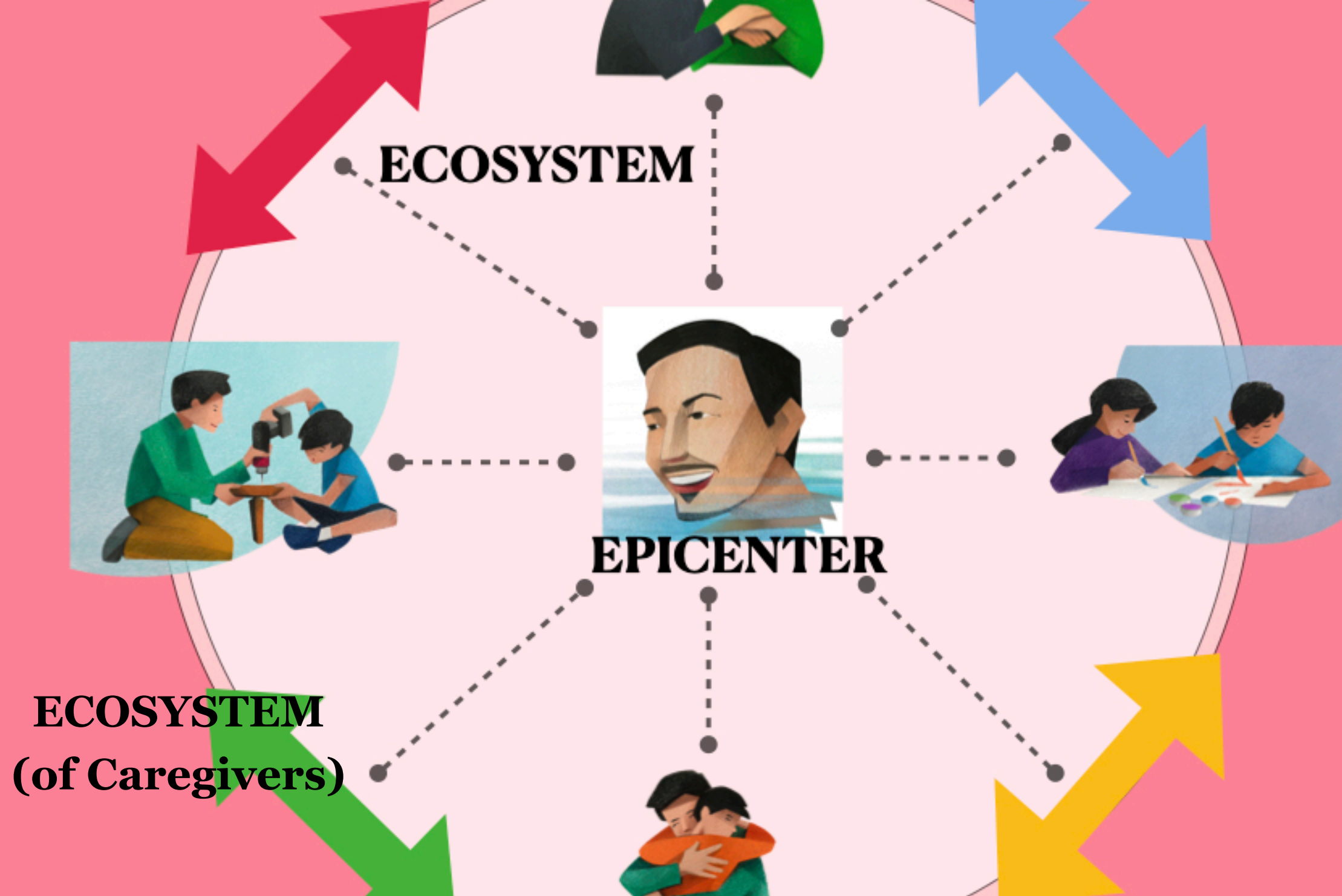




A Mini EpiEco Caregiver Resource Guide

Building a Universe Where Your Autistic Loved One (and You) Can Thrive

Created by



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EpiEco Pioneering Caregivers

