

Building a Business as an Autistic Entrepreneur

A practical guide to emotional self-regulation, overload, and professional relationships



DIMEN
DIVERSE MINDS
ENTREPRENEURS WITH AUTISM



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Introduction

This document brings together two complementary works. The first part presents a qualitative thematic analysis of interviews and focus groups conducted with three groups of participants: autistic entrepreneurs and individuals currently developing a business model; professionals working in the field of autism; and people involved in neurodivergent entrepreneurship initiatives, whom we refer to as "neuroallies"—a term coined by one of the participants.

The second part turns that analysis into a practical guide to help an autistic person embark on a more sustainable entrepreneurial venture, taking into account emotional regulation, overload, relationships with clients, suppliers and collaborators, and the role of support networks.

The quotes from the transcripts have been lightly cleaned up to improve readability, as some transcripts contain errors inherent to automatic speech recognition. In any case, every effort has been made to preserve the meaning, tone, and depth of the shared experiences.

The starting premise is neuro-affirmative. This is not about teaching autistic people to behave like neurotypical people or holding them individually responsible for maintaining inaccessible work environments. It's about offering frameworks and tools so they can identify their needs, anticipate the risk of overload, build work systems compatible with their functioning, and ask for support without feeling that doing so undermines the legitimacy of their project.

One idea runs through the entire document: entrepreneurship can be an opportunity for autonomy, creativity, and meaningful work — but realizing that opportunity requires managing its challenges. Without an intentional design grounded in emotional regulation and sustainability, the work of an autistic entrepreneur can easily become a space of hyper-responsibility, loneliness, uncertainty, and exhaustion.



PART I.

Qualitative thematic analysis

Qualitative thematic analysis

The first part of this guide presents a summary of the information gathered from the focus group of autistic entrepreneurs and from interviews and working discussions conducted within the framework of the DIMEN project. The aim has not been to transform these experiences into rigid categories, but rather to identify patterns of meaning that can guide the content. The richness of the group has allowed us to see how work-related difficulties and strengths intertwine with life history, diagnostic experience, aspects such as motherhood, fatigue, humor, the need for justice, sensory experiences, and relationships with others. In several narratives, entrepreneurship emerges as a response to a profound question: How can I work without sacrificing who I am?



How can I work without sacrificing who I am?

Intrinsic motivation is essential; for many autistic workers, money and status are rarely the main drivers. They need to love what they do and do it their way to focus and find joy in making a meaningful contribution. A traditional work environment limits freedom of choice and doesn't explicitly define common norms, making it difficult for an autistic worker to understand expectations or develop their full potential.

Topic 1. Entrepreneurship as a response to the lack of fit in traditional employment

Entrepreneurship emerges as a response to accumulated experiences of maladjustment in traditional employment. It is not simply formulated as a desire for economic independence, but a need to create a context that demands less constant adaptation. Many autistic people turn to self-employment because many work environments demand a constant reading of implicit expectations, social speed, unanticipated flexibility, and sensory tolerance that generate overload.

In several accounts, conventional employment appears as a space where a person may be technically prepared but emotionally overwhelmed. The person may know how to do the job—in fact, if they know how, they will perform it very competently—but the complexity lies in sustaining the way the environment demands. This idea connects with the social model of disability: the problem is not exclusively with the person, but with the relationship between their needs and the barriers in their environment.

Work autonomy is not a whim, but a condition for well-being and success. According to the guide, this means that the first section should not only ask 'what business do you want to start', but also 'what conditions do you need to be able to sustain it'.

"I need to slow down and then do things my way. I can work with people, I can accept ideas, but I have to carry out my own ideas, no matter what."



