

Change the Changeable



FAQautism.com Toolkit

for family members, teachers, therapists,
caregivers, and others interested
in the well-being of individuals with autism.

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Audio Tracks

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| Track 1 | Chapter 1: Framework for dealing with issues |
| Track 2 | Chapter 2: Factors beyond our control |
| Track 3 | Chapter 3: Factors inherent in autism |
| Track 4 | Chapter 4: Factors we can manage |
| Track 5: | Chapter 5: Real-life examples |
| Track 6: | Chapter 6: Wrap-up and resources |

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Introduction

This FAQautism.com Toolkit, *Change the Changeable*, is one in a series of practical, to-the-point workbooks, each of which addresses just one facet of autism. The mission of FAQautism.com is to maximize the potential and enhance the quality of life of individuals with autism and those around them. In keeping with that mission, the FAQautism.com Toolkits focus on providing options for dealing with various issues that arise in the daily lives of people with autism. We assume readers are familiar with definitions, statistics, research, and other aspects of autism so these Toolkits are presented in a sparse workbook / audio discussion format, allowing readers to dive right into an issue and to explore options applicable to their particular situation.

As can be expected in an issue as complex as autism, there are differences of opinion about the definition, cause, and most effective treatment of autism. The purpose of FAQautism.com is simply to provide practical information and helpful hints, not to take sides. In our experience, these common sense strategies provide workable options for individuals across the spectrum of autism and meld with a wide variety of treatments approaches and philosophies.

The *Change the Changeable FAQautism.com Toolkit* is packed with dozens of real-life examples and practical ideas for making a significant impact on the functioning and quality of life of people with autism by following one simple, easy-to-implement strategy: Change the changeable. The toolkit helps us recognize factors we cannot control or change and factors that are inherent in autism. We also learn of the myriad factors we can, indeed, manage, allowing us to make small changes in logistics or approach or responses, changes that make a real difference in daily life.


Before we get started on this Toolkit, *Change the Changeable*, it is good to step back and recognize the positive aspects of our friends with autism. Even the most challenging individual is a precious human being. We can become so focused on addressing difficult behaviors and challenges that we begin viewing our friends as a bundle of problems. The most important contribution we can make to the quality of life of people with autism is to start each day recognizing and celebrating their areas of strength and ability. Starting with that attitude allows us to be more effective in dealing with challenging issues that arise each day.


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Chapter 1

Framework for dealing with issues

 **Listen** to the audio track for Chapter 1.

 **Jot Down** your thoughts on the Discussion Outline.

Discussion Outline

1. What are our choices when we encounter a challenging issue related to autism?
 - A. Among other things, we can ignore, interrupt, demand, bribe, get mad, punish, nag, shape, encourage, develop a plan, or change our approach
 - B. What is the “change the changeable” strategy?

2. Proactive steps for addressing issues related to autism
 - A. Pinpoint the problem.
 - B. Define expectations.
 - C. Make a plan.
 - D. Take action.
 - E. Recognize progress.

3. Example of implementing the five proactive steps for addressing issues related to autism

A. Demanding change in sleeping habits

B. Shaping a new bedtime routine

4. Overview of the “Change the Changeable” Toolkit

A. Examples of “change the changeable” strategy in action

B. Factors beyond our control

C. Factors inherent in autism

D. Factors we can manage

E. Real-life examples of effectiveness of “change the changeable” strategy

F. Resources and a bonus for FAQautism.com Toolkit readers

Your Notes

questions, comments, ideas, issues