

# A CAMPUS FOR DIVERSE MINDS: SUPPORTING NEURODIVERSE STUDENTS

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# EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY IS A CAMPUS FOR SUPPORTING NEURODIVERSE STUDENTS

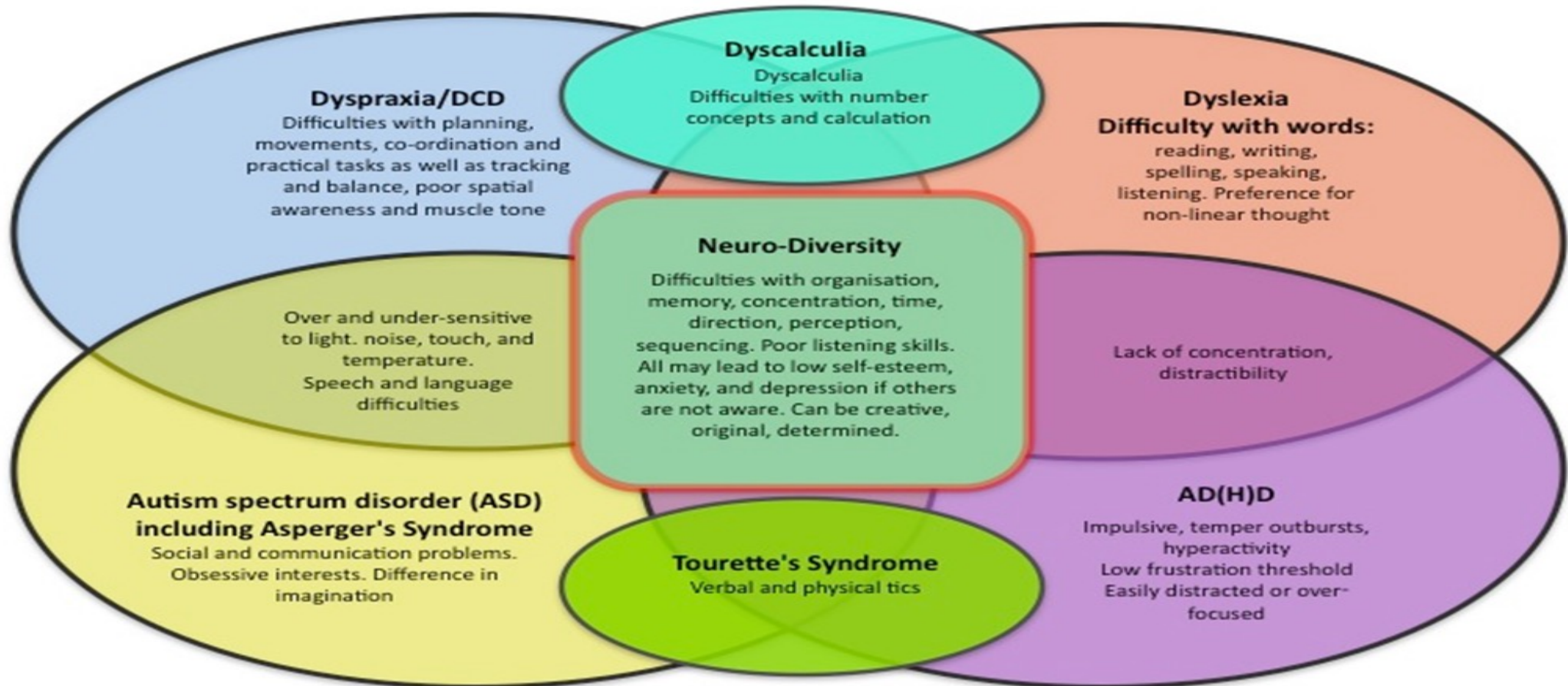


# NEURODIVERSITY

- THE WORD NEURODIVERSITY REFERS TO THE DIVERSITY OF ALL PEOPLE, BUT IT IS OFTEN USED IN THE CONTEXT OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD), AS WELL AS OTHER NEUROLOGICAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL CONDITIONS SUCH AS ADHD OR LEARNING DISABILITIES.

## The Make-up of Neuro-Diversity

This is a document for discussion, concentrating mainly on the difficulties of those with neuro-diversity. It must however be pointed out that many such people are excellent at maths, co-ordination, reading etc . We are people of extremes.



