Asperger's Syndrome ... What About It?

As a person on the Asperger’s scale, Perky now takes the opportunity to expatiate on the condition of Asperger’s Syndrome. It is worth emphasising that autism is a spectrum involving a range of characteristics and responses. Those on this spectrum may vary considerably in terms of the degree to which they conform to autism characteristics.

Autistic people may feel that the world in which they live is hectic, chaotic, and frustrating. They, therefore, tend to adopt a daily routine to bring some order into their lives. It is not unusual for them to prefer being driven to and from work or school daily in the same directions.

They may also prefer cooking and eating familiar food at similar times of the day. An autistic person may also find it difficult to adopt a different approach to situations, and often even minor changes, like switching between two things, can be distressing. Events such as holidays, beginning or changing school, moving home, or Christmas can cause anxiety.

Preferences may also be shown for food only of a particular colour, clothes made exclusively from specific fabrics, or for the use of certain types of soap and toilet paper brands. Compulsive behaviour is often evident in actions such as frequent handwashing or checking locks. This does not, however, necessarily mean they are afflicted by obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

A recognisable characteristic of a person afflicted by Asperger's Syndrome is difficulty with developing friendships. The tendency to lack social skills often leads to problems cultivating stable friendships. For some young children, this can be particularly hard, as they may have an intense desire to build connections and interact with their peers.

Other autistic children and adults may, to some degree, show a preference for being by themselves. So-called selective mutism applies mainly to young children who may demonstrate a reluctance to speak freely to certain people with whom they come into contact. This tendency may last for years and may require therapy.

The lack of social skills associated with Asperger’s Syndrome is likely to give rise to social awkwardness. Sufferers can appear to lack interest and passion for anything. This appearance, however, may not reflect the strong passions lying within their hearts. Significant numbers of those with Asperger’s Syndrome have a narrow range of interests.

These interests often include such things as playing video games, drawing, or making models. There are, however, benefits to be derived from such activities, as they focus the mind and provide a sense of comfort. While Asperger's Syndrome presents challenges, it is also important to recognise the strengths that often accompany it.

Many of those with Asperger’s Syndrome are known for their exceptional attention to detail, strong memory, and ability to focus intensely on topics of interest. These strengths can translate into expertise in specific areas, whether in academia, the arts, or technical fields. Logical thinking and problem-solving are often key skills that can benefit life and work.

There are many forms of support that can benefit those with Asperger’s Syndrome. Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), for example, can help in managing anxiety and developing coping mechanisms. Social skills training can provide valuable guidance for improving communication and understanding social cues. Support groups can also offer emotional support and practical advice.

It is important to view Asperger's Syndrome and other autism spectrum conditions as part of the broader concept of neurodiversity. Embracing this concept means accepting that people with Asperger's Syndrome have unique perspectives and valuable contributions. Coping mechanisms can help manage some of the challenges associated with Asperger’s Syndrome.

Creating a structured daily routine, for example, can provide a sense of predictability and control.

Some may use visual schedules or calendars to plan their day, while others find comfort in having safe spaces to retreat to when they feel overwhelmed. These strategies can make everyday life more manageable and help reduce stress.