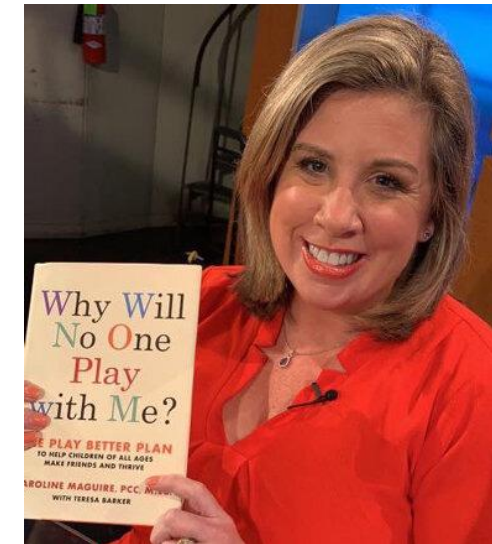


Small Talk 101 for Adults with ADHD

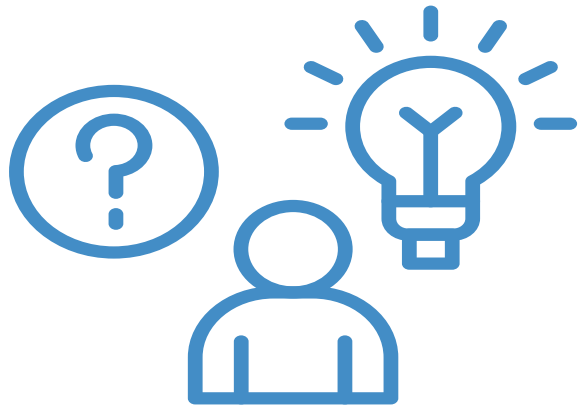


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Why Is Small Talk a Struggle

- Boredom
- We prefer big talk – deep talk
- Staying present
- Listening
- Knowing when its our turn to speak
- Haunted by rumination from the past

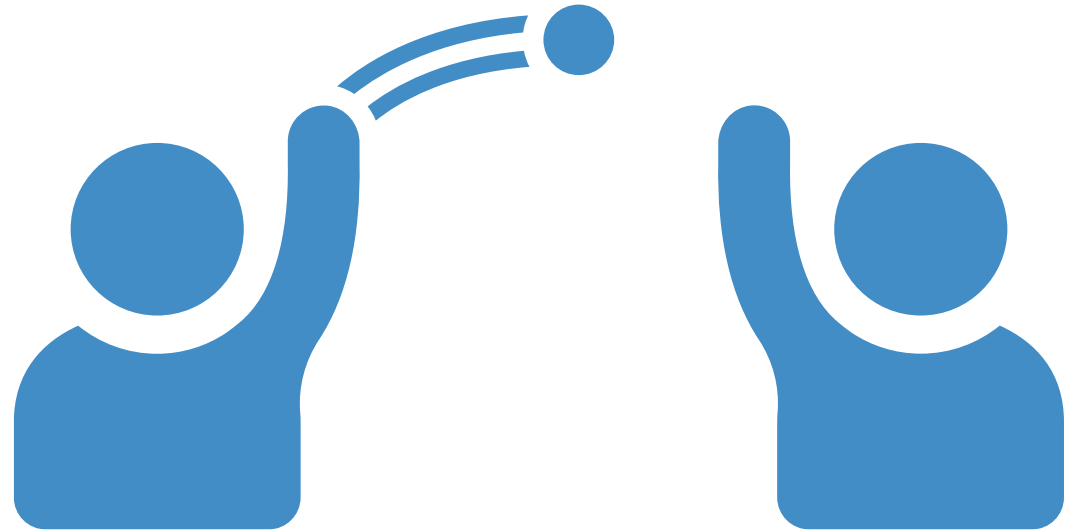


Harness Your Power of Curiosity

- Curiosity is often a Neurodivergent superpower
- What strengths do you bring to conversation
- Neuroaffirming conversation
- We friend differently
- No longer stop infodumping
- Teaching you a skill to help

