

# Autistic Spectrum disorders : psychological & practical guide

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## **1 : Regaining control of your life**

Receiving a diagnosis or recognizing oneself as being on the autism spectrum can initially give the impression that the future is predetermined. Much public discourse emphasizes what society must adapt, at the risk of overlooking the freedom that each individual possesses.

This guide offers another perspective: that of a path where we act on the world at the same time as we become part of it.

Regaining control of one's life begins with a simple observation: unique perceptions and ways of thinking do not prevent us from forming relationships, learning, working, and transforming our environment.

They even open up special opportunities to invent new ways of living and collaborating.

Rather than waiting for everything to be arranged, it is a matter of entering into an active dialogue with the world. Informing oneself and understanding how places, professions, and implicit rules work already makes it possible to transform reality.

Change is not just about adapting: it also comes from the way we participate, by proposing our own ways of life.

Reclaiming one's history requires freeing oneself from an overly narrow image of oneself. The term “spectrum” evokes diversity, but it is often experienced as a fixed label.

To move forward, it is important to consider this word as a provisional description, not as a definitive identity.

Everyone has a unique way of feeling, learning, and connecting.

Becoming aware of these resources opens up possibilities for action. This does not mean ignoring difficulties, but rather placing them within a broader movement: that of a life in which we choose our commitments and our supports.

This change in perspective also transforms our relationship with the world. By taking an interest in it, we discover that many situations leave room for invention. A conversation, a job, a cultural project are not fixed frameworks: they change through contact with those who participate in them.

Understanding this restores confidence in one's ability to influence reality, instead of waiting for it to adapt on its own.

A diagnosis made by a doctor or psychiatrist describes part of reality, but it does not sum up a person. It is an interpretation, based on a specific framework—in this case, psychiatry—that enables dialogue with health services or access to certain rights.

It is a tool, not an identity. There are other areas of thought where the interpretation of observed signs is not the same.

There are other ways of understanding oneself: through daily experience, relationships, and life choices. This inner interpretation is the most legitimate and often the most decisive. It evolves over time, in step with personal discoveries and changes in perspective.

Recognizing this plurality gives us back power over our own trajectory. What matters most is the meaning that each person constructs for themselves, based on what they experience and what they want to become.

This attitude nourishes freedom of action. It invites us to consider the world not as a fixed structure but as a set of

relationships where self-understanding has the final say.

Taking control of one's life also means freeing oneself from the idea that a diagnosis confines one to a single path.

The way we live, learn, and form relationships depends above all on the choices we make and the encounters that mark our journey.

Giving yourself the opportunity to explore is essential. Trying a new sport, signing up for a cultural activity, traveling, meeting different people opens up perspectives that nothing can predict in advance.

Every successful experience, every unexpected conversation shows that identity is not a fixed framework but a living construct.

This chapter invites us to consider diagnosis as a starting point, never as a destiny. The ability to transform one's environment, choose one's alliances, and reinvent one's daily life belongs to each individual.

It is this freedom that forms the basis of an active relationship with the world and sets the stage for the rest of the guide.

## 2 : Seeing things differently

Perceiving the world in a unique way is not a flaw. Many people with this condition notice details that others overlook: variations in light, faint noises, subtle changes in conversation.

This keen eye can become a resource for observation, learning, and creativity.

However, this sensitivity requires adjustment. An overly noisy environment, harsh lighting, or uncomfortable fabrics can quickly cause fatigue. Identifying what triggers sensory overload allows you to adapt your daily life without cutting yourself off from the world.

The idea is not to avoid everything, but to find the conditions that support your vitality.

Perceiving things differently is also an invitation to explore. Taking the time to discover new places, new materials, and new forms of music gradually broadens the range of enjoyable experiences.

Each discovery changes your relationship with the world and shows that unique perception can be an asset.

This particular perception also applies to time.

Some people feel an inner acceleration when they concentrate, others a soothing slowness when faced with a meticulous task. This diversity is not an obstacle but a style to be embraced.

