

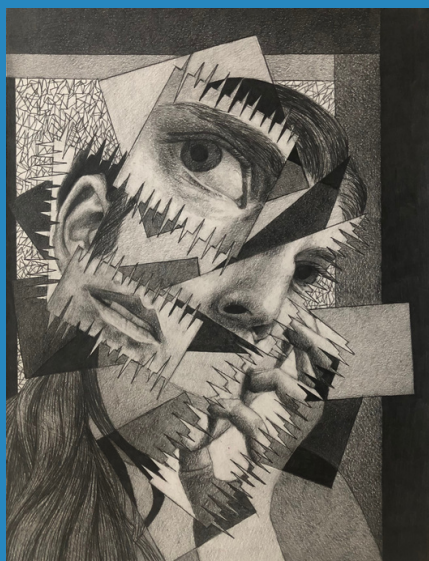


UNDERSTANDING AUTISM PODCAST

SHOW NOTES

SEASON 1 EPISODE 6

SENSORY PROCESSING DISORDER



Sensory Dysfunction
artwork by Nicole Kubilus



Some autistic people are highly sensitive to the world around them. Textures, sights, sounds, noises, and smells, can lead to overwhelm and physical pain. In this episode we explore the reasons behind Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD), its impacts, and treatments.

➤ **CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS OF SPD (1:49-3:16)**

- brain unable to process sensory inputs
- sensory experiences
- mental health symptoms
- physical health symptoms
- spectrum disorder

➤ **IMPACT TO PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH (3:16-14:50)**

- mental health challenges
- physical health challenges
- nervous system challenges
- triggers and anxiety

➤ **SPD AND TRAUMA (14:50-19:24)**

- traumatic experiences can lead to chronic sensory overwhelm
- chronic SPD can lead to PTSD
- development of phobias
- somatic therapy option to treat SPD

➤ **BRET'S CHILD'S EXPERIENCES WITH SPD (19:24-42:37)**

- sensitivity to clothing
- learning how to be sensitive to a child's sensory issues
- SPD can change over time with age
- weighted blankets for soothing
- having a sensory safe area to get away from sensory overwhelm
- tools to help in dealing with sensory overwhelm



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LINKS

Sharon Heller (book)
[Too Loud, Too Bright, Too Fast, Too Tight](#)

Dr. Elaine Aron (book)
[The Highly Sensitive Person](#)

Barrie Jaeger (book)
[Making Work Work for the Highly Sensitive Person](#)

Stanley Rosenberg (book)
[Accessing the Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve](#)

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➤ **SPD AS A STAND ALONE DIAGNOSIS? (42:37-48:21)**

- SPD not a medical diagnosis
- often associated with autism and ADHD
- assessments that specialize in SPD
- creation of a sensory profile
- sensory diets

➤ **NICOLE'S STRUGGLES WITH SPD AS AN ADULT (48:21-1:06:00)**

- sensory struggles as a teacher
- social overstimulation impact on nervous system
- chronic stress, anxiety
- impact of commuting, routine changes
- traditional coping skills no longer worked

➤ **THE STAR INSTITUTE ASSESSMENT (1:06:00-1:22:36)**

- informational interview
- sensory assessment
- identify triggers
- identify soothers
- recommended sensory tools, practices, and accommodations
- Nicole's reflections

➤ **NICOLE'S ADVICE FOR TEACHERS WITH SPD (1:22:45-1:48:27)**

- anticipate when triggers might occur
- find accommodations that will work for you
- consider the age group of students you want to work with



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LINKS

Bessel Van Der Kolk (book)
[*The Body Keeps the Score*](#)

[Touchpoint Vibrating
Wristbands](#)

[Sensory Swing
\(Lycra Swing\)](#)

[The Star Institute of
Denver \(org\)](#)

[Sensory Spectacle
\(Youtube\)](#)

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➤ **ADVICE CONT. (1:22:45-1:48:27)**

- consider your lesson plans that will help your sensory issues
- consider modifying your room environment
- take sensory breaks when you can (passing period and lunches)
- have a sensory safe space at school
- take sick days to recover from overwhelm
- consider a self-care routine
- use a journal to identify your triggers
- wear comfortable clothing
- consider driving meditations for long commutes
- Nicole's advice for art teachers