



GETTING UNSTUCK: ANTI-INERTIA STRATEGIES

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OUTLINE

- **Introduction to concepts (lecture)**
 - **Understanding sticking problems activity**
 - **Finding and using strategies**
 - **Conclusion**
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GOALS

- **Identify different stickiness styles**
 - **Different strategies to suit different styles**
 - **Apply some strategies to real life**
 - **Get a little more done**
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AUTISTIC INERTIA

➤ **Autistic inertia is:**

- Difficulty starting things you *want* or *need* to do
- NOT just laziness or lack of motivation
- Also difficulty stopping

➤ **Inertia can have serious consequences, such as:**

- Financial loss
 - Social isolation
 - Increased support needs
 - Decreased productivity
 - **Decreased quality of life**
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**Why
do we get
*stuck?***

Planning

Motivation

Focus

Movement

Other?

Anxiety



Anxiety

Why do we get *stuck?*

- **worried about consequences**
 - **paralysed by fear**
 - **paralysed by trying to avoid anxiety or other things, e.g. imperfection, unpredictability)**
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Planning

Why do we get *stuck?*

- Overwhelmed by a complex task
 - Difficulty breaking it down
 - Difficulty prioritising
 - Not knowing where to start
 - Forgetting what to do next
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Why do we get *stuck?*

- **Can't be bothered**
 - **Failing to do things and not really caring**
 - **Need more effort to act**
 - **Not be motivated by the same things others are**
 - **Can be a symptom of something else**
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- **(Usually) interested in current activity**
 - **Hard to stop in order to do something else**

- **May not notice needs**
- **Put off things until 'finished' and then forget**


**Why
do we get
*stuck?***

Focus

A funnel is positioned in the center of the slide, with a dark red label that says "Focus" written on its side. The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of a glass being filled with beer, with the golden liquid cascading down the funnel. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional, with a light beige background and dark red accents.

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- **Looks like no motivation**
 - **Stuck despite being motivated**
 - **Changing position or moving is harder**

- **Fail to meet needs**
- **Often with apathy**
- **Often with freezing**



**Why
do we get
*stuck?***

Movement

**There may be other mechanisms
we haven't identified yet.**

**Why
do we get
*stuck?***

Other?