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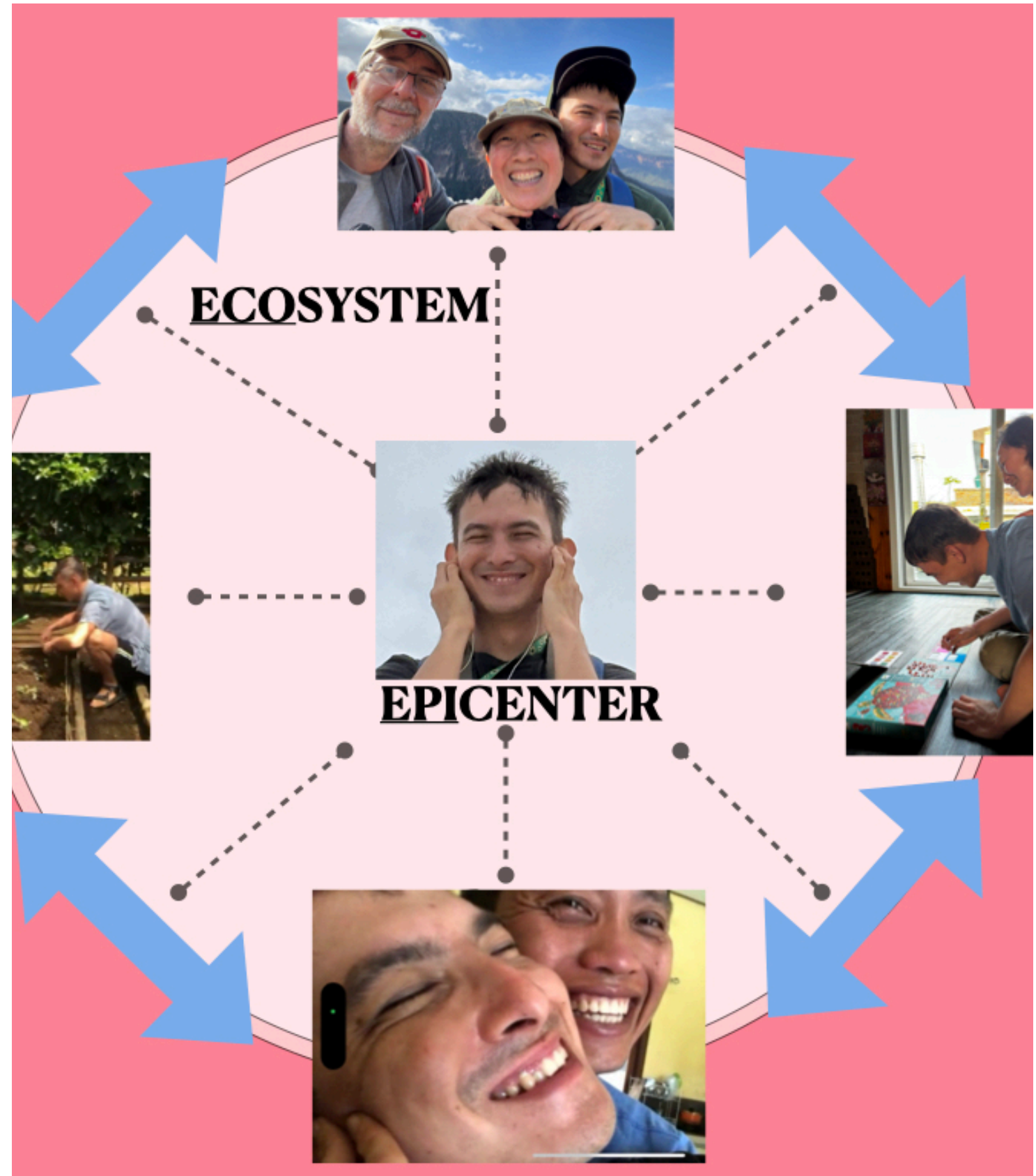
01 Context

This resource guide is a product of A Mother's Wish's pilot EpiEco project. Over two months, Kah Ying, an autism parent-consultant and EpiEco's co-creator, conducted a total of forty 90-minute one-on-one online sessions with 10 families of autistic loved ones and two online group sessions to teach them how to apply this autism caregiving model to their caregiving challenges.

EpiEco is A Mother's Wish self-formulated autism caregiving model: treating the **emotional wellness of autistic individuals** as the **EPICENTER** of an **interconnected ECOSYSTEM** of **caregivers**.

