



RSD

Rejection Sensitivity Dysphoria

RSD is an intense emotional response to perceived rejection or criticism, commonly experienced by people with ADHD. The pain is real—and so is your power to help.

Tips for Loved Ones

- **Understand RSD:** RSD can cause physical pain, similar to how you might feel physical pain. Be cautious with what you say.
- **Recognize accomplishments:** Make a conscious effort to acknowledge and praise the person's achievements and positive qualities.
- **Be mindful of your facial expressions:** Facial expressions can have a significant impact on someone with RSD. Be conscious of your expressions when giving feedback.
- **Use collaborative phrases:** Use phrases like "Would you be open to..." or "Would you be willing to..." to avoid making the person feel shamed or controlled.
- **Check before discussing concerns:** Ensure the person is feeling regulated and calm before discussing concerns. Ask, "Is this an okay time to discuss this?"
- **Validate and listen to their feelings:** When they express their feelings, listen and reflect them back without judging or labeling them as right or wrong.
- **Remind them their thoughts and feelings matter:** Consistently reassuring them will help them feel safe and decrease RSD.
- **Be aware of potential misdiagnoses:** RSD may be misdiagnosed as bipolar or borderline personality disorder in women. Encourage exploring the correct diagnosis if needed.

Remember

Your patience, understanding, and consistent support can make a profound difference in helping someone with RSD feel safe, seen, and loved.

Flourishing Women LLC

Neurodivergent-Affirming Support for Women with ADHD