



Sue Larkey

LESSON 1

Summary



Dean Beadle

- 1. Remember the equation: Autism + Environment = Outcome**
Focus on changing the environment, not the student
- 2. Shift perspective from “won’t” to “can’t”**
Avoid labeling executive functioning difficulties as laziness
- 3. Understand executive functioning as the brain’s ‘admin team’**
Consider how this impacts planning, organisation and task completion.
- 4. Recognise masking behaviours, especially in autistic girls**
Look for subtle signs of anxiety or distress.
- 5. Understand that calm behaviour doesn’t always mean lack of anxiety**
Be aware of potential delayed stress reactions.
- 6. Consider how school environments might be ‘toxic’ for some students**
Look for ways to make the classroom more inclusive.
- 7. Reframe ‘school refusal’ as an indicator of environmental mismatch.**
Focus on adapting the environment rather than forcing attendance.
- 8. Recognise the safety and familiarity needs of autistic students**
Consider how to make new activities feel safe as familiar ones.



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LESSON 2

Summary



Dean Beadle

- 1. Understand executive functioning as the brain's "admin team"**
Recognise its role in planning, organisation, and task completion.
- 2. Recognise the impact of autistic inertia on daily tasks**
Understand it affects both starting and stopping activities.
- 3. Be aware of the high energy cost of everyday tasks for autistic individuals**
Recognise that seemingly simple tasks can be overwhelming.
- 4. Consider the overlap between autism and ADHD in executive functioning**
Be mindful of how this might compound executive functioning challenges.
- 5. Provide visual supports and written instructions**
Reduce reliance on verbal instructions alone.
- 6. Offer alternatives for communication**
Consider emails or voice notes as less stressful options.
- 7. Allow extra time for transitions between activities**
Accommodate the challenges of shifting between tasks.
- 8. Be mindful of how anticipation of tasks can be paralysing**
Recognise that thinking about a task can be as exhausting as doing it.
- 9. Understand that executive functioning abilities can fluctuate**
Don't assume that success one day means equal ability every day.
- 10. Provide clear task completion criteria**
Help prevent perfectionism and reduce anxiety about expectations.
- 10. Consider implementing "safe spaces" or communication protocols**
Create opportunities for open communication without fear of judgment.



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LESSON 3

Summary



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1. Understand that autistic individuals may have a different perception of time

Be aware that concepts like "5 minutes" can be abstract and challenging

2. Recognise the challenges of transitioning between "home mode" and "school mode"

Consider strategies to help bridge these environments

3. Be mindful of the impact of homework on executive functioning

Understand the multiple steps and planning required for homework completion

4. Recognise the concept of "modes" and the difficulty in shifting between them

Plan for smoother transitions between different activities or environments

5. Understand the challenges of task sequencing for autistic individuals

Be aware that difficulty with one task can impact the entire sequence

6. Consider implementing a "one day at a time" approach for planning

Recognise that planning too far ahead can be overwhelming

7. Use visual timers to help make abstract time concepts more concrete

Implement strategies to show time passing during tasks

8. Create consistent routines for transitioning between home and school activities

Help reduce anxiety associated with environmental changes.

9. Be aware of how new or uncertain tasks can dominate thoughts.

Provide clear information and support for upcoming changes or new activities.

10. Understand that autistic individuals may struggle with planning ahead

Offer support and strategies for breaking down future tasks.



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LESSON 4

Summary



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- 1. Implement the use of large water bottles with time markers.**
Reduce the need for multiple trips and aid in hydration tracking.
- 2. Consider keeping essential items (e.g. toothbrush or pen) in easily accessible places.**
Simplify routines by reducing the number of steps required.
- 3. Establish a consistent storage system for belongings.**
Create predictable routines for finding and organising items.
- 4. Lay out clothes in order of dressing the night before.**
Reduce decision-making and planning in the morning.
- 5. Create visual guides for daily routines.**
Use step-by-step images to support independence in tasks.
- 6. Implement strategies to reduce unnecessary planning.**
Consider what stages of tasks can be skipped or simplified.
- 7. Use lists to make tasks tangible and manageable.**
Break down activities into smaller, achievable steps.
- 8. Utilise reminder apps and alarms on phones.**
Support memory and time management with technology.
- 9. Provide information through multiple channels (e.g. voice notes, written notes).**
Accommodate different processing styles and reduce reliance on memory.
- 10. Encourage the use of "could" instead of "should" language.**
Reduce pressure and promote a more flexible approach to tasks.
- 11. Recognise the importance of recovery time and "power saving mode"**
Understand that apparent inactivity may be necessary preparation or recovery.



