



01. Persistent drive for autonomy* (PDA) is characterised by an intense, anxiety- or threat-based response to demands or requests.

It differs from more general demand avoidance due its intensity and frequency, particularly when avoiding demands becomes a dominant coping strategy across many areas of life.



** Also known as pathological demand avoidance; however, many find this term misleading and stigmatising.*

02.



PDA is not a formal diagnosis.

But it helps us to understand a person's responses and how to support them.

If/when PDA occurs, it often occurs within an autism profile, but not always.

We are still learning more.

03.



PDA can look different.

Some become explosive or controlling, while others appear compliant but experience very high internal stress, shutdown, and exhaustion.

PDA requires a different support approach.

Typical 'behaviour supports' do not work. A different approach is needed.

04.

