

RECLAIMING JOY

A NEURODIVERGENT-FRIENDLY TO
OVERCOMING ANHEDONIA





overview

Anhedonia —the inability to feel pleasure— can feel like a fog that dims all joy, motivation, and vitality.

For neurodivergent people, this experience is often layered with sensory, emotional, and cognitive complexity.

This guide explores how anhedonia uniquely affects neurodivergent people and offers accessible, trauma-informed, and intuitive strategies to rekindle delight and presence in daily life.

🌀 Neurodivergence – Specific Impacts of Anhedonia



Dopamine Disregulation



Sensory Sensitivities



Executive Dysfunction



Social Anxiety



Let's talk about it

1. Sensory Processing Differences

Neurodivergent people often experience either sensory hypersensitivity (over-responsiveness) or hyposensitivity (under-responsiveness).

What others find pleasurable may be overwhelming or not stimulating enough.



For example, a buzzing social event that most enjoy might cause sensory overload in an autistic person, while someone with ADHD might seek high-stimulation activities and still feel underwhelmed.



Result: Pleasure is harder to access when sensory input either overwhelms or falls flat, contributing to emotional numbing.

2. Alexithymia and Interoception Difficulties



Alexithymia (difficulty identifying and expressing emotions) and interoception issues (difficulty sensing body signals like hunger or excitement) are common in autism and other forms of neurodivergence.

Result: A person may not recognize that they're enjoying something or may miss subtle bodily cues that indicate joy, desire, or fulfillment.

3. Executive Dysfunction and Motivation Crashes

For ADHDers, autistics, and individuals with CPTSD, executive dysfunction creates blocks in starting, organizing, or maintaining tasks—even those linked to joy.

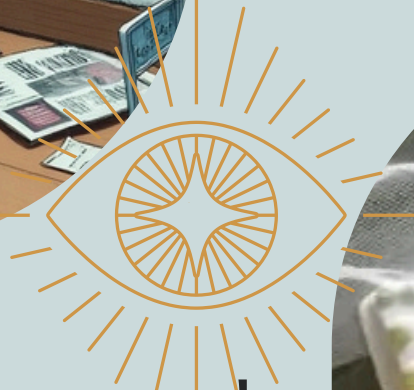
Result: Hobbies become chores, downtime turns into paralysis, and activities that once sparked happiness now seem inaccessible.



4. Rejection Sensitivity and Low Self-Worth

Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD) is common in ADHD and trauma-affected individuals. The fear of criticism or failure often sabotages efforts to try something new or enjoyable.

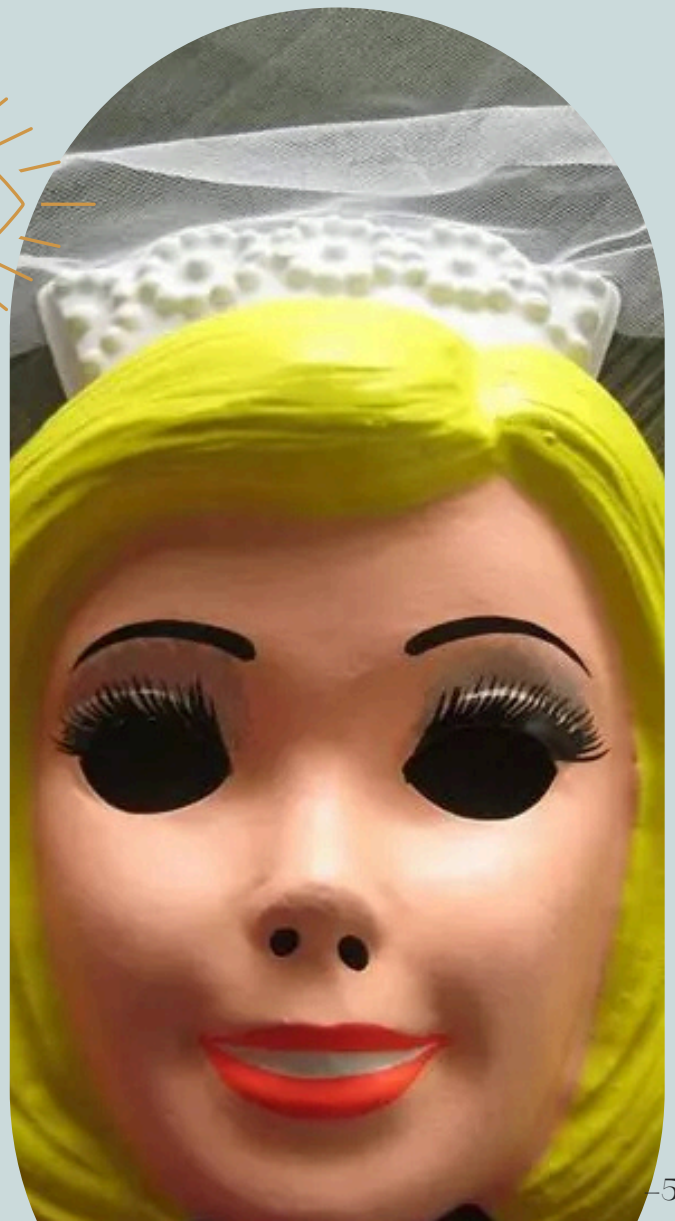
Result: The individual may avoid experiences they might love to escape judgment or disappointment.



