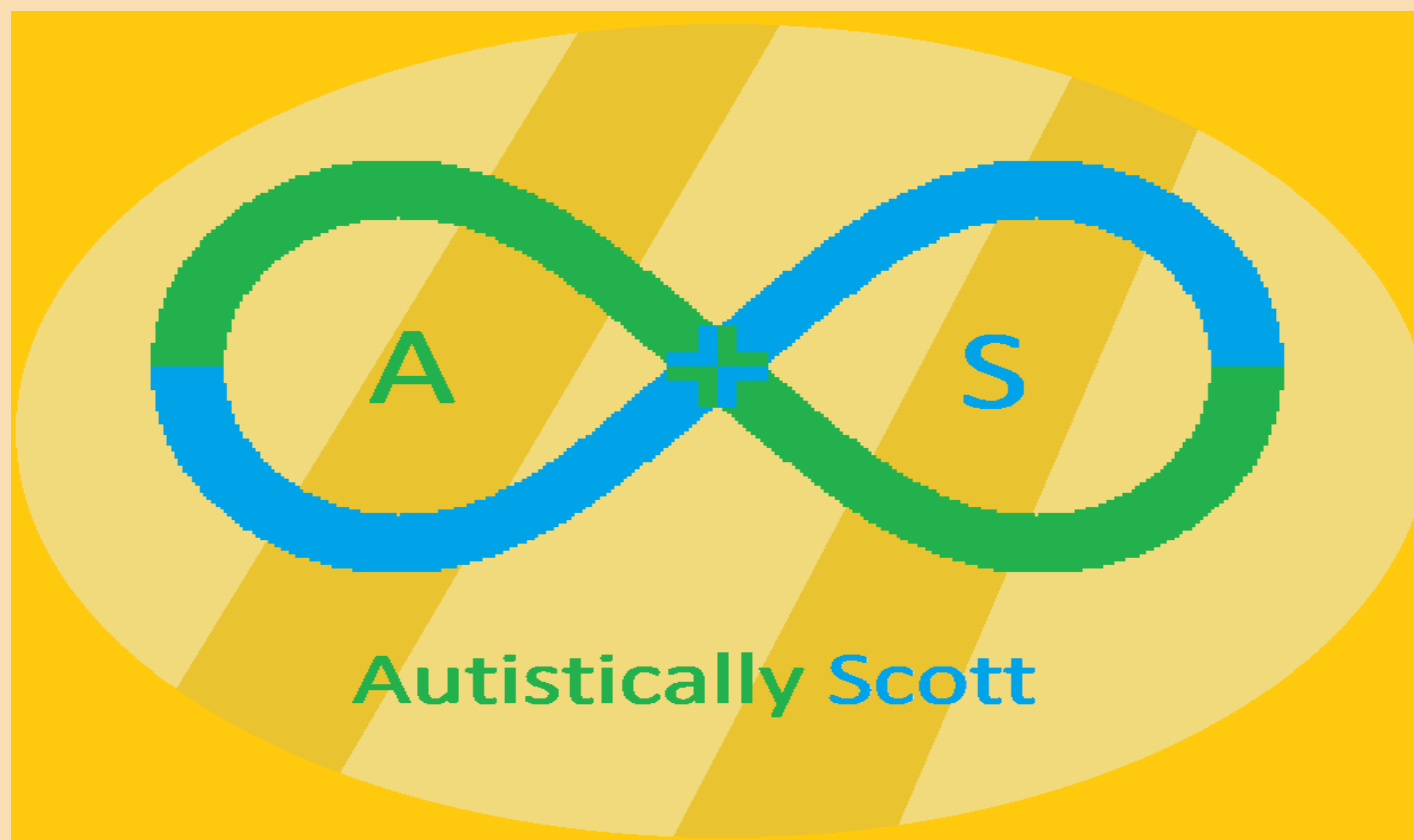


Nurturing Autistic Identity



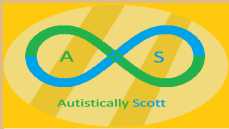


Who am I?



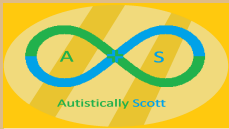
Scott Neilson (he/him)

- Autistic trainer, mentor and consultant.
- Connection, Collaboration, Compassion
- Promoting Autistic identity and culture
- Identification & discovery over 'diagnosis'
- References and visuals by Autistic people



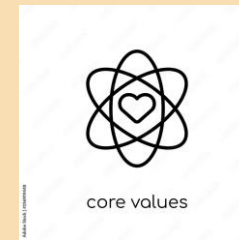
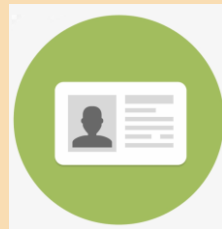
Housekeeping Tips

- Stim and move
- 2 hour session
- Use Chat box
- Content warning: mentions of trauma, suicide, mental health.



