is upset. • Provide visual cues and reminders of how to calm (Example: 5 Point Scale). Reinforce for using these methods • Do not try to reason with, or convince a person, that he is irrational when upset. This is generally NOT the teachable moment. Debrief and teach when calm. 	

Sensory Supports

Important Reminders

Observation	Possible Sensory Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becomes upset when touched or when others get too close. • Avoids getting too close to people and is selective about what he/she will wear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person is 'tactilely defensive' (Very sensitive to touch). • Can cause anxiety, fear, pain and avoidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for permission to touch or enter space • Promise not to touch • If you must touch, prepare the person. Explain (words/pictures, etc.) exactly what you are planning to do. • Offer different options of clothing type: Tighter? Looser? Different Fabric? • Under-clothing that is close-fitting to reduce tactile input on skin • Heavy blankets / weighted blankets • Chair that has sides (Boundaries and Support) • Boundaries of personal space marked with furniture, tape • Look for locations in community settings that allow the person to be out of high traffic, but not 'trapped'. (example: booth in the back of the restaurant on the end or one entire side to self) • Swimming, hot tubs, baths, showers (depends on the type of spray) • Provide a variety of items that the person can use to hold, squeeze, twist. Experiment with different textures. • Provide communication (words, pictures, gestures, etc.) that the person can use to ask for space. Honor the request • Break area. Place to retreat for a time to calm and organize. Access to this place and a way to indicate he/she will be 'taking a break'. • Use a visual tool, such as Five Point Scale, to help the person remember what to do when starting to get anxious in order to reduce stress and regulate sensory system. • Provide predictability and embed routines in the schedule • <i>Refer to specialist for Sensory Assessment</i> 	

Observation	Possible Sensory Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers Ears and can become upset with sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitivity to certain types and amount of sounds. Can cause pain, confusion, anxiety and stress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the type and features of sounds are that cause the person difficulty or pain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitch? Loudness? Complexity? Predictability? Tone? Everything? Limit exposure to the sounds that are the most difficult to tolerate. Help the person predict if possible when the sounds will occur in order to prepare Have the person engage in physical activity before needing to tolerate loud/noisy environments Offer space away from windows or doors Headphones – Noise reduction Ear-buds/earphones – Music Assist to access breaks away from noisy area to quiet, calm area Snug fitting baseball cap or a knit cap (even weighted cap) Chewing gum When unable to adjust for noise/sounds, reduce the auditory processing demands (provide visual communication, directions, information instead) Acknowledge that you understand how difficult it is for the person. Be Patient! <i>Refer to specialist for Sensory Assessment</i> 	

Observation	Possible Sensory Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constantly pacing, moving, jumping 	<p>Could be a variety of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs movement/input to stay alert or focused. May be trying to avoid being touched. May be trying to calm sensory system. May be disorganized and unable to make decisions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively place movement in the person's day. Provide activities, tasks, jobs, etc. that involve movement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional, purposeful movement activities are preferred. Avoid lengthy, aimless, intense pacing, jumping, spinning, etc. Create purpose. Pair 'heavy work' (lifting, pushing, push-ups etc.) with movement for calming and organizing. Provide optional seating that allows to move – therapy ball as chair, rolling stool/chair, rocking chair. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider ways to do the work, assignment or task by standing rather than sitting. Create regular movement activities as part of a health routine : Running, walking, swimming, bike riding, roller skating, trampoline, gymnastics, basketball, etc. Experiment with lighting. Some people respond well to low-lighting or indirect lighting such as lamps. These tend to be calming. Others prefer brighter lights. Many avoid fluorescent lighting Trampoline with regular access. Place in schedule. Or, create a 'jumping spot' that is in a safe, preferred location Use visual schedules that show the flow of the day. Include the sensory activities on the schedule and when they will occur. Unsure exactly what type of movement activity the person might need? Provide choice of activities. Provide them visually with pictures, words, photos. Place a movement activity BEFORE a task that requires concentration or is a difficult situation. Do not make a person earn the movement activity if they need it in order to be successful. <i>Consider the suggestions for 'tactile defensiveness'</i> <i>Refer to specialist for Sensory Assessment</i> 	

Observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty focusing, attending, engaging, and responding 	Possible Sensory Interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be overwhelmed and unable to focus and respond. OR • Alert state may be so low unable to engage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider previous suggestions for embedding movement throughout day. The person may need that type of input to raise alertness. • Add stretching routines to the day. Create tasks in a way that the person must stretch up and down to accomplish the task (ex: putting things on a high shelf, cleaning out a deep cupboard) • Add music to the environment. Experiment with different types of music. Some may alert.. some may calm. • Consider fragrances. Some can alert some can calm. Natural scents, such as lavender, vanilla, pine tend to calm. Scents such as citrus, peppermint and coffee tend to alert. • Reduce the amount of verbal input and prompting and use the visual modality instead. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information visually using pictures, objects, words, symbols, etc. • Try gestures and object cues (example: showing car keys when time to leave, handing the person a broom when time to clean up, pointing using no words) • Give time to process. One direction/question and wait up to 10 seconds before repeating or changing request. • Provide choices in a visual/simple manner. • When speaking, reduce verbal information. Provide the most essential information and eliminate extraneous chatter. • Use routines. Be predictable. Be prepared. Help the person know what to expect. • Provide scripts for responding in frequently encountered situations. Practice. Video tape and have the person watch themselves or others use the scripts multiple times. • On days when the person is having the most difficulty, reduce demands, increase support. For example, assist to complete several steps of a task and have the person finish... even though he/she is able to complete the entire task independently on the 'good days'. • <i>Refer to specialist for Sensory Assessment</i> 	