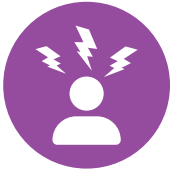


DIALOGUE TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help neurotypical individuals open up spaces to hear from our autistic friends, family, and colleagues.



MANAGE FIGHT OR FLIGHT

CONSIDER:

How can I physically work with my discomfort around uncertainty that might come up in conversation?

TRY THIS:

Recognize that discomfort is very normal and is often a sign of growth.

Breathe deep into your belly to calm your nervous system.

Engage in movement during dialogue to let your body know it's not in danger. For example, take a walk during a difficult conversation.

Name it - say aloud, "I notice I am uncomfortable" as a way to accept your experience and work with it in a healthy way.



LISTEN DEEPLY

How can I practice deep listening to prepare myself for transformative conversations with autistic individuals?

Listen to understand, not to respond or advise.

Respect every person's unique lived experience.

Pause for five seconds before and after speaking. Silence can be valuable.



CHECK ASSUMPTIONS

What are my assumptions that might create barriers to a trustworthy, neuro-inclusive space?

Ask yourself, "What assumption am I making about this person or situation? Is it true? What evidence do I have?"

Assume positive intent - again and again and again.

Always assume there is a lot you can learn from every interaction.



RETHINK THE RULES

Am I expecting that my conversation partners conform to unspoken neurotypical rules of interaction?

Embrace fidgeting/movement - this can help people calm their nervous systems and self-regulate.

Eye contact can be uncomfortable. Not making eye contact might help your conversation partner focus on what you are saying.

A conversation is like a dance - sometimes you might need to pause or slow down to stay in step together!



For more information, scan this code (point the phone camera at the code, then tap the link that pops up to load the website).