

Getting Caught in the Confusion Pressure Trap

By Katherine Gallagher

The biggest concern I have had has been when I allowed myself to feel pressured to be a certain way or do things a certain way. Because of another person's attitude. That is what I have always embraced about being autistic and being a bit different. I value this aspect of myself, but it can be confusing or difficult to understand by a family member/friend or college. One example that I can explain a bit better is why I embark on something or decide not to do it.

The other day when I casually mentioned to my friend that I would like to go with her to look for gardening supplies, she said, "Katherine, why don't you get a plot somewhere in the city to do vegetable gardening?" I understood her idea behind this, but I have always preferred flowers and not vegetables. I tried to defend my stance, saying that was not something I wanted to do by explaining why, then she abruptly said, "Katherine, that is not what I meant." When someone acknowledges me that way, I find it offensive. They are outright saying I was confused by not understanding them. I think it does not help to interact with autistics like this because for me I end up offended. Autistics often feel confused enough with communicating or lack thereof. Sometimes I feel a need to wear a sign on my forehead that says, please forgive me, I am autistic, or please think twice before you make that comment to me. If I am too self-centered to expect this, then maybe I should not be. But I have seen that the ways we communicate may bring more disharmony and conflict by the words we choose. Withholding everything from someone is not good either. I can see the challenges that autistics face with communication because it is something I experience often. As an autistic, I am often aware of how I communicate in ways that may fall short of the neurotypical standards. I am often left feeling confused, hurt, and offended when someone else is assertive with me but does not allow enough time for me to process it in case I decide to be assertive back. This is where there is an ongoing lack of understanding between autistics versus neurotypicals. If I had said what my friend did about someone not understanding me, I would feel extremely bad or guilty for pointing out their shortcomings. But with neurotypicals, it is a common theme to interact this way without withholding anything. I guess because of a need to correct someone and it is their standard and not mine. As an autistic, I do not feel a need to go around correcting everyone about things unless it relates to autism. I do not think the same way. We all need to remember kindness and tolerance with people. It should be at the forefront of our minds while in conversations.

I created this [Website](#) to express my unique autism perceptions. I share my insights and resources here as a person with lived experience. I encourage you to read my [About Me](#) and [Portfolio](#) pages. Or the [What is Autism](#) page for a more in-depth definition.

Autism is very unique and complex. Each person experiences autism differently. My opinions and information are expressions about myself and my experiences. Perception means the ability to see things. It is the ability to become aware of something through the senses. Autism has given me a unique reality and open mind. I believe it is important for others to have their own unique perceptions as individuals on the autism spectrum.

Visit Katherine's Website at <https://spectrumexpressions.news.blog/>

