

# Anxiety & Stress in the Workplace

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Session 6

# Recap and Review

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- What did we discuss last week?
- Disclosure of *ASD* in the workplace
- Possible accommodations
- Problem solving as a team
- Take Away-Hand In and Review as a group

# Introductory Discussion

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- What is Anxiety?
- What is Stress?
- How do they affect you in your daily life?
- How do they have the potential to effect you in the workplace?

# Lets Define Them Together..

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- Work as a group to define both terms on the whiteboard

# Anxiety

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“a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.”

# Stress

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“a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.”

# Did You Know?

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- 18.1% of the general population will deal with some sort of anxiety disorder through out their lifetime.
- 39.6% of people with ASD have reported dealing with anxiety of some kind, the most frequent being a specific phobia (29.8%) followed by OCD (17.4%) and social anxiety disorder (16.6%).
- Therefore the likelihood of someone on the spectrum to experience anxiety is twice as likely as the general population, lets find out why...

# Potential Difficulties or Triggers

- Being labelled as “different or “quirky” by co-workers.
  - Avoiding eye contact, talking too loudly, asking too many questions. There is the potential that you come across as socially awkward, possibly even rude.
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- Tendency to say the “wrong thing” sometimes leads to the perception of being insensitive or uncaring about others’ feelings.
  - Being focused or fixated on specific topics and talk on and on about these, not recognizing when others have lost interest.
  - Having trouble being flexible, difficulty understanding sarcasm, or taking things to literally.
  - Sensory sensitivities are common, This may include extreme discomfort with loud noises, the buzz or flicker of fluorescent lights, or the stimulation of physical contact.
  - Difficulties with motor skills and coordination.
  - Trouble understanding non-verbal communication such as tone of voice, facial expression, and body language
  - Executive functioning challenges impede initiating, prioritizing, and completing tasks.



# Learning Activity- Asking For Help

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- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K\\_mD\\_Gvquzn2k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_mD_Gvquzn2k)
- Watch the following video and observe what the combination of sensory overload, stress and anxiety can do.
- Though this is an extreme example, can you think of a time when you have felt similarly? What did you do to help yourself calm down?
- Asking for Help/Accommodations- Did you see the value in the past? Now?

Break Time 😊

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# Meet Sam..

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- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaRqqVDAaQo>

# Self Management

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- How do you self manage in a stressful/ anxiety provoking situation?

# Anxiety & Stress Management Apps

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happify™



# Workplace Scenario #1

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- At the ABC Auto Parts Company people work in teams. When a line doesn't have enough parts, the workers are sent to other lines.  
Sue is a complainer. She whines all the time.  
She is sent to a new line for the day. Andy greets her. Andy smiles and says, "We're glad to have you as part of our team today.  
We like having people from other departments help us."  
Sue answers, "This isn't what I was hired to do. I'm only here because I have to be."  
Andy tries to explain the work on the line. But every time he says something, Sue whines.
- **If YOU were Andy what would you do next?**

# Workplace Scenario #2

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- Just before Doug went home from his job as a cook on Friday night, the restaurant manager informed him that she would be taking the next two weeks off, and that she was appointing Doug to take her place starting Monday.
- Although Doug has more seniority than the other employees and is an excellent cook, he doesn't feel confident in being able to handle the manager's job. Doug doesn't feel comfortable dealing with the customers, using the cash register, or handling conflicts that may arise between employees. He feels that he will fail at being able to fill her shoes.
- **What would YOU do if you were Doug?**

# Workplace Scenario #3

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- After having spent a great weekend camping, Kyle woke up Monday morning with a fever and a bad stomach ache. He loved his new job, but realized that he would have to call in sick. The others would have to pitch in to do his work. As it turned out staying home Monday wasn't enough. He also had to call in sick on Tuesday and Wednesday. Even after three days at home he still didn't feel well, but figured that he had better get back to work in order not to jeopardize his job. He went to work on Thursday and struggled through until the weekend.
- The next Monday Kyle feels in top shape and everyone, including his supervisor, is friendly to him and glad to see him feeling better. Kyle starts telling them all about the fun he had on his camping trip. He could talk of little else all day. He was so busy talking about his fun weekend that he forgot to thank his coworkers for covering for him. Soon he began to notice tension between himself and his co-workers. His supervisor also seemed more demanding.
- **Question: What mistake did Kyle make? Is there anything wrong with being absent when you first start a job?**



# Focusing On Strengths of ASD...

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- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwnlWX4iyj4>

# Wrap Up & Take Away

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- Tell us about a time when you felt stressed or anxious, how did you deal with it then and based on what you learned today how could you handle it better in the future