Created by Mary Colley

## THE MOTHER OF NEURODIVERSITY JUDY SINGER

“I KNEW WHAT I WAS DOING,” SHE TELLS ME. “‘NEURO’ WAS A REFERENCE TO THE RISE OF NEUROSCIENCE. ‘DIVERSITY’ IS A POLITICAL TERM; IT ORIGINATED WITH THE BLACK AMERICAN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT. ‘BIODIVERSITY’ IS REALLY A POLITICAL TERM, TOO. AS A WORD, ‘NEURODIVERSITY’ DESCRIBES THE WHOLE OF HUMANITY. BUT THE NEURODIVERSITY MOVEMENT IS A POLITICAL MOVEMENT FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS.”



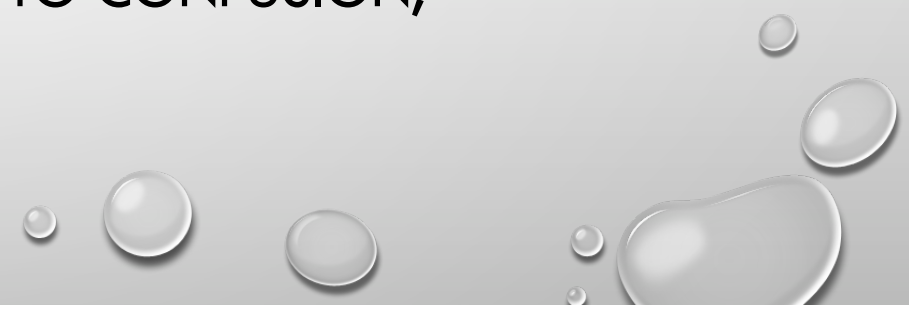


ASD AND NEURODIVERSITY:  
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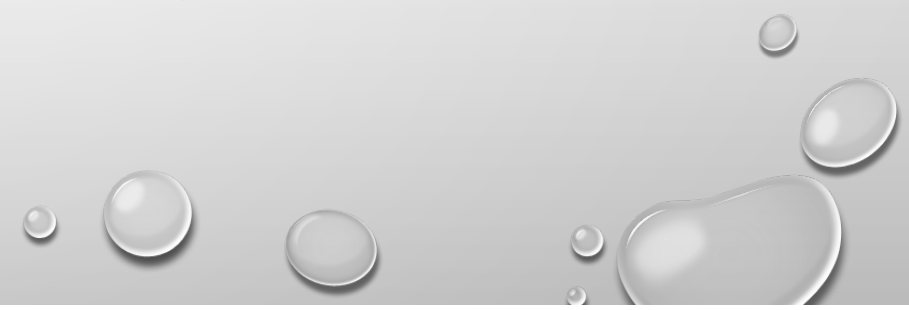


## WE NEED TO LISTEN TO THE EXPERTS: PETE WHARMBY AUTISTIC SELF-ADVOCATE

- “BEING OTHERED AND OSTRACISED. FROM SCHOOL ONWARDS, AUTISTIC PEOPLE OFTEN FEEL WE ARE SEEN AS TOO DIFFERENT, BASED ON OUR BEHAVIOUR, INTERESTS AND ACTIONS. USUALLY THESE ARE SUCH BENIGN, HARMLESS THINGS AS STIMMING, DIFFERENT SPEECH PATTERNS, PASSIONATE INTERESTS IN UNCOMMON TOPICS. THIS CAN LEAD TO CONFUSION, LONELINESS AND SELF HATRED.
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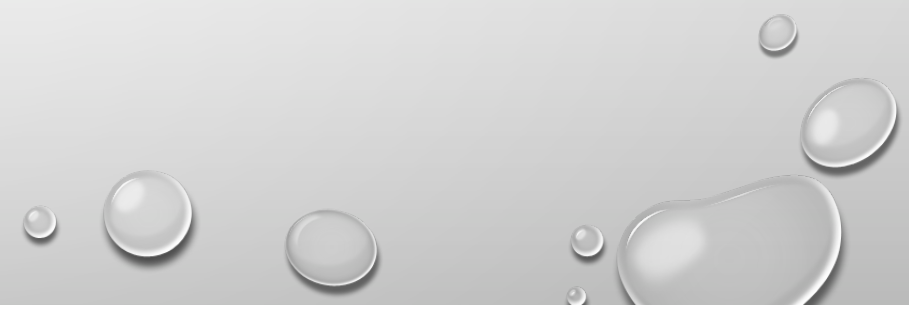
## PETE WHARMBY AUTISTIC SELF-ADVOCATE

