Worksheet 10 Ways to Practice Self-Advocacy: A Neurodivergent-Friendly ChecklistUnderstanding Your Needs

□ Identify my sensory sensitivities and how they impact my communication.
□ Recognize my preferred communication mode (written, verbal, visual, etc.).
□ Acknowledge my energy levels and how they fluctuate.
□ Understand that asking for help is a strength, not a weakness.
□ Recognize that perfectionism, RSD, or shame may make self-advocacy feel difficult.

Practicing Self-Advocacy Skills

Expressing Confusion

□ Remind myself that asking for clarification is okay and normal.
□ Use phrases like:

- *"I'm not sure I understood what you just said. Can you please explain it again?"*
- *"Can you rephrase that for me?"*

Asking for What I Need

□ Identify accommodations that would help me communicate more comfortably (e.g., quieter environments, breaks).
□ Use phrases like:

- *"Would it be possible to continue this conversation in a quieter place?"*
- *"I need a short break to process this before continuing."*

Sharing My Perspective

□ Recognize that my perspective is valid and important.
□ Use "I" statements to express my thoughts and emotions.
□ Use phrases like:

- *"I know you feel X, and I hear you. When I'm focused on Y, it's hard for me to shift to Z."*
- *"I'd like to share something about my thought process. Would you be open to hearing about monotropism?"*

Setting Boundaries

□ Define what I am comfortable discussing, when, and where.
□ Express limits on certain conversations or topics.
□ Use phrases like:

- *"I'm feeling overwhelmed right now. Can we check in later?"*
- *"I prefer not to discuss this topic. Can we focus on something else?"*

Building Self-Advocacy Habits

□ Remind myself that advocating for my needs is a learned skill.
□ Celebrate small wins when I successfully advocate for myself.
□ Be compassionate with myself when it feels difficult.
□ Practice these phrases and skills in low-pressure situations first.

🔲 **Bonus Challenge:** Pick one self-advocacy skill from this list to practice this week!