

# Kink and Autism

Hey listeners. And welcome to this month's episode now, and kind of excited kind of nervous for you to listen to this one. It's one I've wanted to do for a long while and si, and I have been talking a lot about collaborating on this one. Um, so yeah, this episode is about, uh, autism and ADHD and basically being neurodivergent and how that interacts with.

Being a kinky person or someone with fetishes and how the two interact and inform each other. And I just found it quite interesting topic that no one really talks about much. , I kind of bare my soul in this one, but I hope you enjoy, , before we do that, I would like to thank our patrons.

We've got a few more this week. So I would like to say thank you to Stewart Timmins. Nick Payne, Adam Ferris, collarbone deco, very Brian C Harry hypnotist, uh, Matthew O'Mara. And just like to say you daddy's favorites, if you would like to be daddy's favorite, you can also sign up on our. 10 pound a month, , tear.

Your support means a lot to us. It helps keep the show going. It means I can upgrade my equipment and keep the editing to a high standard with, uh, tools I need. And I just want to say thank you.

Now, , I hope you enjoy the interview and on with the show.

[00:01:40] **Craig:**

Hello, and welcome again to the kinky boys podcast. I'm Craig. And today we've got a special guest from another podcast. We've got Si from the teabag and joysticks podcast. And together, we're talking about some of which I've wanted to do for a while, which is talk about being a person who's both kinky and on the autistic spectrum and the sorts of things that come up because of that.

So, hi, sorry. Okay,

[00:02:04] **Si:** Hello. How are we?

[00:02:07] **Craig:** good. Good. How about yourself?

[00:02:10] **Si:** I can't complain. I have coffee. It's a nice day. And the mood is good. So everything is awesome.

[00:02:16] **Craig:** Brilliant. So yeah, you and I have something in common.

[00:02:21] **Si:** Just one thing?

[00:02:23] **Craig:** Well, we have a lot of things in common, but for this, we are both neuro atypical. We're both on the autistic spectrum. We're both on the ADHD spectrum.

[00:02:33] **Si:** Yes.

[00:02:34] **Craig:** So yeah, and we're going to talk today about how that intersects with our kinky lives and how we do play.

## Definition of ASD and related terms

[00:02:41] **Craig:** Now I will say upfront being on the autistic spectrum is a broad range of things and just affects everyone a bit differently. So our two experiences will not encapsulate or represent everyone's experience with this.

[00:02:57] **Si:** Nope, absolutely not. The the thing to remember with autism is it, or while it is a spectrum of conditions and spectrum of effects, everybody has a different experience of it because of it being a spectrum. So the way that it affects myself will be very different to the way it affects yourself, which will be very different to the way it affects Joe blogs down the street.

And whoever else you decided to pick, you know,

[00:03:20] **Craig:** I mean, one of the things I've always heard is it's better to not describe it as a spectrum, but more like a pick and mix. Cause

[00:03:28] **Si:** I've not heard that before.

[00:03:29] **Craig:** cause some people can have sensory processing issues. Some people can have very few sensory processing issues. Some people can have communication issues. Some people can have emotional regulation issues and it's just, everyone has different matches in different things.

[00:03:46] **Si:** I've never heard it described that way before, but I like that the analogy that I've heard before is describing it, like disco lights. So like, you know, maybe this is going back and showing my age a bit, but a, used to be a thing that like the nineties in particular, like you would get these big box disco lights, and it would be separated and you'd have like so many of these lights on at any one point, but not all.

[00:04:10] **Craig:** Yeah. . So we will not be representative of everyone's experience and we've had in our selves very different experiences. So I think we should start with a base definition and some terms we'll be using. So ASD autism spectrum disorder is as we've discussed a group of disorders, which I mean, I don't like to call them disorders.

It's basically our brains work differently. This is what we mean when we say neuro atypical.

[00:04:44] **Si:** I tend to I can't even say it today. Neural atypical. The th the thing to remember about it is as well, it used to actually be a number of disparate syndromes, a number of disparate conditions that all came under a single banner about, I think it was about 10 years ago. They changed it. So when I was actually diagnosed, they didn't call ASD.

There's still a little bit of a controversy. It's about the way that I was diagnosed, because I was diagnosed with Asperger's, which depending on who you talk to is either a separate thing or part of the same thing or both.

[00:05:16] **Craig:** no, it can be like that. It's like, we've talked about both being ADHD. That's often considered a separate thing, but it interacts with the elements of like autism in a very interesting way.

[00:05:29] **Si:** Oh, for sure. Oh, for sure.

[00:05:31] **Craig:** Yeah. So, so it's basically often we think in different ways, we experience emotions in different ways. And we process info, sensory information.

So generally speaking, we process all types of information differently from a neuro-typical person.

[00:05:49] **Si:** Yep.

[00:05:50] **Craig:** Like one of the tests when I got diagnosed was the doctor asked me, so , when you feel a new emotion, what does it feel like? Does it feel like an explosion in your head?

[00:06:03] **Si:** Oh,

[00:06:04] **Craig:** was quite an interesting thing because yeah, emotions are very immediate and they are like big explosions of information in my head.

And I'm like, does not everyone experience emotions that way. You mean people would experience them different from that.

[00:06:19] **Si:** That's interesting because there's definitely times that that is the case for me, but I associate that more with being overloaded than I do general day-to-day emotion, but there's definitely times that that happens. I mean, maybe that's a good point to introduce this idea of overload which the idea of the thing with overload is so I'll describe the way that I experienced it, because the way you experience it might be slightly different.

Because one thing I've learned is everyone has a slightly different take on how this occurs. For me, overload is very sensory driven. It can be emotion driven, but for me it tends to be more sensory driven and it's I there's no necessarily rhyme or reason to it. It's slightly worse if I'm tired, I guess, but it's not a guarantee.

And it will be the ice. Sensation my senses start ramping up. So the sense of touch certain smells sounds, et cetera, will become more and more intense. And it, and even now talking about it, I'm getting tight, very tight as you can probably see. But so of I go from being on my baseline to everything, suddenly feeling almost like every sense is a pressure. So sound feels physical. A emotion can feel physical. So to like obviously touched us with like Sen everything begins, begins to feel like a pressure in my head. And when I hit a certain point, I can no longer manage and I will do one of two things. I either shut down and I not like catatonic shut down.

What sorts of I become almost non-responsive. And in that, in that, if that happens, I either just stop where I am. Or I, if I've still got enough in me, energy-wise because it, the energy drain is real. I will try and remove myself from as much of the input as I can. So that's usually I get as far away from whatever bright flashing lights are on whatever noise I can, because obviously I can't change the touch and the sentence, because sense, it senses all around you and light touch light you're wearing clothes or whatever light is going to be touched.

So he's like I try and shut down as much of the other senses as I can, which is one of the reasons if you ever see me out in public, I nearly always have, even when I'm with people, I nearly always have no suppressing headphones on because I bought noise suppressing headphones that I can, that have a feature on them that let voice through and nothing else, which massively has really, really, it's not a complete panacea, but it's like, it really helped me with that side of things.

[00:08:51] **Craig:** no, no. Yeah. You've pretty much hit the nail on the head. That's very much how I experienced it as well. It's sort of like, I cannot experience nightclubs because nightclubs like the music. Like constant surrounding pressure feels like violence to me.

[00:09:10] **Si:** Yep. I can understand that.

[00:09:12] **Craig:** So like I've never been able to really go to clubs or even bars.

[00:09:17] **Si:** If so, I'm, mine's a little mixed. I can do it. If I am with the right people in the right head space, it's easier if it's a bar I've been to before, because there's a familiarity and I know the layout, I've got an idea of what the people tend to be like. I've got an idea of like a lot of different variables that tend to kind of, they almost act as like anchoring points. But I can't always do it. And then there's been times where like, I've gone out with like I always referred to them as my family, but like, like the guys that I know, and like, we've gone like intending to go out on a night out and I've got there and going, you know what? I can't do this and I've gone back to the hotel,

[00:10:04] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:10:05] **Si:** you know, it's, it's, it's soaks, but it's what it is,

[00:10:10] **Craig:** Cause yeah, like that takes a lot of mental energy and that this is going to be a theme that comes up a lot because like one of the things I find helping with it is if I can freely stem, which we're getting onto another term, which is stemming so often part of the way autistic people deal with information, especially when we're getting a lot of information is to sort of channel it into physical movement.

[00:10:34] **Si:** Yes.

[00:10:35] **Craig:** So for me, I will flat my hands about, I will pace about swinging my arms. If I'm getting particularly distressed or overloaded, I will rapidly slap the back of my neck.

