

Glossary

for What I Mean When I Say I'm Autistic by Annie Kotowicz

Glossary for this Glossary

Glossary = A list of words and phrases, and what they mean in a particular book. Some of these words and phrases have many possible meanings, but this is what I mean when I use them in my book.

Literal meaning = The original or simplest meaning of a word or phrase.

Figurative meaning = What I really mean by a word or phrase, if I'm not being literal.

Introduction

Unpuzzle = To figure out, or to explain.

Bridge the gap = Literally, to connect things that are separate. Two minds are separate, but words can figuratively connect them by describing thoughts and feelings.

Translate = Literally, finding words with the same meaning in another language. Figuratively, finding ways to explain an experience so that it makes sense to another person.

Illuminate = Literally, to shine a light on. Figuratively, to make something easier to understand.

Crucial = Necessary. In this case, learning about autism was necessary before I could understand other things about myself.

Reflected = Literally, mirrored. Figuratively, it reminds you of yourself.

Palette = Literally, a place where an artist puts all the colors of paint that they're using. Figuratively, a bunch of options to consider.

Resonates = Feels significant and relatable.

Stereotype = An idea that a lot of people believe, but isn't true.

Implication = Another meaning, which may or may not be intended.

Pen name = A name used by a writer instead of their real name.

Merely = Only.

Neurotype = Type of brain.

Spectrum = Literally, a rainbow. Figuratively, a variety.

Interpret = Figure out what something means.

Through the lens of = By also thinking about.

Neuroscience = The study of brains.

Memoir = A collection of memories, gathered into a book.

Model = A simplified example to learn from.

Manifesto = A list of things that a person believes are true or good.

Prologue

Prologue = A scene that happens a long time before the rest of the story. Most books with prologues are fictional (that is, made up). But in this book, only the prologue is fictional, and everything else is true.

Hula hoop = A large plastic ring, more than half as tall as the person using it.

Chapter 1: Discovery

Motivations = Reasons for wanting to do something.

Perspectives = Ways of seeing something.

Audacity = Boldness mixed with foolishness.

Do a double take = Look again, after feeling confused or surprised.

Utopia = A perfect place, so perfect that it could never really exist.

Jane Eyre = A novel written almost 200 years ago. It's about a girl who doesn't fit in, but grows up to be more

independent than most women in novels at that time.

Paper = Essay.

Sensory = Related to senses (including sight, sound, taste, touch, smell, and other senses).

Sarcasm = Saying the opposite of what you mean, as a joke.

Input = Information that's coming in.

Ecstasy = Happiness mixed with excitement.

Heavy bass = Bass that is loud enough to feel in your body.

Matte = Not shiny.

Stereotypical = Something that a lot of people believe is common. May be true or false.

Eye contact = Looking directly at someone's eyes while they also look at yours.

At first glance = When you first start to think about it.

Anecdotes = Short, true stories.

Analyzing = Figuring out by examining.

Aesthetic = Related to different kinds of beauty. Usually about things you can see, but it can involve other senses too.

Tropes = Common patterns. This use of the word "trope" is not in most dictionaries, but is popular because of a website called "TV Tropes."

Stimulation = Something that makes you feel more active, interested, and awake. Overstimulated means you've had too much stimulation, and understimulated means you've had too little. Stimming is self-stimulation.

Neurological = Brain-related.

Linguistic = Language-related.

Utility = Usefulness.

Compensate = What you do to be okay when there isn't enough of something.

Willpower = The mental ability to control your own actions.

Systems = Ways of doing things, designed to help you do them better.

Skeptical = Not believing.

Diagnosis = When a doctor says something is wrong with a person's body or mind. (Autism itself isn't wrong, but it can make other things difficult. An autistic person can only get a diagnosis if their autism makes a lot of things difficult.)

Psychologist = A doctor for minds.

Word of mouth = Recommendations from people I know.

Comprehensive = Complete.

Identify = Notice and name.

Single-spaced = Lines of text that are close together.

Criteria = A list of traits that a person might have, which a doctor uses to decide whether or not to give that person a diagnosis.

Medical establishment = Doctors (including psychologists), and all of their rules and ways of doing things.

Seal of approval = Literally, a piece of wax with a symbol stamped into it, showing that a specific person approves a document. Figuratively, approving the idea that someone is autistic by giving them an official diagnosis.

Blood, sweat, tears = With great difficulty.

Red tape = Lots of paperwork.

Arduous = Really difficult.

Justify = Give reasons why something is true.

Moving target = A constantly changing goal.

Neurology = The way a brain is structured.

Chapter 2: Unpuzzling

Colloquially = In common slang. Colloquially, to "rock" means to be awesome.

Kinesthetically = In movement. Kinesthetically, to "rock" means to move back and forth.

Predispositions = Things that you do or feel naturally, without trying or learning.

Vulnerable = Unsafe in a particular way.

Stressors = Things that make a person feel stressed.

Environment = Everything around a person.

