

# Masking Inventory & Cost Assessment

Explore which masking behaviours you carry, and the real cost they have on your energy, identity, and wellbeing.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinician: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is masking?** Masking is the conscious or unconscious suppression of autistic or neurodivergent traits to appear more neurotypical. While it can feel protective, it carries significant costs to energy, identity, and wellbeing.

## MASKING BEHAVIOURS — Which do you recognise?

Check any that apply to you:

### Social masking

- Scripting conversations in advance
- Mimicking others' facial expressions or body language
- Forcing eye contact even when uncomfortable
- Suppressing or faking emotional reactions
- Performing friendliness or enthusiasm I don't feel

### Sensory masking

- Hiding discomfort from sensory input (pain, overwhelm)
- Forcing myself to eat foods that cause distress
- Tolerating loud/bright environments without using aids
- Suppressing physical reactions to sensory input

### Behavioural masking

- Suppressing stimming in public
- Hiding special interests to fit in
- Pretending to understand when I don't
- Masking executive function struggles (appearing "together")
- Hiding or minimising meltdowns/shutdowns

## COST ASSESSMENT

After heavy masking I typically feel:

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The situations where I mask most are:

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**The situations where I can unmask most safely are:**

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**The toll masking takes on my body and mind:**

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**One masking behaviour I would like to reduce first:**

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## REFLECTION & INTEGRATION

**What would it mean to me to mask less?**

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**One safe context where I can practice unmasking this week:**

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