[00:10:45] **Si:** Right.

[00:10:46] **Craig:** Which my partner says it can be quite distressing to see me doing that, but because obviously I'm hurting myself, but

[00:10:52] **Si:** No, I think that's quite common. I've heard from partners, partners in the past, like it's, my, my stemming has changed over time, but I've heard from partners in the past. Like some of my stemming actions can be very distressing and I've heard it from other people, like from the outside because they don't, they don't know what's going on inside.

All they see is the physicality.

[00:11:12] **Craig:** yeah, yeah. And it what you understand is inside it is burning off and processing the emotions or the sensations. And it's like, it's actually giving me relief, even though it looks quite violent and rapid on the outside.

[00:11:27] **Si:** Yep.

[00:11:28] **Craig:** And yeah. So this is something we do, and this leads us onto another masking. And this ties back into burning through a lot of mental energy dealing with this.

[00:11:40] **Si:** Yep.

[00:11:42] **Craig:** So. You know, we live in a neuro-typical world. We live in a world with expectations and manners and societal norms built around people

behaving in a neuro-typical way. So there is a lot of pressure on people on the spectrum to conform to those standards, this, and when we do this is called masking.

And so it's essentially where, like we just talked about stemming is where you suppress stemming. So I will suppress the urge to flat my hands or slap the back of my neck and just sit there quietly. This takes a lot of mental effort and it also means I can't process the information that's coming into my brain or senses and. Yeah, it's an incredibly energy and mental stamina intensive thing to do.

[00:12:39] **Si:** It is, and I don't know about yourself, but it's not always a conscious thing for me. And it's interesting cause I'm sitting here and I can feel myself doing it. Cause it's one of those things that for me, from the way that I steam is I tend to tap

[00:12:53] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:12:54] **Si:** I tend to be like tapping on myself self or I am shaking my leg or people misread is fidgeting.

Which is interesting when I was late. If you want to talk about like how ADHD and Aspergers overlap, plight, ADHD, hyperactivity side of it can, sometimes we read is fidgeting as well. And sometimes it's very difficult to work out, which is which but. It's definitely something that, yeah, it's taxing, but it's not always, I think there can be a misconception that it's taxing in the moment and that's not always true for me if I am masking or I am working through it.

It's the day after the day, like that evening sort of thing, I'm going to be burnt out. But it's the day after that, it truly is because it's the day after once I've slept on once everything's released in my body, my body realizes almost like what is burned because at the end of the day, you're still trying to process what's happened in the day. The day afterwards is when he ate. So to catch you. And I I've always referred to it as it's kind of a social hangover. Because for me, one of the big things with my Aspergers is it's and this is kind of ironic, considering what we were doing now and what I do with the podcast. But it's communication.

I struggle with communication really heavily, like meaning yourself. don't take this wrong way. Look like even talking to you. So even though I know you

talking to you in this setting is a little bit draining to me because we've never spoken in this setting. We've spoken before, but we've not been on this kind of, kind of kilter scenario, whatever word you want to use here.

So I, I'm going to have a little bit of a drain off after this. I know this. And I actually have to factor that in and it's interesting because this'll sound really strange, but I forget. There are times like I will schedule myself and I will end up having to make cancellations because I will have scheduled too much in a not realized, which has been really problematic at times, quite obviously, because, you know, you've said you've committed to doing X, Y and Zed, and then, oh, I can't do that because I haven't got the, I haven't got the energy to, I haven't got the, you know and it's, it's honestly, it's a bit frustrating.

Like when, when, because for me as well, I'll do this and I'll burn myself out and I won't always realize I've done it. And so I'll keep working through the burnout,

[00:15:18] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:15:18] **Si:** which ends up making the kickback that much worse.

[00:15:22] **Craig:** Yeah., I literally had run those days yesterday. My brain just was not working. My executive dysfunction was through the roof. I just couldn't do anything yesterday because I had had such a stressful week that required me to communicate so much. it's just to go back to something you said, I find it interesting that it takes a lot readjusting to talking to someone in a certain setting.

[00:15:46] **Si:** Yep.

[00:15:47] **Craig:** So for me, a big stress is small talk when there's no sort of social script.

[00:15:53] **Si:** Yeah.

[00:15:54] **Craig:** That I find quite troubling and hard to deal with. Whereas in situations like this, where I am essentially communicating with a very clear agenda and script, I find that so much easier to do. There's no pressure to think on the spot as much.

[00:16:13] **Si:** I absolutely agree with that AA it's so in my brain, everything sort of has almost a situational context, which I guess everyone does. I think I say as someone who's not empty.

[00:16:32] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:16:33] **Si:** Shorthand flip neuro-typical for those aren't aware. But if things are within that context, I can flow a lot easier than if I'm in a context.

I don't know. So one of the reasons like, just to give you like an example of how this is working in my head right now for the listeners, like one of the reasons I find this slightly more difficult is because Craig mean, you know, each other to talk to each other otherwise, but we've never spoken to each other in this sense where I'm coming onto your show.

[00:16:59] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:17:00] **Si:** So to me, I'm not used to being on the back foot because when we do our show like my partner will tell you this, like usually on the show, I'm usually the one calling the shots going, right. This is how we need to do this. This is how we do it. And then in the back of my head, and I'm editing this at the same time and everything else, I'm not doing that here.

This is very uncomfortable for me because I'm not used to being on this side, which makes me sound like I'm a bit of a control freak, but it's not that it's more just, this is different contextually to what I'm used to doing.

[00:17:30] **Craig:** The way our brains read context is quite interesting. Just to go back to something you said about feeling burnt out, there is a phenomenon called autistic burnout and it is essentially from having to mask and generate the constant sort of mental energy to keep up with sort of neuro-typical standards.

Yeah, it does hit you hard. And obviously, yeah. There's like the day-to-day things where like you have to spend a day afterwards, essentially having what you call the social hangover, but it also builds up over time and like, so I'll be, yeah, there have been days where I've had to call in sick to work, just because I just didn't have the mental resources to process.

[00:18:08] **Si:** Yep. Yep.

[00:18:11] **Craig:** interesting. This has happened a lot less since working from home again.

[00:18:15] **Si:** But you're not having to mask on the way in and out of work and deal with people at

[00:18:20] **Craig:** because working in an open plan office is awful for me because it's constant sound stimulations. And because I'm sitting right next to my colleagues, I often feel like I can't fully stem. Whereas here working from home, I can get up. I can walk around, I can do whatever I need to do with my arms.

I can play with a stem toy if that helps.

[00:18:41] **Si:** Yep.

[00:18:42] **Craig:** And so what it means is I'm not expending all this energy, so I'm not getting the autistic burnout. I used to.

[00:18:48] **Si:** So I can, and can't relate to that because for me, I need a set space to do different things. So I was doing my dissertation when COVID hit and isolation was in big swing,

[00:19:02] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:19:03] **Si:** trying to do my dissertation work at my desk in my room, did not work for me because my desk in my room is where my media center is.

That is my chill out space. That is where I go at the end of the day to play video games, wherever that lets me turn my brain off. And that is what that space is for. So then trying to do work in that space doesn't work. So working from home for me is difficult because it's not the context to do that particular thing.

I'm one of these people that, that I, the working out at home, it doesn't work for me either for the same reason. And it was one of those things. Like there's a context to do different things, but that's the way it manifests for me. Other people find it so much nicer to do it at home things.

[00:19:58] **Craig:** I fully get that. It's like I have my work desk. If I'm chilling out, I go to look at my laptop on the sofa because that is where entertainment happens.

## Personal histories with ASD

[00:20:08] **Craig:** So one of the big differences between our two stories is you assaulted diagnosed quite young. I was diagnosed essentially three years ago, so I'm into my thirties and I only just get the information that I'm autistic.

[00:20:24] **Si:** Interesting. Because, so I was diagnosed when I was young, but we didn't find out for about three years after I was diagnosed. Not anyone's fault. Okay. Well, okay. I don't think it was anyone's fault. I think it was just a miscommunication thing, which kind of ironic if you think about it. But I didn't find out until I was in my teenage years and it's knowing has been a benefit. But it's not being necessarily the benefit that you would think because it's not like, oh, he's known since he was 13. He's been able to put all these coping strategies in and everything else. Yeah. I've got maybe a couple of extra coping strategies that I had to develop, being young and dealing with it and everything else.

It doesn't mean that there wasn't impact because there was like, I, I dropped out of college and just didn't engage with education at all after what was immediately mandated. Until a good few years later. And then I went back and got my degrees because I just wasn't in a place that I could do that.