Co-occurring conditions = Mental or physical traits that often (though not always) go along with another mental or physical trait (like autism).

Stigma = A bad reputation that's false.

Hyper-connected = A lot more connected than usual.

Neural pathways = Connections between parts of a brain.

Torrent = Literally, a rush of water, like from a fire hose. Figuratively, a lot of something all at once.

Filtering = Only letting some parts get through, and blocking the rest.

Kaleidoscope = A tube with colorful glass inside, which you can rotate to create various pretty designs.

Theoretically = If the previous explanation was complete.

Downstream from = Caused by.

Social cues = When people want you to say or do something, but they don't ask you directly. They only give hints through facial expressions, or through words that are sort of related.

Trauma = When a bad memory sticks with you for many years, making it hard to face anything that reminds you of it, and making other activities hard too.

Meltdowns = Crying (and other ways of showing distress) because you feel overwhelmed, not just sad.

Shutdowns = Becoming silent or still because you feel overwhelmed, not just shy.

Cliques = Small groups of friends who make it hard for new people to join the group.

Rafter = A long, sturdy plank of wood that connects two parts of a ceiling.

Silver linings = Literally, bright lines of sunlight around the edges of clouds. Figuratively, good effects.

Clouded = Mysterious.

Rising through the ranks = Changing to different job roles with more pay, more power, and more responsibility.

Sincerity = Saying what you mean, without sarcasm or secret opinions.

Parkour = Trying to get from one place to another as fast as possible, even with obstacles in the way. Usually this means jumping and climbing over rails and walls, but it can also just mean running. (It doesn't include flips, because those slow you down. Freerunning is a similar activity that does include flips, because it's meant for looking cool, not just for going fast.)

Surmount = Get on top of. This is mostly literal, because parkour includes a lot of climbing. But it's also figurative, because surmounting an obstacle can mean overcoming a challenge.

Root cause = The cause of all other causes.

Unflattering = Not nice. May or may not be true.

Jump out at me = Easy for me to see.

Over my head = Hard for me to see.

Face value = The literal meaning of a phrase, not another hidden meaning.

Motives = Reasons for wanting to do something.

Big-picture = Focusing on the main purpose or long-term goal, not all the little things you'll discover or do along the way.

Disability = Not being able to do something important that most people around you can do. Often (but not always), it's something you could

do in a different environment or with the right kind of help.

Savant = Extra smart or skilled, more than most people in the world.

Connotations = When people hear one thing and it reminds them of another thing, or makes them feel a certain way.

Navigate = Move through, finding your way.

Chapter 3: Sensitivity

Embrace = A big hug.

Caress = A soft touch. In this case, the wind feels like being brushed with a feather.

Christening = An event at a church when a baby is officially given their name. In fairytales, this is often a time when good fairies give blessings and bad fairies give curses.

Intuitively = Without trying to figure it out.

Captivating = Entertaining enough to hold my attention.

Was commissioned = Someone else got the idea and paid me to do it.

Data = Information.

Narrative = The words of a story, or in this case, the words in my mind.

Flinched = Pulled away suddenly, in distress.

Hurt = To cause pain.

Harm = To cause damage.

Disproportionate to = Not the same size as.

Deep in my bones = Felt really strongly, both in my body (but not literally in my bones) and in my emotions.

Buoyed up by = Floating on.

Propelled = Pushed steadily.

Exhilaration = A sudden rush of excitement.

Trickling = Slowly sliding down a surface (in this case, skin).

Pricks = A feeling like being poked with something sharp.

Heaven = Figuratively, enjoyable experiences.

Hell = Figuratively, painful experiences.

Indulging them = Giving them what they want.

Portals = Literally, doors or openings. Figuratively, opportunities to start something new.

Imagination to soar = Figuratively, to get lots of ideas.

Crowning = Being on top of.

Altar = A table with objects on it for a special purpose (usually religious, but not here).

Perusing = Looking at each part of.

Leafing through = Turning gently.

Visual = Related to sight.

Tactile = Related to touch.

Chaotic = Disorganized and unpredictable.

Pristine = In perfect condition.

Fluorescent light = The kind of bright light that comes from a flat rectangle in the ceiling.

By default = Before you do anything to change it.

Muffle = Literally, make a noise quieter by putting something soft over it. Figuratively, make something easier to forget.

Tackle = Deal with.

Phlegm = Similar to snot, but in your throat instead of your nose.

Coming of age = Becoming an adult.

Conscientious = Trying very hard to always follow rules.

Intellectual = Related to thinking.

Principle = An idea that's helpful in a lot of different situations.

Swiveling = Turning back and forth, as if following a curvy path.

Maze = A complicated structure that you could get lost in.

Coral = Underwater creatures that look like plants.

Instincts = What I feel driven to do without thinking about it.

Valid logic = Thoughts that make sense.

Subconsciously = Without thinking about it.

Police = Figuratively, someone who makes you do something.

