



Appropriate neurodivergent language

Neurodiversity - neurodivergent **and** neurotypical collectively, like biodiversity. A person cannot be neurodiverse, a group of people can.

Neurodivergent - a person who is not neurotypical (conditions including, but not restricted to, autism, Aspergers, ADHD, Tourette's, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, PTSD, bi-polar)

Neurodivergence – the state of being neurodivergent

Autism terms to avoid – terminology can be interchanged with neurodivergent/ neurodivergence (ND) where appropriate, where talking about the wider context, i.e.:

'Person with autism/neurodivergence' – this engenders distance; it's not separate but part of innate humanity & identity - please use 'autistic person' 'neurodivergent person'

'Has autism' - autism is not an illness or disease - please use 'autistic' or 'on the spectrum' - technically autism is a condition not a disorder but we believe it's an innate way of being.

'Autism is a mental illness' - No it isn't but we may suffer mental health issues due to bullying in a world that generally doesn't accept our difference

'Lives with autism' - I live with my wife and cats - do gay people live with gayness?

'Suffers from autism' - Generally we suffer from people's misunderstandings and bullying.

'Fighting autism' - autism isn't a malevolent force - we fight against attitudes.

'Victim of autism' - offensive - we are often victims of bullying because of our different way we view the world.

'Touched by autism' - Forget this one - it could be seen as very offensive.

'Retarded' - as if I need to say how offensive this is - do not use.

'We are all a little bit autistic' - This is complete rubbish and offensive/demeaning to actually autistic people.

'He has mild autism/ aspergers' - Curries can be mild you either are or are not Autistic/Aspergers it just depends how well you cope with camouflaging yourself which takes considerable energy.



'High functioning - low functioning' Out of date and offensive to all - you wouldn't say or refer to a neurotypical person as HF or LF'

Do not assume all autistic/Neurodivergent people see themselves as disabled - don't use 'difability' or 'differently abled' either – autistic/neurodivergent people are autistic/neurodivergent people

If you've met a neurodivergent person before you've met 1 neurodivergent person - do not assume we are all the same - this attitude is as offensive to us as 'They all look the same'.

If what you are about to write and say is offensive or inappropriate to another minority group then it's also the same to an autistic/ Neurodivergent person.

In the same way it's inappropriate for a non LGBTQ person to write LGBTQ policy in isolation it's inappropriate to write autism policy if you're not Neurodivergent.

'Nothing for us without us'