

Adult Autism Self-Discovery and Assessment Prep Workbook

Sample Excerpt

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Neurodivergence by Design

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What's Inside?

Purpose

This workbook serves as a supportive resource for adults who are exploring autistic traits. It helps individuals prepare for formal assessment and provides guidance for communicating effectively with healthcare providers.

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Preface	3
Introduction	4
Part 1: Adult Autism Overview	8
Part 2: Late or Missed Diagnoses, Camouflaging, and Gender-Diverse Presentations	10
Part 3: Common Co-Occurring Conditions & What Helps	12
Part 4A: Self-Screening Tools – AQ-10 and AQ-50	15
Part 4B: Self-Screening Tools – GQ-ASC and CAT-Q	20
Part 5A: Self-Directed Qualitative Questions and Diagnostic Criteria	27
Part 5B: Self-Directed Qualitative Questions (Behavior & Camouflaging)	33
Part 6: Diagnostic Cross-Reference – Bridging Personal Experience and Clinical Frameworks	36
Part 7: Autistic Burnout	39
References	44

Overview of Adult Autism

Autism is understood as a spectrum of neurodevelopmental differences that impact various aspects of life, including communication, sensory processing, and the desire for

consistency in routines. Common autistic traits include literal thinking, heightened sensory sensitivity, a strong need for routine, and deeply focused interests.

Late or Missed Diagnoses & Masking

Many adults receive an autism diagnosis later in life, often because they have masked or camouflaged their traits for years. This workbook includes reflection prompts to help uncover experiences that may have been overlooked, as well as to consider how autism might present differently among gender-diverse individuals.

Co-Occurring Conditions

Autism often co-occurs with other conditions such as ADHD, anxiety, depression, and sensory issues. The included prompts are designed to encourage thoughtful reflection on personal experiences with these overlapping traits and conditions.

Self-Screening Tools

This section offers a sample of self-screening tools to help individuals reflect on autistic traits and experiences. For example, the AQ-10 includes questions such as:

- I often notice small sounds when others do not.
- I find it easy to do more than one thing at once.
- I like to collect information about categories of things.

(The complete set of screening tools is available in the full workbook.)

Camouflaging Autistic Traits Questionnaire (CAT-Q)

The Camouflaging Autistic Traits Questionnaire (CAT-Q) is designed to assess the extent to which individuals engage in camouflaging behaviors during social interactions.

Camouflaging refers to the conscious or unconscious effort to mask or compensate for autistic traits to fit in socially. This questionnaire contains 25 statements that reflect different aspects of social camouflaging, such as mimicking others' body language, monitoring facial expressions, or following social scripts.

Instructions

For each statement in the questions below, select the response that most closely matches your typical experiences during social situations. Responses range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

1. When I am interacting with someone, I deliberately copy their body language or facial expressions.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Somewhat Disagree
 - d. Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - e. Somewhat Agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly Agree

Qualitative Reflection

In addition to structured questions, the workbook encourages qualitative self-reflection. Consider questions like:

- How do you feel about joining conversations or making small talk?
- Do you prefer routines and find change stressful?

1. Joining Conversations & Small Talk

Think about how you feel when joining conversations with others. Consider whether you find it challenging to participate in social exchanges, especially in informal settings. Reflect on your feelings toward 'small talk,' such as discussions about the weather or updates on other people's lives. Use the following table to help gauge the severity of your experiences:

Severity	Description
Mild	Occasional discomfort but participation when necessary
Moderate	Regularly avoiding small talk or having difficulty finding the appropriate words
Severe	Extreme difficulty or complete avoidance of social interactions

Your Experience:

Autistic Burnout

Autistic burnout is described as a profound exhaustion resulting from masking and sensory overload. This section includes a checklist of symptoms and offers strategies for recovery.

About the Author

Jay Getten, LMFT, is recognized as a behavioral health innovator and educator with expertise in neurodiversity-affirming care.

Ready to learn more?

You can download the complete workbook using the link provided below.

<https://www.ndbydesign.org/product-page/adult-adhd-self-discovery-and-assessment-prep-workbook>