Spares = Extras, in case something happens to the others.

Mass-produced = Many copies of the same product, made in a factory.

Gut = Literally, inside the center of my body. Figuratively, what seems true before I think much about it.

Empathy = Feeling the same way another person feels.

Visceral = Strongly, in my body.

On my behalf = For me, and instead of me.

Myth = A story or idea that isn't true.

Moves = Makes me want to.

Alert me to = Help me notice.

Bear = Be okay in spite of.

Chapter 4: Processing

Processing = Turning input into information that I understand and feel ready to respond to.

Automatically = Without thinking about it.

Lilting = Going up and down like a melody.

Vocabulary = Words.

Expressions = Here, I specifically mean facial expressions.

Performative = Acting fake.

Barrage = A lot, all at once.

Haphazardly = In an unpredictable way.

Tetris = A video game where blocks fall one at a time, slowly at first, then faster and faster. You can rotate them as they're falling, or move them from side to side. Good moves will make rows of blocks disappear, and bad moves will make them stack up until there's no more room above.

Freeze up = Stop being able to think.

Game over = Literally, when a game stops because I wasn't playing it well. Figuratively, when my mind stops thinking clearly.

Bite = Little bit.

Digest = Figuratively, to process.

Audio = Sound.

Procrastinate = Not yet doing something you need to do, and doing something else in the meantime.

Transcript = Written text that is the same as the words spoken in an audio or video clip.

Summary = Saying something in another way, with much fewer words but most of the meaning.

Self-advocacy = Telling someone what you need.

Efficient = Fast.

Bullet points = A list with a symbol beside each item on the list. Usually those symbols are black circles that look like bullets, but they can be a different shape.

Flow chart = A simple sketch that looks like a board game. At the start, there's a question with a few possible answers. Each answer has an arrow, showing you where to go if you pick that answer. Wherever you go, there's a new question.

Follow-up = After and because of.

Collect = Organize and feel settled.

Transitions = Switching from one task or place to another.

Historically = In the past.

Amid = In the middle of.

Onslaught = A lot, all at once.

Solitude = Being alone.

Illusion = Something that looks real but isn't.

Casts a spell of uselessness = Makes useless.

Preceding = Right before.

Tendency = Something a person often does.

Dysregulated = Not in control of emotions (and also, as a result, not in control of actions).

Insecurely = Literally, not connected to anything solid. Figuratively, unsafely.

Vital = Necessary.

Camel's back / straws = From the phrase "a straw that breaks the camel's back," which means adding more and more of something (like tasks, or information, or stuff being carried by a camel) until suddenly, when you add just a little bit more, it becomes too much.

Something has to give = Literally, something has to bend. Figuratively, something has to stop or go away.

Fluent = Clear and correct.

Verbally = With words.

Sputtered = A mix of spit and stuttered.

Cumbersome = Awkward.

Fluctuating = Going up and down.

Impairment = A thing that makes it hard (or impossible) to do something.

Off-guard = Unprepared to face challenges.

Tension = A mix of feeling awkward and feeling like someone is annoyed by me.

Spit out = Say quickly.

Syllable = One beat in the rhythm of a sentence.

Colleague = Someone I work with.

Context = Other information about a thing, which you need for the thing to make sense.

Curtly = Seeming rude because of using too few words.

Script = Literally, words written for actors to say in a play or movie. Figuratively, words that I prepare ahead of time to say when I need them.

Blood pressure = One of many things that doctors measure to see how healthy you are. High blood pressure can mean you have a health problem, or it can just mean you're anxious at that moment.

Multitasking = Doing several things at the same time.

Articulate = Put into words.

Crystallizes = Turns something wobbly and chaotic into something solid and organized.

Inventory = A list of all the things in a place.

Ramble = Go all over the place.

Stumbling on = Literally, tripping over. Figuratively, discovering by accident.

Coherent = United, not having parts that don't belong.

Snapshot = A photo taken quickly.

Interior = Inside.

Gothic = Designed like a cathedral.

Spilling colorful light = Turning the sunlight into different colors as it goes through the window.

Pneumatic = Moving around using air pressure, like the container for money at some drive-thru banks.

Archived = Stored in an organized way, so you can ignore it for a long time but still easily find it later.

Lofty = Tall.

Medieval = A time in history when many castles were built.

Steampunk = What the world would be like with lots of cool inventions but no electricity.

Flurry = Literally, snowflakes twirling in the wind. Figuratively, lots of stuff moving around.

Clattering = The sound a typewriter makes, which is louder than a computer keyboard.

Furiously = Quickly, with determination.

Retrieval = Getting something back.

Chapter 5: Stimming

Classic fashion = A well-known way of doing things. In this case, flapping in classic autistic fashion means flapping in the way that autistic people often do.

Upstream = In the opposite direction than the water in a stream is flowing.

Staying afloat = Literally, not sinking below the water's surface.

Figuratively, just barely handling everything.