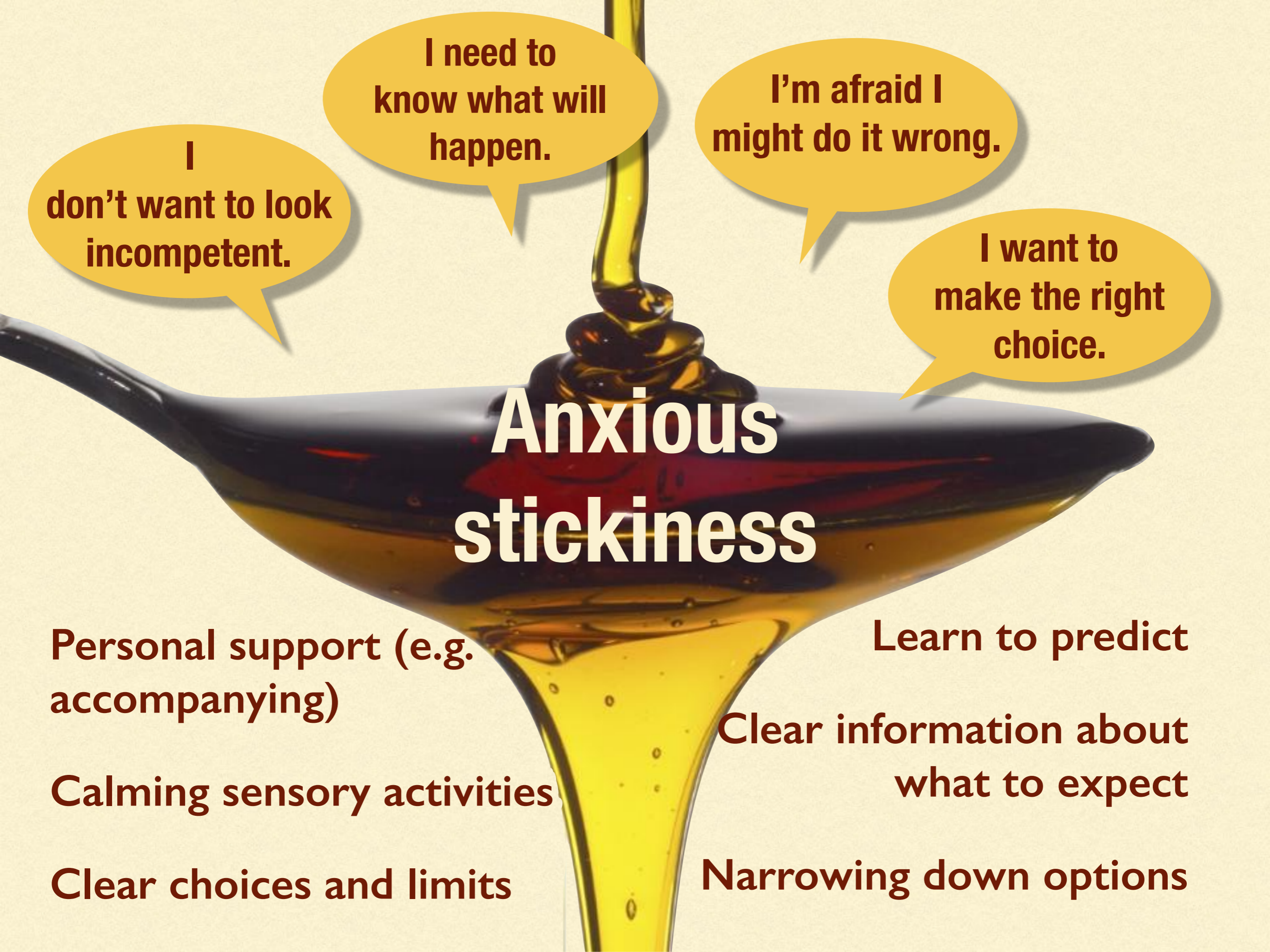




Activity

A close-up photograph of a golden liquid, likely oil or honey, being poured into a glass. The liquid is captured in mid-pour, creating a dynamic, swirling shape. The background is a plain, light-colored surface. The text "Problems & Strategies" is overlaid in the center of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**Problems
&
Strategies**



I need to know what will happen.

I'm afraid I might do it wrong.

I don't want to look incompetent.

I want to make the right choice.

Anxious stickiness

Personal support (e.g. accompanying)

Calming sensory activities

Clear choices and limits

Learn to predict

Clear information about what to expect

Narrowing down options



It's too complicated.

It's such a mess.

I don't know where to start.

I have too much to do.

Disorganised stickiness

Break things down

Prioritise according to *importance* and *urgency*

Alarms and reminders

Attach new actions to existing routines

**Keep environment organised
support to sort/
declutter**



I don't see the point.

You can't make me!

I don't feel like it.

I can't care.

**Don't
want to**

Treat depression

Explain the reasons

Whose priorities are they?

Use timers for undesirable activities

Appreciate the things that are motivating



This is so interesting.

I'll be there in a minute.

I just have to finish this.

Has it been that long?