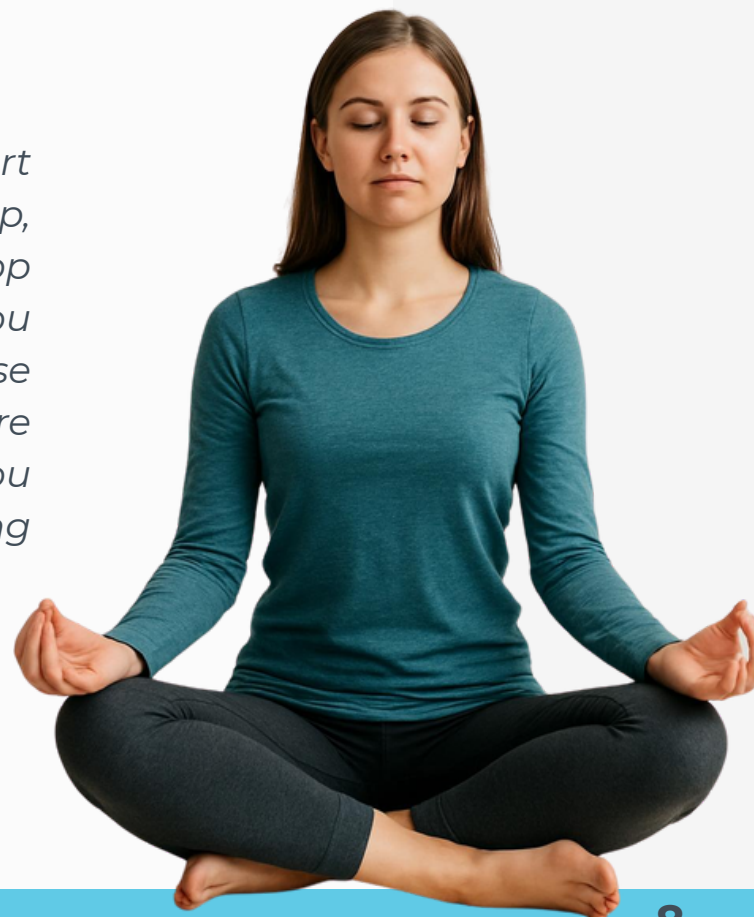
Topic 2. Energy conservation and rest

Starting a business can bring freedom, but it can also eliminate the external constraints that force you to rest. The phrase "you can't stop because you'll lose clients" encapsulates a structural tension inherent in self-employment. In traditional employment, at least theoretically, there are absences, schedules, vacations, and people who cover your duties. In self-employment, a person may feel that stopping is tantamount to disappearing from the market.

For autistic individuals, this dynamic is compounded by hyper-responsibility, difficulty leaving tasks unfinished, fear of rejection, and a tendency toward hyperfocus. Rest is not a reward after achievement, but rather an integral part of the work system. If a person only rests when everything is finished, they will likely never truly rest, because in entrepreneurship there is always something pending.

Sustainability must be considered a design criterion. A business that only functions when people are working under excessive strain isn't functioning; it's consuming the person who sustains it. This idea is especially relevant for suppliers, clients, and deadlines: the system must include automated responses, closure criteria, no-communication days, and protocols for pausing without making people feel like everything is collapsing.

"When you're self-employed or start your own business, you can't stop, right? It's one thing to not stop because you'll lose clients, but you can't stop when you need to because you only realize it when you're already exhausted, or if you stop you feel it will be too difficult to get going again."



Topic 3. Adapted sensory experience: essential

Sensory perception emerges in the narratives as a central work factor. Noise, telephones, open spaces, keyboards, electricity, or the obligation to answer calls generate discomfort, fatigue, and a loss of productivity. Sometimes a small adjustment, such as using headphones or replacing calls with text messages, radically changes the work experience.

For many autistic individuals, sensory overload is not a minor inconvenience, but rather a factor that disrupts attention, decreases energy, reduces social tolerance, and impairs decision-making. When the sensory environment is dysregulated, the person starts from a higher level of arousal even before beginning the task.

In entrepreneurship, this has direct implications. If the business requires trade shows, phone calls, customer service, events, or in-person meetings, the individual needs to anticipate the sensory cost. It is not enough to assess whether the activity generates income; it is also necessary to evaluate whether the model demands a level of sensory input incompatible with the person's health. A practical idea is to categorize tasks by sensory and social load, so that each week combines high-demand tasks with genuine recovery periods.



"Noises bother me a lot. For example, I can hear the electricity and the keyboard here, and it's awful. Nobody told me I could just put on a pair of headphones, and since I started using them, my life has changed."

"Don't call me, message me on WhatsApp."

Topic 4. Implicit communication, literalness and social battery

In the workplace, autistic individuals feel that their working relationships with colleagues should have purpose, structure and clarity. Casual coffee breaks, aimless conversations, questions that don't seek honest answers, or friendliness that masks ulterior motives are perceived as highly challenging situations.

Direct communication is also a strength: it reduces ambiguity, prevents manipulation, and can improve the quality of agreements. The problem arises when the environment expects indirect messages, unspoken diplomacy, or social interpretations that remain unspoken.

To improve workplace relationships, AI is a great ally because it can provide concrete answers to similar contextual situations where prior or subsequent details determine the meaning. Some questions that arise in workplace interactions are ambiguous and stressful, and can be significantly exhausting to decode. Examples include:

- What does it mean when a client takes a long time to respond?
- What is the difference between politeness and friendship?
- How do you formulate a follow-up without sounding aggressive?
- How do you say no, ask for specifics, end an exchange, and detect signs of abuse or exploitation?

A neuro-ally, or AI itself, can help in decision-making, but it is essential to adjust the criteria to avoid bias towards a simplistic, black-and-white interpretation. One trick is to ask the AI itself for other possible perspectives or questions you should ask yourself to help you better analyze the information, and explicitly request that it not be complacent.

