

# Combined Autism-ADHD Traits Assessment

## Introduction

Many traits overlap between autism and ADHD, especially in women. This assessment focuses on recognizing traits that may indicate one or both conditions.

## Instructions

Rate each trait based on how frequently you experience it: 0 = Never/Rarely 1 = Sometimes 2 = Often 3 = Very Often/Almost Always

## Section 1: Attention and Focus

### Hyperfocus vs. Special Interests

- ☐ I can focus intensely on topics that interest me for hours without breaks
- ☐ I collect and memorize information about my specific interests
- ☐ I lose track of time when engaged in preferred activities
- ☐ I notice small details others miss in my areas of interest
- ☐ I can recall specific facts about my interests from years ago
- ☐ I find it difficult to engage with topics outside my interests
- ☐ I talk at length about my interests without noticing others' engagement

**Hyperfocus/Special Interest Score:** \_\_/21

### Attention Regulation

- ☐ I'm easily distracted by external stimuli (sounds, movement, etc.)
- ☐ I struggle to maintain attention on tasks I find boring
- ☐ I have difficulty shifting my attention between tasks
- ☐ I have trouble prioritizing which stimuli to pay attention to
- ☐ I notice background details others don't (sounds, patterns, textures)
- ☐ I miss important information in conversations
- ☐ I get "stuck" in thought patterns or activities

**Attention Regulation Score:** \_\_/21

## Section 2: Social and Communication

### Social Interaction

- ☐ I feel anxious in social situations

- ☐ I struggle to understand unwritten social rules
- ☐ I find small talk difficult or uncomfortable
- ☐ I interrupt others in conversation
- ☐ I miss social cues (when to speak, when others are bored/upset)
- ☐ I have difficulty maintaining friendships
- ☐ I prefer one-on-one interactions to groups

**Social Interaction Score:** \_\_/21

### Communication Style

- ☐ I speak very directly/literally
- ☐ I have been told I talk too much
- ☐ I struggle to organize my thoughts when speaking
- ☐ I have difficulty expressing emotions verbally
- ☐ I take idioms and figures of speech literally
- ☐ I have trouble finding the right words when speaking
- ☐ I struggle with back-and-forth conversation

**Communication Style Score:** \_\_/21

## Section 3: Executive Function

### Organization and Planning

- ☐ My living/working spaces are cluttered despite attempts to organize
- ☐ I struggle to break down large tasks into manageable steps
- ☐ I have difficulty prioritizing tasks
- ☐ I often lose or misplace important items
- ☐ I find it difficult to estimate how long tasks will take
- ☐ I procrastinate on tasks that require planning
- ☐ I start many projects but struggle to finish them

**Organization/Planning Score:** \_\_/21

### Emotional Regulation

- ☐ I experience emotions very intensely
- ☐ I have sudden emotional outbursts
- ☐ I feel overwhelmed by sensory inputs or social demands
- ☐ I experience shutdown or withdrawal when overwhelmed
- ☐ I have difficulty identifying my emotions in the moment
- ☐ I struggle to regulate my emotions once triggered
- ☐ I experience rejection sensitivity (intense reaction to perceived rejection)

**Emotional Regulation Score:** \_\_/21

## Section 4: Sensory and Physical

### Sensory Processing

- ☐ I am sensitive to specific sounds, lights, textures, or smells
- ☐ I seek sensory input (spinning, pressure, specific textures)
- ☐ I become overwhelmed in sensory-rich environments
- ☐ I have difficulty filtering out background noise
- ☐ I have strong preferences/aversions to certain foods based on texture
- ☐ I notice subtle sensory details others don't
- ☐ My sensory sensitivities fluctuate based on stress level

**Sensory Processing Score:** \_\_/21

### Movement and Restlessness

- ☐ I fidget, tap, or move parts of my body frequently
- ☐ I stim when excited, stressed, or overwhelmed (rocking, flapping, etc.)
- ☐ I have difficulty sitting still for extended periods
- ☐ I pace when thinking or problem-solving
- ☐ I feel an internal restlessness or need to move
- ☐ I use movement to help me focus or regulate
- ☐ I feel the need to be constantly busy or active

**Movement/Restlessness Score:** \_\_/21

## Section 5: Coping and Adaptation

### Masking and Compensation

- ☐ I consciously modify my behavior to appear "normal" in social situations
- ☐ I mirror others' speech patterns, gestures, or expressions
- ☐ I rehearse conversations or responses in advance
- ☐ I have created rules or scripts for navigating social situations
- ☐ I feel exhausted after social interactions
- ☐ I suppress my natural behaviors or interests in public
- ☐ I feel like I'm performing rather than being myself with others

**Masking/Compensation Score:** \_\_/21

### Burnout and Recovery

- ☐ I experience periods of extreme fatigue and reduced functioning

- ☐ My symptoms worsen during times of stress
- ☐ I need significant alone time to recover after social activities
- ☐ I experience periods where previously manageable tasks become overwhelming
- ☐ I have lost skills or abilities during periods of burnout
- ☐ I feel I'm constantly operating at maximum capacity
- ☐ I struggle with maintaining energy for daily responsibilities

**Burnout/Recovery Score:** \_\_/21

## Total Scores

- **Hyperfocus/Special Interest:** \_\_/21
- **Attention Regulation:** \_\_/21
- **Social Interaction:** \_\_/21
- **Communication Style:** \_\_/21
- **Organization/Planning:** \_\_/21
- **Emotional Regulation:** \_\_/21
- **Sensory Processing:** \_\_/21
- **Movement/Restlessness:** \_\_/21
- **Masking/Compensation:** \_\_/21
- **Burnout/Recovery:** \_\_/21

**Combined Score:** \_\_/210

## Profile Analysis

### Primarily Autistic Profile:

- High scores in: Hyperfocus/Special Interest, Social Interaction, Communication Style, Sensory Processing, Masking/Compensation
- Key indicators: Special interests, literal communication style, sensory sensitivities, social difficulties despite effort to understand rules

### Primarily ADHD Profile:

- High scores in: Attention Regulation, Organization/Planning, Movement/Restlessness, Emotional Regulation
- Key indicators: Difficulty with boring tasks, time management issues, physical restlessness, rapid emotional shifts

### Combined Profile:

- High scores across most categories
- Particularly high in: Masking/Compensation, Burnout/Recovery, Emotional Regulation
- Key indicators: Complex presentation with features of both conditions, significant adaptation efforts leading to burnout cycles

## Interpretation Guide

- 0-7 in any category: Minimal traits in this area
- 8-14 in any category: Moderate traits in this area
- 15-21 in any category: Significant traits in this area

### **Overall Score Interpretation:**

- 0-70: Few autistic or ADHD traits
- 71-140: Moderate autistic and/or ADHD traits
- 141-210: Significant autistic and/or ADHD traits

## Notes for Female Presentation

Women often show different patterns than those included in traditional diagnostic criteria:

- Special interests may be socially acceptable (psychology, animals, literature)
- Hyperfocus may be mistaken for being "well-behaved" or "daydreaming"
- Social difficulties may be masked by learned scripts and careful observation
- Sensory issues may be interpreted as being "picky" or "sensitive"
- Stimming may be more subtle (hair twirling, nail biting, jewelry fidgeting)
- Executive function challenges might be compensated for with extensive systems