



Explaining Autism to Your Partner

To My Beloved,

I take everything literally. Autistic hyperfocus gives me no choice. My mind fixates on what you say and doesn't let me run a second mental program questioning how you use words. You say the words, but I have to own them.

I use technically accurate words. You tend to use vague words and idle phrases.

I am unaware of nonverbal communication. I cannot pick up on subtleties or take hints. You must put into words everything that you want me to know.

My only purpose in talking is to exchange information. The content of what we talk about is important to me. Any social context is irrelevant and distracting.

I may experience interruptions as anywhere from annoying to devastating, depending on how locked in thought I am at the time.

It is impossible for me to be spontaneous. My mental health requires structured routine.

My senses easily overload. I am hypersensitive to loud noises and bright lights. I get overwhelmed from hearing unwanted conversations. Sensory overload makes it impossible for me to think or focus.

I am unable to defend myself against emotional attacks.