

Sheffield Autistic Society

Adult Asperger Support Group

Please read the following information before coming along to the group.

The aim of the group is to provide support in a welcoming and inclusive environment enabling those on the autism spectrum to speak without fear of being judged, and where people share what they feel ok to share.

We welcome any person to the group whether or not they have a formal diagnosis. We want people to feel this is a space where they can feel safe to express themselves without worrying that others will judge them for their ideas or their communication style.

Online meetings guidance

The online meetings are an alternative to the face to face meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic. We ask people joining the meetings to apply the same guidelines as for the face-to-face meetings.

However the following also apply to Zoom online meetings:

- Invitations to join the meetings will be sent individually as the request of the member on the day of the meeting.
- The facilitator will let people join from the virtual waiting room for enhanced online security
- Please be aware of any background noise on your part and use the mute button if necessary
- You can join without video if you prefer
- You have no obligation to join in with any activity or discussion if you prefer to just listen
- You can leave at anytime
- Please ensure that others cannot listen in to the meetings
- Confidentiality is very important – anything shared at the meeting is not to be shared with anyone else

Face to Face meetings

We have 30 minutes at the beginning and end of each meeting for people to catch up and chat with each other. We generally have a guest speaker or discussion topic between these times. Discussions can, on occasions, get very lively as people are passionate about autism. We do ask people to be respectful to each other at all times and the group leaders may offer a supportive reminder of this at times. You can join in with the discussions we have or if you prefer to observe – there is no pressure to contribute unless you wish to!

If you feel that the meeting isn't for you then please don't feel obliged to stay for the full time. There are always two group leaders who will identify themselves at the meeting who you can speak to at any time.

Everyone who attends must abide by the Group Agreement below:

1. Please treat everyone with respect
2. Everyone has an opinion that is valid and it may not be the same as yours
3. Confidentiality. Keep what is shared in the group within the group.
4. Avoid using any discriminatory expressions
5. Please allow one person to speak at a time
6. Let one of the group leaders know if you are not comfortable with anything
7. Feelings are sometimes difficult to express and we ask that you do not raise your voice as people prefer a calm atmosphere
8. Respect the sensory needs of others attending the group (ie low lighting)

Please email Liz or Phil before coming along so that the group leaders know to expect you at liz-friend@sky.com or philcooney99@yahoo.co.uk or if you want to ask any questions.