- SENSORY OVERWHELM. THIS CAN MAKE EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES, LIKE GOING OUTSIDE OR TO THE SHOPS, ABSOLUTELY UNBEARABLE. BECAUSE OUR SENSORY SENSITIVITY SEEMS TO INCREASE WHEN STRESSED, IT IS EASY FOR NEGATIVE FEEDBACK LOOPS TO DEVELOP. FEELING UNABLE TO 'LIVE' LIKE EVERYONE ELSE CAN BE HORRIBLE.
- 





## PETE WHARMBY AUTISTIC SELF-ADVOCATE

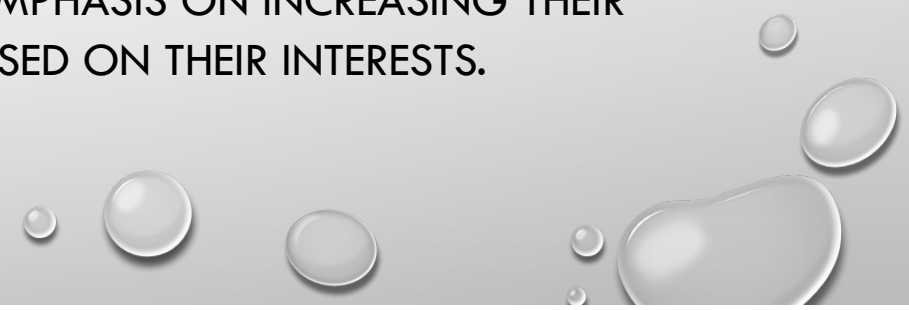
- BEING BULLIED. AUTISTIC PEOPLE ARE HIGHLY VULNERABLE TO THIS. MANY AUTISTIC PEOPLE, IN MY EXPERIENCE, TEND TO ASSUME THE BEST IN PEOPLE AND SO MISS ANYONE ACTING IN BAD FAITH, AND CAN END UP BEING TREATED VERY BADLY. BEING MOCKED AND LAUGHED AT FOR OUR VERY EXISTENCE ADDS TO THIS.”
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• **IF YOU HAVE MET A PERSON WITH  
AUTISM THEN YOU HAVE MET A  
PERSON WITH AUTISM.....**



## COLLEGE SUPPORTS PROGRAM (CSP)

- THE COLLEGE SUPPORT PROGRAM (CSP) WAS CREATED IN 2008, SPECIFICALLY AROUND THE STRENGTHS AND NEEDS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD).
  - STRENGTHS BASED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (ACADEMIC, RESIDENTIAL AND SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL) ARE INDIVIDUALLY DEVELOPED ACROSS ALL SETTINGS AT EMU FOR EACH STUDENT.
  - CSP FOCUSES ON THE WHOLE STUDENT WITH EMPHASIS ON INCREASING THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES BASED ON THEIR INTERESTS.
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# AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER



- ABOUT 1 IN 36 CHILDREN HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) ACCORDING TO ESTIMATES FROM CDC'S AUTISM AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES MONITORING (ADDM) NETWORK.
- ASD IS REPORTED TO OCCUR IN ALL RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND SOCIOECONOMIC GROUPS.
- ASD IS MORE THAN 4 TIMES MORE COMMON AMONG BOYS THAN AMONG GIRLS **AT THIS TIME.**
- EACH YEAR, ROUGHLY 49,000 (+) INDIVIDUALS DIAGNOSED WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD) COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL (WEI, WAGNER, HUDSON, YU, & JAVITZ, 2015).
- APPROXIMATELY 16,000 (+) OF THOSE STUDENTS WILL PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION (WEI, WAGNER ET AL., 2015).

# WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ASD?

## STUDENT STRENGTHS

- ATTENTION TO DETAIL.
- VISUAL PERCEPTION.
- CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC TALENTS.
- MATHEMATICAL AND TECHNICAL ABILITIES.
- INTERESTS OR EXPERTISE IN 'NICHE' AREAS.
- CHARACTER STRENGTHS SUCH AS HONESTY AND LOYALTY
- [SENSORY STRENGTHS](https://embrace-autism.com/autism-strengths-and-challenges/) [HTTPS://EMBRACE-AUTISM.COM/AUTISM-STRENGTHS-AND-CHALLENGES/](https://embrace-autism.com/autism-strengths-and-challenges/)