And he was very much a mental thing. Like I just wasn't in a situation that I could do it, you know? And even now, like there's some, there's definitely some things that I still shouldn't like dealing with anyone I don't know is it's a struggle, Jesus. Like, I, I, I can be damn near mute with some people because I just can't get my head in a certain context.

And especially like, if there's additional pressures in that context, et cetera.

[00:21:54] **Craig:** Oh, yeah.

[00:21:55] **Si:** And it's, it's interesting because it's, I don't know if you get this. I don't necessarily want everyone to know. And I S I say this realizing that I'm coming on podcast talking about it, but like, I'm not one of these people that wants everyone to know and make.

Because I don't like it when people making adjustments has afters. That sounds because in my experience, people making adjustments go too far.

[00:22:20] **Craig:** Yes.

[00:22:21] **Si:** However, with that said, there are times I need adjustments and these two come into conflict because you don't want to raise your voice and say, Hey, I need these adjustments because you don't want to be the one that stands out.

But at the same time, these adjustments may be held. I think it's where do you meet that? Mark? And it's always a constant struggle in my head. Like how do I make this balance?

[00:22:42] **Craig:** So I'm not out at work to anyone, but my immediate managers, my managers know because they're the ones I make adjustments with. They're the ones I need to communicate this with. I haven't yet told my colleagues and I've been debating about whether I should essentially come out at work. And yeah, it it's difficult because one thing I've been picking out is, okay, is this me being sensible?

Or is this like internalized ableism?

[00:23:07] **Si:** I mean, I think that's going to depend on who you talk to as to where they come down on that. For me personally, it comes down to personal autonomy it comes down to how much are you willing to share with X, Y, and Z? So for example, the people that I play with, if they're a regular partner, they probably know I, if they're a one-off partner, probably not,

[00:23:33] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:23:34] **Si:** we're doing something that's going to reflect it because I know certain things do affect like miking sort of thing.

It's not usually something I'm going to bring up.

[00:23:44] **Craig:** Yeah. And I think that's a good point where we can start talking about how

[00:23:50] **Si:** Yeah.

[00:23:50] **Craig:** Cancun interacts. So, so your ref your, as I understand it, mostly on the dominant tender of things.

[00:24:01] **Si:** See, this is interesting. So I describe myself as versatile dumb. However, with that description, I am aware that my versatility is somewhat conditional. I was shocked. So a few years ago I had some, some specialist psychology work with an autism specialist and I sat down in the, in the first session and went, you know, I'm kinky, you've got boyfriend, this, that Nila, which, you know, I don't think they, they used to people being very blunt.

I don't think they were quite used to that.

[00:24:34] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:24:35] **Si:** And I, I noticed around Southern, I said, like, I have noticed that my kink shifts. So I will be dominant more when I feel that life is a little less in my control and things feel a little bit more or intangible in the day-to-day life. I tend to be slightly more dominant when I'm much more in control.

I tend to be more willing to go the other way, and I tend to be more submissive. This is not a hard and fast rule. And for example, in my relationship like I'm polyamorous, but in my relationship with, with what, like one of my partners, even though he's my only partner at the moment my, like my boy, Chris, who does the show with me, I am his Sur

[00:25:17] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:25:18] **Si:** and we have a very well established light.

I am his he's my boy. And like, that's I established dynamic, but we will occasionally switch that. But as a rule, I tend to present myself as more dominant because I'm probably slightly more comfortable in that role.

[00:25:34] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:25:35] **Si:** Because again, th there's the number of elements involved with it. But part of it is if I'm dominant in a scene, I have slightly more control in that scene, which means that I'm slightly more comfortable in that scene because there's less dynamics that are spinning me out in terms of that tax, I've trained to work it out

[00:25:53] **Craig:** Yeah,

[00:25:54] **Si:** that these are, this is going to make me come off as a control freak.

And it's not that it's literally that sort of like if I'm in the mainly or known position with a Dom, especially if Don doesn't communicate well, I can't do DMS that don't communicate well. I don't have to know everything you're going to do, but at least communicate with me. It's, it doesn't work for me because my mind gets too caught up in everything else to actually be enjoying the scene.

[00:26:18] **Craig:** Yeah. Yeah, no, that, that, when you're saying that to me, it makes perfect sense. So I'm sort of the flip of that, where I'm versatile bottom. So most of the time I'm the bottom. And once in a blue moon, I will get in the mood to be dominant. And the thing I find with dominant being dominant is. I enjoy it, but it's also exhausting for me.

[00:26:43] **Si:** Oh, I'm not denying that for a second.

[00:26:45] **Craig:** Yeah. It takes a lot of effort. And at the end I'm like, oh, I can't do this all the time. Okay.

## ASD and Kink Roles

[00:26:52] **Si:** When me and my boy meet, we are always enrolled him enough. But we refer to. Times is having like an intense session versus a normal session. And so an intense session is, is very regimented. It's very much right. You are going to follow these protocols, you're going to do this.

You're going to do this. And I'm going to hold you to every letter of it. Whereas a normal session, there will still be an expectation of the protocols that will still be like, you're my boy. And we're going to do X, Y, Z within, obviously within what we've negotiated. But I'll let a lot more slide

[00:27:30] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:27:31] **Si:** because honestly I don't have the energy to track every single, you know and that doesn't work for some people.

And I get that. Some people want that very strict, very under ask. That's fine. I can do that on occasion conduit overtime.

[00:27:44] **Craig:** See, this gets into something with me, which is, this is more the ADHD side of me strict protocol terrifies me because I know I will not remember it. I will forget it. I will misread what I meant to do. You know, my object permanence is zero, so I will forget things. So I, the idea of putting myself into a position where I am given strict hard-line protocols is terrifying to me.

[00:28:11] **Si:** And you see that somewhat the opposite for me, because I'm one of these people. And again, I keep saying this, I guess this is something like, I guess I need to kind of went through it. But like I keep saying, like, I sound like a control freak, and I, you know, it's not a control thing. It's an your role. And just something thing, I guess, but like, I'm one of these people that works best with routine.

[00:28:31] **Craig:** Yeah,

[00:28:32] **Si:** Routine is a big thing for me. So protocol worked really well for me because protocol is just essentially another word for routine. If X then Y I, I wan I once had a chew to describe the way my brain works as being very much like Java Python programming in binary. So it's just like if X event do Y action type of thing.

And sorta, this is like the way that my brain wakes or protocol for me works really well,

[00:29:00] **Craig:** yeah,

[00:29:01] **Si:** I can't, I, one thing I found is I, I find very few DMS actually able to keep me submissive, partly because I need them to be fair. And partly because I need them to put that protocol in and usually I can find one or the other, but not both.

[00:29:13] **Craig:** yeah. It could be. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And it's very interesting seeing how kinks interact with like what, like autistic syndrome stuff. And this is really what the meat of what I wanted to get into. Like, how does it affect kinks and fetishes? Like one thing I've realized is a lot of my fetishes aren't because they're sexy.

It's because they give me a pleasure and release. I can't get elsewhere.

[00:29:43] **Si:** Yeah. I can understand that.

[00:29:44] **Craig:** mummification so audience listeners, you remember when we talked about information overload and how stimulation can be quite difficult to process being mummified blindfolded and having earplugs put in and being left, there is wonderful for my autistic brain because it means there's none of the bandwidth is being taken up and I can just dress.

[00:30:12] **Si:** I have a question for you on that front as a fellow artist, did you find it disconcerting the idea of doing it the first.

[00:30:22] **Craig:** Yes.

[00:30:23] **Si:** to me, I see the appeal in it, but at the same time, the idea of having all of that suddenly caught off is as unsettling to me as having too much.

[00:30:35] **Craig:** So the idea of it being a cutting off was unsettling. However, because of the way the play session went, I was put into bondage quite slowly. So obviously wrapped up and then like, you know, it was slow and central, which basically meant my information level was being gradually reduced,

[00:30:57] **Si:** Right.

[00:30:58] **Craig:** which

[00:30:59] **Si:** Interesting.

[00:31:00] **Craig:** And I'm not the first person to discover this.

So I briefly worked in the sex shop

[00:31:05] **Si:** Right,

[00:31:06] **Craig:** and we hadn't ordered to repair a vacuum.

[00:31:12] **Si:** right. Okay.

[00:31:13] **Craig:** Yeah, so, so we had an order to repair a back bed and the order was coming in from essential, a caretaker social worker,

[00:31:22] **Si:** right.