5. Masking and Identity Loss

Years of pretending to be “normal” or socially acceptable can disconnect someone from their true likes, interests, and passions.

Result: The loss of authentic identity leaves individuals unsure of what brings joy, making it harder to seek or create it.

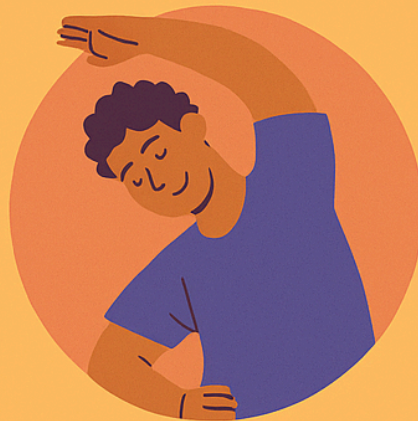


Strategies to Regain Pleasure and Motivation



Identify Sources of Joy

Reconnect with activities that bring genuine happiness



Engage in Physical Activity

Exercise can help boost mood and energy levels



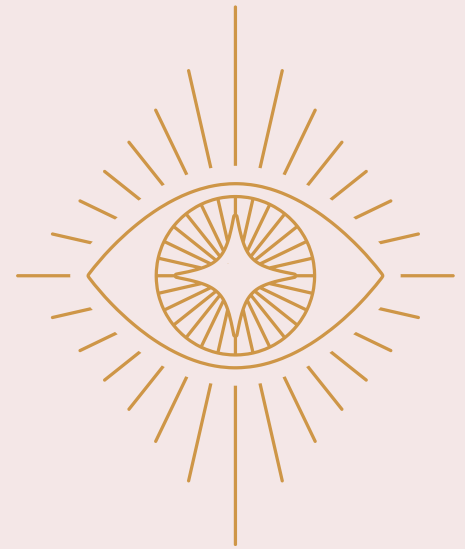
Connect Socially

Reach out to friends or support groups for support



Practice Self-Compassion

Be kind to yourself and set realistic goals



1. Micro–Pleasure Tracking

Keep a daily log of tiny pleasures—a warm cup, a soft sweater, a kind word. For those with interoceptive or emotional recognition challenges, even noticing small shifts matters.

Support Tip: Use stickers, emojis, voice notes, or visual journals for accessibility.