## STUDENT NEEDS

- REDUCED AFFECT DISPLAY
- **LOW THEORY OF MIND/PERSPECTIVE**
- RIGID/INFLEXIBLE THINKING
- HIGH PREVALENCE OF PTSD
- ALEXITHYMIA CO-OCCURRENCE
- IDENTIFYING FACIAL EXPRESSIONS
- FORGETTING FACES
- SLEEP DISORDERS

## WHAT CAN FACULTY DO?

- HONOR LETTER OF ACCOMMODATIONS
- ACKNOWLEDGE BY USING STUDENTS NAME TO REINFORCE ACCEPTABLE CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS.
- PROVIDE CONCRETE EXAMPLES FOR ABSTRACT OR COMPLEX TOPICS.
- ALLOW STUDENTS TO COMMUNICATE THROUGH MULTIPLE MODES (I.E., E-MAIL, ZOOM, FACE-TO-FACE).
- STUDENTS MAY HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF COGNITIVE ABILITIES; ASK THE STUDENT WHAT THEY !NEED!



THEORY OF MIND

“ IF I THINK THIS  
WAY THEN YOU  
ALSO THINK  
THIS WAY”.



# SOMETIMES IT IS HARD TO “READ THE ROOM!”

## READING INTENTIONS OF OTHERS

- MAY NOT DISCERN DANGER SO THE STUDENT MAY ENGAGE WITH UNSAFE INDIVIDUALS (LOAN MONEY, CLOTHES, LAPTOPS, CHILD PORNOGRAPHY) OR WALK IN DANGEROUS AREAS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, WEARING A HOODIE AND EARPHONES.
- MAY TALK TOO LONG TO OTHERS **UNINTERESTED** IN THEM OR FOLLOW GIRLS/OTHERS INTO THEIR ROOMS AND DOESN'T COMPREHEND THAT THEIR ACTIONS/WORDS MAY OFFEND AND EVEN ANGER OTHERS!!
- DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE PERSPECTIVE OF OTHERS AND MAY NOT TOLERATE DIFFERENT OPINIONS.

## SOCIAL RECIPROCITY

- MONOPOLIZE CONVERSATIONS OR GROUP ACTIVITIES, AND MAY TALK OUT IN GROUP SETTINGS BECAUSE THEY THINK THEY ARE ONLY ONES THERE.
- MAY NOT SEE THE NATURAL BREAKS IN CONVERSATIONS OR UNDERSTAND INFLECTIONS WHICH CUE THE END OF THE CONVERSATION.
- MAY NOT RESPOND TO THE EMOTIONS OF OTHERS AND THIS MAKES OTHERS ANGRY..

# IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE PERSPECTIVE OF YOUR STUDENT.

## STUDENT:

- WHEN YOU ENTER THE CLASSROOM, LOOK AROUND TO SEE THE OTHER STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASSROOM. **AM I THE ONLY STUDENT??**
- WHEN THE PROFESSOR ASKS A QUESTION, OR MAKES A STATEMENT ABOUT THE COURSE, IS HE SPEAKING TO YOU?
- ALWAYS RAISE YOUR HAND AND WAIT TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE PROFESSOR.

## FACULTY:

- IT IS A CHALLENGE FOR STUDENTS IN CLASSES THAT INCLUDE AN OPEN DISCUSSION FORMAT. PLEASE ASK YOURSELF IF THE CLASS UNDERSTANDS THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT IN REGARD TO DISCUSSIONS. **ARE EXPECTATIONS SPELLED OUT IN SYLLABUS?**
- **ARE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS MEANT FOR THE WHOLE CLASS IDENTIFIED?**
- HAVE RULES BEEN FIRMLY ESTABLISHED ABOUT CONTENT OF STUDENT DISCUSSION?
- STUDENTS MAY SHARE POLITICALLY UNPOPULAR VIEWS BUT ARE THEN CONFUSED BECAUSE FACULTY MAY HAVE ENCOURAGED OPEN DISCUSSION.

