



Increasing Neurodiversity in Disability and Social Justice Advocacy Groups

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[Image above shows the rainbow heptagon used in the Autistic Self Advocacy Network logo. It is a seven-sided, equilateral heptagon formed by interlocking shapes in red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. A rainbow-colored silhouette of six people and the words NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US in black text overlap the logo. (Image from Autistic Self Advocacy Network, 2013).]

Summary

People with disabilities are underrepresented in social justice groups. Even disability advocacy groups tend to exclude members of the disability community, particularly those with mental and cognitive disabilities and those belonging to non-dominant groups, such as people in LGBTQ communities and people of color. This white paper focuses specifically on exclusion experienced by neurodivergent¹ members of the disability community within disability and social justice groups.

The findings discussed here draw on extensive discourse analyses of autism and disability rights advocacy and social justice communication, along with ethnographic fieldwork in disability rights, autistic self-advocacy, and disability justice groups. The paper starts with a discussion of neurodiversity. Next, it outlines ways in which people with neurocognitive disabilities like autism, mental illness, and intellectual disability are routinely disenfranchised from disability and social justice advocacy. The final section offers practical strategies that disability and social justice groups can use to increase neurodiversity and ensure that more neurodivergent community members are better able to access conversations that impact their lives.

1. *Neurodiversity* refers to variation in neurocognitive functioning. *Neurodivergent* individuals are those whose brain functions differ from those who are neurologically typical, or *neurotypical*.

Neurodiversity: An Introduction

Neurodiversity refers to variation in neurocognitive functioning. It is an umbrella term that encompasses neurocognitive differences such as autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, Tourette’s syndrome, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression, intellectual disability, and schizophrenia as well as ‘normal’ neurocognitive functioning, or *neurotypicality*. *Neurodivergent* individuals are those whose brain functions differ from those who are neurologically typical, or *neurotypical*.

“Neurodiversity is not a theory or a political position; it’s a fact, like biodiversity.”

- Steve Silberman (2015a), author of *Neurotribes*, a comprehensive history of autism (Silberman, 2015b)

The *neurodiversity movement* refers to the disability rights movement aimed at full inclusion for all neurodivergent people. This movement is led by autistic² self-advocates fighting for autism acceptance.

A neurodiversity perspective stresses that “everyone has a different mind, a different way of being,” and that we should

not “suppress these differences [but] accept and support them” (Camley, 2005). According to neurodiversity advocates, “neurodiversity [is] a natural and valuable form of human diversity which should be considered as similar in many ways to other forms of human diversity, such as racial diversity, sexual and gender diversity, and cultural diversity” (Walker, 2014). Increasing neurodiversity entails accommodating neurocognitive differences and acknowledging, including, amplifying, and celebrating the valuable perspectives of neurodivergent individuals.

Neurodivergent people are routinely excluded from key conversations that impact their lives. In high level policy discussions, social justice and disability rights activism, autism awareness campaigns, contemporary ‘mainstream’ media³ discourse, and everyday conversations, autistics and other neurodivergent people are often “erased, silenced, [and] derailed” (Hillary, 2013). These conversations are dominated by neurotypical perspectives that tend to frame neurodivergence as undesirable, as less than, even as a ‘tragedy’ or ‘fate worse than death.’ Such negative depictions reinforce stigma around disability and often misrepresent

2. Many autistics—particularly those within the neurodiversity movement—prefer identity-first language, that is, linguistic formulations like *autistic person* or the collective noun *autistics* that highlight autism as an intrinsic part of identity (see Brown, 2011). Some capitalize Autistic as a way of representing autistic community identity in the same way that the capitalized adjectives Deaf and Black do.

3. By ‘mainstream’ media, I’m primarily referring to major U.S. news network, large U.S. newspaper, and high traffic digital media. As with other references in single quotation marks, I’ve enclosed ‘mainstream’ in single quotes to signify that this term comes out of popular U.S. discourse, where references to ‘mainstream media’—or ‘MSM,’ as it’s abbreviated—are common.

the experience of neurodivergence. Further, when state agencies and policy-making bodies fail to include neurodivergent representatives, policies are not as well-informed as they otherwise would be. “Disabled people know better than non-disabled people what it is like to be disabled. Disabled people who do activism or advocacy tend to have a keen grasp of issues affecting them and people like them” (Brown, 2016). When policy discussions exclude the perspectives of people with disabilities, this often results in policies that write stigmatizing language into law, policies that fail to address key issues, even policies that deny services to those that need them.