Identity definition

“An identity is the fact of being who or what a person or thing is.”



Why Autistic Identity Matters

It is liberating to know you're Autistic.

Self-identifying is valid.

Learning as early as possible = better outcomes

Knowing our Autistic identity can lead to self-discovery and self-acceptance.

We can only thrive as Autistic people.

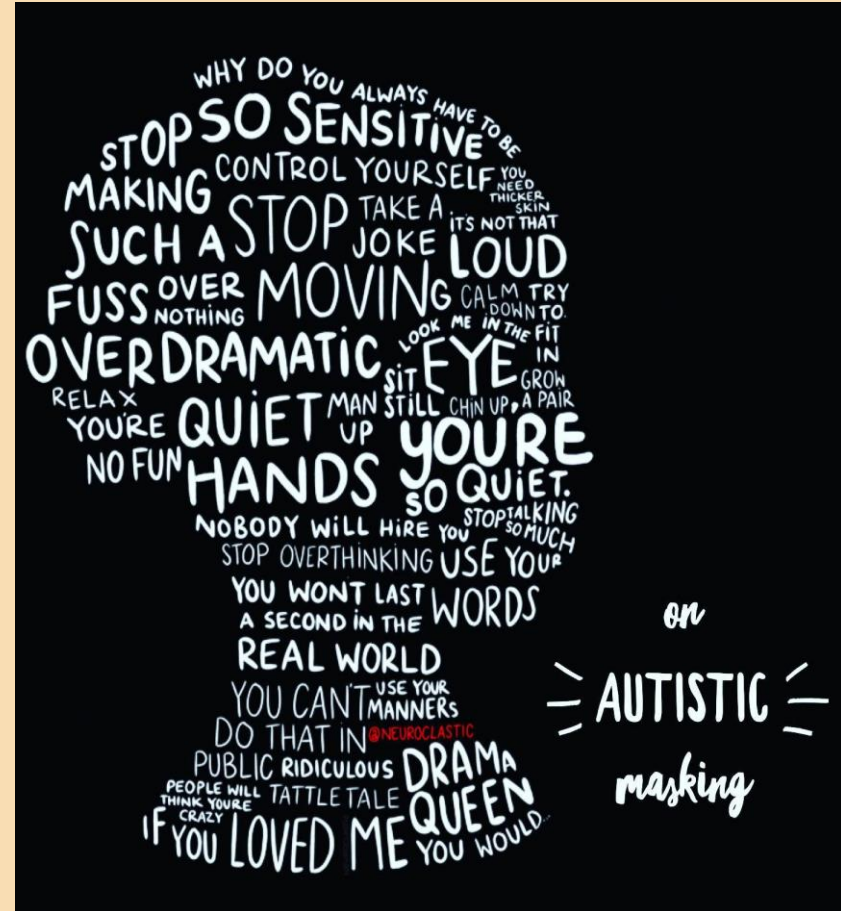
Knowing Autistic early in life study - https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350134133_Does_Learning_You_Are_Autistic_Earlier_in_Development_Lead_to_Better_Adult_Outcomes_A_Participatory_Exploration_of_the_Perspectives_of_Autistic_University_Students



Autistic Culture helps wellbeing and reduces stigma and pathology study - <https://www.karger.com/Article/FullText/524123>

Ableism and Shame

"An ableist society is one that treats non-disabled individuals as the standard of "normal living"". - stopableism.org



PTSD ABA Study - https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322239353_Evidence_of_increase_d_PTSD_symptoms_in_autistics_exposed_to_applied_behavior_analysis

Image source - <https://neuroclastic.com/autism-awareness-does-not-prevent-autistic-masking-autistic-acceptance-does/>

Disconnect from our Identity

littlepuddins.ie Following ...