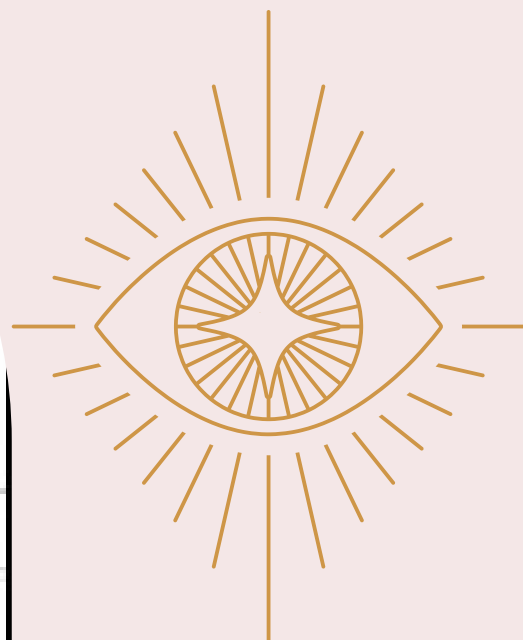
2. Play With Stimuli, Not Tasks

Shift focus from "doing a task" to "exploring a sensory experience."

Instead of saying, "I need to walk," try: "What colors and sounds might feel good if I step outside?"



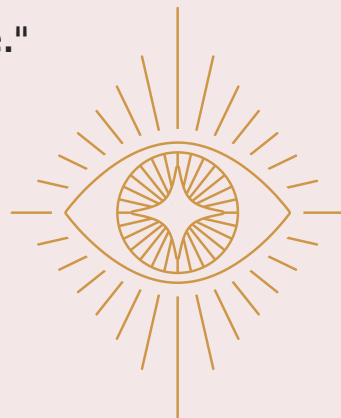
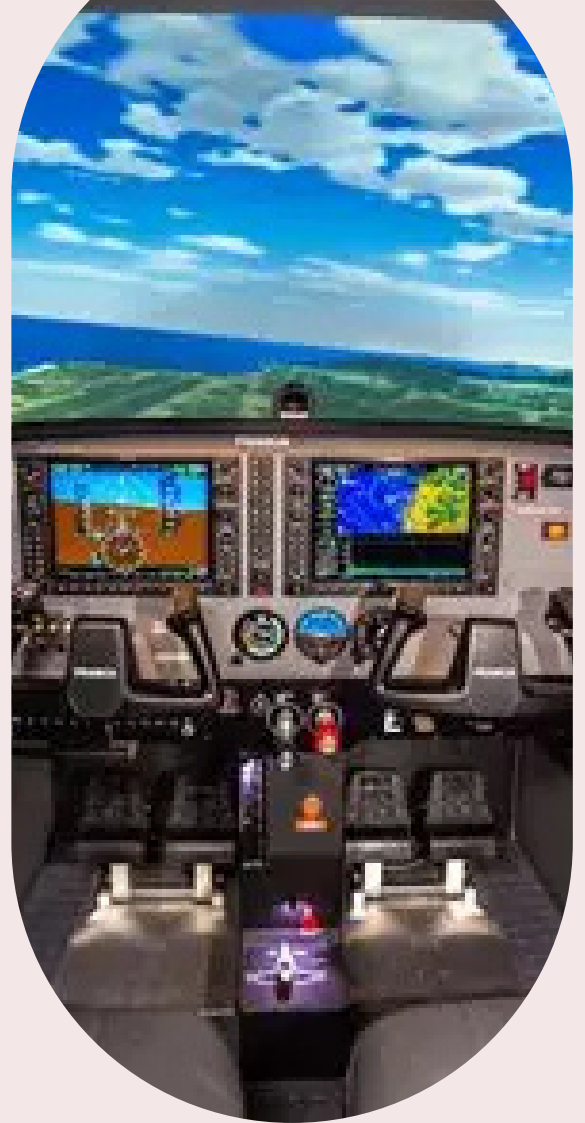
Support Tip:
Use sensory curiosity to reduce task-related resistance.



3. Special Interests as Joy Portals

Special interests (aka "hyperfixations") can help you bypass emotional flatness. Re-engaging with these topics can reignite curiosity and vitality.

Support Tip: Give yourself permission to dive deep, even if it's not "productive."



4. Create Gentle Structure

Replace rigid routines with rhythmic rituals:

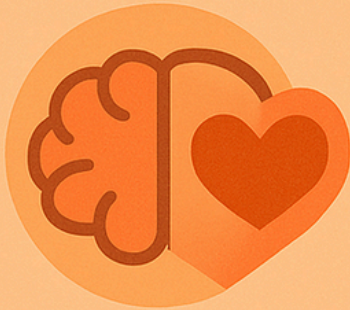
e.g. morning sunlight, afternoon movement, evening decompression.