"I don't like going to a café just for the sake of it, but because you're going to talk about something. I need to know what I have to do. If someone tells me they're going to talk about this, then I go, I help, it gets resolved, and it works for me."



Topic 5. Self-promotion, social networks and how do I sell myself

Social media and self-promotion appear as a specific barrier for many projects. Selling oneself involves putting oneself out there, responding, maintaining a presence, tolerating silence, receiving feedback, and sustaining a public image. For many people, the task of producing or creating is easier than showcasing themselves, negotiating and maintaining interactions.

Some people have an online presence and creative talent, but they can't translate that into business continuity because the interaction burns them out. Others don't understand how to build relationships with potential customers, how to be persistent without being intrusive, or how to communicate their value without feeling like they're bragging. This tension is especially relevant for artists, creative professionals, and service providers.

Marketing ideas compatible with autistic functioning: honest communication, a streamlined schedule, templates, automation, a clear product portfolio, collaborations with people who complement the sales side, and the option to delegate visibility if that task is too costly. Selling doesn't have to mean constantly feigning enthusiasm; it can mean clearly explaining what problem you solve or what product you offer, who you work well for, and under what conditions.



"I have an online presence, but at the same time, either I have too much interaction and I get overwhelmed, or nobody answers me, or I stop checking the account for a while because I feel burned out. I feel that this prevents me from starting a business properly, because it involves constantly talking to people or processing orders."

Topic 6. The neuro-ally: co-regulation and contextual translation

"I always speak to them from the heart, seriously, because I need to tell them I'm there for them unconditionally. They need supportive people, people who are super unconditional."

"Perhaps what you're feeling is that you can't trust anyone because in the end people hurt you, and then you're bringing this to work. Work relationships aren't about whether they like you or are nice."

The need for a 'super unconditional' support person, a 'neuro-ally'. This figure emerges who is not exactly a therapist, partner, or traditional business mentor. It is someone who helps to interpret ambiguous situations, broaden perspectives, regulate emotional intensity, and distinguish between genuine rejection, lack of response, abuse, misunderstanding, or normal workplace dynamics.

Their role is not to speak for the autistic person or make decisions for them. Nor is it to infantilize them or correct their behavior. Their role is to help create a shared understanding when the person is dysregulated, exhausted, or trapped in an extreme interpretation of the situation.

The neuro-ally can help answer questions like: Does this silence mean rejection or just a delay? Is this client taking advantage of my availability? Am I interpreting a professional relationship as a need to be liked? Am I about to send an impulsive message that could harm me? Do I need to set a boundary or do I need to wait?

One of the most valuable contributions of the focus group was highlighting the need for a support person who acts as a neuro-ally. This figure is described as someone who helps interpret, regulate, and translate work situations. They do not replace the autistic person's will. They do not make decisions for them. They do not infantilize them.

The neuro-ally helps create distance when emotions are running high. They might say: "Wait, this might not be rejection; let's review the facts; this client is crossing boundaries; it's best to send this message tomorrow; you need to request a date here; it's best to close this now." Their role is co-regulation and contextual translation.

Many autistic people have lived in environments where they are corrected, invalidated, or constantly required to adapt. A neuro-ally offers a different experience: support that doesn't begin with judgment.

Functions of the neuro-ally

- To help interpret silences, changes, and ambiguities.
- Review messages before sending them when there is a lot of activity.
- Differentiate between workplace conflict and personal rejection.
- Detect signs of abuse or exploitation.
- Remember agreed limits.
- Help mentally closing unfinished business

Boundaries for the neuroally

- Do not decide for the autistic person.
- Do not infantilize.
- Do not use support to impose neurotypical criteria.
- Do not become available 24/7.
- Do not replace professional support if there is a clinical crisis.
- Do not deny the intuition of the autistic person; help to contrast it with data.

Topic 7. Uncertainty, rejection and the need for closure

Interpersonal uncertainty emerges as one of the most intense emotional triggers in entrepreneurship. Not receiving a reply to an email, a client failing to finalise a decision, a company not confirming a partnership, or a supplier delaying a delivery can trigger anxiety, anger, sadness, a sense of being stuck, or a feeling of rejection. In self-employment, these situations are common: quotes that go unanswered, clients who disappear after showing interest, outstanding payments, changes of mind, ongoing negotiations, meetings that fail to materialise, or people who respond politely but vaguely.

For many autistic people, the problem is not 'feeling too much', but having to interpret ambiguous situations without sufficient information. Silence can feel like a threat because it offers no clear information: it does not let you know whether the other person has lost interest, is busy, is avoiding conflict, has changed their priorities, or simply operates on a different timeline. This lack of closure can keep the mind in a state of alert: one checks their email repeatedly, re-reads messages, looks for clues, anticipates negative scenarios and tries to find an explanation that allows them to mentally bring the situation to a close.

