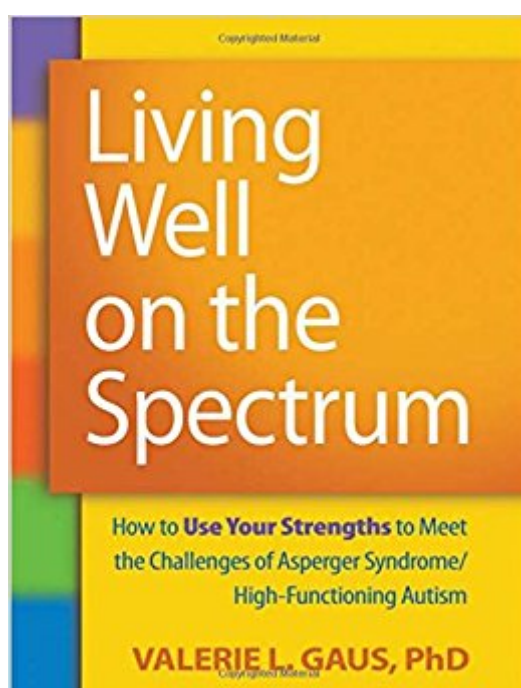


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# Living Well On The Spectrum: How To Use Your Strengths To Meet The Challenges Of Asperger Syndrome/High-Functioning Autism



## Synopsis

Navigating the "neurotypical" world with Asperger syndrome or high-functioning autism (AS/HFA) can be extremely stressful. But by understanding the specific ways your brain works differently--and how to tap into your personal strengths--you can greatly enhance your well-being. In this wise and practical book, experienced therapist Valerie L. Gaus helps you identify goals that will make your life better and take concrete steps to achieve them. Grounded in psychological science, the techniques in this book help you:

- Learn the unspoken rules of social situations.
- Improve your communication skills.
- Get organized at home and at work.
- Manage anxiety and depression.
- Strengthen your relationships with family and friends.
- Live more successfully on your own or with others.

A wealth of stories, questionnaires, worksheets, and concrete examples help you find personalized solutions to problems you are likely to encounter. You can download and print additional copies of the worksheets for repeated use. Finally, a compassionate, knowledgeable, positive guide to living well on the spectrum.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"As an Aspie, I found this an excellent and readable guide. The book gives readers a better understanding of their social, intellectual, and physical strengths and weaknesses, and provides strategies for improving communication and social skills. It includes helpful techniques for choosing goals and setting course toward them. Kudos to Dr. Gaus for creating this manual--I hope it will be much read."--Eric Schissel, Ithaca, New York

"Dr. Gaus presents her ideas clearly and

effectively and makes terrific use of practical examples. She offers great ideas to help those on the spectrum decrease stress and maximize their progress toward life goals by understanding, fully utilizing, and celebrating their special qualities."--Gary B. Mesibov, PhD, coauthor of *Understanding Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism* "A marvelous book with extremely helpful and practical advice. This book will be of tremendous help to individuals with AS/HFA."--Fred R. Volkmar, MD, coauthor of *A Practical Guide to Autism*; Child Study Center, Yale University "Valerie Gaus offers readers on the autism spectrum a positive, powerful plan for living life to the fullest. Presenting autism as a different rather than a disordered way of being, Dr. Gaus personally guides readers toward self-discovery and then shows practical ways to address challenges. As a person on the spectrum, I find Dr. Gaus's examples, ideas, and approaches ring true with my own life experiences....More than just a 'must read'; this book is a 'must experience' for everyone on the autism spectrum, as well as those who support them."--from the Foreword by Stephen Shore, author of *Beyond the Wall: Personal Experiences with Autism and Asperger Syndrome* "On a daily basis, adults on the spectrum face stressful, frustrating, and sometimes debilitating roadblocks that most neurotypical individuals don't appreciate or understand. Author Valerie Gaus, a psychologist who has been immersed in working with spectrum adults for more than 15 years, 'gets it.' Her newest book...is a straight-talking roadmap that will provide both wind and rudder to help adults navigate daily life and meet long-term goals. Filled with practical strategies to minimize stress and maximize progress toward individual goals, this book exudes an unwavering strength-based, can-do attitude. Dr. Gaus reinterprets what could be considered deficits and weaknesses of AS/HFA into distinctive strengths that can be used to one's advantage throughout life. She infuses this attitude with candor and sensitivity...She combines an uncanny understanding of the challenges ASD presents with an array of practical, problem-solving tactics. What's different about this book is the methodical, concrete way she helps the spectrum adult assess his or her current way of thinking and functioning, recognize the patterns that are interfering with personal and professional success, and then create a customized step-by-step personal solution plan. *Living Well* is a powerful guide for achieving well-being in all areas of life." (Autism Asperger's Digest 2011-03-17)"Dr. Gaus presents her ideas clearly and effectively and makes terrific use of practical examples. She offers great ideas to help those on the spectrum decrease stress and maximize their progress toward life goals by understanding, fully utilizing, and celebrating their special qualities. -Gary B. Mesibov, PhD, coauthor of *Understanding Asperger Syndrome and High-Functioning Autism* (Functioning Autism 2011-03-17)"Gaus directly targets what adults and young adults with AS/HFA struggle with daily. Worksheets written in