[00:31:23] **Craig:** had it for one of the people she was caretaking for nonsexual purposes. He just liked to go in the back bed before bed to essentially reduced stimulation to calm him down enough to sleep.

[00:31:39] **Si:** Okay.

[00:31:40] **Craig:** Yeah. And that was like, oh, wow. So this is literally just to help someone who's quite severe in their information processing issues, sleep.

[00:31:50] **Si:** That's an interesting solution.

[00:31:55] **Craig:** Yeah, but thinking about like weighted blankets, quite popular with autistic people, because obviously it gives that pressure on the body. So does the back crack?

[00:32:06] **Si:** True. Yeah, I guess so I see you, you say this to me in my brain goes, what, how did they get to that point?

[00:32:15] **Craig:** I D I wondered I'm like,

[00:32:18] **Si:** Yeah.

[00:32:19] **Craig:** like even someone who needs a caretaker still has sexual

[00:32:23] **Si:** Oh no. Don't don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying they don't. It's just more like, this is, I don't know. It's just it's not the context you expect to hear that in, I guess.

[00:32:33] **Craig:** yeah, exactly.

[00:32:35] **Si:** Okay. Fair enough.

[00:32:37] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:32:38] **Si:** No, I it's. It's something I've not tried, but it's, it's, like I said, there's an apprehension there of having it's to me, it's almost the same as having too much, like having too little, there's almost like a baseline I need to try and make it.

[00:32:50] **Craig:** So on this show, I've often talked about the fact that I'm really into hypnosis that a large part of it is because being there in a hypnosis state is also really a really nice vacation for my brain. And I think this is more ADHD, part of my ADHD is I have several inner monologues going on at the same time. I know not everyone has an internal monologue, but I do, and I have several. And the best way I can describe it is when I'm like going under and in an hypnotic state, I literally go down from about three internal monologues to just like one or maybe half of one, if I'm going really deep. And that is just so nice.

It's a nice vacation for my brain.

[00:33:39] **Si:** you see? I practice here. And I'm usually the test. I have yet to find a hypnotist that can take me under, because my brain just rebels because I am over analytical, which is useful for work, but not from a gels. And the ADHD part of me just doesn't happen. It just doesn't like it. I can't shut it down.

Like little, that little aside, it was funny at uni. We had a study session meeting if a group of friends at one point, and everyone's struggling through with a question and I look at this question and go, oh, no, like you do this and you do this and this and the linked it back through seven different questions.

And, and they just took one look at me and went, how is that? What do you mean? It's just like, You're never paying attention. You're always fidgeting. You've usually got like seven different things going on on your screen at any one time. How have you just managed to like pull the one thing that's managed to flummox everyone out and just rattle it off as if it's nothing.

And I'm like, cause that's how my brain works. My brain is not happy unless I've got 20 things going on at once.

[00:34:42] **Craig:** Okay. Question. Do you also do this and that? And I only just heard, this is something for people on the autistic spectrum, which is spoiling twists in movies before they happen, because you've figured it out ahead

[00:34:54] **Si:** because you've tracked. Yep. Sometimes not all the time, but yeah, when a good one happens and it gets me, he's like, oh my God. But like, usually like, I'll see the trope 66 moves forward and everyone's like, oh, it's like, well, we knew that was it.

[00:35:08] **Craig:** Like didn't everyone know that was going to happen.

[00:35:11] **Si:** Okay. It's like, wait, I am on it's like, you didn't see this.

## Listener question about masking in a scene

[00:35:16] **Craig:** We've got a few questions sent in by listener for us. One of them is being able to not mask or camouflage in the kink scene because you're in a safe space. So obviously we've talked about masking and, you know, in our natural state, when we don't have to conform to sort of societal pressures, we drop the mask.

Do, how do you find that works in a kink scene for

[00:35:37] **Si:** Well, I was going to say, do you want to take this first? Because I suspect that my answer to this may be slightly different to yours,

[00:35:44] **Craig:** Well, it's actually it's, it's been very interesting because in kink scenes, I never used to drop masking before

[00:35:51] **Si:** right?

[00:35:52] **Craig:** used to keep masking lately in kink scenes, I've actually been relaxed enough to drop that and it was kind of an emotional moment. Because the Dom I'm regularly playing with, he, he basically said part of what's fun for me is seeing me having an effect on a person.

[00:36:18] **Si:** Yep.

[00:36:20] **Craig:** And he really enjoys, especially when like dirty talking or just going through a scene or talking to me, he can see his words, having a really impactful effect on me. Start stemming in ways

[00:36:34] **Si:** Okay.

[00:36:35] **Craig:** like when I'm told I'm a good boy, I like physically shutter

[00:36:40] **Si:** Yep.

[00:36:41] **Craig:** because that's that my physical processing, my stemming with it.

And for him to see that is really pleasing and that, okay, this is where it gets a bit emotional that first time I'd ever been praised and affirmed for STEMI. And that was something really deep for me.

[00:37:02] **Si:** Hmm. Interesting. So for me again, it depends who I'm with. I don't drop my, any masking with a partner that I don't play with regularly because I don't feel comfortable too.

[00:37:23] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:37:24] **Si:** And I should say at this point, masking is not always a conscious thing for me.

[00:37:28] **Craig:** Well

[00:37:28] **Si:** I'm at the risk of this sounding a little able, it's like, I'm fortunate that my Stimmingtends to be not always, but tends to be self-contained in a point you can just come across as a bit fidgety or a little bit sort of nervous.

[00:37:45] **Craig:** oh

[00:37:46] **Si:** And so for me, like, I'm usually just like, I'm one of these people. I've always got music,

[00:37:51] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:37:52] **Si:** it's through my headphones or whether I'm an American, I've got music and growing up, one of my key interests was music. So I'm always counting beats. So I'm always counting beats on my fingers. So that's how I tend to stim.

Like I'm counting beats like the four, four or the three, four, so on through my fingers or through tapping them like my leg or something like that. So you don't tend to see it. So it's never really been something that I've heavily masked. And I say this about like partners that I play as one-offs like, I don't tend to meet many guys for one-offs. Anyway, if I'm having a one-off, it's usually at an event also.

[00:38:36] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:38:37] **Si:** So listen, usually music. So I'm usually counting the beat. So it's usually, I've either got an internal count going and I'm, I'm doing a mental steam, or I'm doing a tap switch or on tapping my foot or something, which just comes over as always just enjoying the beat.

If I'm with my partner, however, I will be more likely to drop certain things. But with that said, it's only me and my partner being together. So we've been boyfriends for three years and seven sub for three and a half. Which is a whole, like, if you want to know the history of that, that we did an episode on polyamory and our history is in there.

But we it's only maybe in the last. What do you mean just before the pandemic? So we we're talking about a year and a half year, like a year and eight, nine months ago that I started to drop some of it and I don't always do it. It's not a conscious thing necessarily, but there's, I'm definitely much more willing to say to him, I can't deal with X, Y, or Z today than I would have been with somebody else.

And some of my more regular partners, it depends how much they get it. So I've got a guy who I affectionately refer to him as my son when he first meets daddy, which is the only reason I don't usually do that. He's on play, but like, he's always called me daddy for some reason. So it's just become a thing.

And I will say to him, Like if, like, if we're talking even, cause we don't really do sessions as such, but if we're talking, like I'll be much more likely to drop it with him because I know he gets it and it very much comes down to, does this person have an understanding?

[00:40:23] **Craig:** Oh yeah, totally.

[00:40:24] **Si:** And that's so for me, I don't necessarily drop it in the session because I tend to find a lot of guys who don't understand it or have a misunderstanding of what it is.

Because like I said before, like I have found that people have a fixed idea of what autism is and when you don't conform to that, they suddenly don't know how to handle you.

[00:40:46] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:40:47] **Si:** And you know, you say you ask someone to describe someone who's autistic or point to someone who's autistic and they're going to probably point out someone like Sheldon. Which is interesting because like, apparently that character is not autistic, but they coded in such a way that that's how they come over.

[00:41:03] **Craig:** So yeah, I'll be, I'll be blunt. So they very consciously write him as autistic. They just would never admit it because that means they would have to admit that all the base of their humor is making fun of an autistic person.

[00:41:18] **Si:** I would hesitate to level the accuracy at them directly, but I can't say I entirely disagree either.

[00:41:25] **Craig:** To listen to this podcast, but they may, but

[00:41:28] **Si:** but, but then they're not going to point out people that are on the spectrum that everyone reveres, as if to go like, look, these people are as well, but you don't realize. But like people don't realize like autism doesn't always present itself in a way that you can tell, you know one of the things that I get when I tell people, it's like, oh, you're autistic. I would never have known.

