



# Personal Relationships

**Clare Daborn (UK)**



This project has been funded with the support of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.



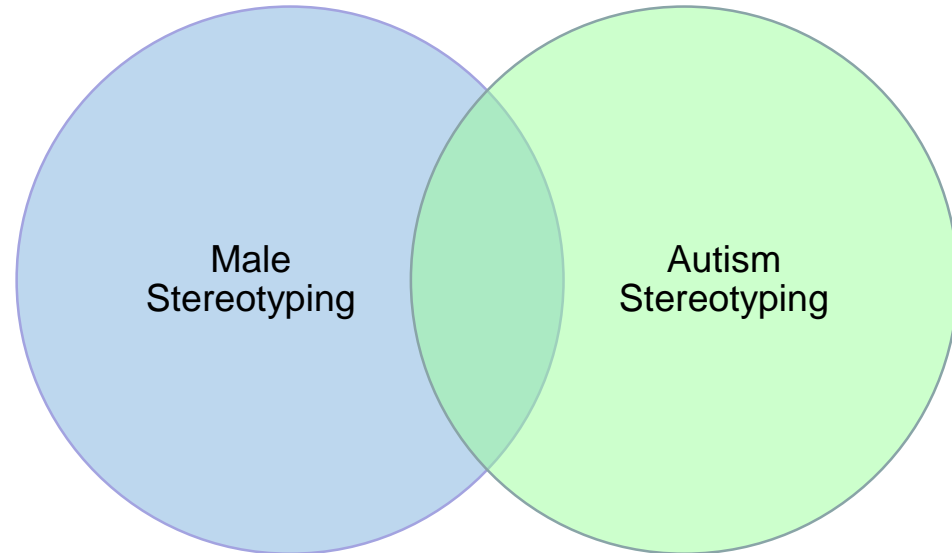
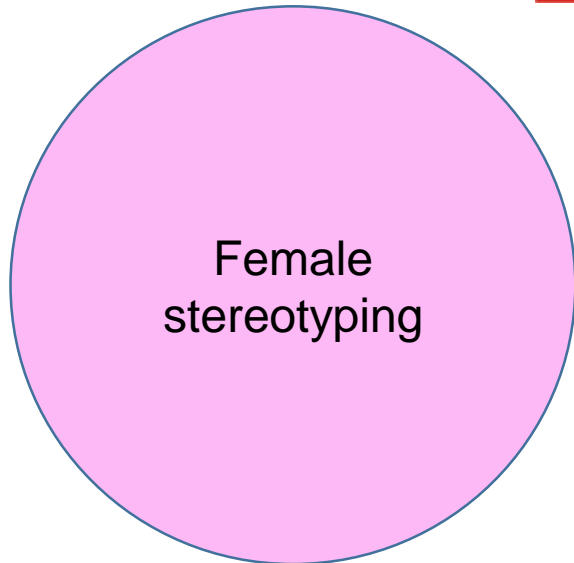
# Introduction to Personal Relationships

- Personal Relationships include all types of social interaction
- Social interaction underlies a vast proportion of our lives
- Social interactions can be more challenging to those on the spectrum.
- Therefore many areas of life are affected

# Personal Relationships

- Stereotyping
- Strengths
- Strategies including masking

# Stereotyping



## Stereotyping – Not caring??

Oh no, she's going.  
I wish she'd stay  
and comfort me...  
maybe she doesn't  
care...



