

Autistic Communication



Neurotypical Communication

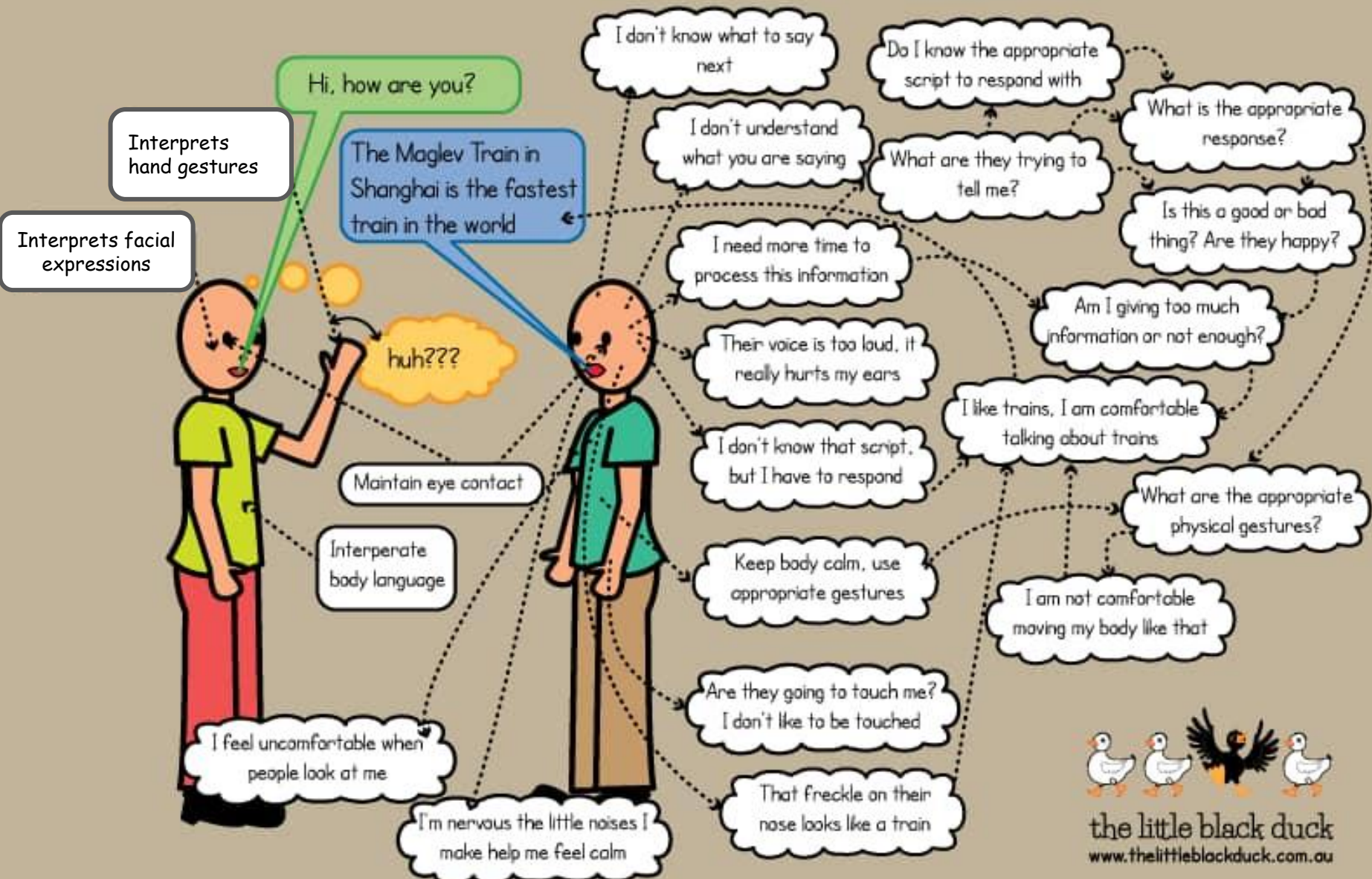
Hi, How are you?

Fine, thanks!
How are you?

I'm great. Have a
good day!



