

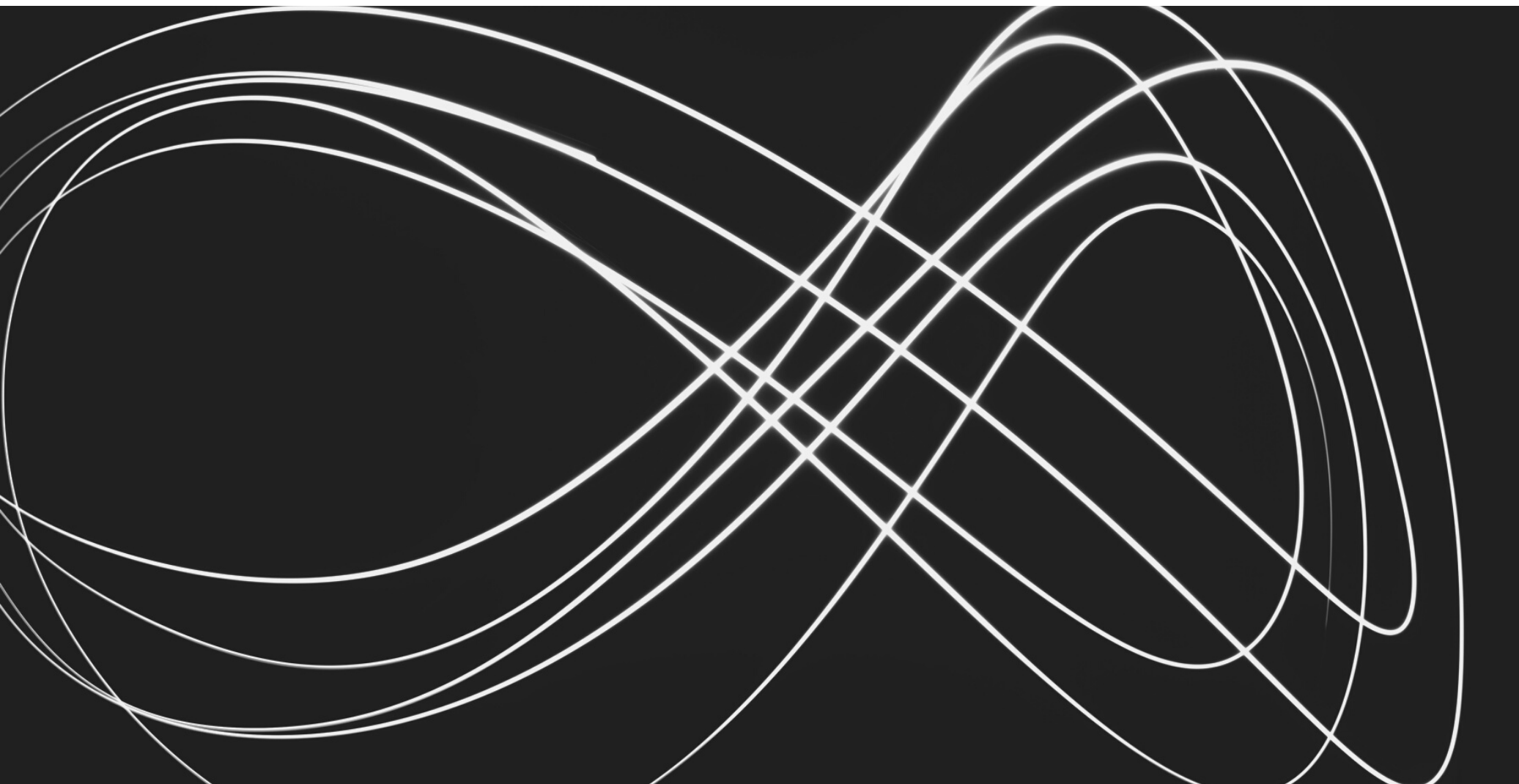
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# THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY & THE AUTISM COMMUNITY

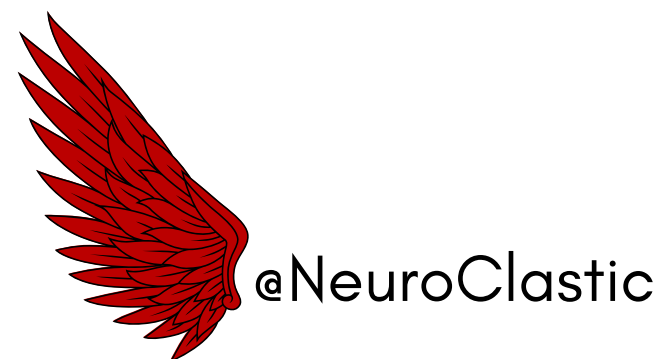


WHAT'S THE  
DIFFERENCE?





# **THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY**





**AAN**

**AUTISTIC-LED  
AND ALLY-  
SUPPORTED  
COMMUNITY  
OF AUTISTICS,  
& ALLIES, ORGS,  
LOVED ONES**

# Neurodiversity

**The Autistic community references autism by the Neurodiversity Model which frames neurological differences like ADHD, autism, dyslexia, & other neurotypes as disabilities but not disorders, diseases, or deficiencies.**

