

Seeking an Autism Assessment and Potential Diagnosis; Pros and Cons

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
<p>Understanding of past and current behaviour, regardless of whether an Autism diagnosis is given;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation for why you/your child may feel or seem different, which can help with self-esteem and understanding. • a more appropriate perspective and approach to understanding and managing difficulties and expectations, • Sense of relief, alleviating guilt and sense of blame; reduced associated stress. 	<p>The outcome of the assessment is not certain and not always definitive;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Autism assessment does not necessarily lead to a diagnosis, even with a private company! • You need to feel fully prepared for the different potential outcomes of the assessment, which includes a 'working diagnosis', meaning that more information is needed to confirm a diagnosis.
<p>Allows you to gain a better understanding of Autism;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diagnosis can allow you to ask questions, do your own research and receive guidance/interventions for more support. • Joining a new community and building connections with other individuals who may be experiencing similar things. 	<p>Other people's awareness of Autism may be limited;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others may lack empathy and understanding of the diagnosis and what this means. • You or your child may face discrimination, stigmatising and bias.
<p>Assessment offers you an understanding of you or your child's individual profile;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our reports give you a clear and realistic picture of a person's individual strengths and difficulties. • We identify areas where intervention could be helpful, as well as areas of skill to draw upon. 	<p>You may still have unanswered questions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Autism diagnosis may not explain all difficulties encountered. • A Working Diagnosis may be given, meaning more assessment is necessary in future before a formal diagnosis can be confirmed. • An Autism diagnosis cannot conclusively explain the cause of Autism.



<p>Potential benefits to interpersonal relationships;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends/family/partners may better be able to understand and accept differences if they have struggled to do so in the past.• New ways of understanding and managing difficulties and conflict within relationships may be opened up.	<p>Potential disadvantages to interpersonal relationships;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends/family/partners may be dismissive of a diagnosis and the negative connotations they may perceive.
<p>Increased, appropriate help and support in school, university or the workplace;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to more suitable healthcare services, for example Autism-specific support.• Employers, colleagues, teachers and staff will have a better understanding of you or your child's individual needs.• Tailored interventions in the school environment, if appropriate.• Employers are legally required to provide reasonable adjustments to the workplace and your working role if an Autism diagnosis is given.	<p>Social risks of negative assumptions, increased stigma, discrimination and stereotyping;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may be affected by inaccurate stereotypes that people may believe about Autism.• People may start treating you differently, adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.• Being identified solely by an Autism diagnosis, rather than individual characteristics, strengths and difficulties.• Potential negative effect on you or your child's self-identity and self-esteem, if treated this way.
<p>Financial support;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You may be eligible for certain benefits and financial help if you receive an Autism diagnosis.	<p>Diagnostic overshadowing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Autism diagnosis could lead to other things e.g. mental health problems being seen as less important and difficulties may always be put down to Autism, rather than consideration of you as a whole person.
<p>Increased compassion and understanding for yourself;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accepting differences and viewing these as part of an individual profile, rather than downfalls.• Changing expectations, with an increased understanding of abilities and limitations.	