

Behaviour patterns – Aspergers Syndrome

When coaching bear in mind an individual might not know how to behave appropriately even if they are aware of the situation themselves. In this type of situation it can be useful to reflect on behaviour patterns such as those found in people with Aspergers Syndrome. An individual with Asperger's will not necessarily appear different to someone without it but understanding these types of behaviour patterns can help the coach support the coachee. It is important however not just to assume someone has Aspergers Syndrome but instead to consider that this is just another way for the coach and coachee to reflect on the behaviour patterns of a wide range of people.

Potential Aspergers Syndrome behaviour traits

1. Socialisation

- Difficulty in understanding gestures, facial expressions, body language.
- Don't find socialising easy and find it hard to make chit-chat, make eye contact and read social cues. Sometimes invades the personal space of others.
- Doesn't find using the phone easy – not always sure when it is their turn to talk
- Naïve and inappropriate interactions that others can see as inappropriate. Often perceived by others as having a blunt manner and at times as being rude.
- Struggle to make and maintain friendships because they find people unpredictable and confusing.
- Can become withdrawn and seem aloof with people
- Difficulty expressing emotions.
- Difficulty in managing frustration, seeing anger as a solution, intense but brief anger, paranoia about other people's inconsistencies, authoritarian nature.
- Lack of empathy that can be seen as inappropriate.
- Often feel misunderstood and rejected by others – can be expressed as anger and blame at others
- Others can see them as 'a bit odd or different' but in a way they can't put their finger on
- Find it hard to imagine alternative outcomes to situations or to imagine what others are thinking.
- Find it hard to predict what will come next if certain things aren't put in place

2. Speech and body language

- Pedantic, repetitive speech.
- Often talks about the same interest a lot.
- Takes things that are said literally and not always sure when they are being teased.
- Untidy writing, ungainly movements, odd standing position (often linked to Dyspraxia)

3. Routines

- Likes routines and lack of routines can cause distress. This can cause problems making plans and organising things and it can make some people over compensate with over planning, meticulous lists etc.
- Problems with sequencing tasks
- Can have obsessive compulsive behaviours.
- Often obsessed with getting better at something. Can get intensely absorbed in the pursuit of knowledge.
- Often has an obsessive interest in numbers, time or patterns of things.

4. Other information

- Over sensitivity to sound, smells, touch, taste, sight
- Anxiety, depression, mood swings, impulsiveness
- These traits make people honest, reliable, dedicated, determined.
- There are different levels of Aspergers. Most people lead normal lives & many are high achievers.
- Famous people include - Einstein , Bill Gates, Woody Allen, Charles Darwin, Thomas Jefferson, Mark Twain, Vincent Van Gogh, Andy Warhol, Alfred Hitchcox, Bob Dylan, Michael Palin

http://addsuccess.co.uk/main/Adults_with_Aspergers_Syndrome.asp

<http://www.nas.org.uk/nas/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=212><http://www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk>

Self diagnosis test <http://www.rdos.net/eng/Aspie-quiz.php>