And I hate that with a passion and I get it's well-intended but he doesn't come over that way. It comes over as patronizing is all. it, like, if anyone ever tells you they're autistic or, oh, they've got Aspergers, don't turn around and go, oh, well, I wouldn't know. There's there's no quicker way to make me realize that you don't know what the fuck you're talking to me.

[00:42:10] **Craig:** . It's one of those subtle things where people don't realize it, but it is just so infuriating because it's like, you know, so how does an autistic person act. What stereotype am I not living up to?

[00:42:24] **Si:** Yeah.

Autism is one of those weird ones that

it's,

you have difficulties in situations and your difficulties are difficult enough to be difficult for you, but the other person, because they don't see what's going on, don't perceive you as having difficulty, unless you're at a certain level, at which point, all they see is difficulty. And to them, it's a very binary thing.

But to ERs, it's really not even simply turning up in the first place has had 200 little battles that you don't realize, you know, and people talk about depression this way. And it's kind of the accepted thing that you don't understand what's going on underneath with depression. People don't realize it applies to other things like autism and things like that.

[00:43:15] **Craig:** Yeah. Yeah. And again, this ties back into talking about autistic burnout, the amount of mental energy it takes to force your brain to function in a way to fit into a neuro-typical world is

[00:43:29] **Si:** forget that just to get out of bed some days like this, that's not just the depression thing. That can be an autistic thing. Like just someone the will to do what, you know, you've got to face on what the, like the energy drain that that's going to cause can be enough to just immobilize you for a period.

[00:43:43] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:43:45] **Si:** Like when I refer to the social hangover, that's kind of what I'm referring to is just like, okay, I know I need to do X, Y Zed, but I burn all my resources yesterday night. I don't have the energy to do that right now. I just about have the energy to get out of bed and get a coffee, and then we'll see how I'm feeling.

And on days like that, like I have to take those, those steps one at a time. And literally it becomes a judgment call, every juncture and literally some days that will just be a case. I sat up

[00:44:14] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:44:14] **Si:** know that sounds extreme, but it's true. Like some days that will just be next to ed at juncture of, I sat up, have I got the energy to do my next step,

[00:44:21] **Craig:** yeah,

[00:44:22] **Si:** but you try and explain that to somebody who has never dealt with this firsthand.

And it just seems very alien concepts. And I get like your listeners right now might be listening to me and going, oh, well, you know, he's, he's not autistic. He's just depressed or whatever. No, like these are ongoing battles daily that if you talk to most autistic people, they'll probably turn around and say to you, yeah, that sounds familiar.

Or maybe that's not how I experience it, but I can kind of relate that to somewhere else within, and while we all have a different experience of it, there's some threads that do seem common. They just may manifesting different times or different ways.

[00:45:01] **Craig:** So I've been learning about the neurochemistry of a lot of this. So what you've described is basically the catch-all term is, is executive dysfunction.

[00:45:11] **Si:** Right. Okay. I've never heard this.

[00:45:13] **Craig:** Oh yeah. Yeah. There's like once you learn and look into ways to help with it, it's amazing. Like the brain chemistry, cause like the brain chemistry is amazing.

so concentration memory and organizing thoughts is all fueled by dopamine. Dopamine is like putting a fuel into an engine, autistic brains, especially people on the ADHD spectrum either do not produce dopamine or do not uptake dopamine. And This leads to a thing where our brains will rebel against any

task that does not produce dopamine, because it knows it is essentially going to stop.

[00:45:57] **Si:** Yep.

[00:45:58] **Craig:** The brain is going, if you make me do this task, I will burn through what little dope for me now I have, and I will start to stop. So as a survival mechanism, I'm not going to do it

[00:46:09] **Si:** Hmm. Interesting.

[00:46:12] **Craig:** I can describe it is this is going to be horrible. So trigger warning violence.

But imagine if someone was forcing you to stick your hand on a hot stove,

[00:46:20] **Si:** Yeah. I see where you're

[00:46:22] **Craig:** overcome a mental barrier to force yourself to do that. That's what it's like having executive dysfunction, but it's for shit. Like I'm

[00:46:32] **Si:** Getting out of bed.

[00:46:33] **Craig:** Yeah. I'm getting out of bed showering, like.

[00:46:37] **Si:** No, I start my day everyday. I start my day everyday on my phone. I don't, I don't get, I don't say et cetera. It's not everyday, either on my phone or on my tablet, reading a comic. I'm literally that I built that into my routine. I didn't know that you say about the executive functioning. It makes me wonder.

[00:46:56] **Craig:** because that is a source of both me. It's like, whenever I do something I don't want to do I put on a podcast, I really enjoy or music. I really enjoy because that replenishes my dopamine

[00:47:07] **Si:** Hmm, interesting. I'm going to have to look into that more.

[00:47:10] **Craig:** Oh yeah. Yeah. It's like the neurochemistry behind it is amazing and it starts to make stuff that just seems weird.

It makes so much more sense.

[00:47:18] **Si:** Now. I'm going to have to read into that more.

[00:47:20] **Craig:** Hmm.

And this is part of like the ADHD autistic experience, because we both found out at different times in our lives, the amount, the lack of information you get. Like is insane. Like,

[00:47:36] **Si:** the diagnosis going your way?

[00:47:38] **Craig:** yeah. Yeah. That's, that's it. Everything I've learned like that has blown my mind and like improved my way of living and life and how I interact with the world has almost exclusively come from other autistic or ADHD people on the internet. Like Infomatic pictures on Tumblr, like tic talks about it.

Like ADHD tick-tock is amazing for learning about this stuff.

[00:48:03] **Si:** so I won't use tick-tock for a number of

[00:48:06] **Craig:** I fully understand.

[00:48:07] **Si:** Tik TOK is very endemic of what is wrong with the social media overall is the short form content, et cetera. I also have particular problems with its parent company, but that's a whole other issue I won't get into here.

I didn't have autism specific counseling until my later. And I've been diagnosed since I was teenager. Now part of that is because I was hesitant to have it, and that's a whole thing in and of itself that we won't get into right now. But part of that is access and knowing what to access and having that specific counseling specifically tailored, made a lot of other things sit in line doesn't mean it was a panacea, but it means that I understand certain things better now, and I can communicate certain things better to other people now as well. Okay. I'm very well. And I've ended up taking us on a tangent here, so I apologize.

[00:48:56] **Craig:** no, no, no something too important. Like there are probably a lot of people listening to this episode, just realizing, wait, you're just describing

what I go through and his like, yeah. It's like, so yeah, learn more. And unfortunately, to get a proper diagnosis is a long track

[00:49:17] **Si:** And yeah. And the thing is, if you all listening to the thing, I'll say, if you're listening to this and going, this sounds very familiar, there was never any harm. Like I obviously I'm talking from a UK perspective where we don't have to worry about the cost up front of doing this, but there's never any harm going to your GP and going, Hey, I think this might be a thing.

And if your GP is good, they'll sit there and go, well, why do you think this might be a thing and tell them, like I was listening to a podcast, they were talking about it. And so much of it links up. I'd like to be assessed.

[00:49:49] **Craig:** yeah.

[00:49:50] **Si:** The assessment may take time to come through, but there's never any harm in doing it.

There's only really benefit to doing it because even if you don't necessarily take anything from it in terms of, because let's, let's make it clear that Alyssa is you can't medicate. People have tried. There are organizations out there that insist they can cure. Right. Which are tosses,

[00:50:16] **Craig:** oh

Yeah.

[00:50:17] **Si:** has ever listened to our podcast.

I have gone on several rants about certain organizations. This is not a constant thing I've done, but like there's occasions, it comes up. But there are organizations out there that insist they can cure it or they link it back to vaccines or no, sorry, fuck off. It's a thing that happens. It's a natural thing that happens deal.

But it, you can't medicate it. And some people are going to sit there and go, well, what's the point in going forward and talking about it? The thing, the point is, if you understand yourself,

[00:50:43] **Craig:** Mm

[00:50:44] **Si:** you can then better. One communicate with the world to interact with the world because you start to understand what drains you, et cetera, because you start talking to people, et cetera, and I'm working it all out.

And actually this may sound really strange, but the autistic specific counseling that I got is a big reason that I am now so comfortable to stand here and go yeah. And kinky and everything else. Not because that's linked directly, but because through talking with the counselor, I got an understanding of where my kink fits with sorta, almost managing my condition to some degree.

[00:51:24] **Craig:** Yeah, like unpicking a lot of the things we pick up from the world is a monumental task, but it really helps.