Becoming aware of your relationship with time helps you organize your days. Allowing plenty of time for demanding activities and giving yourself transitions to change subjects or locations helps avoid overload.

Rather than trying to fit in with common rhythms, you can create a pace that respects your own logic.

This way of measuring time can become an asset. It promotes endurance in long projects, the ability to deepen an interest and to go into detail. By learning to use it, you transform a difference into a creative resource.

Sensory memory is another strong aspect. A scent, a sound, or an image can vividly bring back very old memories. This intensity offers a wealth of sensations that nourish creativity, but it can also be surprising when a detail awakens an unexpected emotion.

To live peacefully with this active memory, it is helpful to create reference points. Identifying places or activities that are calming and preparing simple ways to refocus (listening to soft music, walking for a few minutes) allows you to stay present without getting carried away.

This particular sensitivity also gives depth to relationships. Important encounters leave a lasting mark, which can become a source of stability.

By gradually opening up to new experiences, we discover that this memory is an ally in building meaningful relationships and projects.

Perceiving differently ultimately means living with a very active imagination. Images, ideas, and associations often arise with unusual force. This richness can nourish art, research, and the resolution of complex problems.

It also requires balance so that it does not become overwhelming.

A simple way to achieve this is to set aside regular time for creative activities. Devoting a specific time to writing, drawing, music, or any other creative project allows you to welcome this flow without it encroaching on your rest or other chosen obligations.

Far from isolating us, this imagination can become a bridge to others. Sharing our creations, even modest ones, opens up deep conversations.

Little by little, our unique perception becomes a source of connection, showing that we can enrich the world by offering our own way of seeing things.



### **3 : Creating your own reference points**

For many people affected by this condition, finding reference points is a vital need. These reference points are not just habits: they form a framework that provides security for thought and supports action.

A clear rhythm helps to conserve energy by reducing unnecessary surprises.

Building this framework does not mean locking yourself in. It is about distinguishing what really helps—stable meal times, quiet moments before bed—from what becomes a rigid constraint.

A chosen reference point remains flexible; it can evolve with circumstances and desires.

Creating your own reference points also means learning to anticipate. Preparing for the day, organizing your workspace, and clarifying an important meeting allow you to feel present and available.

This deliberate organization is not a quirk: it is a strategy for feeling free.

Choosing your reference points also means deciding how to start and end the day. A morning ritual—a few minutes of silence, some physical movement, a cup of tea prepared in the same way—provides a solid foundation before facing the outside world.

In the evening, a moment of relaxation planned in advance helps to relax your mind and prepare for sleep.

These rituals should not be experienced as obligations. They can evolve with the seasons or periods of life. The important thing is that they support inner availability and curiosity about what is to

come.

A ritual that is too rigid becomes a cage; a chosen ritual remains a living point of support.

By taking ownership of the beginning and end of the day, we place our daily lives within a framework that we ourselves have designed. This reinforces the feeling of acting on our environment rather than being subjected to it.

The landmarks we choose are not only about schedules, but also about places. Creating a personal space, even a small one, provides a stable foundation for the mind.

This space can be a bedroom, a reading corner, or a makeshift office: the important thing is that it is familiar and conducive to calm.

It is possible to prepare these places to support concentration or relaxation: choose soft lighting, organize objects in a meaningful order, and provide comfortable seating.

These simple gestures transform an ordinary place into a point of balance that accompanies you throughout the day.

This organization is not confinement. On the contrary, a place of rejuvenation makes it easier to go out into the world.

Knowing that a welcoming space awaits your return allows you to approach travel, encounters, and the unexpected with greater confidence.

Landmarks become more solid when they are based on dialogue with those around you. Sharing your essential habits—rest times, alone time, sensory preferences—allows loved ones to

understand your daily choices without them becoming barriers.

This sharing is not about justification. Rather, it is about establishing a common framework where everyone can find their bearings and adjust their actions.

A friend or colleague who knows when you prefer peace and quiet can organize interactions more smoothly, without it becoming a constraint for anyone.

