

Smt. M.M.P Shah Women's College of Arts and Commerce
Department of Psychology Publication

Article

Poetry

From the Head of the Department

What is Autism, they asked...
-Zikra Khan

How to support individuals
with Autism Spectrum
Disorder?
-Bhoomi Mehta

The Antipodes of the
Spectrum
-Srishti Sanjay

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by some typical symptoms like impaired/delayed communication, deficit in social skills, repetitive behaviour and interests and restricted emotional expression. It is severe, pervasive disorder affecting child's development in various domains. 'Beacon' newsletter is an endeavour of the Department of Psychology to bring the subject matter of Psychology to the masses. I congratulate the team for selecting the theme for this quarter – ASD awareness is a need of the hour.

Dr. Archana Patki
Head, Department of Psychology
Officiating Principal

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What is Autism, they asked....

Introduction

It's no secret that the world can be a pretty scary place for people with disabilities. From inaccessible public spaces to cruel online jokes and insensitive media coverage, we all need allies in order to feel comfortable in our own skin. To help provide support to those who are struggling the most, we'll look at what can be done to help those living with autism.



What is Autism?

Autism is a mental condition, present from early childhood, characterized by great difficulty in communicating and forming relationships with other people and in using language and abstract concepts. They tend to engage in repetitive or restricted behaviours.

Most people with autism are of normal or above-normal intelligence but have difficulty understanding the emotions and feelings of others. Many people with autism also have unusual interests and abilities, such as an intense focus on a particular subject, excellent memory.

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Causes of Autism

The cause of autism is not known, although both genetic and environmental factors seem to be involved. Autism may also be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Autism runs in families, so it is thought that genes may play a role.

Other possible causes of autism include:

- Immune system abnormalities
 - Metabolic disorders
 - Nutritional deficiencies
 - Infections during pregnancy
- Prenatal exposure to toxins or chemicals



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Treating Autism

There is no cure for autism, but there are treatments that can improve symptoms and help autistic people lead more fulfilling lives. There is no one-size-fits-all answer to this question, as the best way to treat autism will vary depending on the individual child and their specific needs. However, there are a few general approaches that can be taken in order to help children with autism reach their full potential.

Behavioral therapy seeks to change problematic behaviors through positive reinforcement and other techniques.

Speech therapy can be extremely beneficial for children & can help teach how to better express themselves and understand others.

Occupational therapy can help improve fine motor skills, sensory processing, and overall coordination. It can also provide kids with opportunities to socialize and interact with their peers in a supportive environment.

Lastly, many parents of children with autism and professionals find that a combination of different therapies works best for the child based on the child's individual needs.

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Conclusion

We hope this article has helped you understand the complexity of autism and how it affects individuals on a day to day basis. Autism is often misunderstood, which can make diagnosis and treatment difficult. It's important to learn more about autism in order to better facilitate acceptance and understanding within yourself as well as your community. There are resources available for those seeking support for themselves or their loved ones with autism, so don't hesitate to reach out if you need help!

By Zikra Khan
FYBA Psychology



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How to support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder?

Supporting people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) requires understanding the unique needs and challenges that individuals with ASD may experience. Here are some tips for supporting people with ASD:

- **Learn about autism:** Educate yourself on what autism is, how it affects individuals, and common traits and behaviors associated with it.
- **Communicate clearly:** People with ASD may struggle with social communication so it's important to be clear and direct when communicating with them.
- **Be consistent:** Routine and consistency can be very important for individuals with ASD, so try to maintain a consistent schedule and follow through on promises or commitments.

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- **Support sensory needs:** Many individuals with ASD have sensory sensitivities or differences, so be mindful of the environment and sensory stimuli that may cause distress
- **Respect their boundaries:** Individuals with ASD may have difficulties with personal boundaries so be respectful of their personal space and physical contact preferences.
- **Offer support and accommodations:** Depending on the individual's needs and challenges, they may require additional support or accommodations to navigate daily life.
- **Advocate for inclusion:** Work to create an inclusive environment that values and accommodates individuals with ASD.
- **Ask the person** what is the best way to support them. Every individual with ASD is unique and may require different forms of support. It's important to approach each person with respect, empathy



Bhoomi Mehta
MA I- Psychology

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THE ANTIPODES OF THE SPECTRUM

While you picked up your slants, straights and curves in school
I doodled, scribbled, all baffled... looking like a fool

You spoke distinctly, audibly, crisply , knowingly
I fumbled, mumbled, bumbled.. and struggled randomly

You could well choose between the fright, flight and fight
I just stood there, fists clenched, palms sweaty, all uptight

You played with gadgets, gizmos, guffawed at slapstick
comedy

I did and undid the jigsaw puzzle the entire day, what a
malady!

When they applaud, you beam; when they boo, you slump
I sense no emotion at all... Am I Forest Gump?

You headbang to Metallica, strobe lights.. love embraces and
lipsmackers

I hate psychedelics, loud cacophony , tight hugs, scary
crackers



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You practise , again and again cos practice makes perfect
I just repeat on and on... not knowing cause or effect

You can seamlessly transition and cope with changes in plan
I have a routine to follow- no digressions or detours- That's a
BAN

What do you dream? Oblivious to the screechy alarm beep?
I toss and turn, sweat and swirl....what is actually REM sleep?

You can stifle a smirk, bottle sarcasm, you are on a roll
I am transparent with ticks and twitches that are out of control

You fall in love, gaze longingly, go for moonlit walks
I cannot see 'eye to eye'.. forget lovey dovey talks

Devil, demons, vampires, spiders, creepy-crawlies may scare
you

I get rattled by a bubble, a confetti, a peek a boo too

You call out ADD, ODD, ADHD... like its just a game
That's not my identity... remember, even I have a name

I am the frayed, the weak stitch of the society fragment
I dare you to understand me, and empathize....MAKE A
STATEMENT!!



By Srishti Sanjay
TYBA Psychology

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