

# SWAN Group Rules & Guidelines



## General Rules

SWAN meetups are autistic-only spaces, so you must be an autistic woman (cis or trans) or non-binary person, either diagnosed or self-identified, and aged 18+ to participate in the group in any capacity (unless by occasional invitation e.g. a workshop facilitator).

SWAN groups are sober spaces so we ask you not to use alcohol or drugs before coming to a group.

## Be Respectful

We are different people with vastly different backgrounds, political beliefs, religions, and gender identities. Being hurtful, rude, or disrespectful at SWAN groups is NOT ALLOWED.

Of course, with a group of people from many different backgrounds, not everyone is going to immediately get along. But you can still be respectful and kind when you disagree with others.

Try to be mindful when discussing painful or upsetting experiences. This is a place for community and support but everyone has their own history and some topics may be too difficult in a group setting. Check how others feel about it if you're not sure.

While we all share a neurotype, please respect everyone's individual processing and communication profiles, sensory experiences and potential anxiety or stress levels in the group.

This includes SWAN volunteers and staff, who are all also autistic.

## Be Kind

This is a group for people of all backgrounds to come together, make friends and have nice conversations. In general, if you're making the space uncomfortable for others, that is not acceptable.

Hurtful or prejudiced views will not be tolerated within the group. This includes:

- Racism
- Homophobia / Transphobia
- Ableism / Eugenics – this includes all disabilities.

No one is “not autistic enough” for the group. Many of us are self-diagnosed, for a variety of reasons. We all have a different relationship with our autistic identity and we're here to learn from and support one another.

Sometimes names, pronouns and appearances may not match with your expectations – but we can assume if someone has made it along to the group, they know it's the right place for them and they need to be here.

## DMs, Asking for Phone Numbers & Meeting Outside the Group

Communication outside of meet-ups is of course allowed – we're here to connect after all – though do bear in mind it's not something SWAN staff or volunteers can support with. SWAN is not responsible for any contact outside of groups.

It is each person's individual decision if they want to connect outside meet-ups – please try not to make other group members uncomfortable with your advances, and respect one another's boundaries.

## When Group Rules are not Respected

If someone breaks a rule, the individual will be talked to in private by a group facilitator.

We will always try to resolve rule-breaking issues where possible.

After two incidents however, you may be asked to leave the group.

If the offence is severe enough (harassment, threatening group members or volunteers, etc.) the member will be subject to immediate removal from the group.

If you're having trouble with anyone in the group not following these rules or making you uncomfortable, please speak to a group facilitator or let us know:

[info@swanscotland.org](mailto:info@swanscotland.org)