

My Meltdown Plan

© Helping Hands Creations Inc.

Signs & Symptoms



Triggers



Needs



Signal Plan



Word Bank for Warning Signs

© Helping Hands Creations Inc.

- Flushed skin
- Shallow breaths
- Faster breathing
- Tense muscles
- Restlessness/pacing
- Non-speaking
- Feeling hot
- Heavy limbs
- Sudden loss of energy/fatigue
- Increased stimming
- Increased fidgeting
- Clumsiness
- Headaches
- Sensory pain
- Upset stomach/nausea
- Unsteady hands
- Trembling
- Urge to hide
- Voice volume louder or too quiet
- Voice pacing faster or slower
- Difficulty with eye contact
- Crying or watery eyes
- Dizzy
- Dissociating
- Repeating thoughts or speech
- Skin picking
- Lump in throat
- Blank stare

Word Bank for Triggers

© Helping Hands Creations Inc.

- Sensory overload
- Loud/sudden sounds
- Bright/blinking/flickering lights
- Visual clutter
- Strong smells
- Uncomfortable textures
- Temperature extremes
- Crowded or chaotic environments
- Too many instructions
- Unclear instructions
- Rapid transitions
- Unexpected changes
- Information overload
- Feeling rushed
- Repeated interruptions
- Feeling misunderstood
- Feeling dismissed
- Shame/embarrassed
- Feeling trapped/powerless/no control
- Too much socializing
- Too much masking
- Miscommunication
- Unclear expectations
- Sickness
- Ignoring body needs (hunger, etc)
- Too many decisions
- Group settings
- Lack of communication

Word Bank for Needs

© Helping Hands Creations Inc.

- Quiet
- Dim lighting/darkness
- Noise canceling headphones
- White noise machines
- Deep pressure
- Hydration
- Food/snack
- Sour/salty/sweet tastes
- Hot/cold drinks
- Comfortable temperature
- Rest/nap/lay down
- Movement
- Fidget tools
- Comfort objects or soft textures
- Warm/cold shower
- Cool cloth on face or neck
- Validation
- No questions or decisions
- Permission to be quiet
- Safe space
- Feeling loved
- Predictability
- Time alone
- Non-speaking communication
- Simple yes/no choices
- Scripts
- Simple, clear steps
- No problem-solving
- Reduced expectations
- Reset zone/time
- Gentle check-in
- Break

Word Bank for Signal Plans

© Helping Hands Creations Inc.

- Have scripts planned for texts, calls, e-mails, and conversations
- Keep your scripts short and clear
- Share planned scripts with people who may have direct contact with you during meltdowns OR keep them private for yourself to use
- Consider your audience when creating scripts
- Consider having saved templates for emails and texts
- Consider having scripts on a card to pass out

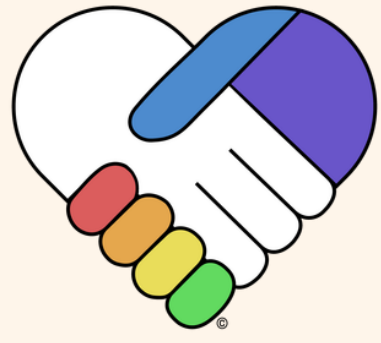
Parent example: “Let’s go to our Nest and Rest zone.”

Work Example: “I need to be excused for PTO this afternoon for medical reasons.”

Roommate Example: “I’m taking a recovery nap. I’ll text you when I’m up for company.”

Family Example: “I need to be excused and head home.”

Friends Example: “I got to go, I’ll text you.”



Meltdown Planning Guide

Place & Title

- ▶ You can use “Meltdown Plan” or “Recovery Plan”
- ▶ Change the title to reflect the place this plan is for.
- ▶ Make as many plans as you need, but make them place specific.



Signs & Symptoms

- ▶ Any signs or cues of you about to have a meltdown.
- ▶ Ask family and friends for possible signs.
- ▶ Remember: They helping you prevent future meltdowns, not to be critical.



Triggers

- ▶ Write/think about past meltdowns.
- ▶ Note ANY times you felt “out of control.”
- ▶ Don’t focus on “does this count as a meltdown?”



Needs

- ▶ What others OR yourself can do to help.
- ▶ Try not to let shame or guilt influence your list.
- ▶ Any comforts, activities or actions YOU find helpful.



Planned Scripts

- ▶ Plan what to say
- ▶ Try to keep it short and sweet.
- ▶ When you can? Have things pre-typed or written.

