

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is simply a way of understanding that amongst humanity everyone in the world has a mind that works a little differently and has been shaped differently as they've grown up by their different life experiences, to help them become individuals.

Sub-groups of humanity exist though whose neurological function, from conception, is markedly different from the rest of humanity and sub-groups are called neurodivergencies (singular: neurodivergent) and include people who are autistic, ADHD, bi-polar, Tourette's and so on.

The neurodiversity paradigm, as it is known, was developed and has evolved organically as a way of encouraging people to recognise that there is no one perfect person, and that anyone who presents differently has no need to be labelled disordered, or not functioning correctly in some way.

Medical science likes to put people into narrow categories of being, and focuses around a 'right' way of being, with every other way being seen as a 'wrong' way – this is known as the medical model of disability.

Research and ideology is starting to move away from this model and is recognising the Social Model of Disability, which recognises that many of the things that are disabling are not centred on the person themselves, but are actually centred on the barriers that are placed in front of that person.

Though not everyone agrees, autism does fall under the label of disability.

The Neurodiversity paradigm does not mean that autism is not viewed as a disability, as it recognises that there are always going to be aspects of autistic neurology, such as sensory differences which can be incredibly disabling. But through the lens of autism it does encourage people to recognise that much of what is currently under the umbrella term of 'autism' could actually not be autism at all, rather, a cross-over between different neurodivergencies.

The neurodiversity paradigm asks that autistic people are looked at through a strengths-based model, instead of the usual deficit-based model.

For more information see:

[What is Neurodiversity?, Kieran Rose, The Autistic Advocate](#)

[Some basic terms and definitions, Dr Nick Walker, Neurocosmopolitan](#)

[Misunderstanding Autistic Neurodiversity supporters, Ann Memmott, Ann's Autism Blog](#)

[A discussion on disability and Neurodiversity, The Autistic Advocate and Not an Autism Mom](#)

[Autistic community and the Neurodiversity Movement, Steven K. Kapp](#)

[Amythest Schaber, What is Neurodiversity, Ask an Autistic series](#)

[Neurodiversity – the key that unlocked my world, Elisabeth Wiklander](#)