# IF YOU ARE A NEURODIVERSE STUDENT OR YOU ARE A FACULTY MEMBER WITH STUDENTS IN YOUR CLASS:

## STUDENTS


- UNDERSTAND YOUR ACCOMMODATIONS AND MEET WITH YOUR PROFESSOR ABOUT RAMIFICATIONS OF ACCOMMODATIONS.
- KNOW YOUR SYLLABUS BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT YOU MUST FOLLOW. THE PROFESSOR SHOULD NOT DEVIATE FROM THE SYLLABUS UNLESS ADVANCE NOTICE IS PROVIDED!
- USE A PLANNING DEVICE SUCH AS GOOGLE CALENDAR TO PLAN WHAT YOU WANT AND NEED TO DO EACH DAY!
- IDENTIFY SPECIAL INTERESTS AND SHARE WITH YOUR FACULTY. THEY MAY HAVE SOME GREAT CONTACTS FOR YOU!
- COMMUNICATE THROUGH EMAIL WITH YOUR PROFESSOR, AND UNDERSTAND THAT THEY HAVE LIVES AND FAMILIES!

## FACULTY

- HONOR THE STUDENTS ACCOMMODATIONS AND IF THERE ARE QUESTIONS ADDRESS THEM TO THE DRC.
- YOUR SYLLABUS IS **YOUR** PLAN FOR THE SEMESTER AND SHOULD INCLUDE THE RULES, EXPECTATIONS AND ACCURATE DUE DATES FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS.
- COMMUNICATE THROUGH EMAIL AND/OR CANVAS IF AND WHEN CHANGES NEED TO OCCUR WITH CLASS ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES.
- IS CANVAS UP TO DATE?
- ARE ASSIGNMENTS GRADED AND UP TO DATE?



## IF YOU ARE A NEURODIVERSE STUDENT: HOW DO YOU BALANCE STRENGTHS AND NEEDS?

- EVERYONE'S DAY SHOULD INCLUDE THE THINGS YOU HAVE TO DO (CLASS) BUT ALSO THEIR SPECIAL INTERESTS AND RECREATION.
  - PHYSICAL FITNESS AND HEALTH ARE IMPORTANT BUT QUALITY OF LIFE IS AT THE TOP OF OUR LIST.
  - COLLEGE IS A JOURNEY AND THERE IS NO TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION AND SUCCESS.
  - OUR STUDENTS MAY NEED TO START COLLEGE WITH 9 CREDITS AND THEN INCREASE TO 12. IF THERE ARE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES MAYBE 6 CREDITS IS ALL THAT CAN BE MANAGED BUT MAYBE NEXT SEMESTER IT CAN BE 15 CREDITS?
- 



## THIS HAPPENS WHEN YOU FOCUS ON STRENGTHS!!

RECENT GRADUATES HAVE CONTINUED THEIR EDUCATION IN LAW SCHOOL, LIBRARY SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE MASTERS LEVEL PROGRAMS.

STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED INTERNSHIPS WITH FORD, COMPUTER SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, GREENFIELD VILLAGE AND US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN WASHINGTON DC

GPA IS 3.4 ACROSS ALL STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM

RETENTION RATE: 99.13%



## TYLER K.

- TYLER WAS A PART OF CSP FOR SEVERAL YEARS. HE EARNED BOTH HIS BA AND MA AT EMU.
- CURRENTLY, TYLER IS IN HIS SECOND YEAR OF LAW SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN



IT IS NOT WHERE YOU START IT IS  
WHERE YOU FINISH!

IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY OR TOO  
LATE FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN  
AND GROW, BOTH  
ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY.

 Alex Aldridge

May 10 · 🌐

Let me tell you a story about a little autistic boy. In 2004 in Chicago, Chicago public schools refused to place the autistic boy in a general education classroom. They labeled him as "low functioning" and claimed that he will never succeed academically. Fast forward to 2022 and the same autistic boy graduated with honors with two degrees in biology and psychology with a 3.79 GPA



FORGET WHAT YOU'VE  
HEARD — AUTISM ISN'T  
SOMETHING TO CURE. IN  
FACT, IT'S A CONDITION WE  
SHOULD EMBRACE AND  
CELEBRATE.





# NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US!





ARI NE'EMAN OF HARVARD  
FOUNDED THE  
AUTISTIC SELF ADVOCACY  
NETWORK

[ASAN](https://autisticadvocacy.org/) [HTTPS://AUTISTICADVO  
CACY.ORG/](https://autisticadvocacy.org/)



- THE AUTISTIC SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK SEEKS TO ADVANCE THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT WITH REGARD TO AUTISM. ASAN BELIEVES THAT THE GOAL OF AUTISM ADVOCACY SHOULD BE A WORLD IN WHICH AUTISTIC PEOPLE ENJOY EQUAL ACCESS, RIGHTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES.
- WE WORK TO EMPOWER AUTISTIC PEOPLE ACROSS THE WORLD TO TAKE CONTROL OF OUR OWN LIVES AND THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMON COMMUNITY, AND SEEK TO ORGANIZE THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY TO ENSURE OUR VOICES ARE HEARD IN THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION ABOUT US.



