

I Need to Scream

A neurodivergent space for feelings, sensations and words that need somewhere to go.

Sometimes the nervous system reaches a point where polite words, tidy explanations and 'coping well' are no longer available. You may feel like shouting, crying, running, hiding, pushing everything away or simply going silent. This resource is not asking you to make those reactions neat. It gives them somewhere to exist.

Before you begin

Use this however your brain needs. Type, write, draw, scribble, repeat one word, leave sections blank or return later. You do not need to justify the size of your reaction.

Right now I feel...

If I could shout one thing...

Permission to be unfiltered

Your reaction may be intense without being wrong. Overload can build through sensory input, demands, uncertainty, masking, social effort, interruption, injustice or too many small things arriving at once.

Get It Out

No editing. No making it sound reasonable. Start with what is actually there.

What is too much right now?

What do you wish you could say - but are holding in?

What keeps looping in your mind?

The completely uncensored version

My Body Is Reacting

Your body may notice overload before your thinking brain can explain it.

Possible signs include: tight jaw, clenched teeth, racing heart, chest pressure, shallow breathing, nausea, stomach pain, headache, hot skin, cold hands, shaking, buzzing, restless legs, heavy limbs, pain, dizziness, needing to pace, needing to hide, wanting to escape, being unable to speak, crying or going numb.

Where do I feel it?

What is my body trying to do?

If my body could speak, it would say...

Intensity and change

How strong is it from 0-10? Has it been building slowly, arrived suddenly, or changed after something happened? There is no correct number.

What Is Around Me?

Overload is often relational, sensory or environmental - not simply 'inside' you.

The environment

Noise, light, smells, temperature, clutter, movement, crowds, clothing, touch, screens, travel, competing voices.

A person or interaction

Tone, pressure, criticism, misunderstanding, conflict, being watched, interrupted, controlled or not believed.

Demands and expectations

What are you being asked to do, decide, explain, tolerate, change or complete? Which part feels impossible or too much today?

What changed just before this?

Consider a plan changing, interruption, rejection, uncertainty, hunger, tiredness, pain, masking, misunderstanding, loss of control or several small things stacking up.

What Do I Need Right Now?

Not 'what should I do?' - what would reduce the load?

Possibilities: less talking; lower light; headphones; leave the room; movement; pressure; familiar music; a safe person nearby; nobody touching me; clear information; a plan; food or drink; warmth; cool air; cancel a demand; stop answering messages; cry; pace; sit on the floor; be alone; not be alone; sleep; a familiar object; more time; or 'I don't know yet'.

What needs to STOP?

What needs to CHANGE?

What would HELP?

After the Scream

Understanding can come later. Expression can come first.

A message from Maggie

You do not have to turn a huge feeling into a perfectly worded explanation before it deserves space. Sometimes the first useful thing is simply recognising: this is too much for me right now. Your body may be communicating overload, fear, frustration, exhaustion, sensory pain or the cost of holding yourself together. Give yourself permission to notice before you demand that you solve it. When you are ready, these pages can help you identify patterns and communicate what needs to change.

What I noticed about myself

A sentence I could share with someone

For example: 'I am overloaded and I need less talking right now.' Use your own words - or no words.

Further reading

- National Autistic Society - sensory differences, meltdowns and shutdowns.
- Kapp, S. K. (ed.) (2020). Autistic Community and the Neurodiversity Movement.
- Price, D. (2022). Unmasking Autism.
- Brown, B. (2021). Atlas of the Heart.

For reflection and support, not diagnosis or emergency care.

If you are in immediate danger or unable to keep yourself safe, seek urgent local support.