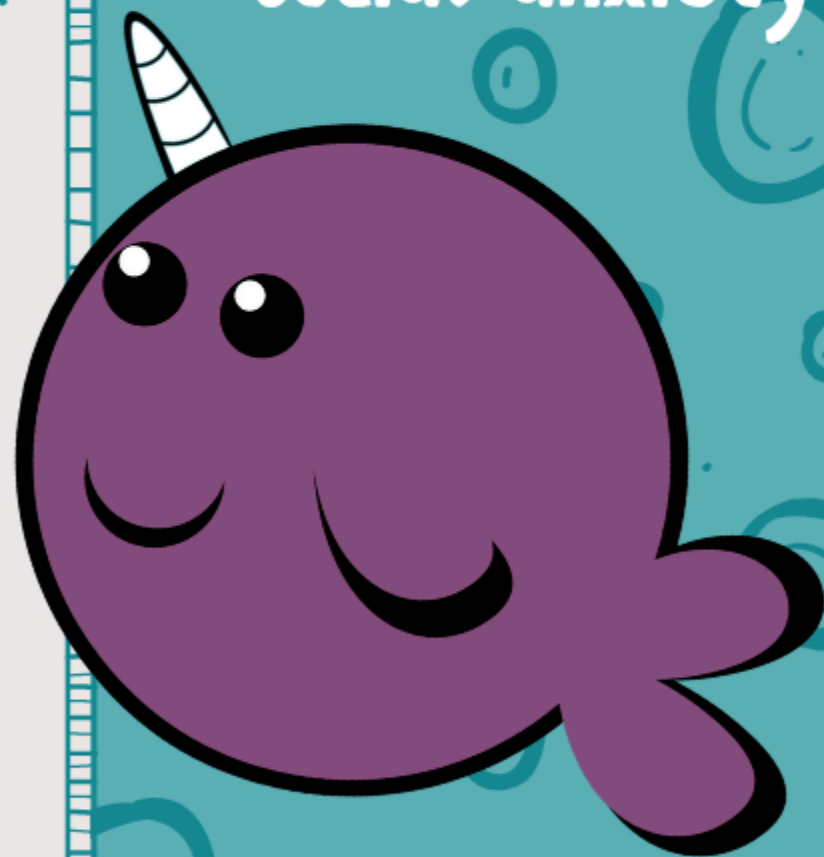


Autistic Anxiety:

- is not the same as "negative thinking" or over thinking or worrying
- has physical symptoms such as difficulty breathing or concentrating & increased heart rate
- can be related to anticipating overwhelming & painful sensory experiences that we are unable to avoid a lot of the time
- can be related to fear of being misinterpreted, tone policed or being harshly judged & even punished for communication differences
- having your access needs constantly overlooked or ignored leads to increased anxiety
- telling an autistic person that "anxiety is lying" to them feels like gaslighting behavior
- in some situations, what is called anxiety can be seen as a tool to help us navigate & prepare for a world that is not kind or accessible to autistic people

Many autistic people experience intense anxiety that looks very different from social anxiety*



*This is not intended to minimize what people with social anxiety experience, but to illustrate the differences in how many (but not all) autistic people experience a different kind of anxiety as a protective skill in an ableist world!