

Exploring Being Autistic programme FAQ

Who is it suitable for?

This is suitable for anyone over 18 who identifies as autistic and/or has an autism diagnosis, or is wondering if they might be autistic.

How many participants will there be?

There will be between six and eight participants on the programme.

What is the age and gender balance?

So far there have been more women than men enrolling on these courses, but that could change in future. The age range has been wide, from 19 to 74, with the majority of participants being between 30 and 50.

How do I know if it will be helpful?

People from a wide variety of backgrounds have found this course valuable and life enhancing. The course offers a creative and bespoke mix of information and support which can benefit everyone whatever their position in relation to autism. You can view the [contents of the programme](#) and I will arrange a consultation when you have filled in the enrolment form.

Are there any risks involved?

Painful memories or feelings may come up in the sessions and I take great care to provide a safe and supportive environment. There are scheduled breaks in the sessions and a quiet area you can go to if you are finding things difficult. I am available to talk with you if you are experiencing difficulties. Identifying as autistic can sometimes raise issues with family members and friends who may view autism negatively and may find it hard to accept that you are/may be autistic. If this happens we can discuss strategies that you can use to deal with the situation.

What qualifications do you have?

The course is currently facilitated by me, Caroline Hearst, with support from an autistic co-facilitator. I am an autistic educator and consultant. I run autism awareness training, specialising in training therapists and counsellors. I devised this programme (which has been evaluated in this [article](#)) to fill a gap in the support available to autistic adults. I serve on the local Autism Partnership board, the member's forum of the National Autistic Society (NAS), as a committee member of Autism UK and as a director of AutAngel. I received the Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Individual on the Autism Spectrum in the NAS Professional Awards in 2017 and have been awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship to extend my knowledge of peer support for autistic people. You can read more about me [here](#).

What dates will the course run?

I am currently developing an online version of this programme, [get updates](#) to be the first to hear about new sessions.