



UNDERSTANDING AUTISM PODCAST

SHOW NOTES SEASON 1
EPISODE 4



Stimming and Fidgeting
Artwork by Nicole Kubilus

Stimming: Autistic Children
and Teenagers (blog)

*How to Heal Your Anxiety When
No One Else Can* (book)
by Amy Scher



SEASON 1 EPISODE 4: STIMMING

Stimming (or stim) and fidgeting are common autistic behaviors that are often misunderstood by the neurotypical community. In this episode we break down some of the reasons behind these behaviors and their importance to those on the spectrum.

- **Definition & Types of Stimming** **0:00 - 2:00**
Visual, auditory, vestibular, proprioceptive, olfactory, gustation, and tactile.
- **Neurological Causes** **2:00 - 2:30**
Beta-endorphins lead to a pleasure response
 - helps to regulate the nervous system
 - release pent-up emotions
- **Stimming vs. Fidgeting** **2:30 - 3:00**
 - Both are a coping mechanism for stress
 - Behaviors are very similar
 - Those with ADHD may also fidget or stim
 - Not just about focus and attention
 - both can be viewed as socially inappropriate
- **Stimming in the Classroom** **3:00 - 14:43**
Is it a distraction? Should it be allowed? We share our thoughts as teachers on these topics.
- **Benefits to Stimming** **14:45 - 15:30**
 - increased focus and attentiveness
 - soothing and regulating emotions
 - expressing pent-up emotions
 - may help those who have trouble expressing their emotions verbally
- **Personal Experiences with Stimming** **15:30 - 26:46**
Here we share our experiences with stimming as a neurotypical parent and as a person on the spectrum. Nicole also shares some of her favorite fidget toys.
- **Emotional Freedom Tapping (EFT)** **26:46 - 29:00**
Nicole also shares some of her experiences with this technique as a form of stress regulation.



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["What is Stimming?"](#)
[Very Well Health \(article\)](#)



FACEBOOK: UNDERSTANDING
AUTISM COMMUNITY

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➤ **Why the Rush to Stop Stimming?** 29:00 - 35:00

- Outs a person as autistic
- May lead to bullying, alienation, or rejection by peers
- Viewed as disruptive
- Can cause self-harm
- Not stimming can be harmful as pent-up emotions are not released

➤ **A "Normal" Neurotypical Behavior** 36:02 - 40:20

We all fidget at different times for different needs

- stress management
- helps to concentrate

➤ **Should Stimming Be Stopped?** 40:20 - 46:33

- If stimming causes self-harm or harm to others
- Stimming should be allowed in the classroom
- Limiting stimming leads to a perception that autistic people can't be themselves (masking)
- Healthy form of self-regulation

➤ **How Can Stimming Become More Culturally Acceptable?** 46:35 - 50:50

- reasonable school and work accommodations
- some may not want to reveal their autism
- find supportive relationships who allow the autistic person to stim without judgement
- promote awareness of the benefits of stimming
- don't treat stimming as "out there" behavior, normalize this behavior in schools and work
- give teachers tools and training on how to help their students self-regulate their behavior

➤ **Teaching Experiences with Stimming** 50:50 - 1:00:00

Here we share our stories with stimming in our classrooms and how we accommodated children on the spectrum.