Conversation is Reciprocity

Game of catch – throw back and forth





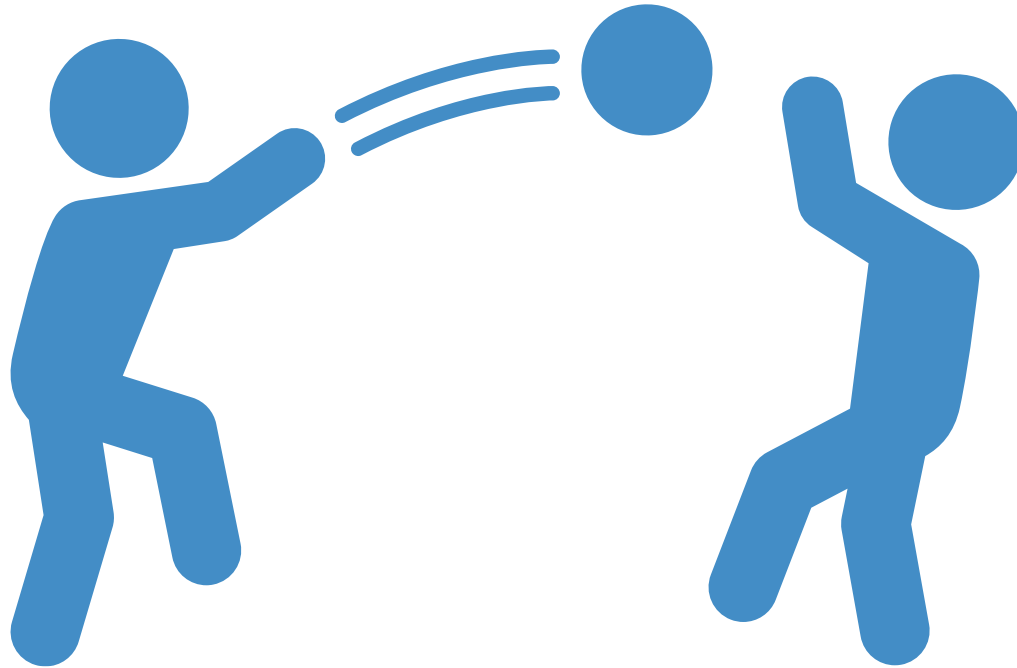
Big Potential For Small Talk

- Identifying common ground
- Cultivating Curiosity
- Nurture relationships
- Reducing Social Anxiety
- Reinforcing Cues
- Spotting the spark

Step 1

Because greetings are generally *exchanged* between two or more people, think in terms of “playing catch.”

The Greeting



Step 2

The Gift



Often, to encourage a conversation to move beyond a simple greeting, conversational partners will offer one another a “gift:”

- a compliment
- an observation
- a piece of relevant information
- or a polite question

These small shows of kindness demonstrate to your partner your appreciation of their presence

Step 3

The Starter



- One common conversation “starter” is an *open-ended question*.
- An open-ended question is any question that invites a deeper response than a one-word answer can provide.
- Open-ended questions often begin with phrases like:

What do you think about—?

How do you know _____?

What can you tell me about_____?

Conversation Starters



- How is your day going?
- Do you like *(insert work, situation, activity, interest, world event)*?
- How was that *(insert situation)*?
- What was that like?
- Hey, I noticed *(insert something you noticed that is public and not going to lead them to feel weird)*.

Alternative conversation starters

- Ask their opinion
- Pay them a compliment
- Ask for information. A good way to start a conversation is to ask for information from the person you want to talk to....

Questions to Help with Any Conversation



Have three questions in your back pocket
(Dancing with the Stars, sports teams, latest news)

- Have you seen this current episode of *(insert show)*?
- What do you think about the latest *(insert topic)*?
- What are they doing for the weekend?

Out of the Box Conversation Starters



I am a foodie. What is your favorite restaurant here?

What is your favorite way to spend a day off?

What is your favorite TV series of all time?

What is on your bucket list and why?

If money were no object, what would you do?

What are the top three lessons you would teach your younger self?

If you could go back, what is a decision you would change and how would it impact your life?

What do you do in your free time?

Connector Topics



A topic everyone wants to talk about



Grease the wheels of social chat



Olympics



Big announcement at work



Context can drive these questions

Step 4

In games like ping pong, tennis, and volleyball, “the volley” is the part of the game when the players take turns sending the ball back and forth between them. A conversational volley is where the participants take turns listening, responding, and adding to the conversation. There are three parts to a conversational volley:

The Volley (Serve, Receive, and Return)



Serving – When the first speaker makes a comment that sets their partner up for a response.

