Strategies for day to day support for Women on the spectrum

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The Impact of Ideas
Assumptions about the nature of autism have always influenced and will always influence approaches to treatment and outlook

Gualtieri (1990)

Different Needs

- Biological/ Physical
- Psychological/ Mental Health
- Social/ Expectations/ Experiences

Recognised Issues

- Masking
- Stereotyping
- Social pressures
- identity conflict
- Autobiographical memory
Long term consequences on:

- Relationships
- Families and Children
- Employment
- Mental Health
- Sexuality (Transgender, asexual, homosexual, gender-fluid)

Strategies *

Based on the RHB** approach
** Retrospective-Hindsight-Backwards

With special thanks to our Worthing Ladies ‘Group

Good Communication

Structure Communication Times
- Chat times (does this need to be face to face using words?)
- Family discussion times
- Guidelines on what to say in situations/ Scripting

Reducing the anxiety over communication
- Sensory Issues (touch etc)
- Environment
- Use of special Interests
- Graded approach
- Does it have to be discussed/resolved now?

Other important considerations
- Sometimes time is needed to allow for processing
- All strategies will need to be practiced/repeated
  - Using humour and being positive
  - Be clear and explicit
  - Compassion for everyone
Confidence and Self Esteem

• Support to:
• Understanding yourself and your ASC
• Like yourself
• Be yourself (including stimming, time out and meeting your needs)
• Being allowed to be herself
• Knowing your strengths and what you’re good at
• Meeting other women

Translate and Keeping it real

• What do they really mean?
• Keeping Safe – strategies
• What does it mean – different perspectives
• What is real and what is not (Social Media/ Media)
• Modelling – nobody is perfect
• Good peer networks (i.e. groups for women)

Managing Anxiety

• REVIEW
  Developing self awareness
  Identifying triggers

• PLAN
  Identify:
  General de-stress strategies
  “First Aid Kit” to tackle acute stress
  Specific interventions for particular triggers

• DO
  Try out the strategies
  Work together

Working Together Successfully

[Diagram showing social interactions and self-care strategies]