



Neurodiversity and Allyship in Tech

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Disclaimer

- This is my opinions and based on my experience.
- I live in the states and use American Medical System.
- I am not a here as repetitive of my employer.



Agenda

- Disclaimer
- Social model vs Medical model
- What is Neurodiversity?
- Language
- Autism
- How you can be an ally

Social Model vs Medical Model

Social

- Systemic barriers
- Impairment vs Disability

Example:

Replace stairs with ramp

Medical

- Curing or Managing
- Fixing the individual

Example:

make the individual physically able
to climb stairs

Social model of disability

Language

Potentially offensive	Autistic preferred	Insight and perspectives from the autistic community	Example of preferred language use in research
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)	Autism, autistic	Disorder is unnecessarily medicalised...	'Autism is a neurodevelopmental difference...'
Person-first language (person with autism)	Identity-first language [autistic (person)]	Identity-first language emphasises autism as inseparable ...	'A total of 125 autistic adults participated in the study.'
Normal person	Allistic or non-autistic	Allistic is an empowering term that reframes autism ...	'The comparison group included allistic (non-autistic) people.'

[Identity-First Language \(autisticadvocacy.org\)](https://autisticadvocacy.org)

Monk, Ruth, et al. "The Use of Language in Autism Research." *Trends in Neurosciences*, vol. 45, no. 11, Sept. 2022, pp. 791–93, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tins.2022.08.009>.



What is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is a concept where neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other human variation.

[What You Need to Know About Neurodiversity](#)

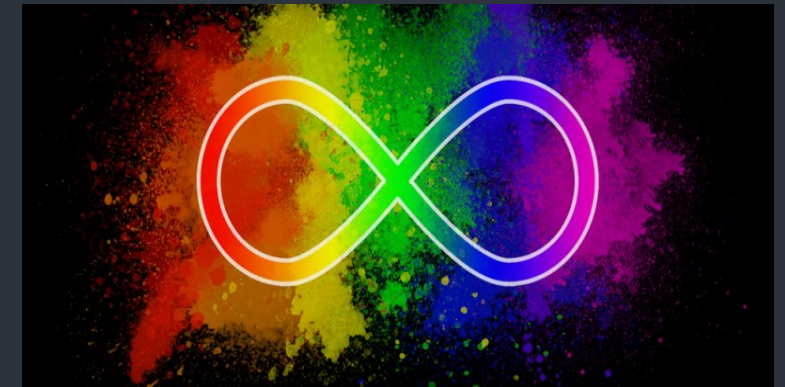


What is Neurodiversity?

- ▶ Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- ▶ Alexithymia
- ▶ Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- ▶ Dyslexia
- ▶ Dyscalculia
- ▶ Dyspraxia
- ▶ Epilepsy
- ▶ Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD)
- ▶ Traumatic Brain Injury
- ▶ Tourette Syndrome
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Bipolar
- ▶ Schizophrenia
- ▶ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- ▶ Speech Disorders
- ▶ Sleep Disorders
- ▶ Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Autism

- ▶ Don't use functioning labels
 - ▶ Talk about Support needs
 - ▶ Support needs can change daily
- ▶ Asperger's Syndrome removed from DSM in 2013
 - ▶ Hidden functioning label
 - ▶ Named for Nazi supporter
 - ▶ actively euthanized patients
- ▶ Can feel Empathy
 - ▶ Just differently
 - ▶ Double Empathy problem

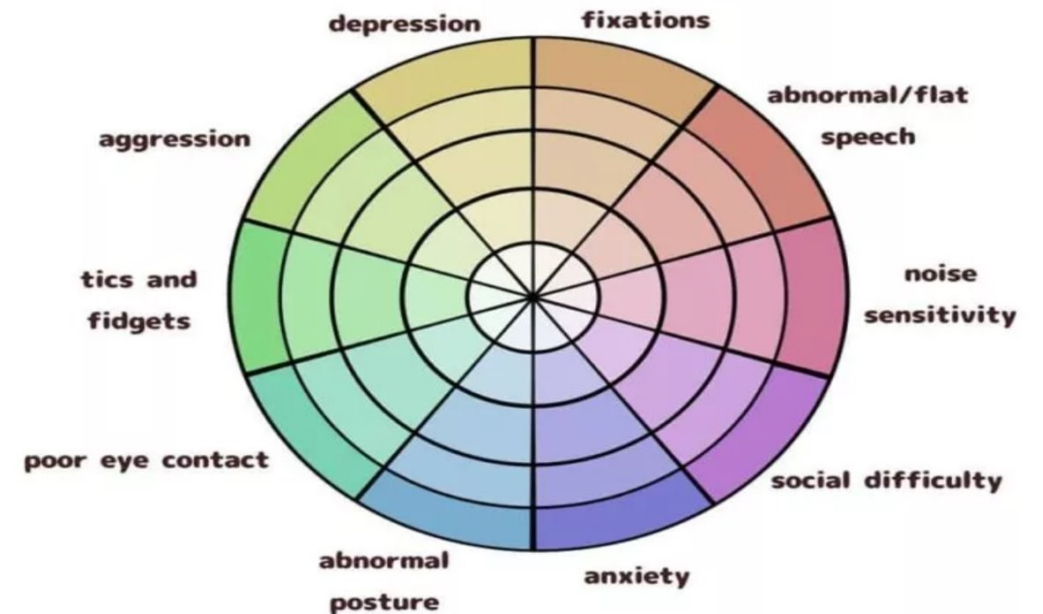


Autism Spectrum

what people think the autism spectrum looks like:



what it can actually look like:



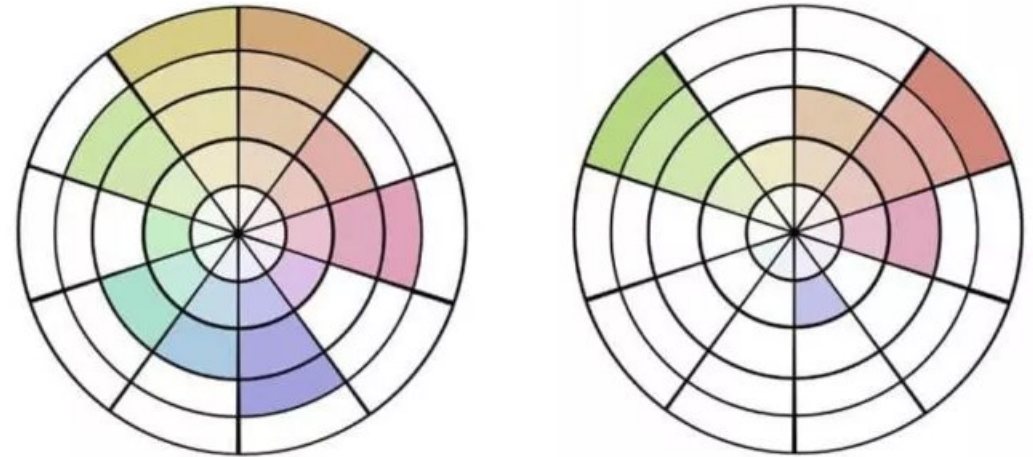
[This Graphic Shows What the Autism Spectrum Really Looks Like | The Mighty](#)

Autism Spectrum

► This Graphic Shows What the Autism Spectrum Really Looks Like | The Mighty

no two autistic people are exactly alike, but we shouldn't be reduced to "high functioning" and "low functioning" stereotypes, either.

my autism looks like this. my brother's probably looks like this.



we have the same "amount" of autism, just different symptoms.



Understand Yourself

What is your superpower?

- Know what you can do.
- Know how you see the world.

What is your fortress of solitude?

- know comfort zone
- Stims

What is your kryptonite?

- What makes your uncomfortable?
- What can trigger meltdown?



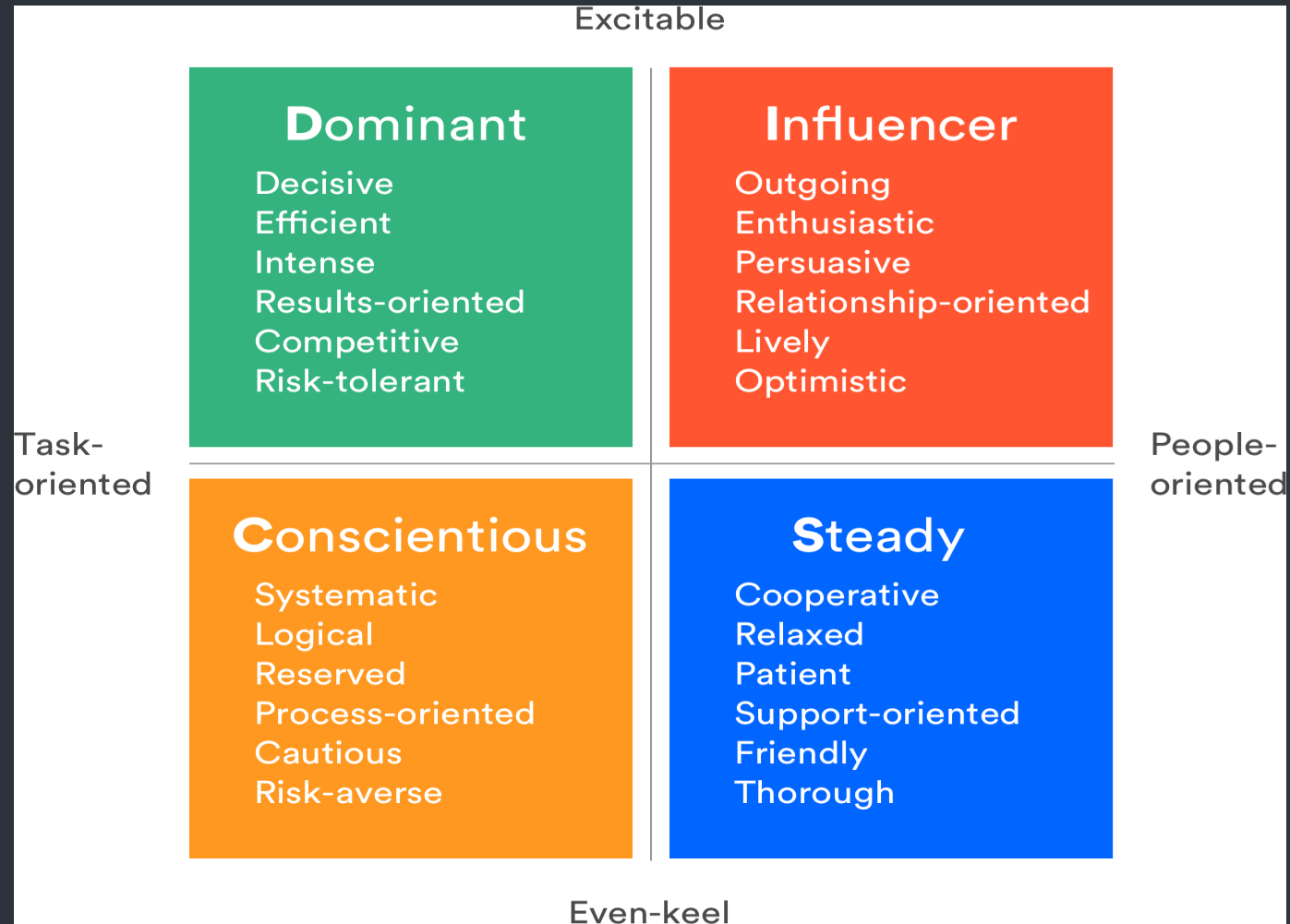
How you can be an ally?