communication and autism



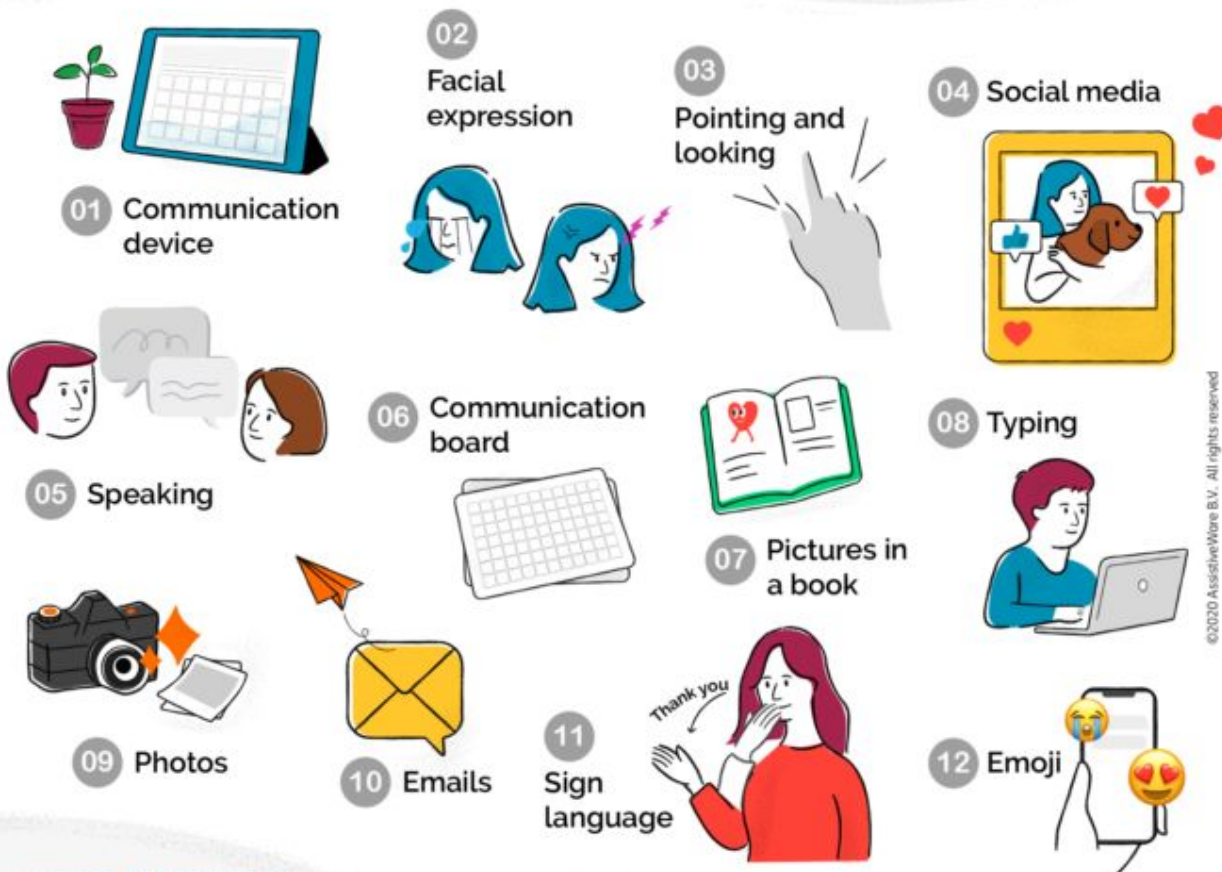
When Autistic people are the only ones trying to change how they talk with others, it can be very hard and tiring for them.

By learning Autistic communication patterns, you can help your friends be themselves with you.

Understanding Ways of Autistic Communication

#My Voice My Choice

Celebrating all the ways we communicate



We can't always communicate by speaking out loud. Here are some of the many ways we might talk to you and you might talk to us.

Just because someone can't speak with words out loud, doesn't mean they don't understand what you say to them or have nothing to say.

Eye Contact

- Eye contact can be distracting, overwhelming or painful for us.
- We show respect by looking down or at something else when we listen, instead of at your face.
- Staring into space can also help us to focus or process.



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Stimming

- Sometimes we like to move our body or make sounds to show we are happy, to help us focus, or to help us calm our bodies and minds.
- We might flap our hands, wiggle our fingers, rock, bounce, hum, sing, or spin.
- Sometimes autistic people are afraid to stim because they worry they will be teased. If you see someone stimming, help them feel safe to express themselves.
- Flappy hands are happy hands!



Conversations

- We connect with others by sharing our own stories that are similar to what you are saying. We are showing you that we care about what you are saying.
- We love to share our special interests - topics that we love learning about, like dolls, cats, dragons, or cars.
- You can be a good friend or classmate by asking us about our favorite topics and giving us space to share our knowledge with words or by showing you them.



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Interruptions

- Sometimes we interrupt because we are worried we will forget what we are about to say.
- We also can have trouble finding the right time to share our thoughts, so we might start talking before we realize that you weren't done with what you were saying.
- We are not trying to be rude, it can just be tricky for us to understand neurotypical talking patterns.



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Voice and Response

- We might speak with a sing-song voice or with a flat voice, “too loud” or “too quiet”. It can be hard for to hear how our voice sounds to others.
- Sometimes we might need more time to respond to you or follow directions.
- Some people repeat words and phrases from conversations or tv/books. This is called “echolalia” and is one way we might communicate with you.



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Literal and Direct

- We often think very literally. That means it's helpful to tell us exactly what you want or need, instead of just giving a hint. Otherwise, we might miss what you are trying to really say.
- We also speak more directly. We like when people are straightforward and feel uncomfortable not speaking as truthfully as possible. We are not being rude - this is how we make sense of our world.



Image credit: [MissLunaRose](#)

Sources:

Autistic Self Advocacy Network: <https://autisticadvocacy.org/>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Explain-Autism-to-People> (written by autistic authors)

Artwork taken from wikihow by Luna Rosa, and autistic artist and advocate, also with ADHD and PTSD:

<https://misllunarose.home.blog/using-my-art/>

Autistic Adults via Facebook groups

When talking about Autism, “Nothing About Us, Without Us!”

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