

Communication - Day 1 continued

How to Speak to your Aspie so They Listen and Understand

“When you want to have a relationship with someone who has Asperger’s Syndrome, you have to learn a new language...Aspergian. This involves understanding their unique patterns of thought and speech. With this understanding, you can neutralize everyone’s distress. Something clicked for me when I recognized the mindset of Aspies. I started developing an awareness of what they meant, why they do what they do, and how to communicate with them in their language. The mind blindness, the context blindness, the lack of empathy – understanding all of this helped me to think like an Aspie. Once I got it, I could speak to them so that they would listen, actually hear me.

This is no easy feat of course.

Step one is to get our emotions and traditional beliefs out of the way.

Step two is recognizing that Aspies want the same things we do, though they go about it differently.

Step three is to speak their language – because they can’t learn ours.

Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

Things to avoid when speaking with your Aspie:

Sarcasm

Double entendre

Ambiguity or vagueness

Hints

Passive-aggressive speech

Slang or colloquialisms

Metaphors

Beating around the bush

Things to include when speaking with your Aspie:

Say what you actually mean.

Be open with your intentions.

Voice your feelings but remind them this isn’t a criticism of them.

Speak clearly and concisely, without rambling.
Ask direct questions.
Ask them to do one thing at a time.
Withdraw from circular arguments.
Accept that sometimes communication will hit a brick wall.
Remain patient and calm.”

By: Kathy J. Marshack, Ph.D