Sink under the weight = Be overcome by the burden.

Air guitar = Pretending to play an invisible guitar.

CD = A flat circle that can store about a dozen songs.

Essentially = The same thing with a different name.

Sliver = Little bit.

Contexts = Places.

Self-censored = Made myself stop.

Welling up = Rising up like water.

Limbs = Arms and legs.

Swaying = Moving smoothly from side to side.

Distribute = Put a little bit everywhere.

Climax = The most exciting part of a novel, usually near the end.

Proprioceptive = The sense of where each part of your body is in space.

Vestibular = The sense of balance and knowing which way is up.

Vocal = With my voice.

Compression = Being squished.

Punctured = With a hole in it.

Barrel = A container full of liquid.

Intact = Not falling apart.

Swarm = Fly in a disorganized way.

Snugly = Figuratively, just right.

Fitting into my own existence = Figuratively, feeling happy in my own body.

Craving = Really wanting.

Counterintuitive = Not what you expect.

White noise machine = A machine that creates a steady sound, similar to rain. People use it to stop being distracted by other sounds.

Drowns out = Becomes more noticeable than.

Grounded = Safe and focused.

Key = Important.

Distinguishes = Helps you tell the difference between it and another thing.

Waver = Go back and forth.

All-consuming = Taking all of my attention.

Pace = Walking back and forth to help yourself concentrate or feel calmer.

Combat = Fight.

Textures = How surfaces feel.

Percussive = Hitting one object against another, like a drumstick on drums.

Whacking = Hitting with a flat object.

Overt = Really easy to see.

Signal = A clue that something might be true.

Drop the mask = Figuratively, stop trying to hide my real self.

Battle = Figuratively, it's difficult (like a fight) to hide my real self.

Surrender = Figuratively, being myself.

Vigilance = Paying attention to make sure I act a certain way.

Cathartic = Letting out stress.

Frame of mind = The current mood, attitude, or ability of my mind.

Reactively = After something happens, and because of it.

Proactively = Before something happens, to prepare for it.

Evolution = A slow improvement over time.

Unconventional = Different than what most people expect.

Nouns = Words that describe people, places, and things.

Unfolding = Being revealed bit by bit.

Plot = The events that happen in a story.

Constrained = Not allowed (or not able) to move. In this case I was literally allowed and able, but figuratively stuck because I was afraid of causing confusion.

Interpretive dance = A dance where each movement has a meaning.

Acoustic = Not electric.

Bonus points if = It's even better if.

Paradox = When two things seem opposite, but both are true.

Nervous system = All the parts of your body that connect your brain to your senses.

Destiny = Literally, what a person can't avoid doing. Figuratively, what a person feels happiest doing.

Awakens my senses = Helps me pay more attention to sensory input.

Be present = Notice what's happening around me right now.

Subtly = Gently.

Simulate = Create something similar. (Not to be confused with stimulate, which rhymes.)

Swiss Army knife = A lot of different tools (like knives and screwdrivers) packed into one very small tool.

Compliant = Obedient to instructions, and not demanding changes.

Cerebral = Related to minds.

Meditative = Thinking about a single thing for a long time.

Resistance = Going against something (in this case, against a desire).

Underlying needs = Needs that create other needs.

Mindset shifts = Different ways of thinking.

Unconsciously = Without noticing.

Couldn't help myself = Couldn't stop.

Incentives = Rewards and punishments, intended as motivation.

Virtue = Being a good person.

Fruit = Figuratively, a result. It comes from something else, like how fruit comes from a tree.

Generate out of thin air = Create from nothing.

Rooted in = Caused by.

On a path to = Eventually will.

Chapter 6: Relationships

Fulfilling = Filling your heart with joy.

Forum = A website where anyone can write posts and comments (like social media), but with post titles shown in a list (like a blog).

Kim Possible = A cartoon from the early 2000s.

Tight-knit = Literally, woven like a sweater with no gaps between the yarn. Figuratively, close.

Academy Awards = A yearly award ceremony for movies.

Aired = Appeared on TV.

Equivalent = The same in its purpose or effect, but different in other ways.

Asynchronously = With gaps of time in between each interaction.

Collaboration = Working on a project together.

Savoring = Literally, noticing and enjoying a taste. Figuratively, appreciating.

Crumbs = Figuratively, interactions that aren't true friendship, but are a bit similar (like how crumbs are a form of bread but not as good).

Condescending = Acting like you're better than someone.

Self-deprecation = Thinking or talking about what might be wrong with me.

Had a solid grasp on = Understood well.

Acquaintances = People I know, but not very well.

Odd looks = Facial expressions that mean they think I'm strange.

Acquired = Got.

Selfies = Photos I take of myself.

Window into my world = Accurate idea of what my life was like.

Trial and error = Trying something many times, failing most of those times, and learning something new from each failure.

Posed = Choosing my position.

Candidly = Not choosing (or even paying attention to) my position.

Captured = Photographed.