plain language will assist readers in discovering problem areas, strengths, goals, and more; recommended for ASD patients and their families." (Library Journal 2011-03-03)"Dr. Valerie L. Gaus delivers on her intent to make a user-friendly guidebook to assist with the challenges common to individuals on the autism spectrum. She directs the reader to turn such challenges into accompanying strengths in order to cope with activities of daily living....This book can be described as practical. While it is best used with high-functioning older adolescent and young adult populations, it is very easy to read and can be assigned as homework for the client to work through on his or her own. Accompanying graphics, parallel language structure, and organization reinforce concepts throughout the book....A valuable resource. If used as a reference, especially the first section can be extremely helpful in better understanding, operationalizing, and reframing the deficit areas often associated with individuals on the spectrum." (School Social Work Journal 2013-10-16) "If I was asked to define Living Well on the Spectrum in one word, the first one that comes to mind is: Pragmatic. Unlike some other books and material available, this book specifically address and opens up a dialogue on the issue of quality of life and the difference between being alive and living. The pragmatic approach within this book is commendable and most certainly one that is off the beaten path." (Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders 2014-01-16)

Valerie L. Gaus, PhD, is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Long Island, New York, where she lives with her husband and two children. With more than 15 years of experience providing mental health services to people with autism spectrum disorders, Dr. Gaus serves on the advisory board of the Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism Association and has lectured internationally on Asperger syndrome and related topics. She is the author of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Adult Asperger Syndrome, a bestselling book for therapists.

I got this specifically for the second half of the book, life organization skills. The steps provided can be a bit cumbersome, and I don't expect everyone to physically write down these steps and follow through every time... However, getting into the practice of these thinking styles, can really help someone who's on the spectrum cope with the ever-changing environment which is life. People on the spectrum often suffer from poor organization and prioritization skills. This book can help address that, and, it also has some solid information about the disorder it's self.

My ASD daughter loves this book. Should would recommend this to other adult ASD individuals.

The main idea of the book is that most problem we have is based on our thinking, social, emotional, and sensory/movement differences. Part 1 of the book describes ASD differences, and part 2 applies the problem solving skill to areas of your life (Chapter 12=dating, chapter 8=work, Chapter 10= community...) . I also liked the tables that summarize how our thinking, social, emotional, and sensory/movement differences affect each aspect in every chapter. I regularly re-read areas that I still have problem.

this workbook was purchased to use for coaching young adults with Asperger's syndrome. It has been very useful and we highly recommend it. . We ordered the therapists book first, by mistake. That was interesting but not as practical as the workbook. We've contacted the author to see if we can get reprints to use.

I like how specific this book is about the cactus challenges a person with ASD can have. The book is very systematically organized... perfectly written for a person with ASD! I really like the detailed chart explanations! Thank you for writing this book!

This is a very useful tool for therapists and their clients. It can be used with other diagnosis as well. It is working well with my older teen clients as well as my adult clients on the spectrum. It is well worth the price. I highly recommend it.

This has been a very insightful and helpful book for me as an adult with autism trying to live well on the spectrum. I would recommend it!

Interactive book on how to identify and deal with Aspergers issues.

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