

Peer Support Handout: Disclosure and Autistic Wellbeing

1 Choosing to Disclose



Deciding whether or not to disclose your autism diagnosis can be difficult, as while there can be a number of positive effects, there may be concerns about how others would treat you afterwards.

Produced by:



**Mental Health
Equity Project**

2 When to Disclose



There isn't a *best* time to tell other people about your diagnosis. You might wish to disclose it to:

- help others get to know you
- access support
- reduce misunderstandings
- promote self-acceptance

3 How to Disclose



How you choose to disclose is a personal choice, some may wish to openly share, while others might want to disclose to only specific people confidentially. You may find it useful to create a plan to prepare yourself and ensure you can advocate for your needs.

4 Negative Reactions



Sometime disclosure can be received negatively. Some people might be dismissive, use stereotypes or make assumptions. Sometimes negative reactions are temporary and their opinions might change when they learn more.

5 Self Care



You may wish to have a plan for self care following disclosure as this can be stressful regardless of outcome. You may find it useful to consider your needs and set new boundaries, or to try to find new methods of self acceptance.

Signposting and Support Resources

Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service – Offer a range of services and support for people struggling with mental health, such as anxiety.

Telling your employer your autistic - disclosure - <https://employmentautism.org.uk/telling-an-employer-that-you-are-autistic/>

National Autistic Society Guide on Telling People You are Autistic - <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/diagnosis/after-diagnosis/talking-about-and-disclosing-your-autism-diagnosis>

Further sources of support can be found in Leeds Autism AIM's Mental Health Guide: <https://leedsautismaim.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2023/04/Leeds-Autism-AIM-Mental-Health-Guide-v6-April-2023.pdf>