Sticky focus

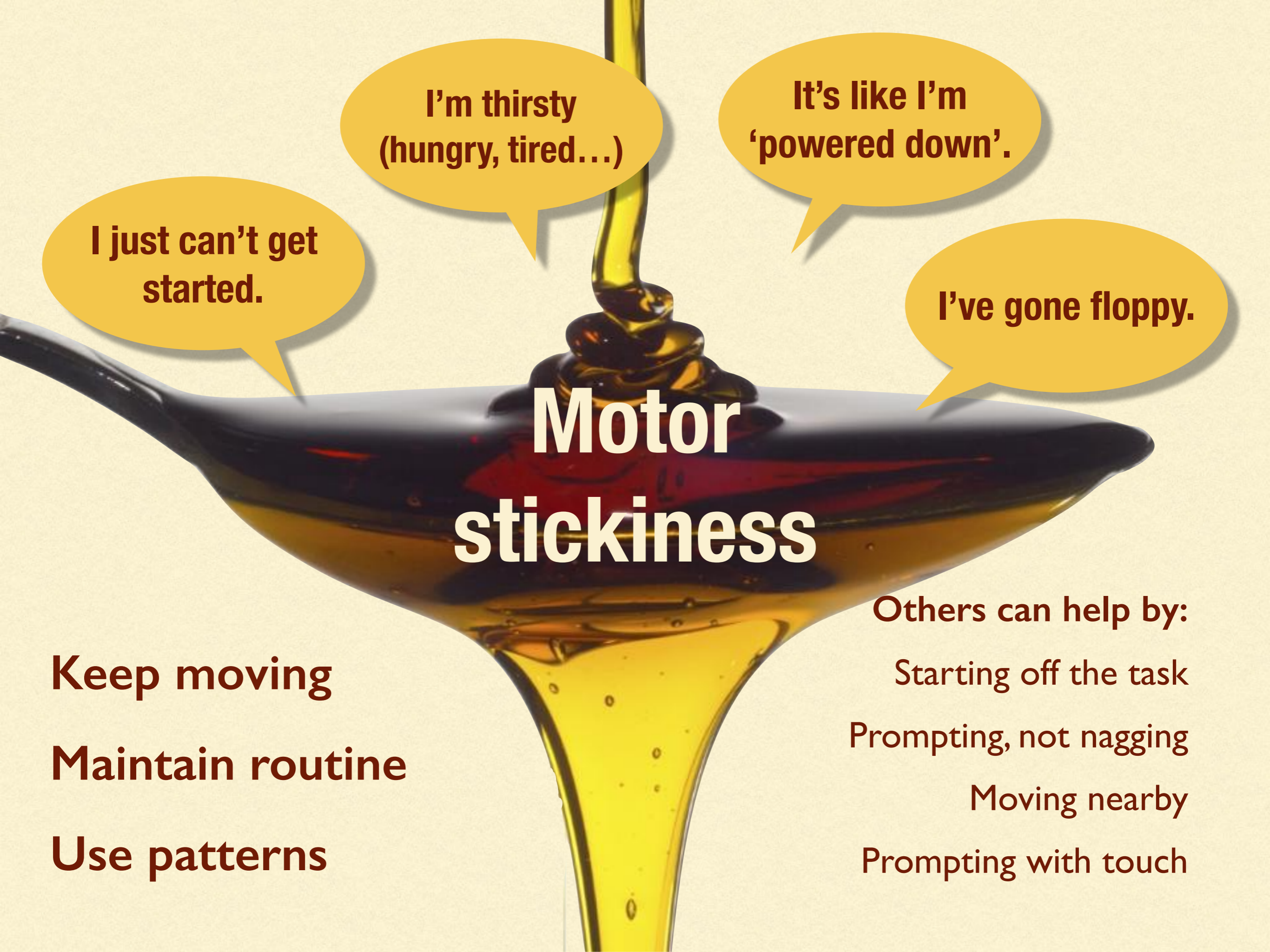
Use timers

Set your own rules and limits

Maintain routine

Do one thing at a time

Indulge hyperfocus - it's one of the great things about autism!



**I'm thirsty
(hungry, tired...)**

**It's like I'm
'powered down'.**

**I just can't get
started.**

I've gone floppy.

Motor stickiness

Keep moving

Maintain routine

Use patterns

Others can help by:

Starting off the task

Prompting, not nagging

Moving nearby

Prompting with touch



General strategies

Routine

Predictability

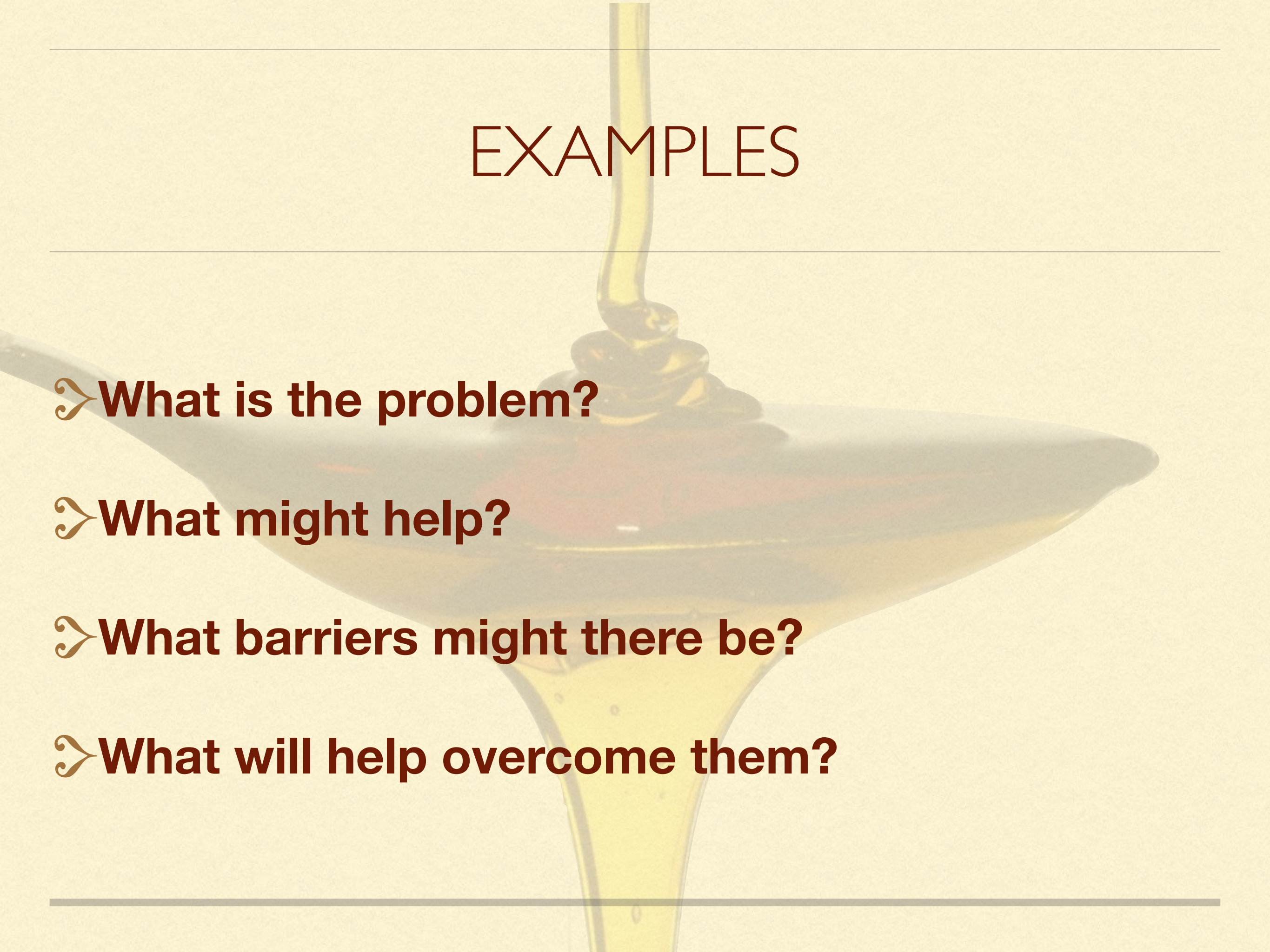
Organised environment

Regular exercise

Mental health treatment

Reduce stress and anxiety

EXAMPLES

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- **What is the problem?**
 - **What might help?**
 - **What barriers might there be?**
 - **What will help overcome them?**
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SUMMARY

➤ **Autistic inertia is:**

- Difficulty starting things *you want or need* to do.
 - Not deliberate!
 - Probably caused by many different mechanisms.
 - Not mentioned in research or writing about autism.
- ## ➤ **An important support need for many autistic people.**
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SUMMARY

➤ **Different reasons for getting stuck**

➤ Anxiety

➤ Planning issues

➤ Lack of motivation

➤ (Hyper-)focus

➤ Movement issues

➤ **Understanding reasons can help find the right strategies**

➤ Less blame

➤ Ways of explaining

➤ More success