

Autism & mental health.

Oxford Academic Health Science Network.

Mr. Richard Woods.

London South Bank University PhD Student.

31st of March 2022.

PROFILING MYSELF.

My perspective.

- 1) Is autistic.
- 2) Agenda is for at least inclusive good quality scientific-method based research & practice.
- 3) PhD is investigating PDA at LSBU.

OF PEAK INTEREST.

Spikey Profiles & Co-occurring conditions.

- 1) All humans have spikey profiles, which are transient across lifetime & different situations (APA 2013).
- 2) Just more pronounced in autistic persons.
- 3) Most Disorders are associated with trauma &/ or ACE (Woods 2020).
- 4) 70% one co-occurring difficulty, 40% at least two (Woods 2019).
- 5) Many of these will be due to how autistic persons are treated by society (Botha 2021; Woods 2017).

OF PEAK INTEREST.

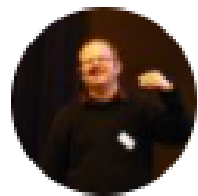
Spikey Profiles & Co-occurring conditions.

- 1) You are not just dealing with autism.
- 2) Autism & co-occurring conditions often simultaneously interact.
- 3) Co-occurring conditions often present slightly differently in autistic persons (Kildahl et al 2021).
- 4) Can be difficult to attribute features to different conditions.

OF PEAK INTEREST.

Spikey Profiles, co-occurring conditions, & trauma.

- 1) Many autistic persons have substantial amount of trauma & is a hot topic.
- 2) Trauma based Disorders often overlap autism, can lead to misdiagnoses & missed diagnoses in autistic persons.



Richard Woods @Richard_Autism · 14 Mar



Is it possible for autistic persons to recover from trauma? If so, what does that look like?



97



109



728



PEAK DISTRICT.

Some of my own struggles.

- 1) Atrocious executive functioning.
- 2) Communication style.
- 3) Demand-avoidance...
- 4) Intense emotions.
- 5) Loud unexpected sounds.
- 6) Only highly productive in a highly stable environment, with loads of control.
- 7) Perpetual conflict between rational & impulsive/ emotional aspects.
- 8) Ruminating.
- 9) Strong sense of right & wrong.

PEAK DISTRICT.

Some positive aspects.

- 1) Easily amused...
- 2) Empathetic.
- 3) Good attention to detail.
- 4) Highly innovative/ creative.
- 5) Highly intelligent.
- 6) Highly reflective.
- 7) Puns/ jokes, e.g., see red text at top of slides.
- 8) Self-awareness.
- 9) Strong passion for doing the right thing.

HERDING CATS.

How do you interact with me? Do you need to fix my “*deficits*”?

- 1) Despite what you might read, we are fully human... even when we have substantial difficulties.
- 2) We are exceptionally diverse, there is no way to successfully divide autistic persons to create subgroups/ subtypes.
- 3) Autism cannot be separated from me & there is no cure.
- 4) We are all arguably “*complex*”/ “*perplexing*” presentations...
- 5) Co-regulating, take a transactional approach.
- 6) You treat me like any other person, listen to me, work with my strengths & interests.
- 7) Need to take a genuine person-centered approach which is led by me to account for my spikey profile...

MINING CANARIES.

... While accounting for our autism.

- 1) Tend to have intense lived experience vs non-autistic persons.
- 2) If we do something, it usually is for a “*rational*” / “*good*” purpose... From whose perspective?
- 3) Issue can be knowing what that the purpose is!
- 4) If we are stressed, it is usually due to situations we are presently in, &/ or previous aversive experiences.
- 5) Always consider sensory differences.
- 6) Consider camouflaging.
- 7) Low arousal, not no arousal.
- 8) Routines & activities on our terms.

MINING CANARIES.

Working with me.

- 1) Allow me to self-regulate, including stimming, e.g., playing with my belt.
- 2) Communicate in my preferred manner, e.g., head to one side focusing on what is being said.
- 3) Do not expect me to care about/ follow all non-autistic social norms (within reason, e.g., laws).
- 4) Engage with subjects I am interested in/ passionate about.
- 5) Negotiate.
- 6) Puns.
- 7) Treating me as a human being.
- 8) Taking my perspective seriously.

AVOIDING VARIANCE.

Concluding comments.

- 1) *“This is particularly important for some people with autism, including those with Asperger syndrome, who may face very significant challenges in their everyday lives, despite having average or above average IQ.”* (DoH 2015, p15).
- 2) How would you feel about autistic persons creating a Disorder that pathologises your non-compliance in creating an autism friendly world and lack of empathy towards us?

ANY QUESTIONS?

The End Game.

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- 3) My researchgate:
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Richard_Woods10
- 4) Any questions?

FIRST JOB REFERENCES.

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