At the same time, it is important not to interpret every ambiguous signal as a rejection. In the workplace, many people do not reply straight away, put off making decisions, forget to reply or communicate vaguely, without this necessarily meaning there is a problem with you or your work. Sometimes silence says more about the other person's organisation than about your professional worth.

"Some time ago, someone was really nervous because they weren't getting a reply to their email. They wanted to write to them and tell them that if they weren't interested, they should just say so to their face. But you can't say that. You can mentally shut down the idea, but you can't say that, because maybe they forgot and they'll call you later."



Topic 7. Uncertainty, rejection and the need for closure

Signs of an insecure professional relationship

You should be on your guard if several of these warning signs appear:

They ask you to do extra work without mentioning payment.

They change the brief after you've accepted the quote.

They delay payments without a clear explanation.

They use polite phrases to avoid being specific.

They make you feel guilty for setting boundaries.

They ask for your immediate availability but do not respect your schedule.

They avoid putting agreements in writing.

They tell you "we'll look into it later" when you ask about money, deadlines or responsibilities.

They downplay your need for clarity.

They confuse you: they seem pleasant in conversation, but in practice they do not honour what has been agreed.

Questions to help distinguish anxiety from a warning sign

- What objective facts do I have?
- What part of this am I interpreting?
- Has this situation happened before with this person?
- Is there a written agreement?
- What do I need to know to feel more secure?
- Can I ask for that information clearly?
- Does the other person respond better when I ask for clarity, or do they avoid the issue even more?
- Am I trying to resolve the situation because there is a real risk, or because I find the uncertainty unbearable?
- What advice would I give to another autistic person if they told me this?
- Do I need to consult a neuro-ally before responding?

Topic 8. Routine, anticipation and external organization

For some people, work provides structure and purpose; for others, rotating schedules destroy the ability to regulate themselves. The key is not rigidity, but predictability. A person can be very flexible if they know there is a framework; what causes dysregulation is constant unpredictability without sufficient information.

In entrepreneurship, a person is no longer bound by a fixed schedule, but they also lose external structure. This can be liberating or disorganizing. To make it a regulating process, external structures need to be created: calendars, energy blocks, visible lists, scripts, themed days, decision templates, and weekly reviews. Jenna Redfield presents an interesting idea about neurodivergent work systems: it's not about finding the perfect productivity system, but about building pillars that reduce executive workload. The organization shouldn't depend on daily willpower, but on visible, repeatable, and adaptable support.



"I've had trouble keeping a job for more than six months, especially with rotating shifts, because when I maintain a routine with rotating shifts I don't have a set routine and it's harder for me to stay calm."

9. Conflicts: detecting tensions before they escalate

Conflict doesn't always begin with an argument. Sometimes it starts with a small, recurring discomfort: a message you don't answer because it triggers you, a client requesting changes without payment, a supplier avoiding setting a date, a partner making decisions without warning. Many people struggle to identify and manage these early warning signs, so it's helpful to write down each person's specific warnings and enlist the help of those who know you well to identify them. The key to managing conflict isn't avoiding it, but rather avoiding reacting when you're highly agitated and responding when you're calm, keeping in mind what you want to achieve. Do I want to be told the truth? Do I want the work completed ahead of schedule so I can make corrections? Do I want to be respected? It's essential that the starting point is well-defined and agreed upon when emotional activation isn't excessive.

It's not about learning to argue better, but about reducing ambiguity and acting before the activation becomes too high.

The key is to recognize early signs: avoidance, irritability, increasingly curt messages, repeated confusion, changes in conditions, a sense of injustice, an urgent need to respond, or a fantasy of cutting the relationship off abruptly.



Red: I want to send an impulsive message, end the relationship, or accept everything so it ends. I can't answer yet.

