



Welcome to the Autistic Community: Welcome Pack Workbook

Prepared by

The Intersectional Advisory Committee (IAC) and
Reframing Autism

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Acknowledgement of Country



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**Always was,
always will be,
Aboriginal land.**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which this Welcome Pack was created and pay respects to Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Sovereignty was never ceded.

We acknowledge First Nations' ancient connection to storytelling as we share our Autistic stories and how these shape our world and our connections to it.



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How to use the Welcome Pack Workbook

This *Welcome Pack Workbook* collects together all the reflection prompts that are included in Reframing Autism's 'Welcome to the Autistic Community: A Welcome Pack', which is downloadable as a PDF (with images and colour), or as an accessible Word document, from <https://reframingautism.org.au/service/welcome-pack/>.

The reflection prompts in this *Workbook* are intended to be used alongside the Welcome Pack itself, so we encourage you to read the Welcome Pack information of interest or relevance to you, before you engage with these reflection questions.

This *Workbook* is 'fillable' meaning that

you can type your thoughts and reflections directly into this document. This means that you can share your Welcome Pack with friends, families and allies, without needing to share your intimate thoughts and reflections, which can be captured separately here.

Of course, you don't need to use this *Workbook*! You may choose to ignore the reflections altogether, discuss them verbally with a trusted ally, work on them in the accessible Word document version, or just think on them internally. We encourage you to take the time and space you need to consider the stories we share, and how they might apply or resonate with you and your experiences, past and present.



Reflection

To start, you might like to take a moment to consider where your information about Autism comes from, how you currently think about Autism, and how this might contribute to the way you feel about realising you are Autistic. Make a note on this here.

The information I have about Autism comes from...

My current thinking about Autism is...

This impacts on how I feel about being Autistic by...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider how your Autistic brain makes you unique and different, and, if you're ready, some of your strengths, skills, and challenges. You might like to note these thoughts here.

My Autistic brain makes me unique and different by...

Some of my strengths and challenges include...



Part one reflections: Discovering you are Autistic



Reflection

Take a moment to consider what your Autism 'looks' like. Now that you know you're Autistic are there some memories or experiences you've had that you can understand better? Note your thoughts here.

I better understand...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider your discovery that you are Autistic. How has your new understanding helped you to make sense of your past? Make a note on this here.

Reflections on my past, now knowing I am Autistic...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider what strategies might be helpful to you to support you to process your new knowledge about your identity, and note this here.

Some strategies that might be helpful...



Part two reflections: Autism acceptance, self-compassion and self-care



Reflection

Take a moment to consider how you might build your self-compassion and acceptance and note your thoughts here. You might also like to reflect on any barriers you might face in practicing self-compassion and self-acceptance.

Some possible ways to build my self-compassion and acceptance might be...

Some barriers to my self-compassion and acceptance might be...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider what self-care means for you. What does (or could) self-care look like when it's **your** way (rather than what you've been told self-care should be or should involve)? Note this here.

Self-care for me involves...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider what your own unique needs are. You might like to consider how knowing that you are Autistic helps you to define your needs, or what resources might support you to meet your needs, or how you might advocate for your needs to be met in different contexts. You can note any of these thoughts here.

My needs are...