In return, listening to the needs of others prevents the risk of isolation.

Recognizing collective rhythms—shared meals, joint projects—allows us to stay connected while maintaining personal space. These mutual adjustments show that creating your own reference points does not pit individuality against collective life: they bring them into dialogue with each other.

## 4 : Learning to communicate

Dialogue is not just about exchanging words. It is also about perceiving the rhythm of a conversation, body language, and nuances of intention.

For many people, these implicit signals can seem vague or exhausting.

Rather than trying to master everything, it is possible to focus on the essentials: listening to the meaning of sentences, asking a question when information is unclear, taking a short pause to organize your response.

These simple gestures are often enough to sustain a lively exchange.

Curiosity also fuels dialogue. Taking an interest in topics that the other person likes reduces tension and opens up a more spontaneous conversation. It is not an effort to perform, but a way of living in the present moment, letting the right words come.

In a conversation, precision of words can be a strength. Clearly expressing what you think or feel can prevent many misunderstandings.

Saying, for example, “I need a moment to think” or “Can you rephrase that?” is not a weakness but a way to establish a more authentic dialogue.

Certain group situations—meetings, large meals, noisy events—can make listening difficult. Identifying contexts where you understand better, choosing quiet places for important conversations, or suggesting a written exchange when it's easier are

legitimate adjustments.

Gradually, these practices will give rise to a personal communication style. It is not a question of copying the way others speak, but of finding a way of being in the world where clarity and mutual respect become the guiding principles.

Dialogue also plays out in silences. Many people feel the need for pauses to organize their thoughts. Learning to mark these moments and to embrace them can transform the quality of a conversation.

These silences do not indicate disinterest. They are a sign of deep attention. Pointing them out with a word or two – “I’ll take a moment” – is often enough to keep the conversation flowing.

Nonverbal communication is also important. Observing posture, tone of voice, and breathing patterns helps to grasp the atmosphere of a dialogue without trying to decipher every detail.

This overall view allows you to adjust your response without getting lost in analysis.

By recognizing these elements, we discover that dialogue does not depend on social performance. It arises from a shared presence, where everyone can speak and remain silent at their own pace.

Learning to dialogue also means accepting that communication is a shared invention. Each relationship requires its own adjustments.

A friend, colleague, or family member does not expect the same form of presence. Observing these nuances and talking about them simply builds strong bonds without sacrificing one's way of being.

Dialogue is enriched when opportunities for exchange are expanded. Participating in an artistic, associative, or scientific activity provides common themes and reduces the pressure of purely social conversations.

These contexts give conversation a concrete foundation, which facilitates encounters.

Over time, this experience shows that communication is not imitation. It is about sharing what matters, inventing a style of presence that respects both yourself and others.

This style becomes a discreet signature, a unique way of inhabiting the world in connection with others.

## 5 : Transforming relationships

Human relationships are not static. They evolve with each person's actions, words, and choices. This idea may come as a surprise to those who often feel that social ties are something they have to endure.

However, every encounter offers room for creativity.

Transforming a relationship begins with paying attention to small changes. A more precise word, more patient listening, or a new suggestion can shift the course of an exchange.

These adjustments, however subtle, ultimately reshape the atmosphere of a friendship, a couple, or a work group.

This process is not a program. It is built step by step, through real situations. By daring to take simple initiatives, we discover that the quality of relationships is not a given, but is woven into shared experiences.

For many, the difficulty lies less in meeting people than in maintaining living bonds.

Regular exchanges can seem artificial or tiring. One solution is to prioritize quality over quantity: choose a few relationships where trust allows for a flexible rhythm.

These special bonds can be nurtured through shared projects: creating, learning, or sharing a practice. The goal is not to accumulate contacts but to build companionships where everyone finds their place.

In these settings, silence is accepted, and meetings can be spaced out without breaking the relationship.

By cultivating this type of bond, we discover that a relationship is not a role to be played. It is a reciprocal construction that adapts to the needs and freedoms of each person.

