Worksheet 1: Communication Accommodations for ADHD Women

Objective: To help you identify and implement accommodations that support your unique communication needs.

Part 1: Understanding Accommodations

Accommodations are adjustments that make communication easier and more effective for you. These can include modifying your environment, using tools, or advocating for your needs in conversations.

Examples of accommodations:

- Asking for written information instead of verbal instructions.
- Taking breaks during long conversations.
- Choosing a quiet setting for important discussions.
- Using a recording tool to review important details later.

Part 2: Identifying Your Needs

1. What communication challenges do you experience the most? *(Check all that apply.)*

- ☐ Processing information too slowly
- ☐ Forgetting details from conversations
- ☐ Struggling to focus in noisy environments
- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed when multiple people are speaking
- ☐ Needing extra time to respond to questions
- ☐ Sensory sensitivities (e.g., bright lights, loud noises)
- ☐ Other: _____

2. Would any accommodations help you manage these challenges?

_____

_____

_____

Reflection:

What is one accommodation you can start using this week?

_____

_____

Worksheet 2: Self-Advocacy in Communication

Objective: To develop self-advocacy skills to express your communication needs confidently.

Part 1: What is Self-Advocacy?

Self-advocacy means speaking up for your needs and ensuring that your communication style is respected. It involves:
✓ Expressing when you need clarification.
✓ Asking for accommodations without guilt.
✓ Setting boundaries to protect your energy and focus.

Part 2: Identifying Your Needs

1. What makes communication difficult for you? *(Write at least three challenges.)*

_____
_____
_____

2. What is one way you can advocate for yourself in each situation below?

Situation	How Can You Advocate for Yourself?
Someone interrupts you before you finish speaking.	_____
You are overwhelmed by too much information at once.	_____
A friend doesn't respect your need for processing time.	_____
You're expected to make eye contact when it feels uncomfortable.	_____

Part 3: Practicing Self-Advocacy

Rewrite the following passive or unclear statements as strong, self-advocating responses.

1. **Passive:** “I guess it’s fine if we talk now, even though I’m really tired.”
   Assertive: _____
2. **Passive:** “I’m probably overreacting, but I get overwhelmed when too many people talk at once.”
   Assertive: _____
3. **Passive:** “I don’t know, I just have trouble understanding things sometimes.”
   Assertive: _____

Part 4: Creating Your Own Self-Advocacy Script

Write a script for how you would express a communication need to someone in your life.
Example:
"I process information better when I can take notes. Would it be okay if I wrote things down while we talk?"

📝 Your script: _____

Reflection:

What is one way you can practice self-advocacy this week?

_____

Worksheet 3: Identifying Communication Strengths & Challenges

Objective: To help you recognize your unique communication strengths and areas for growth.

Part 1: Self-Reflection on Communication

Answer the following questions:

What do you enjoy about communication?:

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is most challenging about communication for you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

When do you feel most comfortable expressing yourself?:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Part 2: Strengths & Challenges Checklist

Check the statements that apply to you.

✓ **My Communication Strengths:**

- ☐ I am good at explaining my thoughts when given time.
- ☐ I can express myself well through writing.
- ☐ I enjoy deep, meaningful conversations.
- ☐ I am good at listening when there are minimal distractions.
- ☐ I can pick up on emotions in tone of voice.
- ☐ Other: _____

❌ **My Communication Challenges:**

- ☐ I struggle with verbalizing my thoughts quickly.

- [ ] I have difficulty interpreting sarcasm or implied meanings.
- [ ] I forget details from conversations.
- [ ] I get overwhelmed when multiple people talk at once.
- [ ] I interrupt when excited or afraid of forgetting my point.
- [ ] Other: _____

Part 3: Reflection

What is one strength you can lean on to help with your challenges?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Worksheet 4: Navigating Social Situations with ADHD

Objective: To develop strategies for handling social situations that may feel overwhelming.

Part 1: Identifying Social Stressors

Which social situations are difficult for you? *(Check all that apply.)*

- [ ] Meeting new people
- [ ] Large group conversations
- [ ] Talking on the phone
- [ ] Making small talk
- [ ] Giving presentations
- [ ] Social events with lots of noise and distractions
- [ ] Other: _____

Part 2: Coping Strategies

Match each **social challenge** to a **helpful strategy** by drawing a line between them.

Social Challenge	Helpful Strategy
Feeling overwhelmed in a noisy group	Find a quieter area or take breaks
Struggling to start a conversation	Prepare a few open-ended questions
Forgetting what to say mid-sentence	Pause and take a deep breath
Getting distracted while someone talks	Repeat key points in your head
Feeling pressure to make eye contact	Focus on a neutral point near their face

Part 3: Action Plan

Write one strategy you can try at your next social event:

_____

_____

Worksheet 5: The Double Empathy Problem & Communication Misunderstandings

Objective: To understand how mutual misunderstandings happen between neurodivergent and neurotypical individuals.

Part 1: Understanding the Concept

The **Double Empathy Problem** suggests that communication difficulties between neurodivergent and neurotypical people happen because **both sides** misunderstand each other—not just because of the neurodivergent person.

Think about a time when someone misunderstood your communication.

1. **What happened?**
   _____
   _____
2. **How did you feel?**
   _____
   _____
3. **How did the other person react?**

_____
_____

Part 2: Identifying Communication Differences

Match the neurodivergent communication style with the common neurotypical misinterpretation.