Autistic Trauma


Can Look like



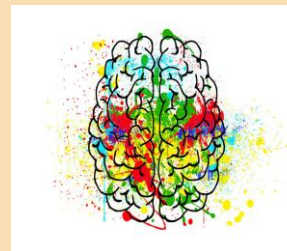
- Not Trusting Your Instincts Working So Hard To Socially Fit In But Feeling Like You Are Falling Again and Again
- Constantly Doubting Yourself Feeling that People Treat You Badly Because You Deserve It
- Having No Boundaries People Pleasing Because You Feel Worthless
- Berating Yourself Constantly Self Harm

@littlepuddins.ie

There are days when being autistic fills me with so much pride and happiness, and there are days when I wish I wasn't autistic. Both are valid. It's ok to struggle, learning to love who you are is a process. Self-love isn't from A-Z it's a lot of crazy letters in between.



#FIDGETSANDSTIMS



Intersectionality of Identity

Autie-biographical

Studies show that trans and gender non-conforming people are up to 6x more likely to be autistic!

Gender Rule Bending

That's really interesting! Any idea why?

I think autistics tend to see society's more arbitrary rules, like with gender, as nonsensical, so we're more likely to go against them to be our true selves

Oooo, that makes us sound so rebellious!

Our very existence bucks the system!

By: Theresa Scovil

COMING OUT, AGAIN
Transition Stories
Sabrina Symington

SEMA
Scottish Ethnic Minority Autistics

autisticblackgirl
...

WHAT ITS LIKE TO BE AN AUTISTIC BLACK WOMAN

Constantly being questioned about your identity.

Having to both mask and code switch to survive.

Feeling boxed in by the multiple biases and assumptions.

Dealing with people painting you as the "angry Black woman" that you know you are not.

Feeling pressured to live up to the unrealistic stereotype of a strong-at-all-times black woman

Being overlooked by doctors because of the lack of research and education

Not feeling seen.

Tired of the media focusing on the autistic white male narrative.

@autisticblackgirl

- LGBT Studies - <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/autistic-individuals-are-more-likely-to-be-lgbtq>



Self-love

Self-understanding

Self-
acceptance



Self-Understanding

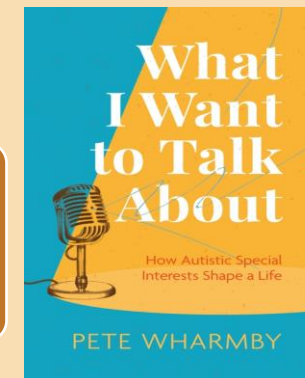
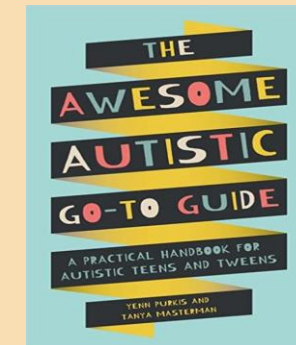
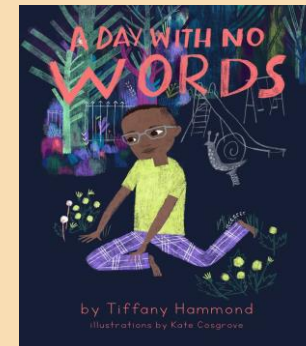
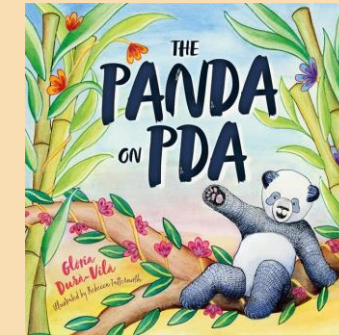
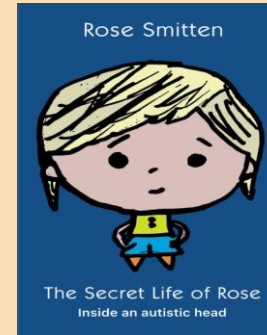
Learning we are Autistic before being in crisis.

Understanding our sensory & communication needs

Learning our rights (United Nations)

Accessing Neurodivergent therapists

Allows us to put into place the support we need.



<https://neurodivergenttherapists.com/directory/>



Interest-Led Learning

- Many Autistic people learn through their interests. We benefit from intrinsic motivation.
- Do not use interests as a reward.
- Self-directed learning gives autonomy to Neurodivergent people.
- Connect through the person's interests & show a genuine interest in them.



Self-Acceptance

Expressing ourselves

Reconnect with stims

Follow our passions and own path

Choosing clothes, colours, styles.

Connect to our sensory bliss

Explore intersectionality.

Not compromising our values & pursue the greater good.

Radical self-acceptance

Neuroqueer is an action.

To neuroqueer or be neuroqueer is to actively diverge from the typical & the normative:

- * actively diverge from neurotypical expectations;
- * actively diverge from heteronormative (cis & straight) gender or sexual expression;
- * actively diverge from expectations of what it means to be Autistic

Be Autistic in **your** way, not the stereotype or even community expectation of who you should be.