[00:51:32] **Si:** And I guess kind of this is tangent, but this has kind of come back a bit. Your like the show notes here is like kingdom. Media is Amazon as an autistic special interest. And that can be a thing.

[00:51:45] **Craig:** Okay.

[00:51:45] **Si:** Now when we talk about this, you need to be careful of avoiding something called savant syndrome, which if you've ever seen any media that involves an autistic person written by someone who's neuro-typical, you usually see some ant syndrome tropes, which is, oh, you know, they've got autism and they, you know, they can't communicate or they can't talk or whatever, or they struggle with social cues, et cetera, which are all traits of autism different people, different effects, et cetera.

These are all traits of autism that can, that can manifest. Oh, but they really Excel in mathematics, physics, Sheldon Cooper medical, slight procedural stuff like, you know, Aussie could called the good doctor, the American show that's on at the moment. Or, you know, Pick X special interest subjects and all there is savant in no, that's not how that works.

That it is not necessarily uncommon for someone with autism to have a strength in an area that to some degree, like they will be weak in some areas and some stronger than others. So for example, I do struggle with with, well, I struggle with words, but that's not what I mean. I struggled with social cues, so I had to learn, and even now I get it wrong, but I had to learn by row social

expressions mannerisms picking apart what people mean when they're not saying directly what the horse,

[00:53:02] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:53:03] **Si:** That's something I've had to pick them up, but then like there's other areas that I do particularly well with any special interest areas, but that's me, that's not every person with autism.

[00:53:14] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:53:14] **Si:** It's not uncommon to have an area that they Excel in, but that's not necessarily savant. It's not, they are the best at what they do in this area. It just means that that's a particular interest.

[00:53:25] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:53:26] **Si:** So for me, music computing, even the podcast, like putting all that together, it all links into these areas that I work really well in.

And I, I, and I've ended up like structuring like my academic career, my career around the fact that it is one of my things, but it is something I do particularly well in and knowing how to play Australia. Really good way of coping with the effects of autism, but it's not always a panacea. And just because you're really good in one thing doesn't mean you don't have the burnout because that's the other thing that you always see.

This is the other side of savant syndrome. When you see Emedia. Oh, you know, they're a brilliant doctor. They're a brilliant physicist. They can do this all day. No, they can't. They've they might be really good at it doesn't mean that they don't have the same. Like I said, the social taxes, social hangover, the emotional crash.

[00:54:16] **Craig:** yeah. So

[00:54:17] **Si:** I went on a rant there.

[00:54:18] **Craig:** then in the night it's fine. So, so so we've actually skipped a beat because we should explain what a special interest is. It's

[00:54:25] **Si:** Yes, we showed. Sorry.

[00:54:26] **Craig:** autistic people have not just one, sometimes several topics that they are really intensely interested in and often they will talk, especially people notice in spectrum that struggle with social cues.

We'll just talk at length about said topic.

[00:54:45] **Si:** Like I just did.

[00:54:46] **Craig:** Yeah. Like I knew a gentlemen that was really into cats. Like he really likes cats and always bring up cats. And it can be like that just cause he's so passionate about them and like there's no mediation of that passion. Like I'm kind of like a folklore. I often say like folklore is my specialist topic and it's a common greeting when like autistic people are talking a meeting, it's like, so what's your specialist topic. I've had this quite a few times. It's it's like, like one of the things is I know quite a lot of autistic people and that's because I can communicate with them better. So before my diagnosis, I was I had people that I felt like I just clicked with and it was like, I struggled so much to make small talk and communicate with a lot of these every soft often not meet this one person who I just click with and I could really easily communicate with them and understand what they mean. And after I got my diagnosis, I realized all these people in my friendship groups who were in that category where other autistic people, we were just sort of having the same language I need to express in the same ways.

[00:55:59] **Si:** And I, I must admit there's been similar occasions, but I've also found myself very fractures with other artists because, and the way I've always thought about this, and maybe this is wrong, I don't know. But the way I've always thought about this is there is the neuro-typical language of the world. And there is the non-stereotypical language of the world.

But then there are languages within that non neurotypical language. And it's it's to give it an analogy that your listeners may be able to relate to a slightly more, as you mentioned, there are, you know, think about language. There is English and most people taught English in terms of like our listener base says, I'm assuming, but then there's also an, I'll use this example because this is what I know.

Like there's also Chinese,

[00:56:54] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:56:55] **Si:** you can get to people who speak Chinese, who cannot converse because they speak different versions of Chinese. Whether they speak Mandarin and Cantonese or in flight, even going one step further, they speak two separate dialogues of Mandarin, one north, one south, and there'll be differences in language there.

And so for me, it's like, okay, I can liaise with the neuro-typical. The non neurotypical world. I can liaise with some of it, but I can't liaise with all of it because I don't understand that particular way of doing it.

[00:57:27] **Craig:** Yeah. Oh, no, that that's totally a thing.

[00:57:31] **Si:** Yeah.

[00:57:32] **Craig:** I mean it's but yes, to go back to specialist topics as kinks I've definitely seen that. I've seen people who have sort of one king of one very specific kink that they're very into and want to do and need to talk about all the time. And it's like, this very much feels like a specialist topic.

[00:57:52] **Si:** Yup. I, I have seen this. I wouldn't say. Everyone who has a specialist, kink is on the spectrum, or this is the case, which I think is one misconception where fear of kind of perpetuating here, but it can definitely be a thing I know for myself, it tends to be the, I have, I mean, Greg, you already know this, but like your listeners may not.

If this is the first time they're meeting me, like I have a fairly broad range of kinks that I maneuver through, but I tend to be the type of person that when I do find myself move towards a new king, I won't necessarily take everything around liking and take it all in and, you know, savant it.

[00:58:45] **Craig:** Yeah.

[00:58:45] **Si:** But I tend to focus on it and find where my thing is within it.

Find what I want from it and stick there and work my way through one thing at a time. And like some of your listeners, we sat here and go, yeah. With that. That's what everyone does. And I, I agree. Yeah, everyone probably does this to some degree, but for me, it's like, if I'm in that position that this is the king

I'm going through right now, then like when it's a new king, usually that's the only thing that I do for a while.

And it won't be like, oh, I'll have this session where I'm doing manage. And this session where I'm doing, you know, I was going to say chassis, but I guess that's a variation on bondage, like hypnosis, for example, or whatever. Mike, when I started with the hymnal stuff with the boy we did a lot of hip. No, because I was trying to work out what I liked.

And like I said, I spent a long time going through like various forums and working out what works and what doesn't for me, et cetera. I'm like what side of the things I like to be on, et cetera. And then once I got that, that's locked in. I know what that is. I'm good with that. Not saying that's not going to expand further, but like I'm at a point that I'm comfortable with that, you know?

And it's almost like I always find kinky something of like a buffet. Like there is everything out and everything that you can try and everything is, you know, all, all the food of the world is in front of you.

[00:59:59] **Craig:** Yeah.

[01:00:00] **Si:** And do you want, do you want to try it? And I, I always say to people, it's just like, I will try most things as long as they are illegal.

I will try most things twice once to see whether it works for me and wants to see whether, like, if it didn't work for me the first time, was it just the way it was done or was it where I was in that moment or is it absolutely not going to work for me?

[01:00:23] **Craig:** Yeah, no, that's very weight wise way of doing it. And I think this taps into something, which is you have to be wary of pathologizing people's interests and behaviors. It's like, just because like how much of being an autistic person where you're really passionate about something is that you pathologizing it by saying it's your specialist's interest.

[01:00:49] **Si:** Yeah.

[01:00:50] **Craig:** And this is difficult because it's always hard to tell how much of our brain chemistry makes up who we are and how much is a more nebulous sort of. This is my identity. This is who I consider myself to be.

[01:01:04] **Si:** Yeah, absolutely.

[01:01:07] **Craig:** And it's, it can be hard cause obviously like, so I was diagnosed late in life. And once that, what that has done for me is I've had to go through and reevaluate a lot of my life, especially a lot of my childhood and it's changed and I do keep finding myself, oh, so that's why I do that because of my autism.

That's why I do that because of my autism. And it's like, I have to, like, I do have to stop myself from completely pathologizing myself and just saying I have interests of my own. I'm not just doing this because of my neurochemistry. I'm doing this because of

[01:01:42] **Si:** yeah.

[01:01:43] **Craig:** me. It's who I am.