Starting from the disability rights motto “Nothing about us without us!,” neurodivergent self-advocates have fought to change conversations about neurodiversity. Autistic activists have been particularly successful using digital tools to fight exclusion in public discourse. In blogs, Twitter and Facebook feeds, message boards, and other online spaces, autistic neurodiversity advocates make their voices heard and push back against stigmatizing messages. In these online spaces, autistic self-advocates share their own experiences of autism and disability, offer positive messages about disability, build community, and ultimately make space for different ways of seeing and being in the world. Autistic activists also use online spaces and public advocacy to impact public policy. For example, in 2014, the Autistic Self Advocacy Network spearheaded a reform initiative and many advocates used the hashtag #StopCombatingMe in blog posts and tweets pressing Congress to reform the Combating Autism Act. In response to the protests, the bill was renamed the Autism CARES (Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support) Act, and legislators began calling for increased representation of autistic adults in programs funded by the act (Autistic Self Advocacy Network, 2014).

“Accepting our autism does not mean ignoring or denying disability.”

- Autistic neurodiversity activist
Lydia Brown (quoted in
Silberman 2012, p. 364).

While a neurodiversity perspective focuses on difference and promotes positive messages about disability, it’s important to note that neurodivergence is both difference and disability. As Thomas Armstrong (2010) emphasizes in his book *Neurodiversity: Discovering the Extraordinary Gifts of Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, and Other Brain Differences*, “It is an understatement to say that [autism, ADHD, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, intellectual disabilities, and schizophrenia can] bring . . . suffering . . . But we’ve become one-sided in our disease-based orientation to brain differences and need to spend time exploring the positive side to correct

this imbalance” (p. ix). While the neurodiversity movement is ultimately aimed at changing society to be more inclusive and supportive of neurodivergent individuals, advocates stress that this goal cannot be achieved without acknowledging both challenges and strengths that come with neurodivergence. For self-advocates, neurological differences and the challenges that come with disability are both intrinsic parts of their identity.

The Exclusion of Neurodivergent Perspectives in Disability and Social Justice Advocacy Groups

People with disabilities are underrepresented in social justice groups. Even disability advocacy groups tend to exclude members of the disability community, particularly those who are neurodivergent and those belonging to non-dominant groups, such as people in LGBTQ communities and people of color. The self-advocacy movement led by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, the disability justice movement centering queer people of color with disabilities, the mad pride movement led by users of mental health services, and the neurodiversity movement all answer the exclusion and marginalization faced by underrepresented groups of people with disabilities within the disability rights movement.

“[P]eople with learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, and mental health issues have become excluded from the social justice organizations that we have been a part of. Even in grassroots collectives and unions that strive to be inclusive and where people know how to talk about disability, many people don’t know concretely what steps to take to make their organizing more inclusive of us.”

- Disabled author and neurodiversity advocate Liz Kessler (2015)

Lack of awareness, inaccessibility, privilege, and stigma are all responsible for the exclusion of neurodivergent and other disabled perspectives within disability and social justice groups. Social justice organizations frequently “[have] little awareness of disability, and often [rely] on high levels of physical and mental exertion without acknowledging limitations

or access needs, inevitably leading to burnout and alienation” (Lamm, 2015). Disability rights groups are also criticized for alienating community members with disabilities by failing to “challenge any structural oppression except for disability” (Patty Berne, quoted in Lamm, 2015), for being “dominated by whiteness, straightness, and maleness” (Lamm, 2015), and for focusing on mobility impairments to the exclusion of other disabilities.