The **successful** conveying or
sharing of ideas and
feelings.

Communication

Communication Styles



Empathy vs Sympathy

- ▶ Perspective Taking or putting yourself in someone else's shoes.
- ▶ Staying out of judgement and listening.
- ▶ Recognizing emotion in another person that you have maybe felt before.
- ▶ Communicating that you can recognize that emotion.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXSjc-pbXk4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw>

How Can You support Neurodivergent Colleagues?



[Focus \(monkeyuser.com\)](http://monkeyuser.com)



Battle for the thermostat: Gender and the effect of temperature on cognitive performance

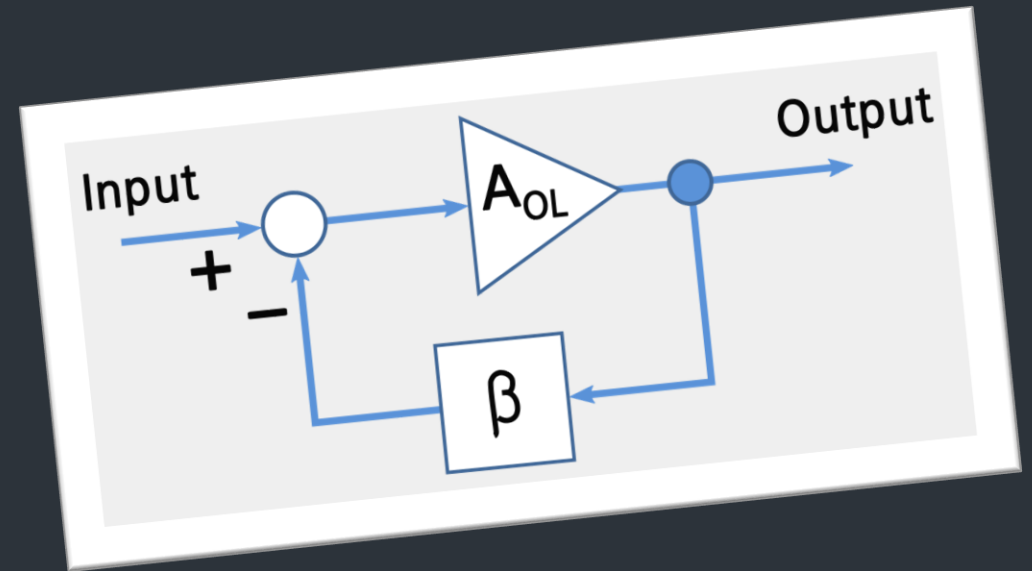


Meetings

- ▶ Invites with agenda
 - ▶ Scripting and planning
- ▶ Follow up emails
 - ▶ Summary with agreed action items with due/eta dates
 - ▶ Be as detailed as possible
- ▶ Eye contact is not a requirement for understating and focus.
- ▶ Clear and Direct communication.
- ▶ Walking/movement
 - ▶ Pacing
 - ▶ Dry erase board
 - ▶ Including virtual

Advice not Feedback

- Make a point to ask others for advice
- Take all input as their point of view
- Leave what is not helping you
- Take the time to reflect





Resources

- [Neurodiversity at Work: Drive Innovation, Performance and Productivity with a Neurodiverse Workforce 1st Edition](#)
- [Unmasking Autism: Discovering the New Faces of Neurodiversity](#)
- [We're Not Broken: Changing the Autism Conversation](#)



Questions/Comments?

Thank You!!



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