**Interview Questions**

1 Can you tell me a little bit about yourself: how old are you?

2 If you know it, what is your diagnosis?

I’m looking into the subject of mate crime. When someone who is meant to be your friend does something to hurt you that is against the law because you have a disability it is known as mate crime. But to find out about that I’m also going ask you some questions about friendship and your thoughts and experiences on that first.

3 It is often said that autistic people find some aspects of mixing with other people difficult. What is easy and what is hard?

4 What makes you feel comfortable and uncomfortable?

5 Which aspects of interacting with people do you like/dislike?

People talk about emotional intelligence and ‘reading people’ from their body language and facial expressions.

6 What do you understand about this/not understand?

7 What do you think you get right or wrong?

8 People often talk about ‘getting a bad feeling’ about some people, that they are in some way dodgy, and it doesn’t feel right being around them. What’s your experience of this?

9 Research has shown that lots of autistic people want to have more friends but find it hard making friends. Have you found this to be true?

10 What are the good things about having friends?

11 And what are the bad things (if you can think of any)?

12 Have you ever thought it was better to be with someone even if you didn’t want to be around them rather, than be on your own?

13 Is anyone better than no one?

14 Have you ever experienced a friendship that wasn’t always good- what about it makes you think this?

Mate Crime Questions

15 Have you heard of ‘mate crime’?

16 What do you think this is?

17 Can you think of things that might be mate crimes?

18 Is mate crime like bullying? Is it the same or different? Could you tell them apart?

19 Are some people more likely to be victims of mate crime and why?

20 What sort of things do you think might make someone more likely to be a victim of mate crime?

21 What would being exploited by a friend look like?

22 Has anything like this ever happened to you?

23 Do you think taken advantage of something to be ashamed of? Would that make you feel less likely to talk to someone about it?

24 Would you talk about it with anyone? /Did you?

25 If so, who? /Who did you talk to about it?

26 What could you do to stop this happening to you (again)?

27 If there was some training for adults that you could attend that would help you be more aware how to not to make yourself vulnerable to mate crime would you be interested in going on it?

28 If 1 is absolutely not and 10 is definitely, where would you place your level of interest this on the scale?

29 Has this discussion made you rethink any of your friendships/relationships?

30 You’ve come to see someone you think of as a friend might not be. What will you do next time you come into contact with them?

At the end of the interview schedule I will sum up the conversation and ask whether it has been good/bad to talk about the things discussed and if the participant feels it has been upsetting in any way. This will enable me to assess whether they need any ongoing support/counselling to prevent/minimise harm to the participant.

Supplementary Questions if necessary:

A lot autistic people find it easier to make friends on line than in ‘real life’. Is this true of you?

How would you see Real Life differ from online friends?

Good things about online and bad?

Good things about real life and bad?