The exclusion of neurodivergent perspectives is particularly striking within advocacy around autism. The world’s largest autism advocacy organization, Autism Speaks, has faced sustained protests from autistic self-advocates and their allies for more than six years (see Hughes, 2015a). In spite of its claim to speak for the autism community as a whole, Autism Speaks has been loudly criticized for failing to include autistic people in any leadership roles and for failing to listen to autistic people who argue that Autism Speaks’ autism awareness campaigns constitute “fear mongering [that] hurts Autistic people” (Ne’eman, quoted in Autistic Self Advocacy Network, 2009). Autism Speaks campaigns often characterize autism as a tragedy and fate worse than death, and depict autistic people as “less than human” (Ne’eman, quoted in Diament, 2009), “broken, voiceless” (Bascom, 2012), missing, and as burdens on their families and society (see Hughes, 2015a). In the face of opposition to Autism Speaks rhetoric and business practices—including demonstrations at Autism Speaks events, online petitions with prominent signers, hundreds of blog posts, pages of critical comments posted to the Autism Speaks’ website, hundreds of tweets, and appeals to sponsors to withdraw their support—Autism Speaks has never directly responded to autistic protests, nor has it changed its propensity for fear rhetoric.



[Image description: Picture shows a group of nine protesters with the Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Central Ohio at an Autism Speaks walk. They are all holding signs. Messages include “Nothing about us without us,” “I can speak for myself,” “I’m a person, not a puzzle piece,” and “Listen to me, I have autism.” (Autistic Self Advocacy Network of Central Ohio, n.d.)]

While neurodiversity advocates criticize Autism Speaks for failing to represent the community it claims to speak for, the neurodiversity movement has also been criticized for the same reason. Specifically, neurodiversity advocates have been called out for excluding the perspectives of people with intellectual disabilities (see Hughes, 2015a; Schaber, 2015). ‘Big tent’ neurodiversity requires acceptance, support, and accommodation for those with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. However, neurodiversity advocates often argue for acceptance by “throwing [people with intellectual disabilities] under the bus” (Schaber, 2015). For instance, when neurodiversity advocates argue that nonspeaking people ‘aren’t stupid,’ they reinforce the idea that those who have or are perceived to have particular intellectual abilities (or the ability to cultivate them) are more worthy of acceptance than those with an actual or perceived lack of intellectual abilities.

Strategies for Increasing Neurodiversity

Through relatively simple practical strategies, inclusion for neurodivergent people in disability and social justice advocacy groups can be increased. Accommodating neurodiversity is a valuable way to strengthen advocacy. Accommodating neurodivergence not only makes groups accessible to underrepresented

“I hope our movements will become more inclusive of people with disabilities and we will learn to support each other as if our movements [depend] on it, which I think [they do]. I believe this will make our organizing stronger, more effective, and more sustainable.”

- Social justice advocate Theo Yang Copley (2011)

members of the disability community, accommodations can also benefit neurotypical community members and prevent advocate burnout.

Six strategies for increasing neurodiversity in advocacy groups are listed below. This list is by no means exhaustive, and adopting these best practices will not mean that any group is completely accessible. As neurodivergent activist Liz Kessler (2015) notes,

“[a completely accessible group] does not exist.” The important thing is that groups “[k]eep learning and keep thinking about how people might be excluded” (Kessler, 2015).

1. Make meeting spaces and group communication accessible.

Organizers need to ensure that people with disabilities can get in the door. For people with mobility impairments, this means that meeting spaces must be wheelchair accessible and close to accessible public transportation. For people who are neurodivergent, access may depend on other sensory and communication accommodations.

For instance, spaces in which there are strong fragrances (like perfumes), harsh fluorescent lights, and loud noises are not accessible for people with sensory sensitivities. Group discussions may not be accessible for people with neurocognitive or intellectual disabilities. And typically long days, conferences, and meetings aimed at advocacy training exhaust advocates and are not accessible to community members with disabilities (Kessler, 2015).

“[L]ittle details add up. They communicate a message: People with disabilities are going to have to fight to participate in these meetings.”

- Adam Prizio (n.d.), manager for government affairs at the Center for Disability Rights

Organizers can try to anticipate potential issues and institute community norms and practices to address them—such as, a no-fragrance policy for meeting participants, frequent breaks, and limited meeting times. Organizers can also scout potential meeting places with access in mind and seek out spaces that are accessible to people with mobility and neurocognitive disabilities. Advocates should also work to incorporate multiple modalities in group communication. Detailed written agendas can help people follow group discussions. Twitter, email, and Google group discussion threads can facilitate group communication for people who prefer to communicate by typing or not in person. Groups should also provide space and materials in meetings for people who draw or write to communicate.

