Autism-Good-Feeling Questionnaire

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Background:

The **Autism-Good-Feeling-Questionnaire** is an informal assessment tool. It's aim is to give educators, caretakers and other professionals ideas to increase the well-being of people with an autism spectrum disorder. The idea of well-being as an important goal in treatment, education and interventions, stems from the "Quality of Life" framework as developed by Robert Shalock (1997[1]). The questions in this questionnaire were originally part of the Autism-stress Questionnaire (Vermeulen, 2007) but have been changed into items assessing positive feelings instead of stress, according to the principles of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)[2]. A more detailed description of the background of the **Autism-Good-Feeling-Questionnaire** can be found in the article "The practice of promoting happiness in autism" (Vermeulen, 2014) of the Good Autism Practice special issue *Autism, happiness and wellbeing*[3].

Use:

The Autism-Good-Feeling-Questionnaire aims to explore what creates positive feelings in a person with autism. The questionnaire explores different factors in several areas: sensory experiences, social interaction, communication, activities, transitions, stereotyped activities and rituals. Obviously, a questionnaire can never cover all possible items that give raise to positive feelings. The questionnaire is therefore primarily intended to start a more detailed assessment of the emotional well-being of a person with autism.

Depending on the age, the developmental level, the language abilities and the current functioning of the person you can use the questionnaire in different ways:

- You let the person with autism fill in the questionnaire and both of you discuss it afterwards;
- You fill in the questionnaire together with the person;
- You have the questionnaire filled in by people who know the person with autism very well, such as parents, siblings, personal assistants, caretakers.

Items that cannot be scored should encourage further exploration, observation and interviews.

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[1] Schalock, RL (Ed.). (1997) *Quality of life:. Vol. II. Application to persons with disabilities* Washington, *DC.* American Association on Mental Retardation.

[2] Seligman, M. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive Psychology:. An Introduction *American Psychologist, 55* (1), 5-14.

[3] Vermeulen, P. (2014). The practice of promoting happiness in autism – in: Jones, G. & Hurley, E. (Eds), *Good Autism Practice: Autism, happiness and wellbeing*. (pp. 8-17). Birmingham: BILD Publications.

User license:

This questionnaire can be copied and distributed without limits, but only for direct use in the support of people with autism.

Using the questionnaire in publications, presentations, lectures and workshops is **<u>NOT</u>** permitted without prior written consent of the author and of Autism Centraal. This restriction also applies to customized versions and translations of this questionnaire. Also the name "Autism-Good Feeling-Questionnaire" is protected by copyrights.

Disclaimer:

The use of the questionnaire is entirely at the expense and risk of the user. The author nor Autism Centraal accept any liability for the consequences of improper, unethical or incompetent use of the questionnaire. A good use of the questionnaire requires thorough knowledge of the autistic style of information processing.

Autism Good Feeling Questionnaire

The questionnaire contains items referring to all sorts of things that can give a person a good feeling. Obviously, each person is different. What gives a good feeling to one person, can be very unpleasant for another person.
Below, you can indicate the extent to which things or events give you a good feeling. For each category of items, there is place to add things that are not mentioned in the list.

Each 'item' can be scored as follows:

> **3: This gives me a good feeling** - I enjoy this very much
> **2: This gives me a good feeling** – I enjoy this
> **1: This gives me a little bit of good feeling** - I enjoy this a little
> **0: This does not give me a good feeling** – I don't enjoy this in particular (neutral, I feel nothing) or I even find this unpleasant
> **?**: **I do not know if this gives me a good feeling**

Obviously this list is not exhaustive. Therefore, there is room left to add things that make you feel good or that you enjoy.

Sensory aspects

	3	2	1	0		?
Certain light, namely: .:						
Certain sounds, namely: .:						
A certain kind of voice, namely: .:						
Silence						
Certain smells, namely: .:						
Certain tactile stimuli, namely: .:						
Being touched						
Being cuddled						
Being kissed						
Heat						
Cold						
Certain foods, namely: .:						
Certain beverages, namely:						
Certain items that I like to touch, namely: .:						
Certain weather conditions (please specify:…………………………)						
A fleece blanket around me						

Social aspects

	3	2	1	0		?
The proximity of certain people, namely:						
Seeing certain people, namely: .:						
When someone starts a conversation with me						
When someone asks me about my hobbies / interests						
Being invited to visit someone						
Someone eating or drinking with me						
Playing a game with someone (what game?)						
Someone helping me with a difficult task						
Parties						
Travelling together with someone						
Being alone						
Hustle and bustle of a group of people						
When there are few people in the same room as me						
Group activity (eg. Sports), namely: .:						
Getting a "like it" on Facebook or other social media						
Receiving a compliment						
Being online on Facebook (or other social media)						

Communication

	3	2	1	0		?
Being called						
Being looked at - eye contact						
When people ask me how I am doing						
When someone asks me about my hobby / passion						
Getting a pat						
Someone winking at me						
Jokes and humour (what kind of?)						
When I get time to think of an answer to a question						
Written communication						
Communication via email / Facebook etc.						
A phone call						
Talking about my feelings						
Talking about my favourite subject (s), namely::						
Clear instructions and assignments						
When things are visualized						
When I get enough time to say what I want to say						
Completing questionnaires like this one ...						

Changes - transitions

	3	2	1	0		?
When changes are announced well in advance						
When changes are announced shortly in advance						
If changes are not announced						
New activities						
New people						
New places						
Getting Up						
Going to school / work						
Breaks						
Going home						
Going to sleep						
Being able to complete a task or activity						
Getting enough time for difficult transitions / changes						
When others adhere to agreements made						
When activities start and stop on time						
When I get a clear explanation about the change						
When everything is in the right place						

Rituals / stereotypies

	3	2	1	0		?
When I can perform my ritual / rites without being disturbed						
Having a place and time for my stereotyped activities						
Told that it's okay if I behave stereotypically						
If I can do a certain ritual, namely: .:						
If I can finish a certain train of thought, namely: .:						

Pleasant events

	3	2	1	0		?
Meeting favourite people, namely: .:						
The prospect of meeting favourite people						
Doing my favourite activity, namely:						
The prospect of doing my favourite activity						
Getting a gift /present						
Surprises						
Receiving a reward, namely:						

Activities / program

	3	2	1	0		?
A lot of variety in my activities / programme						
Little variation in my activities / programme						
Being able to choose what activity I am doing						
Many choices in the range of activities						
Limited choice in the range of activities						
Short Activities						
Long activities						
Easy activities						
Difficult activities						
Activities with time pressure / deadline						
Activities without time pressure / deadline						
Activities that are very structured and predictable						
Activities with an "clear ending" (where I know when it will end)						

What are the (kind of) activities that give you a good feeling:

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Are there certain people that make you feel good?

Write them below. Try to mention what those people do to make you feel good.

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Are there also certain items/objects that give you a good feeling? Or animals? Or places? Write them below:

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Are there certain thoughts, ideas that make you feel good? Things, people or events on your mind that give you a good feeling?
Write them below:

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