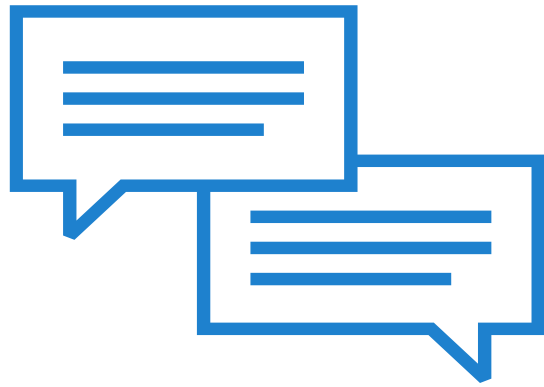
Receiving – When the non-speaking partner listens to the speaker with the goal of understanding, considering, and responding.

Returning — When the second speaker responds to the first speaker, after which the first speaker can respond to the return, or one or the other can serve again.



Keep the Conversation Going

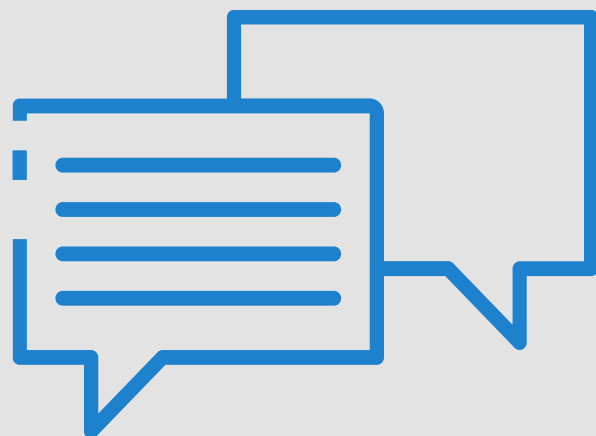
- Be curious, but don't interrogate
- Ask thoughtful questions
"Oh, I never heard of that, I would love to know more."
- Build on the last comment



Conversational Threading

Tik Tok creator and communications expert, Vinh Giang, talks about the benefit of conversation threading saying, your response should have *“multiple threads to latch onto. We can take this conversation in many directions now - response with multiple threads in them.”*

Threading Example



Unthreaded response is: “Boston”

Using Threading you would say,

“I am from Cape Cod originally. It’s a summer place people know, but it’s actually so different in the winter. I found that, although I love it there in the summer, I like the action of the city, the theater and being able to go to a game anytime I like.”

This response allows the listener to dive deeper into several topics and it deepens the conversation, so you get to know each other better.

Steering the Conversation

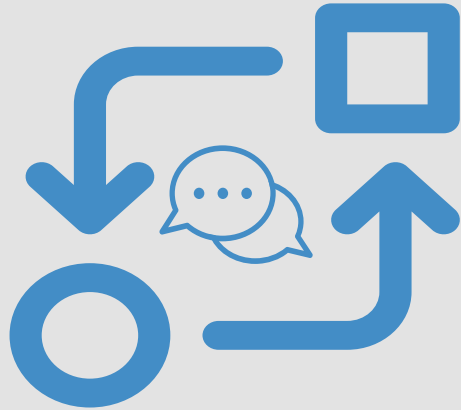
Guide or nudge people toward topics that flow and are robust.

- Instead of saying *“How’s the weather”*
- Steer *“I am a foodie; I love to go to dine outdoors.”*

Shift the
Conversation
When You Are
Bored



Phrases to Steer the Conversation in a Direction You Desire



"Speaking of that, have you ever considered...?"

"That reminds me of... Can we talk about that?"

"I'm curious about your thoughts on..."

"I wanted to ask you about..."

"Have you heard about...?"

"It's interesting how... What do you think about...?"

"By the way, I read something recently about..."

"I'd love to get your opinion on..."

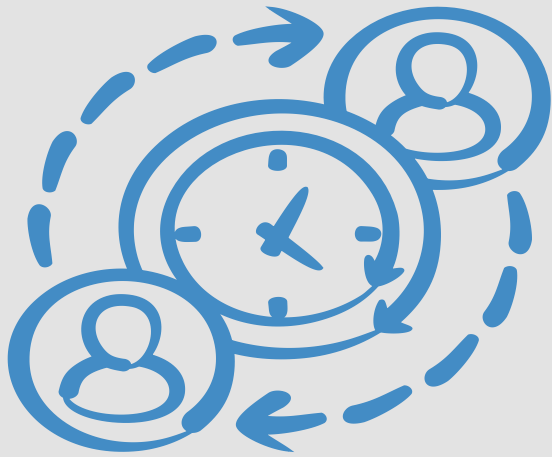
How Do I Remember What I Want to Say ?

