

# Autistic Meltdowns:

## Helping Before & During a Meltdown

### Before

#### **Know their Sensory Profile**

Understand what your loved one is sensitive to and what might cause a meltdown.

#### **Build a Circle of Trust**

Gather a team of trusted professionals to understand their diagnosis and potential triggers.

#### **Remember Behavior Is Communication**

Investigate behavior patterns to understand the underlying needs and pressures.

#### **Maintain Structure & Predictability**

Having clear schedules, routines, and visual aids can create a sense of security and reduce anxiety.

#### **Give Opportunities for Autonomy**

Involve them in decision-making by offering simple choices daily to foster trust and a sense of control.

#### **Learn Motivations**

Discover soothing activities and preferred sensory tools to use as incentives and support emotional regulation.

### During

#### **Read the Room**

Be attuned to what helps your loved one feel safe during signs of distress.

#### **Stay Calm & Focused**

Model a calm body and refrain from panicking, as they can sense your stress. Stay strong and regulated.

#### **Move to a Quiet Space**

If possible, a quiet space with no loud noises.

#### **Stay Quiet**

This is not the time for talking, instructions, bribes, or negotiations.

#### **Offer Water**

If appropriate, you can quietly offer a sip of water, which can sometimes be helpful.

#### **Don't Reprimand**

Show compassion and empathy during this moment.

#### **Seek Professional Help**

Don't hesitate to contact experts or call for help to ensure safety.