**NOW WE WILL HEAR FROM THE EXPERTS:  
THOSE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE**

BEN ROGERS

SIMON JANEVIC



## CSP PROS

- GOOD MORNING EVERYONE, MY NAME IS BEN ROGERS AND I WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT THE WAYS THAT CSP HAS BENEFITED ME ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY.
- GIVEN THAT I AM ON THE SPECTRUM AS WELL, I AM VERY GLAD THAT I CAN RELY ON CSP
- I AM SIMON JANEVIC. I AM ALSO AUTISTIC, AND HAVE BEEN GRATEFUL FOR THE COLLEGE SUPPORTS PROGRAM HERE AS WELL, THAT HAS SIMILARLY BENEFITTED ME.

# MENTORS

- HAVING A MENTOR IN CLASS IS VERY BENEFICIAL BECAUSE HAVING SOMEONE TO TAKE NOTES FOR YOU IS HELPFUL BECAUSE THESE LECTURES CAN BE VERY LONG AND ARDUOUS, AND SOMETIMES I HAVE TROUBLE FOLLOWING THE MATERIAL.
- STUDENTS ARE ALSO GIVEN AUTONOMY HERE; THEY CAN CHOOSE TO HAVE OR NOT HAVE A MENTOR DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH THEY FEEL THEY NEED IT FOR A PARTICULAR CLASS, AND THE MENTOR CAN EITHER SIT WITH THEM OR AWAY FROM THEM DEPENDING ON WHAT THE STUDENT PREFERS.

## HOW CSP HAS HELPED ME

- CSP HAS HELPED ME ACADEMICALLY AND SOCIALLY. IN TERMS OF ACADEMICS, I FEEL LIKE I CAN BALANCE OUT MY TIME WELL BECAUSE I HAVE STUDY TABLES TO HELP WITH MY HOMEWORK IF NEEDED. IN TERMS OF MAKING FRIENDS, I HAVE MET PEOPLE THAT HAVE SIMILAR OBSTACLES TO ME AND I CHERISH THOSE FRIENDSHIPS.
- I HAVE ALSO BEEN HELPED FOR THE SAME REASONS. STUDY TABLES PROVIDES MENTORS WHO CAN HELP WITH HOMEWORK ACROSS MULTIPLE SUBJECTS, AND THE SOCIAL EVENTS ALLOW FOR US TO MEET AND CONNECT WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE. MY ACADEMIC COACH IS ALSO HELPFUL FOR HELPING ME MANAGE MY WORKLOAD AND PLAN OUT STUDYING.



## STUDY TABLES

- USEFUL RESOURCE FOR HOMEWORK HELP AS DIFFERENT MENTORS CAN HELP YOU WITH A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS SUCH AS MATH, SCIENCE, WRITING, ETC.
- GIVES STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE WHERE THEY WORK – THEY CAN WORK IN THE MAIN ROOM WITH THE MENTORS AND OTHER STUDENTS, OR CAN LEAVE TO DO SO ELSEWHERE IN THE LIBRARY IF THEY SO DESIRE.

# SUGGESTIONS FOR FACULTY

- EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES
- GOING INTO BETTER DETAIL WHEN IT COMES TO ASSIGNMENTS INSTEAD OF TEACHING MYSELF.
- STUDY GUIDES/ WHAT TO EXPECT ON EXAMS
- BEING ACCOMMODATING AND FOLLOWING THE STUDENTS LETTER OF ACCOMMODATION.
- TEST CORRECTIONS ALLOWED TO REGAIN SOME POINTS.
- UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT PRESENTATION STYLES (AS INDIVIDUALS WITH ASD MAY STRUGGLE WITH EYE CONTACT, TONE, ETC)
- PRE-ARRANGED GROUPS WITH UNDERSTANDING PEERS
- OFFERING TO MEET-ONE-ON-ONE TO DISCUSS SUPPORT IN CLASS
- PROVIDING A VERY DETAILED SYLLABUS SO WE KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN
- TALK WITH US ABOUT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT ABOUT OUR AREA OF INTEREST

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FINAL THOUGHTS!





QUESTIONS?

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Q





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