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LESSON 5

Summary



Dean Beadle

- 1. Model executive functioning strategies for students.**
Demonstrate how to manage tasks, time, and organisation.
- 2. Practice co-regulation techniques.**
Offer calm, reassuring support during challenging moments.
- 3. Recognise students' efforts in executive functioning.**
Acknowledge progress and improvements, no matter how small.
- 4. Understand that metacognition is not fully developed until adulthood.**
Adjust expectations for younger students' self-reflection abilities.
- 5. Implement games and activities that practice executive function skills**
Use engaging methods to develop planning and organisation skills.
- 6. Provide clear, specific task requirements.**
Define what "good enough" looks like to prevent perfectionism
- 7. Use Visuals to break tasks into smaller, manageable chunks**
Use visual aids to separate tasks and reduce overwhelm.
- 8. Implement time framing for tasks.**
Use visual timers or progress bars to show time passing.
- 9. Create online resources for homework information.**
Provide accessible reminders of assignments and due dates.
- 10. Allow students to take photos as memory aids.**
Support recall of important information or instructions.
- 11. Use colour-coding systems for different subjects or task types.**
Aid in organisation and recall of information.
- 12. Implement visual supports throughout the classroom**
Use relevant visuals to reinforce key concepts and instructions.
- 13. Consider how classroom design impacts focus and attention.**
Minimise visual distractions around key learning areas.



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LESSON 6

Summary



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- 1. Understand autistic inertia as difficulty in changing states.**
Recognise challenges in both starting and stopping tasks.
- 2. Implement the "All you have to do is..." approach.**
Break down overwhelming tasks into smaller, manageable steps.
- 3. Identify what "freezes" individuals and plan around it.**
Develop strategies to work through or avoid common sticking points.
- 4. Lay out clothes in order of dressing the night before.**
Reduce decision-making and planning in the morning.
- 5. Allow flexibility in when tasks are completed.**
Recognise and accommodate individual work patterns and energy levels.
- 6. Start the day or lesson with low-demand tasks.**
Build confidence and momentum with achievable activities.
- 7. Be clear and specific about task requirements.**
Reduce anxiety by providing detailed expectations.
- 8. Define what "good enough" looks like for tasks.**
Prevent perfectionism by clarifying acceptable completion standards.
- 9. Celebrate small wins and progress.**
Acknowledge efforts and achievements, not just final outcomes.
- 10. Implement the "power of nope."**
Allow students to temporarily opt-out of overwhelming tasks
- 11. Remember "power saving mode" can be effective tool**
Understand that apparent inactivity may be necessary preparation or recovery.
- 12. Validate and believe students' experiences of inertia.**
Offer support and understanding, even if you don't fully comprehend their struggle.
- 13. Consider implementing "safe spaces" or communication protocols.**
Create opportunities for open communication about struggles without fear of judgment.



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LESSON 7

Summary



Dean Beadle

1. Recognise the link between executive functioning and emotional regulation

Understand how executive function challenges can impact emotional control.

2. Implement safe spaces in educational settings.

Create designated areas where students can retreat and self-regulate.

3. Consider using recording devices in safe spaces.

Allow students to express concerns without immediate face-to-face interaction.

4. Implement "SafeSpeak" or similar communication protocols.

Establish clear guidelines for sharing concerns without fear of consequences.

5. Use visual mapping techniques.

Help students process and validate their concerns through visual representation.

6. Be mindful of object permanence issues.

Understand how "out of sight, out of mind" can increase anxiety for some students.

7. Be clear and specific about task requirements.

Reduce anxiety by providing detailed expectations.

8. Provide clear information about changes or absences.

Reduce anxiety by explaining when things or people will return.

9. Offer alternatives to eye contact during conversations.

Reduce sensory overload and increase comfort in communication.

10. Recognise that autistic brains may process more information at rest.

Understand the increased cognitive load in everyday situations.

11. Implement strategies to reduce sensory overload in classrooms.

Consider lighting, sound, and visual stimuli in the learning environment.

12. Encourage self-advocacy skills.

Teach students to recognise and communicate their needs effectively.

13. Foster a classroom culture that values neurodiversity.

Celebrate different thinking styles and problem-solving approaches.