

# UNDERSTANDING The SPECTRUM

Introduced  
by Archie! ↻



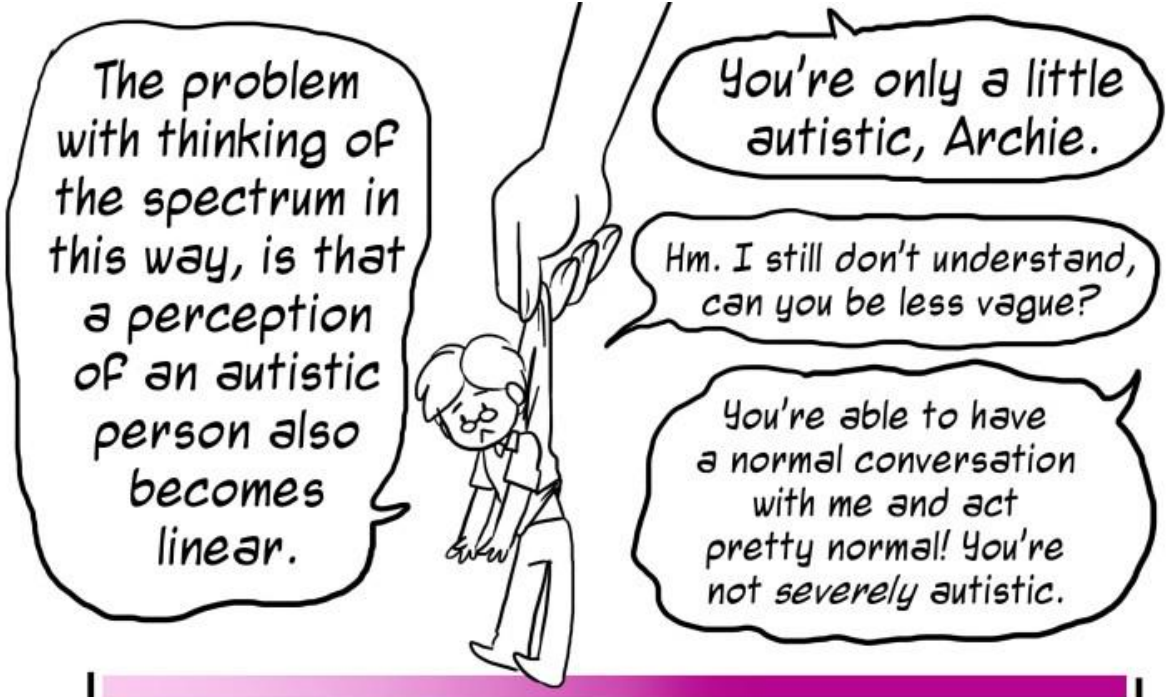
Language can be  
confusing for me.

It takes me longer than  
the average person to process  
conversations.

And although I am good at  
making conversation, it can take  
me longer than normal to respond.

But, neurotypical  
people find  
language  
confusing too.  
And it can lead  
to some people  
misperceiving  
who I am.





The problem with thinking of the spectrum in this way, is that a perception of an autistic person also becomes linear.

You're only a little autistic, Archie.

Hm. I still don't understand, can you be less vague?

You're able to have a normal conversation with me and act pretty normal! You're not severely autistic.

Not autistic Very autistic

...And so you see, if someone thinks you're on a 'low end' of this spectrum, this often happens:



Archie you can handle all of this just fine, you're not *that* autistic.



**NEW** Situations  
TOO MUCH NOISE  
LACK of ROUTINE  
'SMART' tight clothing  
DON'T STAY  
loads of conversations all at once  
DON'T FIDGET  
BE MORE ORGANISED!



