The Emotional Toolbox

Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have a higher risk of mental health challenges when compared to the general population, with around 40% being diagnosed with an anxiety disorder and over 80% experiencing general anxiety. Persons with ASD may also experience challenges with emotional regulation, which creates challenges when responding to stress.

The "Emotional Toolbox" is a framework developed by Clinical Psychologist Tony Attwood, to represent a collection of tools and strategies to help a person respond to emotions they are experiencing. Below is an adaptation of the Emotional Toolbox. To support a person's emotional regulation, the following tools can be considered:

SOCIAL TOOLS

using others and connection

PHYSICAL TOOLS

a quick release of energy

SPECIAL INTEREST TOOLS

engaging in activities that give you pleasure

RELAXATION TOOLS

a slow release of energy

MEDICATION TOOLS

part of a comprehensive plan to manage emotions

THINKING TOOLS

changing thinking to manage emotions

Reference: Attwood, T (2004). Exploring feelings: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to Manage Anxiety: Future Horizons; 2004.
For information on emotional regulation see the Kerry's Place workshop "Don't Tell Me to Calm Down".