Organizers should check in with all group members at each meeting by asking ‘Is there anything you’d like us to know about how you’re feeling today?’ By inviting members to share details like whether they’re feeling tired or preoccupied, experiencing pain, having a difficult time processing speech or speaking, typing, or reading themselves, groups can establish an atmosphere in which access differences are acknowledged, accepted, and accommodated. This will also help groups make space for emotion in meetings.

2. Presume competence.

Presuming competence is an ideal that comes from the field of education. It entails treating people “as if [they are] smart” (Jorgensen, 2005, p. 4) and maintaining skepticism regarding the validity of evaluations

“[When] we presume [people with disabilities] are incompetent, we don’t give them opportunities to demonstrate their competence, and this, in turn, is taken as ‘proof’ that they are, indeed, incompetent. The vicious cycle of the self-fulfilling prophecy is realized.”

- Author of *Disability is Natural* Kathie Snow (2007)

of intelligence (which are based on neurotypical standards of thinking and communicating). Presuming competence is a vital communicative ideal, “nothing less than a Hippocratic oath for educators” (Biklen, quoted by UNESCO, 2012). It is the starting point for interactions that honor “another human being . . . as a true equal” (Zurcher, 2013), particularly interactions involving neurodivergent individuals who may be nonspeaking or labeled ‘low-functioning.’

Presuming competence is also a foundation that facilitates self-empowerment. Pervasive presumptions of incompetence—particularly those that come from parents—impede disabled individuals’ ability to develop goals and expectations for themselves. Speaking from her own experience growing up

“listen[ing] to people talk about me as if I was a stagnant being, unable to learn and grow” (Amy Sequenzia, comment on Tate, 2014), nonspeaking autistic activist Amy Sequenzia (2014) stresses that “Self-esteem matters. Being assumed to be competent matters, even if we don’t meet all of our parents’ expectations. . . If all we hear is that we can’t, that we need to improve, that our future will be not good because we are part of a ‘low’ class of humans, we don’t learn that we can expect to be valued for who we are. This attitude, coming from our own family, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.”

There is one important pitfall to avoid when presuming competence. Accounts about the power of presuming competence can disrupt people’s tendencies to “judg[e] intelligence by smooth movements and the ability to speak” (Rubin, 2014), but they can also support ableist conceptions of personhood that cast intelligent people as recognizably human and dehumanize people with intellectual disabilities (Hughes, 2015b). Autistic activist Julia Bascom (2014) writes about this “big problem” in her blog *Just Stimming*:

There is this thing that happens sometimes.

Parent has an autistic child. Autistic child doesn’t speak, or their speech isn’t an accurate window into what they are thinking. Autistic child is presumed to be very significantly intellectually disabled.

Years later, a method of communication is found that works for the child, and it turns out that they are in fact very smart. Very smart! The parents are overjoyed. They begin talking about presuming competence, the least dangerous⁴ assumption, that not being able to speak is not the same as not having anything to say.

They are so, so excited.

And they start talking about all the incorrect assumptions they had. If we’d known, they say, we wouldn’t have done X. If we had known they could read, think, hear us.

And it’s a big problem, because the way they talk.....they think the problem was that they treated their child like they were intellectually disabled, and they weren’t. But that’s not the problem. The problem is that they thought their child was intellectually disabled, and so they *didn’t treat them like a person*.

4. Presuming competence is also referred to as operating under ‘the least dangerous assumption’ because “[p]resuming incompetence could result in harm to . . . students . . . [whereas e]ven if we are wrong about students’ capacities to learn . . . , the consequences to that student of that incorrect presumption are not as dangerous as the alternative” (Jorgensen, 2005, p. 3).