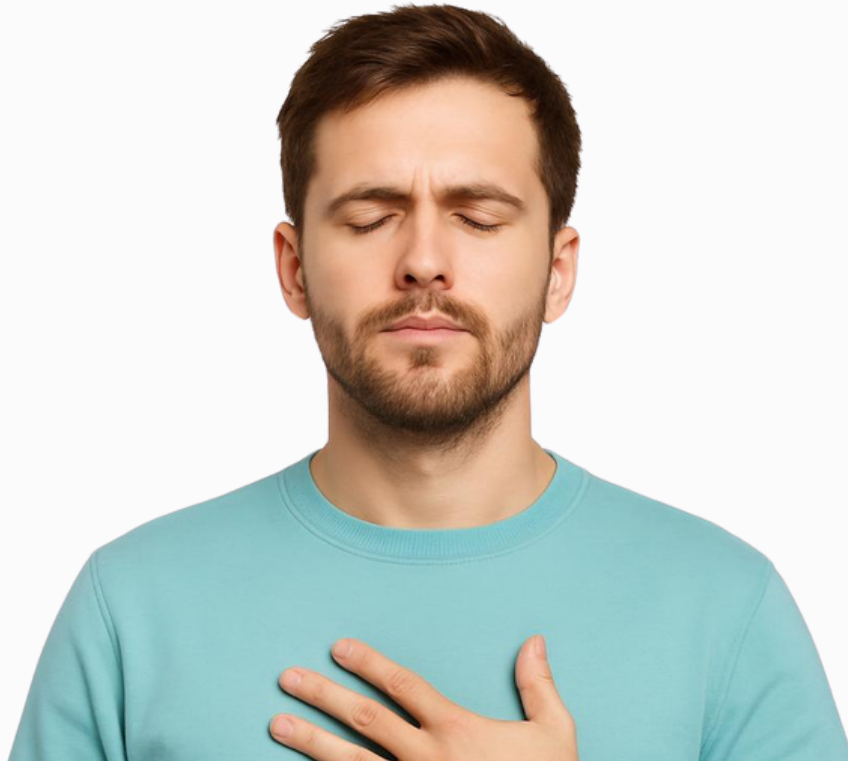


Yellow: I feel activated, I need to write before speaking, ask for time or consult.



Green: There is disagreement, but I understand the problem and can respond.

Conflict de-escalation script



Conflict de-escalation script

Before the conversation

- Find the right time. Ask in advance: "Could you set aside some time tomorrow to talk with me?"
- Find the right place. conflicts are best discussed privately and managed in person.

During the conversation — a 6-step structure

1. State the observable fact. "I'd like to clarify [fact]."
2. Describe the impact. "This is affecting [the deadline / the quality of the work / payment / my energy]."
3. Name your need. "I need [clarity / a firm date / a decision / a new deadline]."
4. Check their perspective. "Are you seeing this the same way, or differently?"
5. Propose options. "I can suggest two possible ways forward: A or B."
6. Close with a commitment. "Let's confirm a direction by [date]."

Topic 10. Preventing burnout: plan a break before you need it

Burnout doesn't appear overnight. It usually builds up over time: too many tasks, unresolved issues, noise, too much interaction, uncertainty, and too little real rest. By the time a person realizes it, they're often already at a breaking point.

That's why prevention must be done in advance. A pause plan isn't a plan to fail; it's a plan to keep going. Every sustainable business should have instructions for slowing down, diverting, temporarily closing orders, or communicating delays.

The question, "How does the social system protect you when you need to stop?" is a profoundly political and practical statement. The bureaucratic system for the self-employed often penalizes taking a break. That's why it's necessary to create internal safeguards: time buffers, automated messages, waiting lists, non-urgent products, scheduling limits, and support networks.

Early Signs of Autistic Burnout

- Not being able to decide simple things.
- Irritability or frequent crying.
- Increased sensory sensitivity.
- Avoid messages for days.
- Feeling that everything is urgent.
- Losing skills that were previously available.
- Need for intense isolation.
- Thinking that stopping is impossible.

Pause plan

- Light pause: reduce demanding tasks for a week, cancel non-essential meetings, and respond to messages only within fixed time windows.
- Moderate pause: stop accepting new bookings, notify clients of delays in writing, bring in administrative support or a trusted neuroally, and prioritize critical payments/deliveries.
- Full pause: stop all new sales, activate an automated out-of-office reply, refer ongoing work to a trusted collaborator where possible, and contact professional support alongside your trusted network.

Topic 11. Redefining success: autonomy, coherence and livable life

In the dominant entrepreneurial culture, success is usually measured by growth, revenue, expansion, visibility, and productivity. But interviews with autistic entrepreneurs reveal a different definition: success can be working without self-destruction, driven by values or interests, not having to constantly mask one's true self, being able to care for family, choosing compatible clients, maintaining ethical consistency, and having a project that allows for a personal life.

This redefinition doesn't diminish ambition. It makes it more precise. For an autistic person, a small, stable, and compatible business can be more successful than a large project that demands hyper-availability and constant masking.

Not everyone wants to grow their business, hire a team, or have a social media presence. Some want to make a living doing something they're good at, with a reasonable level of exposure. Others want to build a community. Still others want to innovate without being bossed around. All of these can be valid.

Alternative indicators of success

- I can rest without guilt at least one day a week.
- My clients understand how I work.
- I have fewer crises due to uncertainty than before.
- I can say no to incompatible projects.
- My income is consistent with my energy.
- I have a support person or network.
- I don't need to be performing all the time to sustain the project.



