



Neurodiverse Adventures: Animal Feelings Scale (PDA-Friendly)

The Animal Feelings Scale is based on the Incredible 5-Point Scale and has been adapted to support individuals with Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). This tool helps identify emotional states and empowers individuals to manage their responses through self-awareness and choice. Each animal represents a different level of emotional intensity, with suggestions for supportive responses.

Level	Animal	How I Might Feel	What I Might Do	What Helps Me
5	 Tiger	I'm about to explode or shut down. Everything feels too much.	I might scream, hit, cry, or hide.	Give me space. No talking. Let me retreat to a quiet area. Don't ask questions. I need time.
4	 Fox	I'm really anxious or angry. I feel trapped.	I might try to escape, argue, or say no to everything.	Offer a quiet activity. Use soft voice. Offer choices (or no choices). Let me take the lead.
3	 Rabbit	I'm jumpy or annoyed. I don't like what's happening.	I might fidget, get silly, or avoid things.	Give me a job to do, a fun distraction, or a sensory break. Use humor or playfulness.
2	 Turtle	I'm calm but cautious. Just checking things out.	I might want to be left alone or take things slowly.	Let me go at my pace. Offer gentle encouragement or sit nearby without pressure.
1	 Panda	I feel safe, calm, and happy.	I can talk, play, or join in easily.	Keep things predictable and fun. Celebrate small wins. Let me feel in control.



How to Use This:

- Create a visual chart with the animals, their faces, and behaviours.
- Let the child help choose the animals and what each one means.
- Use it together during calm times to build co-regulation strategies.
- Offer it gently during distress as a support tool, not a demand.



Optional Add-Ons:

- 'Animal calming cards' with activities for each level (e.g., "Fox Time: Hide in a cozy den with headphones.")
- Soft toys or puppets of the animals to act out scenarios
- A magnet or peg chart so the child can show how they feel without speaking