

## **Ways to Control Your Meltdowns**

Most people can see a cause and effect for their feelings. For example, when a person is angry, he/she can tell you just what caused the angry feelings.

But people with Asperger Syndrome or other Autism Spectrum Disorders typically do not see a cause and effect for their feelings, particularly their anger, and may commonly have meltdowns that no one sees coming. It is believed that stress and pressures just build-up in some people without them being aware of these feelings. Then some trigger which may not be apparent causes an “explosion,” which typically seems out of proportion to the situation.

One way to avoid these explosive episodes is to help people learn to deal with stress on a daily basis, rather than let it build up. This checklist is designed to be a daily reminder of the most appropriate ways that a person can reduce stress and the build-up of strong emotions.

Other relevant forms include:

*Are You Explosive At School?*

*Are You Explosive At Work?*

*What Triggers Your Explosive Behavior?*

# **Ways to Control Your Meltdowns**

Do you ever have meltdowns where your feelings “explode” and seem totally out of control? Sometimes people who have these feelings say they aren’t even sure what caused them, and after a meltdown they are embarrassed and confused about their behavior.

You can control your explosions, however, if you do just a few simple things each day to reduce the build-up of stress. Stress builds up like pumping air into a balloon, but if you let a little out each day, you won’t get to the point where you “pop.”

Make copies of this form and check off things you do each day to reduce your stress.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I took a break (a walk, some deep breaths, etc.) when I felt pressured.

\_\_\_\_ I excused myself from a situation which was upsetting me.

\_\_\_\_ I started to feel upset, and made positive statements myself which helped me calm down (e.g. “If \_\_\_\_ I keep my cool, I will feel better soon”).

\_\_\_\_ I exercised for at least 20 minutes.

\_\_\_\_ I relaxed by deep breathing, mediating, yoga, or listening to quiet music.

\_\_\_\_ I made sure I got enough sleep.

\_\_\_\_ I limited my amount of caffeine from coffee or sodas.

\_\_\_\_ I spent time doing activities which interest and relax me.

\_\_\_\_ I talked to someone about my day and how things went.

\_\_\_\_ I kept a mood diary of how I felt during the day.

\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_