Neurodivergent Communication	Common Misinterpretation
Talking about a special interest for a long time	Being "self-centered"
Needing time to process before responding	Being "uninterested" or "aloof"
Avoiding eye contact	Being "dishonest" or "shy"
Speaking honestly and directly	Being "rude"
Struggling with small talk	Being "unfriendly"

Part 3: Bridging the Gap

How can you **help others understand your communication style**? *(Write at least one idea.)*

_____

_____

Worksheet 6: Setting Boundaries in Communication

Objective: To develop skills for setting healthy boundaries in conversations.

Part 1: What Are Communication Boundaries?

Boundaries help protect your energy, time, and mental well-being. Examples of **healthy communication boundaries** include:

- Asking someone to slow down when they talk too fast.
- Saying “I need a break” when a conversation becomes overwhelming.
- Letting someone know when you prefer written communication over verbal.

Which of these **boundaries would be helpful for you?** *(Check all that apply.)*

- ☐ Asking for time to process before responding
- ☐ Requesting a quieter setting for important discussions
- ☐ Limiting conversation length when feeling overstimulated
- ☐ Avoiding certain conversation topics that cause stress
- ☐ Other: _____

Part 2: Boundary Scripts

Rewrite the following unclear boundary statements to make them clearer and more assertive.

1. **Unclear:** "I don’t really like loud places, but I guess I can go."
   Assertive:_____
2. **Unclear:** "I’m kind of tired, so maybe we can talk later?"
   Assertive:_____
3. **Unclear:** "I don’t like when people interrupt me, but it’s fine."
   Assertive:_____

Part 3: Your Personal Boundaries

Write down one boundary you want to start setting in conversations:

_____

Worksheet 7: Managing Sensory Overload in Conversations

Objective: To develop strategies for handling sensory sensitivities that impact communication.

Part 1: Identifying Sensory Triggers

Which of the following **sensory experiences** make communication harder for you? *(Check all that apply.)*

- ☐ Bright lights
- ☐ Loud background noise
- ☐ Multiple people talking at once
- ☐ Strong smells (perfume, food, cleaning products)
- ☐ Physical touch (crowds, handshakes, hugs)
- ☐ Uncomfortable clothing (tags, textures, tightness)
- ☐ Other: _____

Part 2: Coping Strategies

Match the **sensory challenge** to a **possible coping strategy** by drawing a line between them.

Sensory Challenge	Coping Strategy
Loud environments	Use noise-canceling headphones or earplugs
Bright lights	Wear tinted glasses or adjust lighting
Overwhelmed in a crowd	Step outside or take sensory breaks
Too many people talking	Focus on one speaker or use written notes
Strong smells distracting you	Carry a calming scent (like essential oils)

Part 3: Creating a Sensory Plan

Write one action you will take the next time you face sensory overload:

1. _____

Worksheet 8: Communicating Needs Without Guilt

Objective: To help you express your needs confidently and without self-doubt.

Part 1: Recognizing Unhelpful Thoughts

Check any thoughts you've had when trying to ask for what you need:

- ☐ "I don't want to be a burden."
- ☐ "People will think I'm difficult if I ask for accommodations."
- ☐ "I should be able to handle this on my own."
- ☐ "What if they say no?"
- ☐ "I feel guilty for needing extra help."

Part 2: Reframing These Thoughts

Rewrite the **self-doubting thought** as a **self-affirming belief.**

Self-Doubt: "I don't want to be a burden."
SelfAffirmation

_____

Self-Doubt: "People will think I'm difficult if I ask for accommodations."
SelfAffirmation

_____

Self-Doubt: "I should be able to handle this on my own."
Self-Affirmation:

_____

Part 3: Practicing Self-Advocacy Statements

Fill in the blanks with assertive ways to communicate your needs.

1. **"I work best when _____. Would it be possible to adjust that?"**
2. **"I need a little more time to process this. Could we slow down or take a break?"**
3. **"I prefer _____ when communicating. Could we do that instead?"**

Reflection

What is one need you will confidently express this week?

_____

Worksheet 9 Self-Accommodation Checklist for Neurodivergent Communication

Self-accommodation is a powerful way to support yourself in communication. Use this checklist to identify ways to make conversations and information processing easier for you.

Recognizing Your Needs

□ Identify when I am too stressed or distracted for a conversation.
□ Recognize when I need more time to process information.
□ Notice when my nervous system is overwhelmed and take a break.
□ Choose optimal circumstances for receiving and relaying information.

Setting Up Communication Supports

Managing Conversations

□ Avoid conversations when I am feeling overstimulated or stressed.
□ Ask to delay conversations when I need more time to process.
□ Use a “Do Not Disturb” button, sign, or status to prevent interruptions.
□ Ask to move discussions to a calmer place when needed.
□ Establish a cue with trusted people to remind each other to take breaks if a conversation gets off track.

Receiving and Retaining Information

□ Ask for written information instead of verbal instructions at work.
□ Request to record meetings or conversations to review later.
□ Ask for important details to be sent via text or email.
□ Choose a quiet place for reading and responding to messages or emails.

Deferring Conversations

□ Use boundary-setting phrases when I need to delay a discussion.

- *“I can’t do this right now because I can’t give you my full attention. Can we do this later?”*
- *“Can you check back with me at [time] when I can focus better?”*
- *“I’m overwhelmed right now. Can we talk about this difficult topic after dinner?”*
- *“I had a hard day at work and might not process this well. Can you save it for tomorrow?”*

Building Self-Awareness

□ Identify key accommodations that help me communicate better.
□ Practice self-advocacy by communicating my needs openly.
□ Reflect on one accommodation I can implement this week and write it down:

📌 **My self-accommodation to focus on this week: _____**

Worksheet 10 Ways to Practice Self-Advocacy: A Neurodivergent-Friendly Checklist

Understanding 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!