Support Tip: Use visual schedules, sensory cues, or accountability buddies as scaffolding.

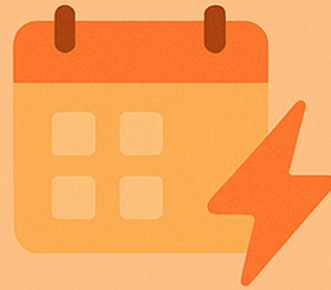




Strategies to Regain Pleasure and Motivation



Mindful
Enjoyment



Dopamine-
Friendly
Routines



Sensory
Nourishment



Social
Micro-Dosing



5. Creative Expression Without Pressure



Draw, dance, sing, or write for 10-15 minutes without any goal. The act of expression itself can reopen emotional pathways.

Support Tip: Choose mediums that feel safe and unjudged—even scribbling counts.



6. Reconnect with the Body Through Somatic Rituals



Weighted blankets, rhythmic movement (rocking, bouncing), or gentle touch (massage, tapping) can regulate the nervous system and help release emotional blocks.

Support Tip: Allow your body to lead. Follow urges to stretch, move, or rest.

7. Rewild Your Schedule

Remove a few "shoulds" and introduce more spontaneity. Create a "yes day" or "curiosity hour."

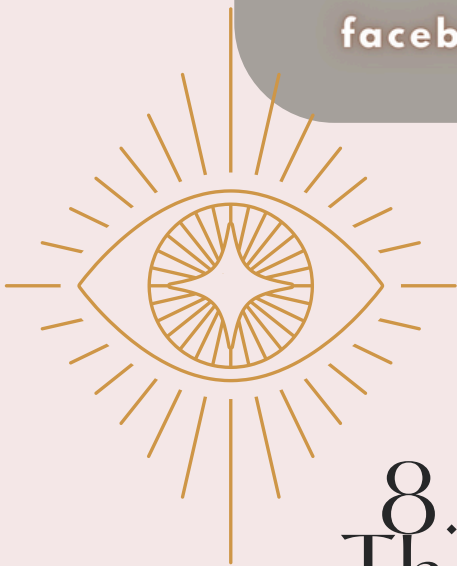
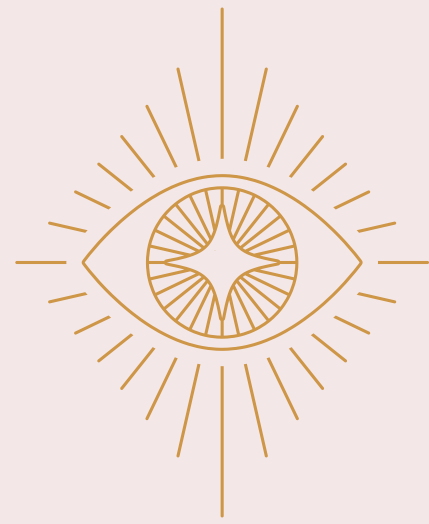


**Regain control
of your life**

LGS SOLUTIONS

PPM

Join the private group
facebook.com/groups/lgsppm



8. Join Community Spaces That Honor Neurodiversity

Spaces where people are not expected to mask, explain, or justify themselves help restore connection, validation, and safety—essential elements for joy to return.

Support Tip: Online groups, peer circles, or one-on-one ND coaching can be anchors.



Wrap-up

Anhedonia isn't a failure. It's a signal.
A whisper that your nervous system,
identity, or spirit might be out of alignment.
Use these tools not to "fix" yourself, but to
re-become yourself.
One gentle spark at a time.





You aren't alone

I help people like you reclaiming their power and walking towards their success. Your success is my success, so the more you progress, the better I'll be.

Let's talk this over and build together the best strategy to fit your needs and personality.

contact@lgs-solutions.com
<https://linktr.ee/lgssolutions>



www.lgs-solutions.com

RECLAIMING JOY

Joy is a noun that has 23 meanings, 11 of which are obsolete, according to OED. It comes from French *joie* and has various uses in religion, theatre, jewellery and more.