Everyone is connected not only to the autistic loved one but also to one another.

Our mission is to **establish EpiEco as the standard autism caregiving approach**, inspiring everyone to be their **best selves** and generating **virtuous circles of change**.



1. **Shift 1:** Get to Know Your Unique Child for Who They Are
2. **Shift 2:** Prioritise Your Emotional Wellness
3. **Shift 3:** Establish a United Ecosystem (Spouses, Family & Helpers)
4. **Shift 4:** Cultivate Your Allies to Expand Your Ecosystem



Shift 1

Get to Know Your Unique Child for Who They Are



When we try to make our kids conform to mainstream norms, it creates friction, meltdowns, and emotional distance. Stepping off that treadmill is the first step toward joy.

Make **Emotional Wellness** Your Compass

Before demanding a task or pushing a goal, pause and ask yourself: "Is this helping their emotional wellness, or am I trying to satisfy outside expectations?"



Listen with Your **Eyes**

Non-verbal autistic individuals communicate constantly through sounds, gestures, movements, and pacing. Atypical behaviours, even meltdowns, happen when a child feels unheard and / or overwhelmed.



Try This Today

5 Minutes of Unjudgmental Observation



- Observe your child for just 5 minutes without correcting, instructing, or guiding them.
- Reflect on what they are thinking and feeling from their perspective.
- What did you learn about them? About yourself?

Reframe the Meltdown

- When a meltdown happens, **breathe** and remind yourself to focus on this: "They aren't giving me a hard time; they are having a hard time."



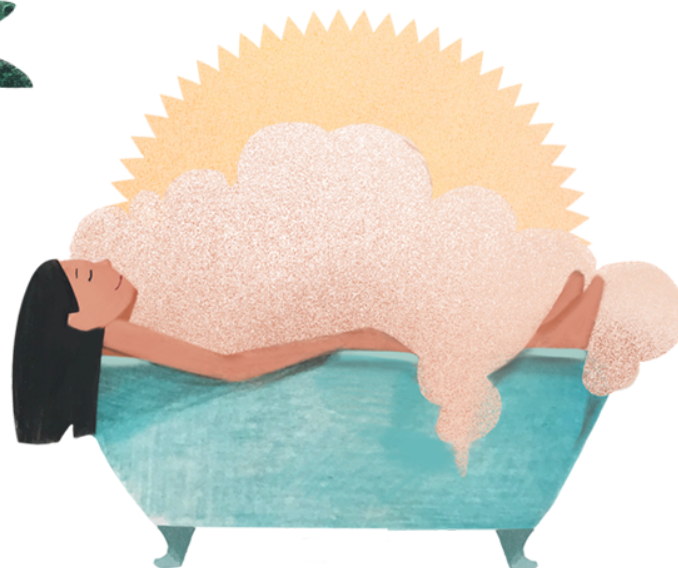
- Breathe slowly and deeply to shift into a mindful state.
- When they are calm, you will be ready there to embrace them with positivity.

Self-Care is a Bare Minimum, Not a Luxury

Don't forget to ask yourself: "How are you feeling?" If you are not feeling a sense of joy in your caregiving life, how do you think that makes your autistic loved one feel?



And from time to time,
treat yourself!



You cannot pour from an empty cup. Burning yourself out doesn't help your child. Focusing on your child's emotional wellness means focusing on yours as well. You are also the 'Leader' of the Ecosystem. If you are not in good shape, your autistic loved one's support system collapses!



(You) Eating well, sleeping well, and exercising are part of your autism caregiving plan. If you are not well, how can you look after your child?

Try This Today

Make **Calmness** Your Mantra

Autistic individuals are deeply attuned to how others feel. Your **calmness** is a caregiving tool. Cultivate it with activities that help you to feel relaxed and clear your mind.

- Ask yourself several times a day: "How am I feeling right now in my body?"
- Try these exercises while taking slow, deep diaphragmatic breaths to help you feel more relaxed. All you need are your hands!



Interlace your fingers. Lay your intertwined hands (1) on the top of your head or (2) at the back of your neck. Lean back to press against your hands.

Use your index and middle fingers of both hands to make tiny, gentle circles on any part of your face:



e.g., your temples and Third Eye (between your eyes at the top of your nose).