Neuroqueer Life & Literature: Nick Walker on Aucademy educating with Chloe
<https://bit.ly/3lTC1lW>





Autistic & Neurodivergent Love Languages

Info dumping

Parallel Play

Penguin Pebbling

Please Crush My
Soul Into My
Body

Support
Reminders

Relating
through
personal stories



Autistic Community



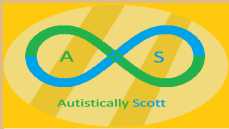
- Neurotypicals are less likely to want to interact with Autistic people.
- Autistic spaces help us unmask safely.
- Role models for Autistic people.
- Autistic community brings a sense of belonging. Shows that we are not alone.



Chloe Hayden plays 'Quinni' in 'Heartbreak High'



less willing to interact with autistic people (Sasson et al., 2017)
Autistic Peer Interactions - Catherine Crompton (2019)

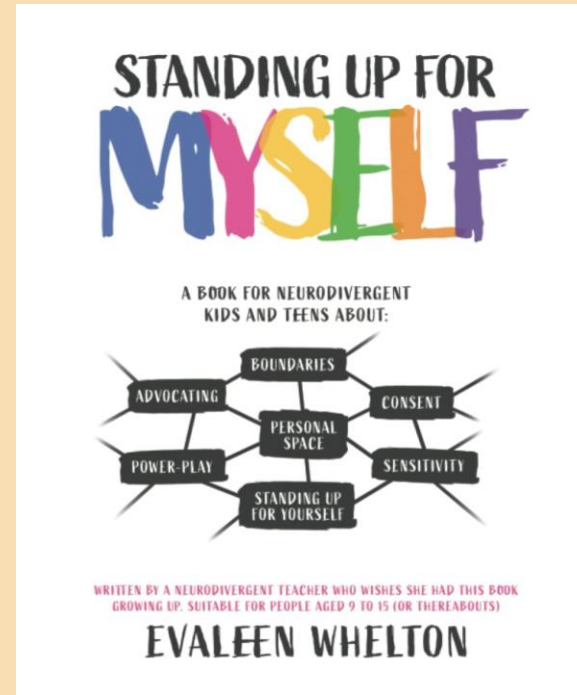
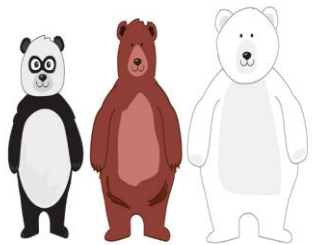


Identity Connection Exercises

NEUROBEARS

Is now available!

We want a generation of young people who understand their autistic experience and can advocate for their needs all their life long.





Building Agency and Autonomy

Saying no to people,
places or activities

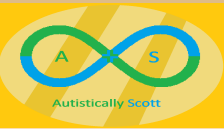
Person contributes to
their support plans

Learning our
boundaries and know
who is safe

Access to alternative
communication

"That's a really good
way you did that."

Don't make gestures
or cultural norms
mandatory.



Practice Self-advocacy

"I am overwhelmed.
Can I have a break?"

Taking someone's hand or pointing towards item they need

"Can I wear something else instead of this uniform?"

Move away from the activity they don't want to do.

Write note/text about leaving the room for a few minutes

"I didn't understand, could you repeat that please?"

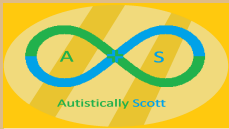


Letter to your Younger Self

I am sorry for what you had to experience growing up. For all those times people mocked you and treated you like an alien. For the things you felt sensitive to and struggled with that everyone else had no problems with.