This vision alleviates the fear of social failure and makes encounters more authentic.

Relationships are also transformed by the ability to set clear boundaries. Saying no, expressing a need for a break, explaining what is acceptable and what is not protects self-esteem and makes the bond more secure for both parties.

Setting these boundaries is not a gesture of rupture. It is a way of making the relationship sustainable.

A friend, partner, or colleague understands better what really matters when it is expressed calmly. This shared framework reduces misunderstandings and fatigue related to unspoken issues.

From this perspective, the relationship becomes a space of mutual responsibility. Everyone knows where they stand with each other, and this ground can evolve over time.

This clarity frees us from the constant effort of interpretation and allows us to devote ourselves fully to the exchange.

Transforming a relationship can ultimately mean broadening its horizons. Unexpected friendships or collaborations often arise from a shared interest: art, science, community involvement, exploration of nature.

These contexts offer a common language that transcends the usual categories.



Venturing into these circles does not require giving up one's uniqueness. On the contrary, it can provide a platform for expression.

Curiosity about new worlds helps overcome the fear of judgment and shows that the world is more diverse than past experiences would suggest.

Through these encounters, we discover that relationships are not a problem to be solved but a living dimension of existence.

They transform when we dare to participate at our own pace, letting reciprocity do its work.

## 6 : Opening up to the world

Opening up to the world often begins with small explorations.

Visiting a new neighborhood, trying an artistic activity, attending a conference, or walking in an unfamiliar place can broaden your horizons without disrupting your personal rhythm.

Each discovery changes the way you perceive your environment. A detail you notice, an unexpected encounter, or an unexpected landscape provide new points of reference.

These experiences change your view of the world, but also the way you see yourself.

This openness does not have to be spectacular. It can take the form of a regular habit: a weekly outing, reading outside your usual field, talking to someone from a different background.

The important thing is to establish a dynamic that connects your inner curiosity to the richness of reality.

Opening up to the world also involves learning. Reading, taking a course, discovering a new scientific or artistic discipline allows you to broaden your perspectives.

These learning experiences nourish the mind and create opportunities for encounters.

What matters is not the amount of knowledge accumulated, but the living relationship that is created with it. A subject explored out of curiosity awakens the desire to exchange ideas.

Conversations arise more naturally when we share a discovery that has truly touched us.

Each step in this direction changes our perception of the world.

What seemed closed becomes a field of experience. We discover that the environment is not static: it reacts, opens up, and transforms itself when it comes into contact with personal initiatives.

Curiosity about the world can also come through cultural encounters. Discovering a foreign language, listening to unfamiliar music, or tasting cuisine from another country opens up new perspectives.

Each culture offers a unique way of experiencing time, space, and relationships.

These experiences do not require long-distance travel. A cooking class, a film in its original language, or a conversation with someone from a different background can be enough to broaden our everyday world. Little by little, this openness creates familiarity with human diversity.

By broadening the scope of our experiences in this way, we discover that the world is not an external entity. It becomes a partner in dialogue that responds to the attention we give it and transforms with it.

Opening up to the world does not mean giving up our uniqueness.

On the contrary, it is often by embracing what makes us different that our encounters become most fruitful. Presenting our interests, suggesting an activity we are passionate about, or sharing a specific skill invites the other person to a genuine encounter.

This movement transforms our relationship with the world.

What was perceived as a set of obstacles becomes a field of possibilities. Every initiative, however modest, changes the texture of the surrounding reality and reinforces the feeling that we can act on our surroundings.

Little by little, this dynamic builds lasting confidence. The world is no longer just a place of adaptation: it becomes a space for shared creation, where we can participate fully without losing ourselves.

## **7 : Changing your environment**

Changing your environment does not require significant resources. Small changes in the organization of your home, workplace, or daily commute can already reduce fatigue and support creativity.

Reorganizing a space for better circulation, choosing appropriate lighting, and limiting sources of noise are simple actions that influence concentration and well-being.

