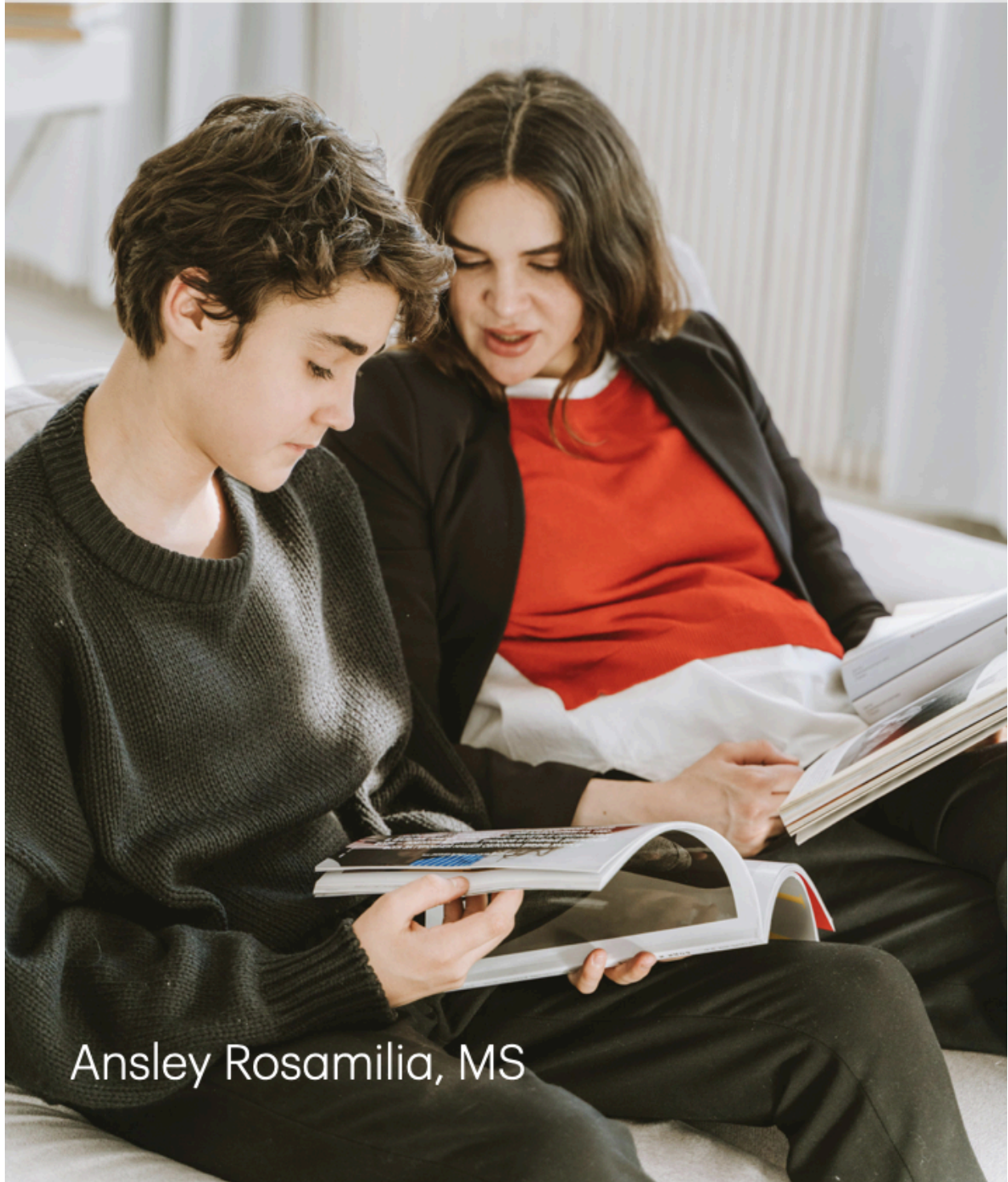


6 Ways to Talk With Your Neurodivergent Child

(Without pushing them away)



Ansley Rosamilia, MS

6 Ways to Talk With Your Neurodivergent Teen (Without Pushing Them Away)

By Ansley Rosamilia, MS |

Why This Guide Exists:

If your teen is autistic, ADHD, or otherwise neurodivergent, you might feel like you're walking on eggshells every time you try to connect. Maybe they shut down, snap back, or just seem impossible to reach.

This guide gives you 6 gentle, practical ways to connect with your teen—without judgment, pressure, or guesswork. Because communication shouldn't feel like a battle.

Let's get into it.

1. Ditch the Pep Talks. Go for Curiosity Instead.

Instead of saying: *"You'll be fine! You always figure it out!"*

Try: *"What part of this feels hardest right now?"*

Your teen doesn't need cheerleading—they need space to tell the truth without being fixed.

2. Ask Questions They Can Actually Answer

Bad: *"How was your day?"*

Better: *"Was today more draining or more manageable?"*

Vague questions invite shutdowns. Specific, emotionally-aware questions help them reflect and open up (a little).

3. Validate Before You Problem-Solve

If your teen shares a struggle, don't leap into solutions. First, say something like:

"That sounds like it was a lot. Thanks for telling me."

Validation builds trust. Trust builds safety. Safety builds communication.

4. Respect Their Recovery Time

Your teen might not want to talk the second they get home—not because they don't care, but because they're burnt out.

Let them decompress. Give a heads-up like: *"I'd love to check in with you after dinner if you're up for it."*

5. Own Your Role Without Guilt-Tripping

Sometimes you may miss the mark. That's okay. Model self-awareness instead:

"Hey, I realized I talked over you earlier. That wasn't fair. I'm working on it."

This builds mutual respect—and shows your teen they don't have to be perfect either.

6. Enter Their World, Even Briefly

They may have responsibilities, but take time to share in their interests. Watch their favorite show, play their game, or engage in any part of their private world they're willing to share.

This shows you value what they value and are willing to connect on their terms.

A Final Word:

You don't have to be a perfect parent.

Just a present one.

If you want help building a deeper, calmer relationship with your teen—especially if masking, anxiety, or burnout are involved—I'm here.

Be well,

Ansley

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