



## Strategies and Resources: **Women and Autism – Some Considerations**

- Women can learn to ‘mask’ and mimic social norms from an early age often leading to them not being diagnosed or misdiagnosed in later life when problems with anxiety or depression become apparent.
- Masking/ mimicking can mean that some people might struggle to believe you are autistic or fail to understand the impact autism has for you. Attitudes such as *‘you must only be a little bit autistic because you manage so well’* can not only feel frustrating but may also undermine the experiences and challenges you face.
- Masking/ mimicking is exhausting over time- remember to consider your feelings and experiences when masking. Was it necessary? Was the result of masking in a situation positive enough to outweigh any negatives or recovery time afterwards?
- Some autistic women may feel underlying pressure and expectation to be good at and interested in social chit chat or small talk. However, you may lack interest small talk, and/ or have difficulty understanding/ dealing with social hierarchies and unwritten social rules and cues.
- Autistic females do have special interests akin to their autistic male counterparts. And similarly, those interests can feel intense.

# Contact Us

This guide was produced by **Leeds Autism AIM**, part of The Advonet Group. We are a free service co-led by and run for autistic adults (aged 18+) in the Leeds area.



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