Listening



- Reflect back
- Fold your finders and try to remember the topic
- Ask someone to remind you of your point

Shift the Conversation When You Are Bored



- We can change the conversation when you are bored and when you want to talk about a special interest.
“Sorry, that was a lot. I just love to talk about this.”
“I just want to share what I learned.”
- Flag the subject by saying,
“That reminded me of this other topic.”
“Hey, there is an off topic I wanted to share.”

Add Supportive Comments to Encourage Reciprocity



- Supportive Comments that indicate you are listening and interested. They encourage people to keep speaking:
“I hear ya.” “Uh-huh.” “Oh, wow.” “Mmm.”
“Whew.” “Oh, wow, that is tough.”
- Supportive comments that indicate that you understand and relate to their emotion:
“Oh, how is that?” “That must be hard.” “You are kidding, what next?” “No way!”

Step 5

The Conclusion (Exit)



If you recognize that the conversation is drawing to a close, you might use a stock conclusive phrase such as:

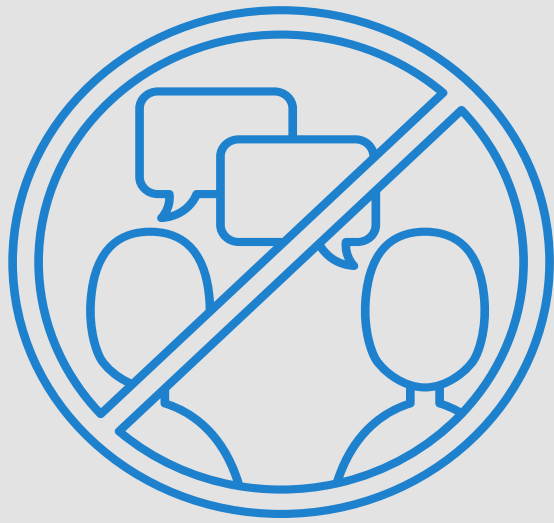
“I will catch you later,” or “Good chat. Until next time!”

“I’ve got to get back to work, but I look forward to hearing how things turn out for you.”

“Glad to hear you are doing well. Let’s connect again soon.”

“I’m so sorry for being abrupt, but I do have to run. Hope to see you again when we have more time!”

How to Tell if the Conversation is Over



How to tell if a conversation is over:

If someone is...

- Trailing off and adding or ending conversation
- Putting their foot pointing to the door
- Looking away
- Thinking and pausing for more than a few beats
- Giving an excuse they have to be somewhere
- Looking to the door
- They stop adding to the conversation

How Do You Know When the Conversation is Over



There are a few signals you can look for to indicate it may be time to end your conversation. For example, your partner might be:

- Responding briefly, without adding information.
- Changing their position by orienting their body away from you.
- Looking away or making eye contact with others.
- Pausing before responding.
- Mentioning somewhere else they need to be, or someone they are hoping to speak to.
- Using conclusive language such as, *“It’s been great talking to you”* or *“So nice running into you.”*

Phrases to Exit a Conversation



"It's been so great to see you, talk to you, but we have to run."

"I will catch you later."

"Been good talking to you."

"I will see you tomorrow."

"Well, nice to see you."

"Good chat. Until next time."

Phrases to Exit a Conversation



"I've got to get back to work, but I look forward to hearing how things turn out for you."

"Glad to hear you are doing well. Let's connect again soon."

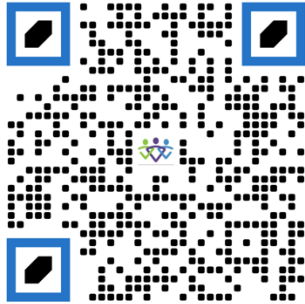
"Hey, this was great to chat with you. I'd love to meet up sometime."

"Excuse me for being abrupt, but I have to go."

"It's been lovely to chat, but I need.."

"Forgive me for being abrupt."

SCAN ME



FREE

GIFT



Caroline
Maguire

CONNECTION MATTERS

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