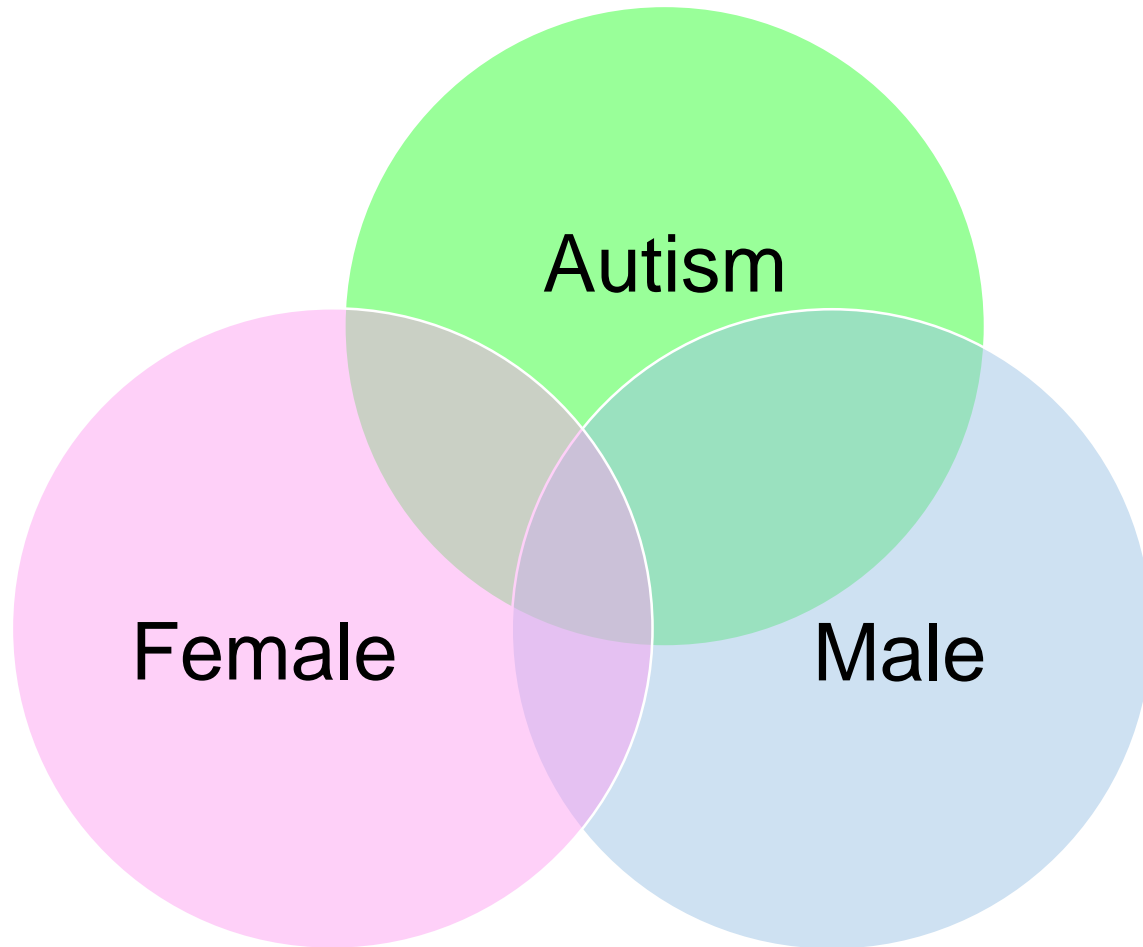
Poor thing she's so  
upset. I hate people  
being around when  
I'm upset, I think I  
should leave her  
alone



But some people  
prefer to be  
comforted....  
Maybe I should  
stay.

But if I stay I'll  
probably say the  
wrong thing and  
make it worse for  
her... I'll go...

**Reality**



# Strengths of the UK Group

- We can see beyond stereotypes and identify our strengths.
  - Loyalty
  - Reliability
  - Honesty and sincerity
  - Caring
  - Logical thinking
  - Creative and 'unorthodox' ways of thinking
  - Sense of humour
- Our strengths give us strategies to overcome difficulties and lead to successes.

# Strategies

- Finding common interests and fun activities.
  - Being creative and finding new ideas for activities we can build relationships from.
1. Using the natural structure and more obvious traditional gender roles that a 'romantic' relationship offers.
- Seeing new things as an adventure not something to be scared of.
  - Having a back-up or escape plan to reduce anxiety.
  - Use of social networking websites and technology to keep connected.
2. Having a mentor, friend, advocate or family member.
  3. Masking – logic, mimicking, suppressing



# Strategies and Successes

Having a mentor, friend, advocate or family member.

- With the help of her advocate one member of the group resolved a problem with men approaching her while waiting for the bus.

Before



After



# Strategies and Successes

## Masking

Conscious processing

That doesn't  
make sense – it  
must mean  
something else

That makes  
more sense –  
it must mean  
that

“Opening a can of  
worms...”



“Creating an  
unpleasant or  
difficult situation...”

# Conclusions

- Understanding of autism is crucial!
- Especially understanding that we are individuals
- Support
  - Mentor
  - Peer support

Up next

Future Security

