



Autistic Exploitation (Burnout)

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Autistic burnout is a **protective long-term shutdown**. It's like our brain goes into sleep mode, not completely off, because we have to survive, but **we're only able to do the bare minimum to prevent total system failure**.

Being in shutdown for a lengthened period of time is a **trauma**. Burnout is essentially the **aftermath of being pushed beyond our limits**, for a significant amount of time, to be hyper-productive to meet ableist demands/norms & can last up to multiple YEARS.

The main source of burn out for us autistics, especially PDAers, is **the demand for us to "perform" or mask in "socially typical" ways to avoid our mistreatment &/or punishment**, that requires a great deal of energy, planning, & sacrifice which disrupts our regulation.

I compare burn out to surgery in that we never are the same after it. But we can learn to cope/heal.

The simplest way to aid us is to reduce all demands & assist our completion of tasks within collaboration.

Adjust & manage your expectations of us.

As with someone who has recently had surgery, you don't expect them to perform at a high level of functionality for quite some time. The same goes for burnout.

Give autistics support & time to heal without having unrealistic expectations which only adds to our trauma.

"Why I prefer using the term exploitation over burnout: Burnout makes it about worker feelings. Exploitation draws our attention to employer practices and policies which require structural solutions." - @MLevantovskaya via former Twitter

How to Support a Child During Autistic Exploitation (Burnout)

- Manage your expectations
- Lower or eliminate demands
- Allow abundant screen time
- Prioritize collaboration over independence
- Stick to routine
- Limit new experiences
- Plenty of safe foods & comfort items
- Allow lots of solitude without judgment
- Allow them extra time with friends
- Don't exclude them, always invite

About Asiatu:

Asiatu "Coach" Lawoyin, is a Black, Trans, Agender, Queer, multiply neurovaried sociologist & Spelman College alum. They teach people how to be authentic commUNITY, rooted in accountability, while decreasing harm, which fosters healing and connection.

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