

A surreal painting with a green globe, a red figure, and two dark figures in the foreground. The scene is set against a background of purple and blue hues with abstract, organic shapes. A small red figure stands on top of the globe, while two dark, shadowy figures stand in the foreground. The overall mood is mysterious and dreamlike.

Relationships and marriage on the autism spectrum

by
Donna Williams

<http://www.donnawilliams.net>

<http://www.auties.org>

Befriending yourself

- Learn about yourself – who are you?
- Apples and Oranges
- Become who you would befriend
- Before you take, what are you offering?
- Avoid separatism
- You won't be everyone's taste
- Trying versus self abuse



Socialising

- Hygiene and tidiness
- It's not 'their stuff'.
- Self regulation.
- Learning to turn take.
- Personal Space.
- Lacking a simultaneous sense of self and other.
- Scripts and their limitations.
- Don't sell an apple as an orange.
- Friend vs therapist
- Partner vs parent



- Friendly versus friends.
- Volunteering as an alternative.
- 'Friends' aren't limited to humans.
- Autism-friendly networks
- Spectrum style friendships versus non-spectrum friendships
- Where do you meet real people?

Friendships



Social alternatives

- if conversing isn't your forte?
- if you have dyspraxia?
- if you have social phobia or exposure anxiety?
- if you are socially ambivalent/solitary?
- if you have sensory issues?
- if you have health or psych challenges?



Relationships

- Give each other time
- Sensuality is often 'auto' before it's interactive.
- Sensuality precedes sexuality.
- If you can't read the messages, self-advocate.
- Check your feelings, check theirs.
- You are not an object
- A partner is not a toy
- A partner is not a parent
- Sex or a relationship?



Knowing your sexuality

Gender identity

Monogamy

What if you're not
monogamous?

Dating versus living together

Shared accommodation,
with own rooms

A scheduled relationship

Autistic relationships

Asexual relationships

Independent lives

Marriage

Relationship styles



- Family (maybe)
- Doctor
- Counselling
- Citizen's advice
- Library
- Volunteer Services
- Community houses
- Community groups
- Support groups
- Local council
- Social networks

Your supports