[01:01:45] **Si:** I find that interesting because your experience of mine in that are very different because for me talking about, and this was going to sound very strange to your listeners that after talking for as long as we have, but talking about my Aspergers and talking about me are so intertwined that it's very hard to separate one from the other.

And it's very difficult. Like I have been asked by doctors, et cetera, before, like I've gone, I've gone along to a doctor who I've not been to before and they see it on my note and I, okay, well, what does this mean for you? And I can't answer that question because I don't know how to explain it because to me, where I start, where, sorry, where I stop and the autism starts, it's not a demarcation.

[01:02:40] **Craig:** yeah. It's no, it's something that, yeah, no, I completely understand that because I'm having trouble. Talking about this. It's like, because it is this thing that affects your whole life.

[01:02:54] **Si:** Yeah.

[01:02:55] **Craig:** It is literally you experienced the world in a different way. The whole world, everything in your experience is different.

[01:03:02] **Si:** Yep.

[01:03:03] **Craig:** And it's like, so trying to explain to someone that's never felt that is

[01:03:07] **Si:** Okay.

[01:03:08] **Craig:** I find it near impossible when I've been talking to my managers, like when I came out about them, I just could not articulate how, because it's trying to articulate how you experienced the world to people.

[01:03:22] **Si:** One thing that I struggle with as well is

trying to imagine a hypothetical And so if someone goes, oh, you know, would you like to do X, Y, and Z? I'll sit there. And I'm like, I guess, I don't know, because I can't visualize it, which can make hooking up. Interesting. Because you know, that's usually the kind of question that you get asked, oh, well, would you like it?

If I do this? And I'm like, well, I don't know until we're in that situation. And people always get really put off, like, if I, if I'm blunt with them and I guess this is kinda masking conversation to some degree, but like, if I'm that blunt with them, that's one of the reasons why I'm not, because if I'm like that, people are a bit like, oh, well he's a bit, I used to slide, but what do you want me to say?

Because I don't know.

[01:04:06] **Craig:** Yeah.

[01:04:07] **Si:** It's like, for, for me, it's like, if I'm doing a session, like a mom, like me and my boy have a very good relationship that he and I have done negotiation so much at this point that we know mostly what's going to be the case. And it's a case of if we're just in any negotiations it's to say, right, I can't do this today rather than this lot is on the table.

Sort of thing is, you know, kind of the opposite of how you do a negotiation at the start, because we've been together that long.

[01:04:36] **Craig:** Yeah.

[01:04:36] **Si:** And so that's really freeing to me because I don't have to try and plan everything ahead and imagine the scene beforehand, because I can't do it. It doesn't work that way.

And I always describe myself as kind of living in spontaneity. Not that there isn't regimented structure to things, because again, I know the environment, I know this, I know X, I know why he knows, so that sort of thing, but I can't my mind doesn't process and won't let me, you know, here's the 20 steps there, you know, you know what I mean?

Even though, but by the same token, when I'm in the social hangover, I know, I haven't got the steps to do three things for, for things forward, like, but that's immediate future because the moment I start looking any further than that, my brain just can't process it. And it's a very weird thing to try and explain this because it's almost a contradiction, but it's not.

It's just, again, the key word that keeps coming up contextual for me, everything is contextual.

[01:05:40] **Craig:** Yeah, no, totally like planning ahead of a scene, as I've said, is exhausting. And it's sort of being in the moment. And part of what I like about being a sub is you don't have to plan stuff. And the other thing which ties into like reading social cues is the social cues in a BDSM scene are very simplified.

[01:06:04] **Si:** Yes.

[01:06:05] **Craig:** like, you will be told what's happening.

You, you won't have to figure it out. You will just be told you will be asked and you can directly respond.

[01:06:17] **Si:** and it's interesting because I feel the same thing. You'd like you've said you don't like doing club events at enlight kink events as such. I enjoy kink events for the similar reason, because when you are at an event, like one of the ones I go to is colored and there's the social aspect in the play that happens.

And if you're playing with someone, you know, pretty quickly because the, the cues are very direct that that's going to be the thing, because they're either into you or they're not. And it's like, if you go to, if you go to a sauna or a bath

house, like, you know, very quickly, like something's going to happen, something's going to know there.

There's very rarely that always it isn't it not Dean is that you know, are they interested? And there isn't that whole light. Trying to jump through the hoops of neuro-typical communication.

[01:07:11] **Craig:** yeah, yeah. You can just be direct with

[01:07:14] **Si:** Yeah. I'm not saying being Dick with it. I'm just saying like it's a lot more direct.

[01:07:20] **Craig:** Yeah. And it's so there's One of the things I was talking about on this program is safety. And this brings me on to something which I always have to talk with DMS about when we're doing a scene, which is, as we've discussed overload is a thing

[01:07:36] **Si:** Yes.

[01:07:37] **Craig:** and autistic people deal with it in different ways, but the two big ones are meltdowns where you feel overloaded and express it, or like you and myself, you shut down now in a BDSM scene.

This carries concerns because say, if I'm in a very intense scene and I start to shut down, I cannot verbalize

[01:08:00] **Si:** Yes.

[01:08:01] **Craig:** I can, I physically cannot say stop, or I need to talk.

[01:08:06] **Si:** Yep.

[01:08:06] **Craig:** So I need the dorm to be able to read those signs in me

[01:08:11] **Si:** Yep. Which is one of the reasons I don't sub very much.

[01:08:14] **Craig:** yeah. Yeah.

[01:08:16] **Si:** It's, I've had it happen. And I guess, trigger warning around consent for your listeners. Like one of the early experiences I had of kink

involved bondage and this was a new guy that I was playing with and we'd met for coffee and things seem to go well.

So I went back to his, which is something I would not normally do either, but I was in a flow and I felt that I had a handle. We went to his, we had a session, but before the session started, I said to him, there are two things I need you to know. I'm autistic. Like sensory. Cause it can be a thing for me. I says because this is the first time we meeting you.

Absolutely do not like, I'm fine for you to like tie my hands, but leave my feet. Always make sure I can move. Do not pin me down. Absolutely. Do not pin me down. The session comes to an end or at least I thought it would come to an end and then he lays on top of me and I can't move. I couldn't even verbalize my safe word.

I couldn't tap out. I could, I literally froze. I have never been so frightened and that this is, this is, I don't mind admitting this. Like I've properly freaked out. I've never been so frightened. And then he lifts up and he must have known something was wrong, but he's like, you okay? I'm like, yep. Yep.

I'm fine. I'm just, I immediately removed myself from that session. And then he texts me afterwards. It's like, that was a really good session. I just texted him back and went. The one thing I told you was, do not pin me down. I do not communicate with me again because I just couldn't any, I mean, it was a full on, like I had just shut down.

[01:09:57] **Craig:** Yeah.

[01:09:57] **Si:** And this is, this is why I only like tend to sub with people that I've known for awhile and that I've got a handle on. Now for example, my boy on occasion will dominate me cause I'll be in that mood. And we've had a session before where I was fine. Like he was on top of me. We were in, in the moment we were going like, and then out of nowhere, the damper.

That's an analogy that might make sense to you. It might not dear listeners, but like, I kind of describe it, like when it's a physical overload, it's like the dam breaks and suddenly goes and suddenly everything's too much. And the dam broke. Like we were really getting into it and suddenly it's like, no trigger, no warning, no nothing.

Just the dam broke. And I started to, I could feel myself locking out, but me and my boy have a non-verbal safe word which we have because occasionally he will have a gagging or something like that. And in that moment I couldn't even rebel and it wasn't even actually conscious that I did this. It's only afterwards when he pointed out to me, once I started to come down I started tapping out.

And we have a repeated, we have a repeated tap. I'm not gonna say exactly what that tap is, but we have a repeated tap. And I didn't realize when I set this up with him, this was entirely Socratic. This repeats a tap is damnit. Yeah. Perfectly the same tap that I do when I'm stimming.

[01:11:25] **Craig:** right.

[01:11:26] **Si:** And I didn't know that I done this until such time.

It came for me to call on that. And I couldn't even like, I genuinely couldn't focus. I couldn't even think it's also not an uncommon thing. Like the I'd had with some my ex partners that we'd have a session and it'd be really good session, really intense session, really like really happy session, nothing going wrong at all.

But straight after that session, I would basically need them to essentially walk away and go home. And I would just be co fetal for about five. And it didn't matter whether I'd been Domo or like that would be a thing. And it was nothing to do with them. It was just, I needed that moment of recentering. And so it's important for anyone. What if, if someone, if you're playing with someone who is autistic, ask them what their overload looks like, if they know and what they need in terms of aftercare, because aftercare can be very, very different for someone with autism, because a lot of people talk about aftercare and they talk about, you know, talking and cuddling and sort of having that sort of tender moment and everything.