Part three reflections: Developing a positive Autistic identity



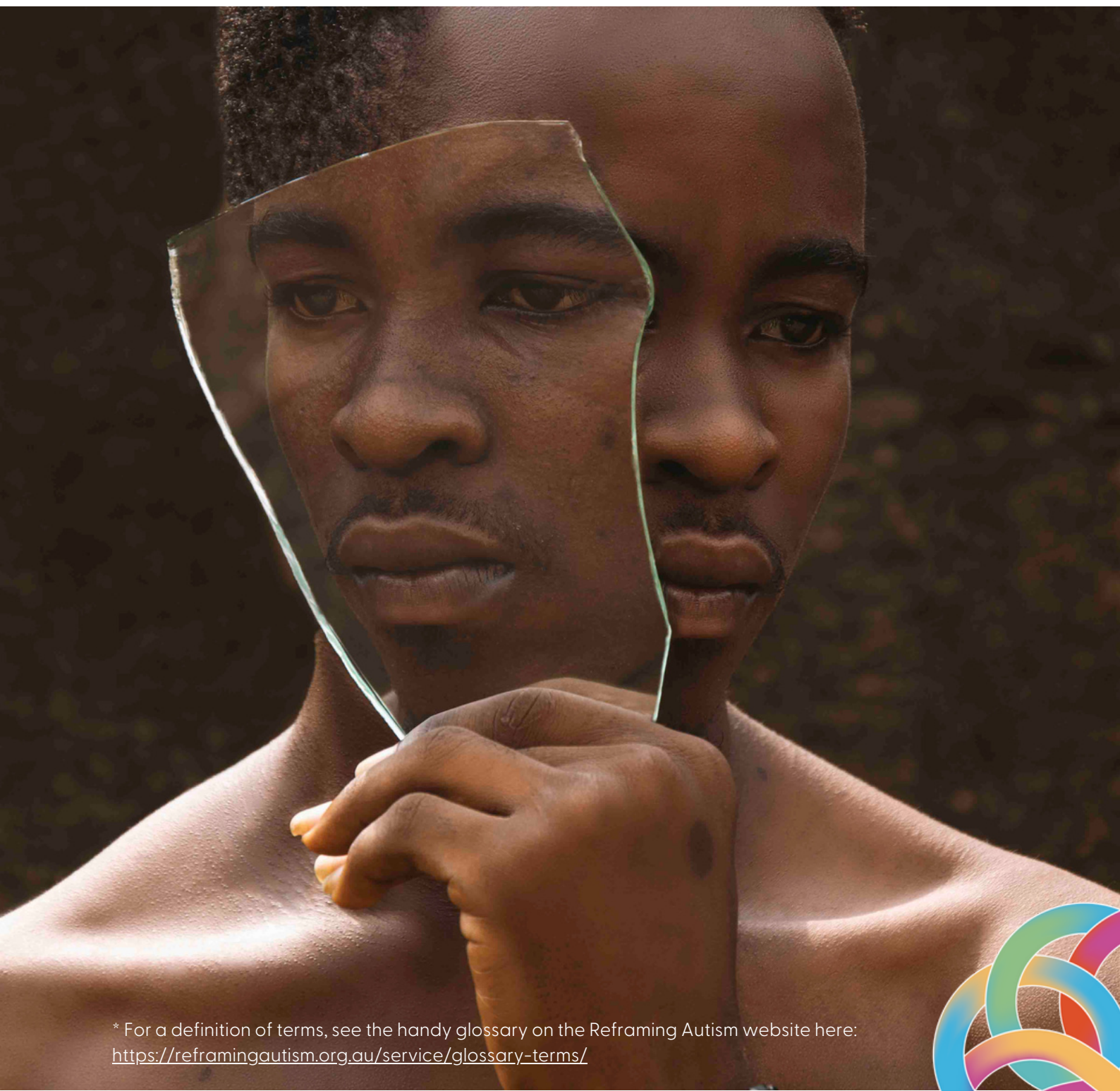
Reflection

Take a moment to consider what a positive Autistic identity means to you. Begin by noting your Autistic qualities of which you're most proud. You might find it helpful to begin by considering which of our stories might be something you would be proud of (because seeing strengths in others' Autistic qualities might be easier than identifying your own, and could be a first step to that!). Note your thoughts here.

To me, a positive Autistic identity...



Part four reflections: Reducing masking* and camouflaging*



* For a definition of terms, see the handy glossary on the Reframing Autism website here: <https://reframingautism.org.au/service/glossary-terms/>



Reflection

Take a moment to note here the signs for you that might indicate you're masking*. If this is a new concept for you, it may take a while to get this understanding. How might that masking be impacting you and your wellbeing?

Signs that I'm masking include...

The impact that masking has on me is...

* For a definition of terms, see the handy glossary on the Reframing Autism website here: <https://reframingautism.org.au/service/glossary-terms/>



Reflection

Take a moment to consider reducing masking*. When might it be safe for you to explore unmasking*? With what people in your life could you explore unmasking with? You can note your thoughts here.

Circumstances I feel more comfortable trying to unmask include...

People in my life that might be okay trying to unmask with include...

* For a definition of terms, see the handy glossary on the Reframing Autism website here: <https://reframingautism.org.au/service/glossary-terms/>



Reflection

Take a moment to consider whether there are times you feel more comfortable masking*? Can you be both authentic and true to yourself and also mask sometimes? You can note your thoughts here.

Times I feel more comfortable masking include...

My thoughts on authenticity and masking....

* For a definition of terms, see the handy glossary on the Reframing Autism website here: <https://reframingautism.org.au/service/glossary-terms/>



Part five reflections: Living a good Autistic life



Reflection

Take a moment to consider what a living a good Autistic life means to you. Are there things in our stories that resonate for you too? What would **your** good life look like, and what steps might you take to lead your good Autistic life? You can note your thoughts here.

To me, a good Autistic life means...



Part six reflections: What we wish we had known



Reflection

You might like to use the space here to begin a journal. Perhaps you might like to reflect on the things that you are passionate about, and that bring you joy, contentment and engagement. Or perhaps you might like to start with capturing what makes you complex and unique. Or even just write a list of things you still wish you knew about your Autism.

My journal begins...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider what you have read in this section. Which questions do you also have, and which pieces of advice might you would like to try in your own life? Note these here. (The further resources on page 176 and the [Reframing Autism website](#) might have some answers to your questions, and help you to think about 'what next' for you!)

Questions I also have include...

Advice I'd like to try in my life includes...



Part seven reflections: What we want others to know



Reflection

Take a moment to consider the importance of differences in Autistic communication, socialising and empathising, and how these might look different for different people. What are some of your organic Autistic communication preferences or needs? How do you like to connect and socialise? Note your thoughts here.

Thoughts on my Autistic communication ...

I like to connect and socialise by...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider the importance of social connections, friendships, and romantic relationships for you. How important are 'important others' in your life? What characteristics do you value in others? Note your thoughts here.

My thoughts on connections ...



Reflection

Take a moment to consider all that you have to offer the world! Reflect on the barriers you have overcome to experience success and thriving. Note your thoughts here.

Things I have to offer the world include...

I have overcome...



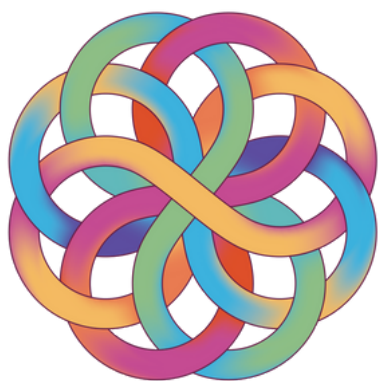
Final reflection

If you completed the initial reflection task on page 17, you might like to now complete this final reflection. Take a moment to consider where your information about Autism comes from now that you have engaged with this Welcome Pack. How does your knowledge continue to contribute to your Autistic identity? Make a note on this here.

My information about Autism now comes from ...

How I think about Autism contributes to my Autistic identity by...





You are welcome!

www.reframingautism.org.au

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