One bite from a tree of knowledge = Figuratively, a small action with bad consequences that seem impossible to fix. (From the story of the Garden of Eden.)

The mere presence of other people = Only the fact that other people are there, without the need for anything more.

Blank look = No expression on my face.

Manually = Doing something while thinking about it. (Opposite of automatically.)

Monotone = Like musical notes that are all the same, not some higher and some lower.

Periodically = Occasionally, with about the same amount of time between each.

Dissociating = Ignoring my surroundings and losing track of time.

Simultaneously = At the same time.

Carry on a conversation = Keep having a conversation.

Suppression = Resisting or stopping forcefully.

Metaphor = Figurative word or phrase.

One-sided = Only one person is making an effort, not the other.

Adapt = Change to fit in.

ADHD, PTSD, bipolar = Other neurotypes and mental health conditions. They are different from autism, but some autistic people have them too.

Introvert = Someone who gets more energy from being alone than from being around other people.

Play a role = Act like a different person.

Just be = Be myself, without trying.

Tending the fire = Keeping the fire burning, for example by stirring it or adding more logs.

Tenants = People who rent a house or apartment.

Unrequited love = When you're in love with someone and they don't feel the same way about you.

Flopped = Failed in an embarrassing way.

Fallout = Additional bad things that happen after (and because of) one bad thing.

Convey = Tell.

Vantage point = Literally, a place from which you can see very far. Figuratively, a long time after the events being described.

Heartbreak = How it feels when someone you're in love with doesn't want to date you, or someone you're dating breaks up with you.

Strikes = Hurts my feelings.

Hit like a load of bricks = Cause pain and confusion.

Amplify = Make something seem bigger or more intense.

Prolong = Make something last longer.

Redirect = Literally, change the direction of. Figuratively, change the topic of.

Initiating = Starting.

Reading between the lines = Figuring out what someone really means.

Torture = The worst kind of pain.

A fellow girl = Another girl.

Suffered the consequences = Fell in the lake as a direct result of pretending not to hear me.

Dawned on me = I realized it.

Enigma = A fancy word for a puzzle.

Occurrence = Event.

Flirty = The kind of things people do when they want to date someone.

Incompetence = Not being able to do something, usually something that's possible to learn.

Dance = Figuratively, actions that two people take together.

Mixed signals = Some clues that make it seem like I want to date them, and other clues that make it seem like I don't.

Straightforward = No hidden meanings.

Founded on = Literally, built on.
Figuratively, needed from the start.

Intimate = Emotionally deep and close.

Intricate = Complex but organized.

Pursuit = Literally, a chase.
Figuratively, trying to succeed at.

Mutual understanding =
Understanding each other.

Salient = Noticeable.

Anew = Again, but feeling like the first time.

Pitfalls = Things that cause me to fail.

Consecutive = In a row.

Objects of my affection = People I loved.

Conducive to = Useful to create.

Open = Honest and not hiding anything.

Bedrock = Literally, solid ground that a house is built on. Figuratively, something you need at the very beginning to help something else succeed.

Secure = Literally, connected to something solid. Figuratively, safe.

Came to = Finally did.

Came along = Entered my life.

Chapter 7: **Misunderstandings**

Tangents = Topics that seem very different, but are connected in some way.

Custom = Thing that is common in a certain place or among certain people.

Genuinely = Not pretending.

Spontaneously = Not planned.

Side conversations = Talking with a few friends nearby a larger group that's talking together.

No hard feelings = No one feeling hurt or offended.

Devise = Invent.

Woven into = Hidden in.

Out of context = In a way that seems random, without extra information that would help it make sense.

Delivered = Said.

Carving up = Literally, cutting into pieces. Figuratively, defining each part.

Art form = A type of art, like how painting and drawing are different types of art.

Safety net = Literally, a net that can catch you if you fall. Figuratively, something that protects you from problems and makes you feel safe.

Studies = When scientists ask a question and then gather information to answer it.

Mismatch = When two things don't work well together.

Encounter = Coming across something, usually for the first time.

Literature = Books.

Spot-on = Exactly correct.

Authenticity = Behaving like people do in real life.

Overshadowed = Made less noticeable.

Internal state = What's happening inside a person's mind, emotions, and body.

Unfazed = Unbothered.

Taunts = Teasing that's meant to make someone upset.

Gazes = Looks.

Frosted glass = Glass with a cloudy surface through which you can see lights and colors, but not objects.

Demeanor = How someone's attitude seems, which may or may not be true.

Distinction = Difference.

Derail = Literally, make a train go off its track. Figuratively, cause me to forget.

Train of thought = What I was thinking about.

Interjection = Interruption.

Nonsensical = Doesn't make sense.

The key to unlock = Figuratively, the information to understand.

Withhold = Not let someone have.

Be mindful = Keep in mind.

Reassurance = Reminder that things are okay or will be okay.

Broken record = Literally, a few moments of music that repeat.
Figuratively, someone who says the same thing again and again.