But for some of us that might work some of the time, but other times that's going to be too much. Because all we need after afterwards is we need five minutes of complete silence and nobody being near us because, and this was on really stupid. Like just my, my ex partner being near me afterwards is, and this was, let me be very clear.

They'd done nothing wrong at all. Right. But just them being in my immediate vicinity stressed me out. Not because they done anything wrong or there's anything untoward going on, but because them being in my immediate vicinity, put my defenses up and put me in a position where it's like, even though they're my partner, like there's someone around like subconsciously there's someone around me.

I need to be pulling myself together. I need to be presenting myself in a certain way, et cetera. And it was never anything to do with them, but I needed them to walk out the room for five minutes just so I can basically shut that part of my brain down and just let myself kind of come back into having grasp on my senses.

[01:13:45] **Craig:** Yeah,

[01:13:46] **Si:** And I always felt really I'd still do to this day. Feel really bad when I have to say that to whether it's my boy or whether it's another partner, like, because I feel like I'm pushing them away, but it's not that I don't want them to be around me. It's just, I need essentially to reconnect those little pieces of my sensory input piece by piece.

So as not to blow, it's like plugging things into a circuit. If you blow everything in at once, you're gonna blow the fuse. But if you do it gradually so that system's got time to compensate.

[01:14:16] **Craig:** Yeah. It's it does mean like aftercare safe words, situations like that will be different for autistic people. And this is part of why I wanted to do this episode because it can be hard to communicate that to people if they

[01:14:32] **Si:** Oh yeah.

[01:14:33] **Craig:** Yes.

[01:14:34] **Si:** It can, and

[01:14:37] **Craig:** Wow.

[01:14:37] **Si:** I think we would be remiss as well to not point out that some of this is trial by fire. Some of this is very definitely a case of being with the individual, talking with the individual and going through what might happen,

what may be their needs afterwards. But until you hit that point, you don't know for sure.

And flight, for example, like I said earlier, I struggled to visualize a hypothetical scenario. So I can tell you based on the experiences that I've had, that I've just relayed to you what's happened in the past, but I don't know how that's going to manifest in that moment with that person. When I get there, it may be different.

So with my boyfriend, for example, most of the time aftercare consists of cuddling and chatting. But with my ex partner, absolutely nothing that they'd done to cause this with. Like, we were just as close and everything else, but with them, I needed that silence. And part of, I think part of that might be a little bit of a personality thing because they were quite an energetic personality.

Whereas my boy will tell you like me and him are quite not, not sit entry, but we're very much more sort of constant level where, whereas like my ex partner, like he, he could, he, if he had sugar got help and like, I never saw him high on sugar, but I, I would dread too. Cause like he really could like bounce around and I love that about him, but you know, when I'm coming back, when I'm coming back to normal, after a session, it was too much for me to handle in that moment. And so it was very much on an individual individual base. So it's all well and good. You like, you can talk about this first, but also just have understanding that just because you've talked about it going a certain way doesn't mean it will. And the key thing is yet it's a little bit of a trial by fire and it's all about patients and how you communicate and how like you go about it.

And you, the key thing too, I would say if someone who's non autistic, who's playing with someone who is autistic, is to listen to what you're being told, even if it's not being delivered in the nicest way, because in the moment when you're in overload or you're just not generally coping very well, you can be unintentionally very harsh or come across very harsh.

Because in that moment, you're not worried about social cues. You're not worried about the attitude that's coming over in your voice. When you talk to someone you're not worried about. The 20 different Q markers that you, as someone who is near a typical as in like the domino or whatever this neuro-typical that you do subconsciously, because there's a good chance that we're having to do them consciously.

But in that moment we can't. So we can come over a lot sharper than is intended. And this is by no means an excuse for anybody, but it's something to be aware of.

[01:17:42] **Craig:** Oh,

[01:17:44] **Si:** Yeah,

[01:17:44] **Craig:** I mean, one thing I've done in the past is if I know I'm playing with an autistic person I tend to have an, I've been in the dominant position. I've done a slow wind down. So like you said, like giving them that space, I will quite endowed. And then like, I will put that as part of the scene towards the end.

I will put them in a blindfold

[01:18:10] **Si:** right.

[01:18:11] **Craig:** I will relax a scene in a way that I know will reduce their input. So like a peak. So we have this peak input and then Y as I wind the scene down, like I do it in a sexy way to give them the space and the lack of input to help them recenter themselves. Like you can integrate that into it.

[01:18:32] **Si:** Oh yeah. I'd that can definitely be useful.

[01:18:35] **Craig:** Yeah. And as we've talked about some points like your artistic behaviors and the way your mind works can work very well in a scene. If you understand how to integrate it properly,

[01:18:48] **Si:** Oh yeah.

[01:18:48] **Craig:** a barrier to be overcome. It's a way to understand how your mind works and work with it. Not against it.

[01:18:56] **Si:** No, I would agree with that. I would absolutely agree with that. I mean, for me personally, I am the kind of person that enjoys a scene to be fairly full. Especially when I am sobbing. Like I, and like this thing that I'm talking about where I, like, I just needed silence, like is usually if I was being more submissive because when I'm being submissive, I know that I need

somebody who will, I always refer to it as sort of pin me down and keep me down because otherwise kind of, because I'm more used to being dominant.

That's portion of my brain starts running. If you, if I can get someone that can keep me down and being submissive in the scene, that's what I need. So that kind of wind back. It doesn't always work for me. So as much as it can be a little bit intense, like I sometimes need that it's going to be intense right up until the last minute.

And then I'm going to give you some silence to come back, you know,

[01:19:57] **Craig:** yeah.

[01:19:57] **Si:** but that's, that's the way that I experienced it, you know?

[01:20:00] **Craig:** Yeah, because again, all autistic people are different as all people are different and you need to listen to your partner and talk to them about what they need. Like, there's nothing here that isn't like the standard rules of BDSM in a way.

[01:20:13] **Si:** Yeah.

[01:20:14] **Craig:** So just communication and understanding your partner's needs.

[01:20:18] **Si:** This is all SSE of rack.

[01:20:20] **Craig:** yeah, it's just with autistic people though. Needs maybe a bit more outside of what you're normally used to. Okay.

[01:20:27] **Si:** No, I absolutely. I basically have nothing to add there because I absolutely agree.

[01:20:31] **Craig:** Yeah. So I think that's a good place to leave it because obviously this is a huge topic of, we can talk about it for ages, but I think that's a good natural place to leave

[01:20:39] **Si:** Yeah. I would agree with that.

[01:20:41] **Craig:** So yeah. Thank you very much for coming on. I've been wanting to do, have you, Andre is like do a co-lab as the kids say

[01:20:50] **Si:** No, I, I do appreciate that. And at some point, I mean, we've been discussing in the background. I won't say what yet, what we've been discussing in the background to get you over until I show at some point.

[01:20:59] **Craig:** love.

[01:21:00] **Si:** It's been nice. If you don't mind me giving you a quick shameless plug.

[01:21:05] **Craig:** I was going to say, where can people find you?

[01:21:08] **Si:** so if you want to hear more from me and I promise I'm not always quite as intense as I've been on here today you can find me and my mobile.

Chris over art teabags and joysticks. We are a, we, we describe ourselves as the kinky video game podcast. So like the first half of our show is usually discussing video games or current events. Second half of our show is always a semi specialist's topic. So we'll, we will talk about, we've done episodes on polyamory.

We've done episodes on chastity. We usually like have a kink back off of the episode and a flight more current event in gaming front half. Sometimes we kind of combine the two which is how we worked out that Darth Vader is probably a leather daddy. But yet you can find us the easiest way to find us is we are at TB.

Just about everywhere. We're on Instagram, we're on Twitter, we're on mastered on on the Wolf group. And we are on Spotify and everything else, like every major platform that you can find is on.

[01:22:04] **Craig:** Yep. Like I highly recommend your show. I've I always find it very informative and very fun to listen to.

[01:22:12] **Si:** Thank you. The thing that we try and do is like, just for your listeners. So they know, like, we'd say we tend to approach each topic as a conversation. It's not necessarily, this is what this is. It's more, we are two

Kingston's who sit down and go, you know, where's our take on this particular thing and we'll try and bring people on when we can and talk about particular things.

But yeah. Yeah.

[01:22:32] **Craig:** Cool. So as always listeners, I hope you enjoyed listening and play safe.

[01:22:38] **Si:** Thank you.