Topic 12. Community and secure networking

Traditional networking is experienced as ambiguous, exhausting, and unsafe; a network of autistic professionals or neuro-allies is perceived as a necessary way to express oneself authentically, based on shared needs and with the expectation that it can function differently from traditional circuits.

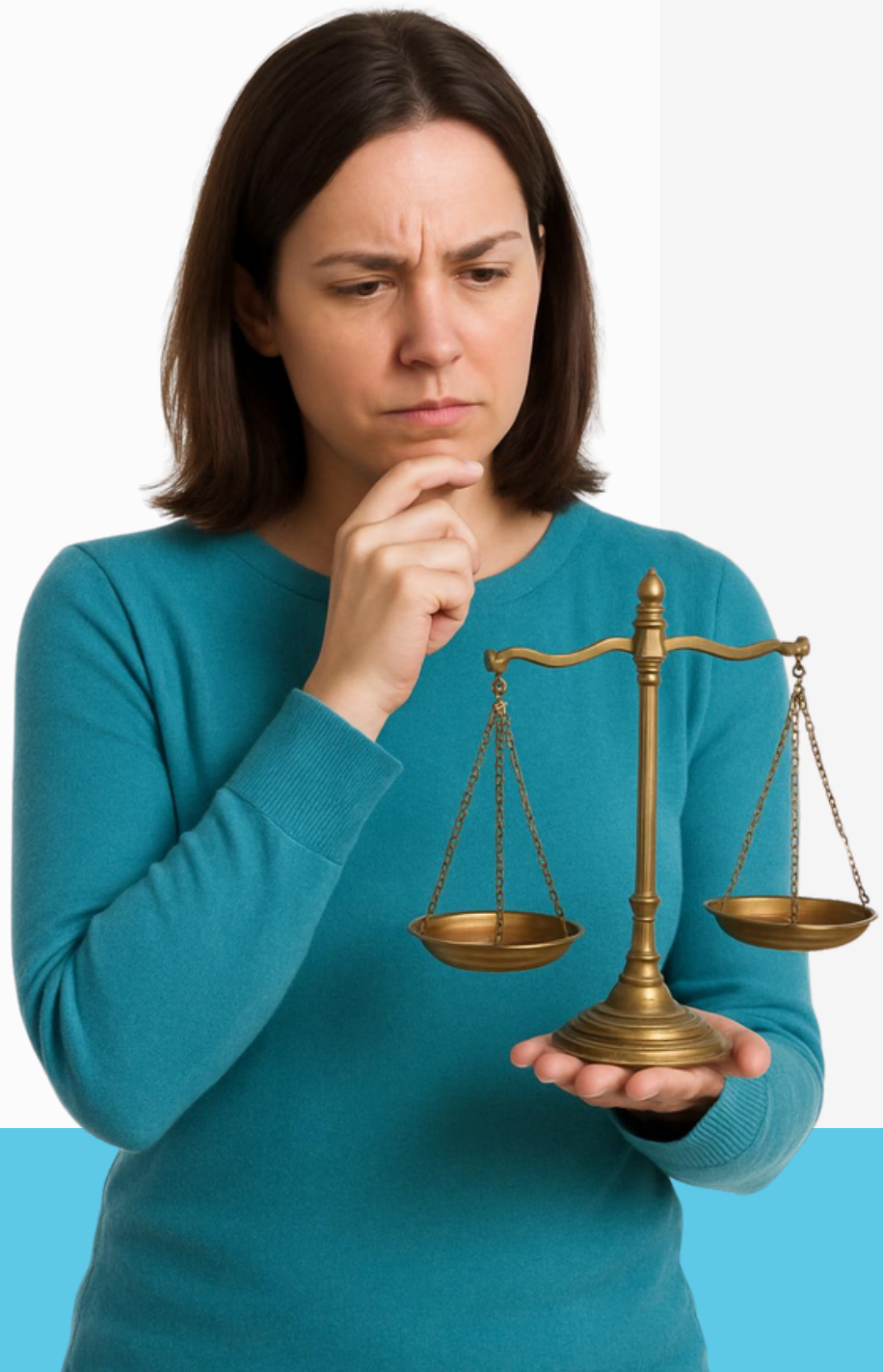
Safe networking doesn't require eye contact, improvisation, speaking when you don't want to, or participation in unstructured conversations, social activities, or informal gatherings. It can offer a pre-arranged schedule, clear turn-taking, the opportunity to write, breaks, specific objectives, and agreements of respect.

The community can also serve a very practical purpose: exchanging compatible providers, reviewing messages, sharing templates, recommending professionals, warning about bad practices, and offering diverse success stories.