Circle back = Return.

Inattention = Not paying attention.

Impertinent = Acting like I deserve more than I do.

Fumbling = Literally, dropping things.
Figuratively, not done well.

Repercussions = Bad consequences.

Ironically = Surprising (not in a startling way, but after thinking about it) because it's the opposite of what you expected.

Skim = Quickly read, trying to only pay attention to the important parts.

Diligent = Working consistently.

Explicitly = In words.

Authority figures = People in charge of a specific place.

Mastered the art of = Become really good at figuring out.

Prioritize = Do earlier and with more effort.

Gray area = More complicated but also more accurate.

Solidarity = Supporting one another.

Minimizing = Literally, making smaller. Figuratively, treating as unimportant.

Analogous = Similar.

Tangible = Literally, something you can touch. Figuratively, something really convincing.

Analogy = A description of something similar.

Misses the mark = Fails to do the thing it's meant to do.

Power move = An action whose main purpose is to make someone feel that

you're cooler, better, or more powerful than them.

Usurp = Take.

Flexing on = Literally, showing off muscles. Figuratively, showing off power or ability.

Power structures = Who currently has power.

Easy target = Someone who's easy to bully.

Pay deference = Act shy and respectful.

Oblivious = Not noticing what's happening around me.

Off-handed = Careless.

Invert = Switch the order of.

Hierarchy = A list of people, organized from the person with the most power to the person with the least power. Sometimes the list is actually written down (like in a kingdom), but in this case it's an imaginary list to explain how people see one another.

Equalize it = Remove the hierarchy, acting as if everyone has the same amount of power.

The emperor has no clothes = In a story, this sentence was said by the only honest character. Everyone else was pretending that the emperor (king) was wearing clothes, because they didn't want to challenge him.

Status = Place in a hierarchy.

Shine a light on = Make something easier to see.

Imply = To add another meaning, which may or may not be intended.

Neglected to = Didn't, but should have.

Never crosses my mind = I never think of it.

Read into = Notice another meaning, and believe it's intended, which may or may not be true.

Snide = Sarcastic and mean.

Shudder = To shake with fear. Bodies can literally shudder, but a heart shuddering is a figurative way to describe a feeling of fear that comes suddenly.

Common thread = When the same thing can be found within several other things.

Consent = Agree to do something.

Decline = Not agree to do something.

Trigger = Cause.

Prim = Careful in movement, speech, and dress.

Stoic = Not showing strong emotions.

Scheming plots underhand = Planning sneaky actions.

Without missing a beat = Immediately.

At the expense of = Leaving me with less attention for.

Calculating = Figuring out.

Misread my face = Believe I'm thinking or feeling something that I'm not.

My language = Figuratively, how I communicate.

Chapter 8: Meltdowns

Tipping point = Literally, when you're filling a container with liquid, the tipping point is how far you can fill it before it starts to spill over. Figuratively, when I'm overwhelmed, the tipping point is when I start to cry.

Bawling = Crying loudly.

Heaving sobs = Crying in between big breaths, because I'm crying so hard that it makes me lose my breath.

Betrayed = When someone makes a promise and then breaks it.

Tantrum = Crying (and other ways of showing distress) because you want something from someone.

Stifled = Pushed down, to make quieter.

Recipe = Figuratively, something you can do to cause another thing to happen.

Smoother = Easier, and improving more steadily.

Depleted = Figuratively emptied, with no strength left.

Collapsed into tears = Flopped down and started crying.

Ounce = Figuratively, a small amount.

The thing in question = The thing they're asking about.

Etc. = And similar things.

Standard = Something everyone agrees is normal.

Dampen = Literally, make quieter. Figuratively, make less expressive.

Threads = Topics.

Sharp cry = Short yell.

The extent of = All of, then it was done.

Magical = Figuratively, very helpful.

Surveyed the damage = Literally, looked around a place where there was a recent disaster. Figuratively, thought about what just happened.

Avalanche = Literally, when a lot of snow slides down a mountain. Figuratively, when I was thinking about too many things at the same time.

Recover = Find again.

From under the wreckage = Figuratively, from all my thoughts.

Profoundly = Very deeply.

Goes out of their way = Makes a big effort.

Heroic / save the day = This is a bit sarcastic, because to me the actions seem easy, but other people are impressed by them.

Bribe = A gift to convince someone to do something.

Pent-up = Kept inside.

Striking up = Starting.

Storm = Figuratively, when a person is upset.

Anchor = Figuratively, something that doesn't change.

Flail = Literally, swing carelessly. Figuratively, act upset.

Collapse into your peace = Figuratively, feel as peaceful as you, and also feel worn out after being upset.

Sleuthing = Finding clues to solve a mystery.

Ingredients = Things that turn into something new when you combine them. (Literally, flour and other ingredients can become a cake. Figuratively, burnout and other ingredients can become a meltdown.)

Sapped = Removed bit by bit.

