



**Is the Neurodiversity
paradigm compatible with**

Evidence Based Practice?

What is the Neurodiversity Movement
and is it compatible with therapies
and intervention services?

@NeuroClastic

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1. What exactly is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is not a political movement. It's a biological fact similar to biodiversity. It is merely an acknowledgment that there is diversity in the way brains are structured and how those differences impact perception and sensory experiences.

2. What is the **Neurodiversity Movement?**

The Neurodiversity Movement is social, philosophical, and political. It is the notion that differences are not inherently in need of remediation or to be considered “diseased” or “deficient.” The movement, like any sociopolitical movement, does not have leaders, a dogma, or consensus. It is a broad umbrella term that is usually applied to efforts to combat dehumanization of disabled people, to destigmatize disability, or to advocate for disability rights.

3.

What is all the
buzz about

Neurodiversity?

Within the autistic and broader disability communities, neurodiversity is rarely mentioned. Most often, those who bring up the Neurodiversity Movement are people either attempting to be allies or people attempting to maintain political supremacy in the therapy/intervention industry.

Some people misappropriate the notion of Neurodiversity as a political ploy to set up a false binary that pits professionals and parents against advocates. This is always ridiculous.

4. What do people get wrong about Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is not the idea that autism and other disabilities are all funshine and brainbows* [sic]. A person can have profound neurodevelopmental disabilities that are inherently debilitating and cause tremendous suffering.

Neurodiversity is not a bunch of quirky, self-diagnosed people who watched some TikTok videos and decided they are disabled because they're awkward and bad at organizing. If you ever thought this, go ahead and cringe a little. You fell for the classic "kids these days" narrative.

5.

Where does treatment fit in the **Neurodiversity Movement?**

There is no monolith among disabled people about what treatments are appropriate, but most autistic people oppose therapies that seek to change a person's core self to appear more "normal" or less autistic. Many also feel that accommodations are often more appropriate than skills training. For example, instead of training someone to tolerate (in appearance) loud sounds, they should be given ear defenders.

6. Who should I listen to about working with **Autistic people?**

Everyone.

Listen to everyone. Listen to parents, listen to providers, listen to advocates, listen to your children, listen to everyone.

You don't have to agree with people when you listen to them. You don't have to like them. You don't have to take their advice. You don't have to even respect them.

If simply listening to someone means you are likely to be indoctrinated into harmful values, then you need to work on that.

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6. Who should I ignore regarding Autistic people?

No one. You don't need to ignore anyone if you are hoping to be informed. You need to evaluate your own information literacy skills and your values.

If you can be convinced to harm children and violate your boundaries and values because you simply listened to someone, you need to work on information literacy so you're not susceptible to nonsense.

If you think an institutional evidence base is always superior, then you don't have the values or information literacy you need to have to work with autistic people.

7.

What is the agenda?

Is someone trying to convince you to paint large groups of people as a monolith in order to prevent you from listening to or respecting marginalized people?

If someone talks about the “neurodiversity movement” as if it’s a cohesive set of principles or a membership club, they’re trying to set up an “Us vs Them” false binary. Binary thinking is a tool of colonialism.

If someone paints the neurodiversity movement as having a dogma, like a religion, then they’re trying to get you to devalue and dehumanize people according to stereotypes because listening to marginalized people disempowers the oppressor.

8.

But are there any red flags?

People who set up discussions creating false binaries trying to get you to disregard or devalue an entire marginalized group are employing colonized tactics to let you know it's socially unacceptable and you will lose your power if you side with the oppressed.

Any messaging that paints a marginalized group as extremists who are unsophisticated, uneducated, "savage," or unreasonable has a colonial mindset and is unwilling to give up their privilege in the effort of progress.

We see this most with the "severe autism" lobby and the speech language-ABA cluster of people who suppress communication rights.

Examples of Colonizer Rhetoric

"They can't be trusted. They support Rapid Prompting Method."

"Having ASD does not mean they are an expert. Do we listen to people with cavities or do we listen to dentists?"

"Am I just supposed to accept fecal smearing, elopement, public masturbation, and extreme self-injury and aggression?!"

"They can advocate for themselves!"
(From people who believe their clients cannot self-advocate)