These adjustments are not a form of assistance: they are an expression of a way of living in the world that is in tune with one's real needs.

Each action of this type shows that we are not condemned to endure a given environment. By transforming our environment, we also change the way we think and feel, and we discover that the world responds to personal initiative.

Adapting one's work or study rhythms can be just as decisive as modifying one's space. Some tasks require intense concentration; others, flexible availability.

Spreading these activities out at the right times of day reduces fatigue and increases efficiency.

For example, you can group tasks that require a lot of attention at a quiet time, then reserve noisier periods for less delicate activities.

This type of organization does not mimic traditional productivity methods; it adjusts to the way we perceive time and energy.

By finding your own rhythm, you transform your temporal environment as much as your physical space. This autonomy in time management reinforces the feeling of acting on the world rather than being acted upon by it.

Changing your environment also involves your relationships with others. Proposing new rules for how a group operates, redefining how tasks are divided, or creating a space for discussion can profoundly change the atmosphere of a living or working environment.

These proposals do not require a hierarchical position. They often arise from careful observation: noticing that a meeting would benefit from being shorter, that a common space needs to be quieter, or that written communication would avoid unnecessary tension.

When presented simply and consistently, these suggestions show that it is possible to transform an environment collectively.

They remind us that everyone contributes to the shared quality of life and can make their mark on it.

Transforming one's environment can ultimately mean choosing new areas of life. Moving to a new neighborhood, city, or type of housing, joining a different work community, or starting an activity in a different setting opens up unexpected horizons.

Such a choice is not an escape. It sometimes responds to a correct intuition: that a more suitable context will allow one to develop one's projects and relationships.

By carefully preparing for these transitions, we ensure that this move becomes a step toward growth, rather than a forced break.

Whether it's small daily adjustments or bigger decisions, changing your environment shows that life is not a fixed framework.

It can be shaped by thoughtful actions that reflect each person's unique way of building their world.

## 8 : A unique and creative path

After exploring ways to influence your life and environment, it is time to bring these experiences together. A unique path is not a series of one-off solutions: it is a coherent way of living in the world.

This consistency is built by recognizing the elements that truly support existence: chosen relationships, meaningful activities, and an adjusted relationship with time and space.

Everyone can connect these dimensions in their own way, based on their history and desires.

This work of unification does not impose a model. On the contrary, it allows us to take a unique path, where past, present, and future decisions interact to give shape to the future.

Living a unique path also means maintaining a continuous curiosity. Discoveries, big or small, feed the invention of the self.

They remind us that identity is not given once and for all but is shaped through encounters.

This curiosity can take many forms: exploring an artistic discipline, following developments in a scientific field, or getting involved in a social cause.

Each initiative opens a dialogue between the inner world and external reality.

By allowing ourselves to change our interests, we retain the freedom to reinvent ourselves. This perpetual movement prevents singularity from becoming a new constraint and keeps the link with



the diversity of the world alive.

Embracing a creative life also means accepting your own rhythms. Some periods are rich in projects, others call for rest or reflection.

This alternation is not a weakness but a natural part of your personal journey.

Recognizing these cycles helps to avoid the pressure of continuous productivity. We can thus devote moments of high energy to developing new ideas and use quiet times to consolidate what has already been undertaken.

By drawing on this dynamic, we discover a deeper coherence: phases of activity and pause complement each other to give our life trajectory lasting strength.

Reaching the end of this journey means recognizing the ability to create a world that suits us. It is not a question of controlling it, but of shaping it through active presence.

Every life choice, every relationship, every transformed space bears witness to this freedom.

This creation is not an isolated act. It is part of a constant dialogue with others, with culture, and with nature.

By participating in this dialogue, we move beyond the idea of a fixed identity and enter into a story that is always in motion.

This guide aims to show that, far from being a simple adjustment to norms, the unique and creative path allows us to invent a way of living that connects the intimate and the collective.

It is this continuous invention that gives strength and joy to existence.