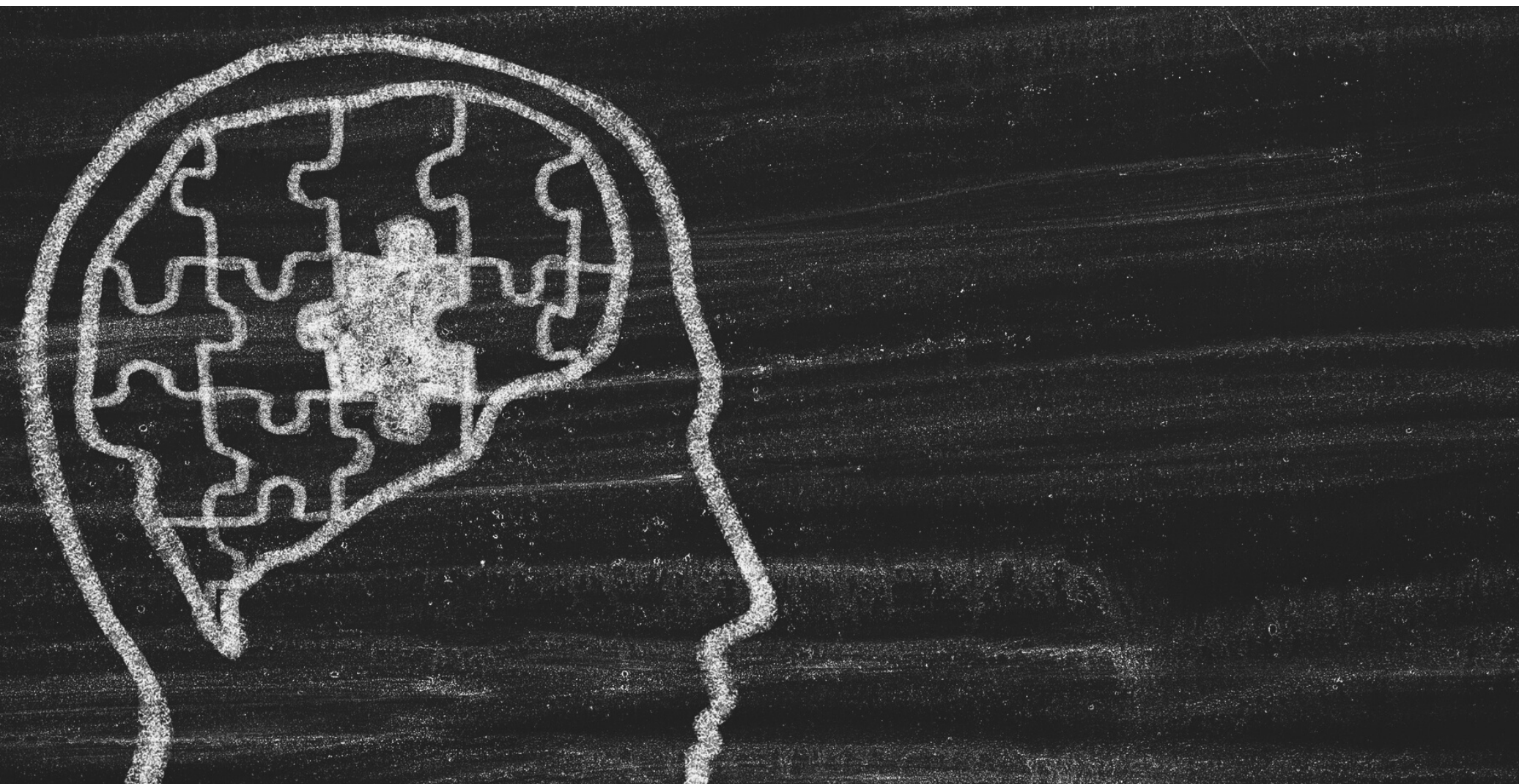
## Values & Beliefs

**OF THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY**

- **Autistic people should control the narrative about autism**
- **Autism does not need to be cured**
- **Autistic people are valuable members of the community deserving autonomy & respect**
- **Autistic people should not need to change their autistic nature to be accepted, but society should be more accepting**



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# **THE AUTISM COMMUNITY**

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# **THE AUTISM COMMUNITY**

**Is led by parents, researchers,  
businesses, organizations, &  
institutions**

**The identity of the autism  
community centers those who  
know autistic people, & often  
focuses on the burden of  
family members and  
educators of autistic children**

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# The Deficit Model

**The Autism community frames autism solely as a disease or disorder that is characterized by impairments, deficits, and limitations. This view sees autistic behaviors that are harmless, like echolalia, stimming, and lack of eye contact as needing to be fixed.**

## Values & Beliefs

**OF THE AUTISM COMMUNITY**

- **Parents and academics control and maintain ownership of the narrative about autistic people**
- **Autism needs to be treated and/or cured**
- **Autistic people are talked about as burdens on the economy, educators, and families**
- **Autistic people need intensive behavioral interventions to be more normal or independent**



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## **AUTISTIC COMMUNITY**

### **IDENTITY FIRST LANGUAGE**

**"Autistic person"  
because being autistic  
is inseparable from a  
person's identity and  
way of existing**

### **SYMBOLISM & ICONS**

**The Autistic community  
often uses an infinity  
symbol as the symbol  
of neurodiversity. It  
removes the high/low  
functioning myth of the  
"spectrum"**

## **AUTISM COMMUNITY**

### **PERSON FIRST LANGUAGE**

**"Person with autism"  
because autism is seen  
as a series of deficits,  
as if a non-autistic  
person exists separate  
from their impairments**

### **SYMBOLISM & ICONS**

**The Autism community  
mostly uses the puzzle  
piece, which is  
regarded as offensive  
by most autistic adults**





# **WHY THE PUZZLE OFFENDS THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY**

- **Implies autism is a "missing piece" or Autistic people are fragmented or broken**
- **Is childish and erases autistic adults; implies a childhood disorder**
- **Historically symbolized the search for a genetic cure**
- **Is brand recognition for organizations that harm Autistic people**
- **Symbolizes a community that does not prioritize or respect Autistic voices**