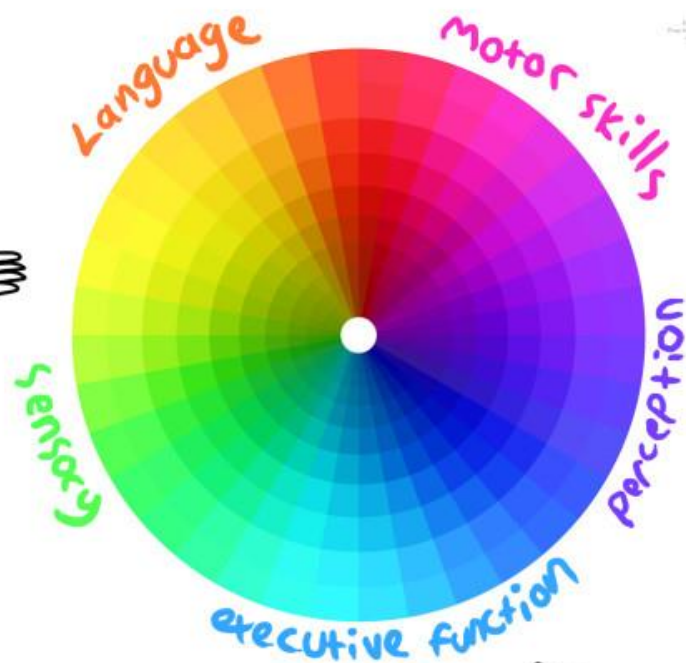
And if you're seen as being on the 'high end' of this spectrum-

I'm gonna re-label you on this spectrum... Since you're very autistic I don't think you should have a job, just to be safe y'know?

It can lead to some people labeling you as being incapable of doing anything at all.



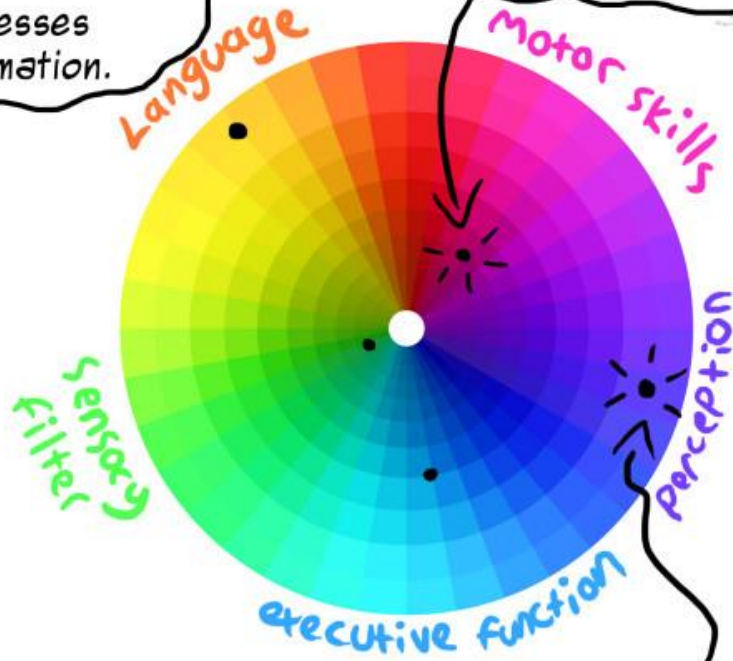
The truth is though, someone who is neurodiverse in some areas of their brain, will also be no different to your average person in other areas of their brain.



You see, the autistic spectrum looks something more like this.

The spectrum consists of many different 'traits', or ways in which the brain processes information.

Some traits create difficulties in every day life. (hence being diagnosed)



But also many traits are useful in every day life.



Each person with autism will have a set of traits all in different areas of the spectrum. The areas where they don't have a trait will function no differently to a neurotypical brain, but may be affected by circumstances. In example, I am good at making conversation (language). But I get sensory overload in loud and crowded spaces, which then makes conversation very hard for me.



Sometimes, if someone is diagnosed as being 'on the spectrum', and informs another person of this, it's so that they can get some understanding and respect for the things they are unable to do. *But*, it is also so that they can cooperate with the world around them- so that they can be the best in the things they *can* do.

I hope that in the future, people will better understand the term 'spectrum', and continue to respect the differences *and* similarities we all share in how we experience the world.



Rebecca Burgess is a freelance comic artist and illustrator living in the UK. She has an interest in history and folk songs that runs through alot of her work. Her obsession with comics runs into her spare time, where she draws two webcomics! Rebecca also likes to play video games, explore the countryside and dress like a time traveler!

Rebecca's tumblr where this comic was originally posted is here: [theoraah.tumblr.com](https://theoraah.tumblr.com)