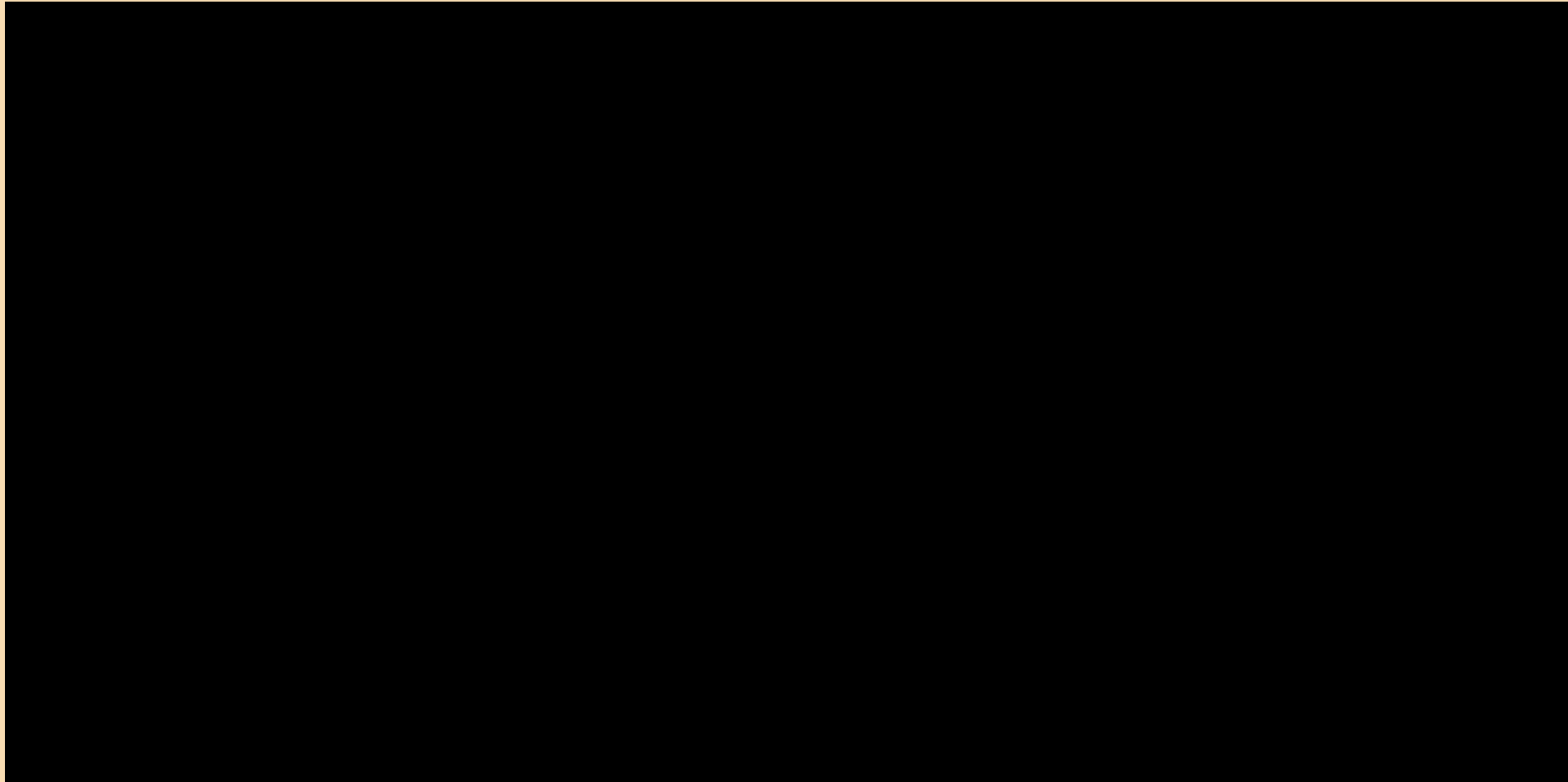
You were never stupid, broken or any of those other things people called you. You were never meant to "fit in" with everyone else and it is not right to compare yourself to them. However, there is a community of people out there who share your experiences and understand you. You are not alone and your own tribe is out there waiting for you.

I hope you can forgive yourself for anything you ever believed was wrong with you. The only thing you ever lacked was not knowing your Autistic self.



Why Autistic Pride Matters

Autistic Pride Day (June 18th)





autienelle



AUTISTIC, QUEER,
AND COMING OUT
OF TWO CLOSETS



At age 23, I discovered a list of non-stereotypical Autistic traits that changed my life. I found myself coming out of another closet: the Autistic closet. But just like when I came out as queer, I decided to own my Autistic identity with pride. Others may disagree, but I love who I am as my true authentic self.

@autienelle



Nurturing Autistic Identity

Self-understanding

- Know our rights
- Understand our culture
- Autistic books
- Neurobears
- Neuro Cards
- ND therapists

Self-acceptance

- Autistic Community
- Unmask in safe spaces
- Express ourselves
- Stick to our values
- Explore intersectionality
- Follow our passions

Self-love

- Having autonomy
- Self-care
- Forgive ourselves
- Self-compassion
- Boundaries
- Self-advocacy



My Details

Website: [Autisticallyscott.uk](https://www.autisticallyscott.uk)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AutisticallyScott>

Email: autisticallyscott@gmail.com