



Social Skills

Understanding Others

Reference Sheet

Available in the format below:



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Understanding Others Reference Sheet

A few years ago I was driving home from work, thinking about how I'm frequently asking my students on the autism spectrum, "How do you think so-and-so was feeling in this or that situation?" And I was thinking about how much they struggle to answer that question. I realized that I'm asking them to give me information on exactly what they don't know. Wouldn't it be helpful to provide some knowledge, some information that neurotypical individuals know instinctively, before I ask them to identify or predict others' perceptions? So I created a reference sheet of common feelings and perceptions during social interactions, and I've found that many of my students benefit tremendously by having this information on hand when I give them perspective-taking tasks. I've provided three social situations with which to use the reference sheet, but the sheet can be helpful as a reference whenever students are asked to discuss others' points of view.

Name _____

Date _____

Understanding Others Reference Sheet

Top 6 Negative Experiences in Social Interactions

- Having another person think poorly of them (especially looking stupid)
- Being disliked
- Having another person mad at them
- Being rejected/excluded
- Being embarrassed / Loss of privacy
- Hurting someone's feelings (leads to feelings of guilt)

Top 6 Positive Experiences in Social Interactions

- Feeling accepted
- Feeling admired
- Feeling valued
- Enjoying time with another person
- Making someone feel good
- Helping someone out of a bad situation

Top 8 Ways to Make People Feel Good Socially

- Make them feel valued by acknowledging their feelings
- Make them feel accepted by including them socially
- Make them feel accepted by forgiving them
- Make them feel admired by complimenting them
- Build their confidence by encouraging them
- Make them feel important by asking questions about them
- Make them feel valued by expressing your care/concern
- Spend time with them doing something fun or relaxing



Name _____

Date _____

Peter had trouble making friends in school. Some of the other kids would say mean things to him under their breath so that teachers and other adults wouldn't hear. His one friend Molly tried to make him feel better and forget about the other kids. One day Peter had to give a presentation to his class. He heard some of the other students whispering "loser" as he walked to the front of the classroom.



What might Peter be thinking and feeling?

What might Molly be thinking and feeling?

What could Molly do to make Peter feel better?



Name _____

Date _____

Kami worked very hard in her three anthropology courses at college and got one B and two A's. She found out about an internship position at the local museum, and even though she's very shy she set up an interview appointment. When she arrived for her interview, she discovered her outgoing, pretty sister Julie showed up to interview for the same internship!



What might Kami be thinking and feeling?

What might Julie be thinking and feeling?

What could either of them do to make the other feel better?



Name _____

Date _____

Denny and Rick are best friends. They go to a party together one Friday night. At the party, two women come over to where Denny and Rick are sitting. Both women make almost all their eye contact with Denny, and laugh at his jokes. They ask Denny questions about himself, and nod and smile at his answers. They barely acknowledge Rick. Then, one of the women says, "There's going to be an outdoor concert tomorrow night at Haven Park. Why don't we all meet up there, around 8 PM?"



What might Rick be thinking and feeling?

What might Denny be thinking and feeling?

What could Rick do in the moment or later?

What could Denny do in the moment or later?

