

Feedback from discussion following autism talk

Question 1

What can we do as individuals to improve the quality of life of women on the autistic spectrum ?
Take time to listen
Listen to autistic women
Being believed and not belittled
Talk more to other women
Be calm around us if we panic
Keep us safe if we shut down
Be more understanding
Don't stand too close
Share information with others about autism
ASK autistic women what they are thinking and feeling
Not get impatient
Give people space to communicate and listen
Don't label or stigmatise people
Don't make assumptions about people you meet for the first time
Improve awareness of autism
Promote education about autism
Watch Christine McGuinness documentary
Read books on topic
Listen, ask and be willing to adapt without judgement
Accept difference in people
Try and be understanding
Listening
Signs and symptoms which will help everyone

Question 2

What can we do as a Soroptimist club to improve the quality of life for women on the autistic spectrum?
Sharing lived experience
Scouts/ guides etc school assembly presentations
Self help group either autistic women or parents of autistic children.eg @ pantry
Ask people at summer seminar 2025 what contact with autism they have
Invite other autistic speakers
Suggest improvements to our talk
More talks by Cath & Louise
Video / media story on Website podcast & links
Campaign (advocate) for better care in NHS for women on the spectrum. Condition in eg hospitals GP surgeries clinics etc eg lights / noises
Be clear in delivery- when speaking be direct
Raise awareness of autism
Be more understanding
Cut down on SI jargon & explain it
Adopt a social model of inclusion NOT medical
Have an expectation that as many individual members of the club as possible complete Level 1 / basic autism training
Engage with other services to raise awareness
Check with all new members if they need any adjustments
Ask what practical things we can do to make meetings better for women with autism in the club

Question 3

What can we do as society to improve the quality of life of women on the autistic spectrum
Autism awareness like dementia awareness - training for everyone including frontline staff
More training for professional frontline staff
Train timetables and signs on platforms more autistic friendly
Better signage and displays on machines. Online forms more autistic friendly
Pay attention to recent laws - promote laws

Education
Raise awareness of autistic women's situation in particular
Campaign for companies to make reasonable adjustments in employment
Be more observant of behaviours
Awareness of the features of autism
Education of the general public via podcasts info booklet, links / hot links
Have leaflets or literature about the things to look out for and how to help
Our individual behaviour can change society
Be wary of simplistic labelling
Promoting awareness of neurodiversity early in school
Have input of autistic people at education/workplace conferences on inclusion participation in person
See the person not the label
Training of medical professionals, hospitals can be difficult
Use signs and symbols rather than words
TV / drama portraying autistic people positively
Use simple instructions - lose the padding
Accepting autism as one type of difference
Social model of inclusion

July 2024