Features of a secure network

- Prior agenda.
- Verbal or written participation.
- No obligation to have a camera or make eye contact.
- Rest periods.
- Specific objectives.
- Clear moderation.
- Asynchronous channels.
- Spaces without masks
- Authentic relationships
- Mutual support
- Shared regulation
- Validation
- Help in interpreting situations



PART II.

Emotional regulation toolbox

Situation 1. Managing anxiety: I freeze up before I even start

Many people don't get stuck because they lack ideas, but because they have too many variables to consider. Starting a business involves choosing a name, legal structure, product, price, target audience, distribution channel, branding, timeline, social media presence, supplier, and strategy. For a nervous system that craves clarity, this multitude of decisions can lead to paralysis.

When you notice a block, don't ask 'Why am I not making progress?' Ask 'How many decisions am I trying to make at once?' If it's more than three, the problem is probably executive workload, not motivation.



- Write down all pending decisions.
- Mark which ones are necessary for a minimum test.
- Postpone those that belong to a later phase.
- Ask your neuro-ally to help you separate urgent from important.
- Define a 20-minute action, not a perfect plan.

Situation 2. Emotionally regulate the fear of failure

The fear of failure can be especially intense when a person has had many experiences of not fitting in. It activates mechanisms similar to those triggered by physical fear or threat: fight-anger, avoidance-paralysis, or, if you manage to remain calm, coping and problem-solving. The project doesn't just feel like a business experiment, but like an identity test: if this doesn't work, then maybe I'm not good enough. This conflation of outcome and identity greatly increases the pressure. If you shift your mindset and recognize that the project can be improved, and that the outcome still focuses on specific situations rather than your identity, the pressure is reduced to a more manageable level.

One regulatory strategy is to define the project as an experiment, not a trial. An experiment may not yield the expected result and still produce valuable information. If an offer isn't selling, it could mean the price isn't right, the channel isn't reaching the right audience, the explanation isn't clear, or the timing isn't right. It doesn't automatically mean your capability doesn't exist. The most dangerous failure isn't that a test doesn't work. It's sustaining a deregulating model for months because you don't dare to pause or adjust.

- Before launching, write that you will learn even if it doesn't work as expected.
- Define objective adjustment criteria.
- Separate product evaluation from evaluating your own personal value.
- Scheduled checkups, not compulsive checkups.
- Celebrate actions taken, not just results.



Situation 3. Assertiveness: I find it difficult to set a price

Setting a price can trigger guilt, fear of rejection, and difficulty valuing one's own work. Some autistic individuals tend to price their work based on internal effort, but the market typically also values solutions, specialization, quality, trust, and results. Others lower their prices to avoid conflict, but later experience resentment or burnout.

A sustainable price must cover materials, time, taxes, energy, communication, breaks, and profit margin. If it only covers the visible working hours, it makes invisible all the work surrounding delivery: responding, preparing, managing changes, recovering energy, and dealing with uncertainty.

It's also important to remember that a client who only accepts your work if you overexert yourself or charge below what's viable is not a sustainable client.



- Calculate material cost and real time.
- Add on communication and management time.
- Add on margin for taxes and unforeseen expenses.
- Define a non-negotiable minimum price.
- Prepare a sentence so you don't over-justify yourself.
- Talk to someone you trust if you tend to undervalue yourself.

Situation 4. Assertiveness: A client contacts outside of business hours

When a client messages outside of business hours, the trigger can affect you even if you don't reply. The message enters your mental space and can create a sense of urgency. Therefore, the key isn't simply not responding; it's designing a system so that the message doesn't invade your entire evening.

You can use automated responses, clearly marked schedules, or establish rules from the start. If the client persists, the response should be clear and repeatable. There's no need to explain your entire story or justify your need for rest. We can manage anger, frustration, or that extra activation of the nervous system with protective measures, such as separating your work phone from your personal phone, archiving intrusive calls, and anticipating potential issues with relaxation or distraction techniques.



- Define a communication schedule.
- Include it in quotes and in the email automated signature.
- Use *Do Not Disturb* mode.
- Reply in the next available window.
- If it happens again, remember the written agreement.
- If they do not respect the boundary, reassess compatibility.

Situation 5. Managing uncertainty: a supplier is late

A supplier's delay can trigger a chain of thoughts: *I won't make delivery dates, the client will be angry, I'll lose money, everything is going wrong.* Anxiety increases because you depend on someone you can't control. In this case, regulation involves regaining agency over what you can control. For example, if the pink dye isn't arriving, I can notify the client to reschedule the appointment or let her know there might be a last-minute change.

First, separate the fact from the projection.

- Fact: the supplier hasn't delivered by the agreed date.
- Projection: the entire project is going to fail.

