

A Nervous-System-Friendly Approach to Housework

*(A Gentle Regulation
Framework)*





Housework is rarely just practical.

It often carries expectation, memory, and invisible standards.

If it feels heavy, that makes sense.

This approach is not about productivity.

It is about building trust between your thinking mind and your body.

1. Start while already in motion

Starting requires a shift in energy.

If you are already on your feet, moving between rooms, returning from outside, finishing another task - beginning is often easier.

Sometimes it is not motivation we are lacking, but movement.

2. Work small

Reduce the scale.

- One surface
- One room
- Ten minutes

Small tasks feel safer.

Safe tasks are easier to repeat.



3. Simplify decisions in advance

Decision fatigue drains energy.

Instead of asking:

- Where should I start?
- How much should I do?

Decide ahead of time:

- Assign rooms to certain days
- Define what 'enough' looks like
- Choose one small action only

Clarity lowers overwhelm and nervous system activation.

4. Stop before you get tired

Do not wait until you reach exhaustion.

Notice early signals:

- Tight shoulders
- Shallow breathing
- Heightened sensory activity
- The urge to 'just finish this bit'

Stop there.

Not because you can't continue, but because you are choosing trust.

Action does not automatically equal exhaustion.



5. Ease sensory demands

Make the easiest version the right version.

- Use wipes for ease
- Wear comfortable clothes
- Use headphones
- Keep tools simple and visible

Accessibility is not indulgence. It is thoughtful design.

6. Link tasks to safe conditions

Attach tasks to predictable moments.

- Hoover when the house is empty
- Empty bins on the same day each week
- Reset one room at a time

Predictability helps the body relax.

7. End clearly

Endings matter.

- Turn it off.
- Put it away.
- Take on breath.
- Say 'that's enough.'

Your nervous system remembers how things end.



Remember

This is not really about housework.

These principles apply to:

- *Work tasks*
 - *Emails*
 - *Exercise*
 - *Creative projects*
 - *Life admin*
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- ✓ Start while in motion
 - ✓ Work small
 - ✓ Stop before tired
 - ✓ End clearly
 - ✓ Repeat gently

A home doesn't have to be perfect.

It just needs to be somewhere your body can soften.

Your nervous system doesn't have to be calm all the time.

It just needs to know it won't be pushed past its limits.

This is the quiet work of reclaiming - not pushing harder,
but building trust.



I hope this guide has helped you approach housework with a little more gentleness.

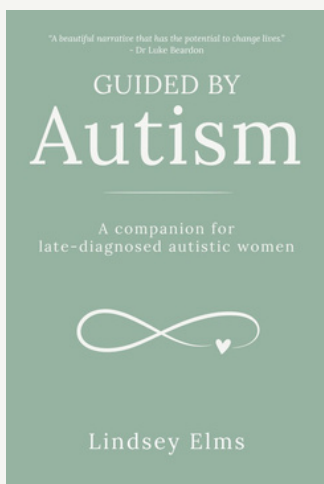
Having experienced how isolating and disorienting a late autism diagnosis can be - and how little guidance exists to help navigate it - I couldn't ignore it. Once I found my footing, I didn't want others to have to face it alone.

And so I wrote *Guided by Autism: A companion for late-diagnosed autistic women*

If this resonated, you can explore more in my book or visit:

lindseyelms.com

where you will find a quiz, blog and more.



Autism can be a compass, not a problem to solve.

Lindsey Elms

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