Resilience = The ability to feel good again soon after something stressful happens.

Susceptible to = In danger of.

Incredulous = Not believing.

Unpack = Figuratively, think carefully about.

Capacity for = Ability to experience.

Safety valve = Literally, a device that lets air out of a container to stop it from bursting. Figuratively, a thing you can do to stop feeling like you're about to burst.

Implosion = Literally, an explosion on the inside. Figuratively, when stressful feelings become even more stressful because you aren't expressing them outwardly.

Chapter 9: Quirks

Elicit = Cause.

Nuances = Details that are hard to notice unless you're looking carefully.

Effortless = Easy.

Diagnostic = For a diagnosis.

External intervention = Outside help.

Pros and cons = Possible good results and bad results to consider before making a decision.

Eloquent = Choosing words that are accurate, pretty, and well-organized.

Glance = Quickly look somewhere.

Feedback = When someone tells you how you did (good or bad).

So-called = Other people call it this, but I don't agree that it should be called this.

Therapy = An activity that's meant to help with a problem. (Some people think that avoiding eye contact is a problem.)

Disclaimer = A warning about doing something. It isn't telling you not to do it, just giving you some info to keep in mind if you do.

Tradeoffs = When bad things happen along with good things.

Irregular = Unusual.

Spouted = Said carelessly.

Database = Collection of information.

Intuition = Information that you know without using your senses or thinking about it.

Magic = Figuratively, skill.

Juggle = Figuratively, remember.

Drop = Figuratively, be forgotten.

Sufficient = Enough.

Aura = Literally, a cloud or glow surrounding a person. Figuratively, a connotation.

Map to = Have individual parts that match.

Flush = Lined up.

Cobwebs = Messy spiderwebs.

Compulsive = Something you can't stop yourself from doing.

Stabilize = Make less likely to fall.

Precariously = In danger.

Center of gravity = The part of an object that needs to be supported if you don't want it to tip. Sometimes it's really in the center, but if one side of the object is heavier, then the center of gravity will be on that side.

Greeting = A way to say hello.

Trite = Short and not serious.

Emphasis = Some parts louder.

Hovering = Literally, floating around. Figuratively, present but in no particular order.

Track = Continue to notice.

Pre-read = Read ahead of time.

Equipped = Had the tools I needed.

Intonation = Which parts are loud or quiet, high or low, and slow or fast.

Oral = Out loud.

For the trees = Because of the trees. Literally, it means the trees are in the

way. Figuratively, it means you're noticing them more. The trees themselves are also figurative, meaning details.

Forest = Figuratively, the main goal or general idea.

Meet the minimum quantity = Have enough.

Organic = Not designed by people.

Pruned = Trimmed.

Arboretum = A garden of trees.

Androgynous = Not masculine or feminine.

Unscripted guesswork = Figuring out what to say in each moment.

Falling into sync = Starting to do things at the same time.

Improvised = Made up on the spot.

Novel = New.

Lyrics and choreography = Literally, the words of a song and steps of a dance. Figuratively, the way people expect things to be done.

Chasm = A big hole in the ground.

Wield = Hold like a weapon.

Spontaneity = Tendency to do things without planning.

Flipside = Another way of looking at the same thing.

Chapter 10: Optimizing

Optimizing = Making something as good as it can be.

Cultivate = Help something to grow.

Electric scooter = Like a skateboard, but with a handle and a motor.

Empowered = When something makes you feel strong or capable.

Obscure = Hide.

Rationale = Reasons.

Relevant = Matters at the moment.

Mitigating = Making less bad.

Unqualified = Without a disclaimer.

Stretching my comfort zone = Figuratively, doing uncomfortable things.

Cringing = Flinching on the inside.

Epiphany = A sudden, brilliant realization.

Inevitable = Unavoidable.

Minimize = Make smaller. (Earlier, "minimizing" was figurative, but this time it's literal.)

Wildly = All over the place.

Twisting it to fit my memory = Changing myself to be more like I was before.

Budget = Literally, deciding how much money to spend on different types of things. Figuratively, deciding how to use the energy that I have.

Quantify = Find a number for.

Unit = A size for measurement, like an inch or a cup.

Chronic = Lasting a long time.

Ambiguity = When things are unclear.

Triage = Figuring out what's most urgent.

Prioritize = Figure out what to do first.

Belittled = Made less important.

Bystanders = Nearby strangers.

Factoring in = Thinking about while making a decision.

Autonomy = Freedom from being controlled by others.

Chapter 11: Uplifting

Discrimination = Being treated badly because of a fact about yourself (like your skin color, gender, or neurotype).

Giving the benefit of the doubt = Treating someone as if their intentions are good when you don't yet know if that's true.

Self-reflective = Thinking and writing about my own experiences.

Supervisor = A boss, but not the main boss of a company, just the boss of some of the people who work there.

In practice = Through action (not just written down).

Facilitate = Help others create.

Night and day = Figuratively, very different.