These revelations, about presuming competence, human dignity, and the least dangerous assumption—they don't apply only to kids who are secret geniuses. They apply to everyone. They are *the most important* for the kids who really do have intellectual disabilities, who really *can't* read or use full sentences and who really do need extensive support. The people who came up with these terms came up with them for a population where there is very little doubt that significant disability is a factor. These terms don't mean *assume they aren't actually disabled*. These terms mean *assume they are a person, and remember what you don't know*. (author's emphasis)

We can never know what's going on in another person's mind or perceive the world as others do. To echo the sentiments expressed by autistic activist Amythest Schaber (2014) in their video series *Ask an Autistic*, “[n]o matter what it looks like to neurotypical people from the outside,” every community member “has a rich inner world of thoughts, experiences, and memories” and is deserving of respect and inclusion.

3. Listen to neurodivergent people.

Organizers in disability and social justice groups have a responsibility to educate themselves about

Some useful blogs for learning about autism and neurodiversity:

- Autistic Hoya
- Just Stimming
- Neurocosmopolitanism
- Neurowonderful
- Ollibean
- Paula C. Durbin-Westby Autism Advocacy Blog
- Thinking Person's Guide to Autism
- Unstrange Mind
- We Are Like Your Child

neurodiversity and disability. Educational resources can be found online and out in the community.

The Internet is a place that is free from many of the barriers to access faced by neurodivergent people. People can compose digital communication in their own time and from environments they control. Online forums are also spaces that can be “designed and structured by [neurodivergent people] for [neurodivergent people]” (Ne’eman, 2013, personal communication). For example, autistic spaces created by autistic self-advocates online are digital spaces in which autistic communication is not only encouraged, but understood. They are places where autistic advocates build community and make their voices heard.

Online spaces are also excellent educational resources for spreading information about neurodiversity and accommodating neurodivergence. A Google search for “neurodiversity” yields several good starting points as top results, including blogs, videos (often captioned), and tweets.

Organizers without access to the Internet and those who learn better by speaking and interacting with others rather than reading or watching media can also seek out neurodivergent perspectives in their communities. Local chapters of the Autistic Self Advocacy Network and Self Advocates Becoming Empowered, student disability groups on college campuses, nursing homes, group homes, and community meetings in libraries are all venues where organizers might listen to and learn from neurodivergent perspectives. Forging relationships in these groups may also help organizers recruit more neurodivergent partners for their initiatives.

A list of useful resources including books, documentaries, blogs, online videos, Twitter users, and groups is provided at the end of this white paper.

4. Acknowledge and include intersectional perspectives.

Intersectional perspectives that account for disability in relation to other dimensions of difference are missing from most conversations about disability and social justice. In particular, the perspectives of people of color with disabilities and people with disabilities who are LGBTQ and gender non-conforming are

underrepresented. In order to understand disability and social justice, advocacy groups must include intersectional perspectives. Different dimensions of identity, privilege, and structural oppression interact in people’s lives. Experiencing any given context as a black, queer femme with a disability is different from experiencing the same context as a straight white man with a disability. While both of these individuals may experience ableism, the ways in which ableism intersects with racism and heterosexism for queer

“Disability rights doesn’t challenge any structural oppression except for disability. It invisibilizes many people’s lives. . . Even the idea of independent living is a little difficult. I mean, I support it, obviously. It’s incredibly important. But it’s a capitalist framework; there’s nothing about collective interdependency.”

- Radical crip artist/activist Patty Berne
(quoted in Lamm, 2015)

people of color will mean that their experience of ableism will differ. Underrepresented perspectives can offer valuable insights about disability, privilege, and oppression.

Disability and social justice advocacy groups should do more to center and amplify underrepresented perspectives. Advocates need to acknowledge ways in which they are privileged, and ask how their organization is doing in terms of including those who do not experience the same privileges. When reaching out to people of color and LGBTQ community members with disabilities, organizers must also listen when they say ‘This is what we need to participate.’

5. Reach out to underrepresented members of the neurodivergent community, especially those with intellectual disabilities.

Neurodiversity is a ‘big tent’ concept that includes every person in the world and centers the experiences of those who are neurodivergent, but the neurodiversity movement is much smaller in scope. Autistic self-advocates are leading the contemporary neurodiversity movement, and autistic perspectives dominate conversations about neurodiversity. Thus, politically speaking, the term *neurodiversity* carries strong associations with autistic advocacy and autism acceptance.