Next, ask for specific information. Don't just ask "what happened?"; ask for a new date, options, and consequences. Finally, communicate with the client only when you have a clear message.



- Breathe and don't text or call when your anxiety is at its peak.
- Review the initial agreement.
- Request a specific, up-to-date date.
- Activate plan B if one exists.
- Inform the customer honestly and provide options.
- Review whether the provider is still the recommended option.

Situation 6. Assertiveness: listening to intuition and managing insecurity

Many autistic people have learned to distrust their intuition because for years they were told it was exaggerated or misunderstood. However, feelings of discomfort can contain important information. They don't always signify danger, but they always deserve to be examined.

Before accepting, it's necessary to filter any opportunity that makes us uneasy. An opportunity that seems good might not align with your limitations, energy levels, or values. The question isn't just whether it can generate money, but what the cost will be.

- What exactly are they asking me for?
- Is the scope clear?
- Are they pressuring me to decide quickly?
- Do they respect my conditions?
- Am I accepting out of desire or out of fear?
- What does my neuro ally think after I share the information I have?



Situation 7. Managing the potential failure: I find it difficult to delegate

Delegating can be difficult when quality, accuracy, and control are essential. Sometimes, people know they need help but feel that explaining the task will be more difficult than doing it themselves. Or they fear the result won't meet their standards. This can lead to taking on too many responsibilities to the point of burnout.

Delegating doesn't mean giving up everything. It means translating internal knowledge into external instructions. To delegate effectively, you need examples, steps, quality criteria, and review points. The first time you delegate, it's usually slow; subsequent delegations reduce your workload or determine whether you can rely on other employees or collaborators.

- Choose to start with a repetitive task, not a core task.
- Record your screen or create a visual example.
- Define what is acceptable and what is not.
- Do a small first test.
- Review without redoing everything.
- Adjust instructions, don't just blame the person.



Situation 8. I feel guilty for resting

Guilt about resting often arises when a person links personal worth to productivity. In entrepreneurship, this guilt intensifies because there are always pending tasks. If you rest, the idea emerges that you are missing opportunities or letting clients down.

But rest isn't the opposite of work. It's a prerequisite for being able to continue working. If you don't rest, your ability to make decisions, communicate, create, and regulate yourself diminishes. Rest doesn't compete with business; it protects business.

Guilt paralyzes; responsibility recalibrates. Where guilt locks you into commitments you can no longer meet, responsibility gives you permission to renegotiate them — with yourself or with others — on terms that actually fit.

- Schedule breaks before filling up the week.
- Don't call it free space: call it recovery.
- Define tasks that are allowed and not allowed during breaks.
- Use automated messages.
- Remember that someone else's urgency is not always a real urgency.
- Check if the guilt decreases when the break is scheduled.
- Don't call it guilt, call it a sense of responsibility.



Situation 9. Fear of being misunderstood: revealing that I am autistic

Deciding whether or not to disclose your diagnosis is a personal decision. There's no single answer. Some people find relief in explaining it; others have experienced discrimination or invalidation. If you're a manager in your company, some behaviors might be perceived as authoritarian, eccentric, or submissive. If you struggle to define your role, manage mistakes or changes, and your communication style is very direct, you might think that an explanation could ease the tension. Before deciding to do so, consider what other options you have.

You can reveal needs without disclosing a diagnosis. For example: I work better with written agreements, I need to schedule an appointment, I don't answer calls without an appointment, I respond within 48 hours. In many cases, communicating working conditions is sufficient.

If you decide to explain that you are autistic, it can be helpful to do so from the perspective of needs and strengths: my way of working is very precise and structured; to deliver good quality I need clarity, realistic deadlines and written communication.

- What is the purpose of revealing it?
- Who should I tell?
- What exactly do I need to ask for?
- What are the risks?
- Do I have support if the answer is no?



Situation 10. Peace of mind vs. standard success

Growth can be both exciting and dangerous. Numerous experiences of autistic individuals demonstrate that a project can grow beyond a person's capacity for self-regulation. Unplanned growth can bring more employees, more clients, more messages, more decisions, more uncertainty, greater responsibility, more social interactions, more changes, and less rest.

Before scaling up, assess whether your sensory and social bandwidth can absorb the additional load. Without templates, automation, personal support, a protected schedule, and clear boundaries, growth can lead to burnout. Sometimes the most sustainable decision is not to take on more, but to consolidate what is already working.

- How many orders/customers can I handle without exceeding an acceptable rest period, i.e., without going into the red?
- Which task becomes a bottleneck?
- What can I automate before accepting more?
- Who can I refer them to?
- What price should it rise to if there is excess demand?
- What emotional or physical sign will indicate that I should temporarily close my schedule?



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