Befriended = Made friends with.

The dead of winter = The coldest part of winter.

Too smart for my own good = So smart that it caused problems, like not noticing how other people didn't like being corrected.

Single-handedly = By itself, without help.

Pitched = Set up.

Rejuvenation = Getting energy back.

Staycation = A vacation at home.

Medical bracelet = A bracelet with words or symbols that give information about the body or brain of the person wearing it.

Strictly = Very carefully.

Common knowledge = Something everyone knows.

Campaign = A bunch of ads created by one person or company.

Infer = Figure out.

Ritual = Special tradition or habit.

Gifts = Talents.

Cursive = Flowy writing.

Periscope = A tube with mirrors at the top and bottom, so you can look into the bottom and see out the top.

Defiant = Rebellious on purpose.

Love language = The actions that make an individual person feel loved.

The tables turn = When a person stops doing something, and someone (or something) else begins doing it instead.

Heart rate = The speed of your heartbeat.

Echo = Figuratively, a memory.

Lays the foundation = Is needed first.

Spring = Are caused.

Valid = Makes sense and matters.

Movement = Figuratively, when a lot of people start to believe and act on an idea.

Chapter 12: Beauty

Chaos = Disorder and unpredictability.

Invigorating = Stimulating.

Clambering = Climbing, but sometimes going sideways instead of up.

Shelter all dappled in green and gold = Leaves with sunlight coming through, creating a place that feels both safe and beautiful.

Brimming with = Full of.

Breathtaking = So amazing that it causes you to stop breathing for a moment, or sometimes to take an extra big breath.

Bothersome = Annoying.

Grating = Literally, scraping. Figuratively, painful.

Downright = Completely.

Ninety-five percent = Most.

Stain = Figuratively, a bad thing added to an otherwise good thing.

Influence I had narrowly escaped = Could have had a bad effect on me, but didn't.

Veiled compliment = Words that are a mix of nice and mean.

A hundred percent = All.

Linear = Literally, in a line. Figuratively, in an order that makes sense, with each thing connected to the thing before it.

Wholehearted = Enthusiastic.

Finely tuned = Sensitive, being affected by small things.

Inseparable = Cannot be separated.

Euphoric = Thrilling.

Necessarily = Has to be.

Subjective = Different for every person.

In the eye of the beholder = In the mind of the person looking.

Align = Match up.

Cultural conditioning = Something you only believe because everyone around you does.

Manipulative media = Ads that try to make you do something unnecessary, like buy a product to feel pretty enough.

Marvel = Feel awe and express it.

Puts a spotlight on = Figuratively, makes it easy to notice.

Turns me off = Makes me dislike.

Mannerisms = Ways of speaking or moving.

Put down = Make fun of.

Figures in pop culture = Famous actors and musicians.

Universally = By everyone.

Parov Stelar = An electroswing DJ.

Electroswing = A mix of electronic music and swing music.

Aqua = A musical group from the 1990s, known for the high voice of their main singer.

Guilty pleasure = Something you enjoy, but feel bad about enjoying.

Went wild = Started cheering loudly and dancing happily.

Arbiters of taste = People who get to choose what's cool and what isn't.

Compatibility = How well two people get along.

Sprawling = Stretching out in a comfortable, relaxed way.

Badge = Label.

Tainting = Staining.

Niche = Really specific and not well known.

Presentation = How someone chooses to look and act on the outside.

Toll = Cost.

Intrinsic = Built-in.

Malicious = Mean.

Boundaries = What a person has decided they will and will not do.

Struck me as profound = Seemed amazingly wise.

Break the script = Not do what's expected.

Uphill = Difficult.

Wounds = Hurt feelings.

Warrior for clarity = Someone who makes an extra effort to be clear.

Reaping the rewards = Getting good results after a long wait.

Unreservedly = Without holding anything back.

Merits = Positive traits.

Integrity = When someone's actions match their words.

Diving past = Going beyond.

Surface-level pleasantries = Simple conversation, usually between strangers, also called "small talk."

Heavy armor = Figuratively, something that's protective but also a burden.

Hyper-vigilant = Paying a lot of attention to make sure I act a certain way.

Self-preservation = Keeping myself safe from judgment and misunderstandings.

Spinny sundress = Figuratively, a feeling like twirling freely.

Authenticity = Being myself.

Molding = Changing.

Buoyancy = Literally, floating. Figuratively, happy and relaxed.

Redemption = When something or someone starts bad but then becomes good.

Cram them into = Make them do.

Struck me like a chord = Felt amazing and important.

Little did I know = I didn't know.

Embody = Express through my words and actions.

Colors = Affects.

Thanks

Cradling = Literally, holding like a baby. Figuratively, reading carefully.

Newborn manuscript = Early draft.

Nurturing = Literally, helping to grow. Figuratively, giving feedback.

Polishing = Literally, making shiny. Figuratively, making better through small changes.

Refine = Improve, little by little.