To increase neurodiversity, organizers in disability and social justice groups need to reach out to a diverse cross-section of neurodivergent people, including those who are autistic and not autistic. In particular, neurodiversity advocates must find more ways to connect with individuals with intellectual disabilities and people who are institutionalized and represent their voices in activist spaces online. “[S]eeking out ways to listen to autistic people [and other neurodivergent individuals] who live in group homes” (@rsocialskills, 2015b) and nursing homes is one way advocates might increase neurodiversity within the neurodiversity movement.

Neurodivergent individuals’ access to groups can be improved through simple advertising. Posting flyers about meetings in public spaces (like libraries and grocery store bulletin boards), promoting meetings on Twitter and Facebook, and advertising meetings in public calendars and on community pages (like Craigslist) are strategies that can help organizers reach a wider audience of potential community members.

6. Acknowledge and question 'common sense' expectations.

As organizers and community members learn more about neurodiversity and disability, they will become more aware of ableist, 'common sense' expectations and the negative impact they can have on advocacy. It's important that group members continually acknowledge and question their own judgments in order to increase neurodiversity.

For instance, Liz Kessler (2015) points out several commonly held expectations that can lead to exclusion in activist groups, including the expectation that all group members do the same amount of work and that community members not be 'flaky' and back out of plans at the last minute. She points out that all activists have different capabilities, and that respect for people's boundaries is key for inclusion of disabled people in social justice groups. Her suggestions for increasing neurodiversity within groups include talking about boundaries in meetings, and finding ways to include people who are 'flaky.'

"Keep learning and keep thinking about how people might be excluded."

- Neurodivergent social justice organizer Liz Kessler (2015)

These suggestions and those above point to the need for group members to question expectations around participation and personhood. Organizers and members should continually ask the questions: 'Is this a reasonable expectation for all community members?' 'Who might be excluded from participating if these expectations are in place?' And 'What kinds of accommodations might we use to enable more people to participate?'

Resources

Books and Films

Autistic Self Advocacy Network Resource Library – Includes a wealth of books, reports, toolkits, and self-advocacy resources published by ASAN. <http://autisticadvocacy.org/home/resource-library/>

Loud Hands: Autistic People Speaking – edited by Julia Bascom, Autistic Self Advocacy Network, 2012.

Loving Lampposts – a film by Todd Drezner, 2011.

Neurodiversity: Discovering the Extraordinary Gifts of Autism, ADHD, Dyslexia, and Other Brain Differences – Thomas Armstrong, Da Capo Press, 2010.

Neurotribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity – Steve Silberman, Avery, 2015.

Neurotypical – a film by Adam Larsen, 2011.

No You Don't: Essays from an Unstrange Mind – Sparrow Rose Jones, Unstrange Publications, 2013.

The Real Experts: Readings for Parents of Autistic Children – edited by Michelle Sutton, Autonomous Press, 2015.

Typed Words, Loud Voices – edited by Amy Sequenzia and Elizabeth J. Grace, Autonomous Press, 2015.

Wretches and Jabberers – a film by Gerardine Wurzburg, 2010.

Blogs and Videos Online

Ask an Autistic – Subtitled videos about what it's like to be autistic, by Métis, autistic, and multiply disabled writer, public speaker, artist, advocate, and activist Amythest Schaber. https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLAoYMFsyj_k1ApNj_QUkNgKC1R5F9bVHs

Autism Women's Network – A community dedicated to building a supportive community for autistic women and allies. <http://autismwomensnetwork.org/>

Autistic Hoya – A blog written by autistic, disabled, queer, ace, genderqueer transracial/transnational adoptee and disability justice and policy advocate Lydia Brown. <http://www.autistichoya.com/>

Ballastexistenz – A blog written by Mel Baggs, disabled writer and artist. <https://ballastexistenz.wordpress.com/>

Emma's Hope Book – A blog started by Ariane Zurcher documenting her journey parenting her daughter Emma. It's since been taken on by Emma Zurcher, a non-speaking autistic teen. <https://emmashopebook.com/>