Shift 3

Establish a United Ecosystem (Spouses, Family & Helpers)



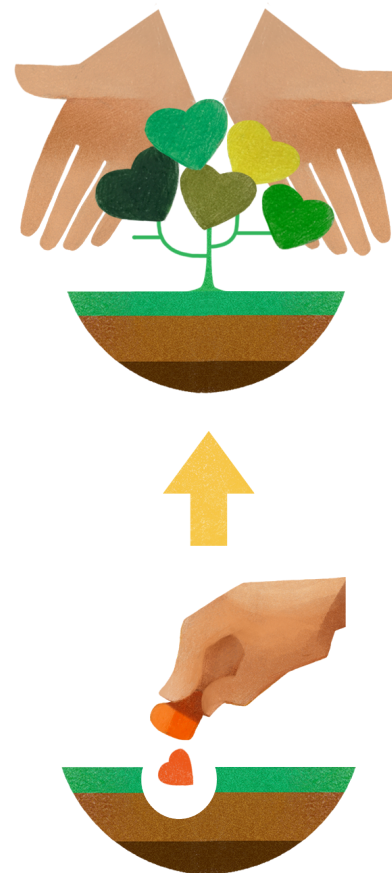
No single person can assume the caregiving responsibility without feeling overwhelmed. However, when you distribute it among others — spouses, family members, and domestic helpers, caregiving can be done with joy!

Generate virtuous circles of love and calmness to enable emotional wellness.

Use visual tools to note down instructions and activities for easy reference

Guide with **Clarity** and **Kindness**

Treat the caregivers in your Ecosystem as valued partners. Focus on HOW you can help them to succeed. Give them all the incentives and support to enable all of you to be UNITED in caring for your autistic loved one!



Try This Today

Create a “Care Cheat Sheet” and Share It

- Sit down and write down **ten non-negotiable things** that help your autistic loved one feel safe. **Start with three on Day 1** and work your way to ten.
- Along the way, share it with the other caregivers by sharing the list and modelling the behaviour.

Thank you
for your smile!



- **Here is a non-negotiable:** Say “Thank you” and mean it for every effort, big or small. Do that with your autistic loved one and the caregivers!

Hold Regular Get-Togethers to Stay United and Positive

- Practise relaxation strategies to promote calmness.
- Check in to see how everyone is feeling in their lives. To be able to help the autistic loved one, caregivers also have to feel well.
- Discuss activities and strategies to adopt for the autistic loved one so as to stay united and distribute responsibilities.



Shift 4

Cultivate Allies to Expand Ecosystem



Advocate with **Pride** and **Patience**

Help teachers, relatives, friends, policymakers, and even members of the public understand *how* your child experiences the world.

Your autistic loved one is NOT naughty. They are sensorily overwhelmed.

The broader world isn't built for autistic individuals. To make the world a more inclusive place for your autistic loved one, build a community of allies.

Educate and **Initiate**

Invite the promising ones into your lives. Ask them to help. Teach them. When they've spent time in your universe, they will care, and they will stay.



Try This Today

Create an "About Me" Profile

For **teachers/relatives/individuals** meeting your autistic loved one for the first time.



Organise a get-together to do your autistic loved one's favourite activity and take it from there.

Make an Invitation List

Put together a small list of people you would like to be the allies of your expanded Ecosystem.

You don't need someone who is an expert on autism.

The best candidates are calm, open-minded, and available for your autistic loved one.



Additional Information on EpiEco

EpiEco

An Autism Caregiving Model



By Kah Ying Choo with Adi Hariyanto

- The EpiEco Project: Making Emotional Wellness of Your Autistic Loved Ones As the Epicenter of the Ecosystem of Caregivers
- Autism Meltdowns: Alleviating Them with Love, Care, and Joy – Introducing EpiEco Training
- #APAC2025: Presenting at Asia-Pacific Autism Conference on the Key to Mitigating Autism Meltdowns
- A Breakthrough in Connecting with Profoundly Autistic Individuals: Introducing EpiEco
- Origin Story and Introduction of EpiEco
- What is Autism Really? Five Video Series

WhatsApp [Kah Ying @ 8163-4509](#) if you are interested in [immediate online sessions](#) OR to sign up on a waiting list for a potential EpiEco 2.0 project, pending funding.