

SOCIAL MASKING



Social masking is to hide or disguise yourself so that you can better fit in with other people around you. This can be in any situation but mostly when you are out of the home, such as at school, work or in a social situation.

For most of us it is an unconscious strategy we develop when we are growing up and it means we learn to behave differently with different groups of people. We are different when we are with friends than when we are with family, school mates or work colleagues.

For autistic people, because they may feel that being their true selves is very different from others, it can be more difficult to mask and more exhausting. Often the autistic person spends a lot of time and many years hiding their traits and trying to fit in.

Masking may involve suppressing certain behaviours that the person can find helpful (such as stimming or focusing on intense interests). It also means mimicking the behaviours of others by using rehearsed 'scripts' in social situations.

SOCIAL MASKING

MASKING AUTISM CAN LOOK LIKE:



SimplyPsychology

The impact of masking

Signs that a child might be masking is school

SOCIAL MASKING

THE **DOUBLE-EDGED** SWORD OF **MASKING** IN AUTISM



NEGATIVE EFFECTS



Mental health
Increased anxiety, depression, and burnout.



Loss of identity
Feeling disconnected from true self.



Limited potential
Hiding strengths and talents.

BENEFITS



Reduced social anxiety
Feeling safer from rejection and judgment



Social inclusion
Access to activities and relationships.



Sense of belonging
Fitting in and avoiding isolation.