Just Stimming – A blog written by Julia Bascom, an autistic woman, writer, and self-advocate. <https://juststimming.wordpress.com/>

Musings of an Aspie – A blog written by Cynthia Kim, a late-diagnosed woman with Asperger's Syndrome. <http://musingsofanaspie.com/>

Neurocosmopolitanism – Autistic educator, author, speaker, transdisciplinary scholar, and martial arts expert Nick Walker's blog. <http://neurocosmopolitanism.com/>

Neuroqueer – A blog collective publishing creative writing, art, and articles about the neuroqueer experience. <http://neuroqueer.blogspot.com/>

Neurowonderful – Amythest Schaber's blog about autism, neurodiversity, and disability. <http://neurowonderful.tumblr.com/>

Non-Speaking Autistic Speaking – A blog written by Amy Sequenzia, non-speaking autistic activist, writer, and poet, and frequent contributor on Autism Women's Network and Ollibean. <http://nonspeakingautisticspeaking.blogspot.com/>

Ollibean – A blog collective that amplifies disabled voices in order to learn how best to support and empower disabled children in a world that is not yet fair and inclusive. <http://ollibean.com/>

Parenting Autistic Children with Love and Acceptance – Online parent community and autistic safe space aimed at parenting grounded in acceptance, support, accommodation, respect, and neurodiversity advocacy. <https://autloveaccept.wordpress.com/>

Paula C. Durbin-Westby Autistic Advocacy Blog – A blog written by autistic advocate Paula C. Durbin-Westby. <http://paulacdurbinwestbyautisticblog.blogspot.com/>

Radical Neurodivergence Speaking – A blog written by neurodiversity activist Kassiane Sibley. <http://timetolisten.blogspot.com/>

Real Social Skills – A blog about how interaction between people works, written by autistic rabbinical student Ruti Regan. <http://realsocialskills.org/>

In My Language – A captioned video produced by Mel Baggs, describing their autistic experience of the world. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnylM1hI2jc>

Sometimes a Lion – A blog written Autistic Self Advocacy Network co-founder and president Ari Ne’eman, covering topics on disability policy and advocacy. <http://arineeman.com/>

Thinking Person’s Guide to Autism – A blog collective dedicated to autism advocacy, education, and community support. <http://www.thinkingautismguide.com/>

Unstrange Mind – Autistic writer Sparrow Rose Jones’ blog. <https://unstrangemind.wordpress.com/>

We Are Like Your Child – A blog collective publishing writing by disabled people aimed at connecting parents of disabled children with disabled adult perspectives. <http://wearelikeyourchild.blogspot.com/>

Yes, That Too – A blog written by autistic, queer, master’s student in mathematics Alyssa Hillary. <http://yesthattoo.blogspot.com/>

On Twitter

@autchatmods – Official Twitter account or #autchat, a chat by and for #ActuallyAutistic and similar people (including those who are self-diagnosed).

@AutismAcceptDay – Twitter account for Autism Acceptance Month, which counters negative images that are often seen in autism awareness campaigns during the month of April.

@Autism_Women – Twitter account for the Autism Women’s Network.

@Aut_Love_Accept – Community for parents of autistic children committed to love and acceptance, and looking to learn from autistic adults.

@AutPress – Autonomous Press, a publisher owned by disabled workers.

@autselfadvocacy – Autistic Self Advocacy Network.

@Boycott_AS – Official Twitter account for the Autism Speaks protest group Boycott Autism Speaks.

@DisVisibility – Online community dedicated to recording, amplifying, and sharing disability studies and culture.

@EverydayAbleism – Tweets from the Everyday Ableism Project, an open discussion of disability, illness, mental health, and ableism.

@Lollardfish – David M. Perry, disability rights journalist.

@NeuroQueer – Twitter account for the Neuroqueer blog collective aimed at “queering neurodivergence, neurodiversifying queer.”

@ntrsxnIND – Official Twitter account for #intersectionalND, a monthly Twitter chat about intersectionality and neurodiversity.

@Queerability – Advocating for LGBTQ and disability rights.

@rsocialskills – Twitter account for the blog Real Social Skills.

Groups

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Self Advocates Becoming Empowered

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