

Spicy Brain Vocabulary Index

Neurodiversity: the idea that neurological differences like autism and ADHD are the result of normal, natural variation in the human genome. Indeed, many individuals who embrace the concept of neurodiversity believe that people with differences do not need to be cured; they need help and accommodation instead.

Medical Model of Disability: from the biomedical perception of disability. This model links a disability diagnosis to an individual's physical body. The model supposes that this disability may reduce the individual's quality of life and the aim is, with medical intervention, this disability will be diminished or corrected.

Social Model of Disability: is based on a distinction between the terms *impairment* and *disability*. In this model, the word *impairment* is used to refer to the actual attributes (or lack of attributes) that affect a person, such as the inability to walk or breathe independently. The word *disability* is used to refer to the restrictions caused by society when it does not give equivalent attention and accommodation to the needs of individuals with impairments.

Intimacy: spaces and/or people with whom we feel as comfortable as possible being emotionally vulnerable with; people and spaces we feel safer directly and transparently communicating with/inside.

Masking: is a process in which an individual changes or "masks" their natural personality to conform to social pressures, abuse, and/or harassment.



Spicy Brain Symptomology

Forms of Neurodivergence:

- Autism
- Obsessive Compulsion
- PTSD or CPTSD
- Synesthesia
- Dyslexia
- Hyperlexia
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia
- Anxiety
- ADHD

General Symptoms/Behaviors of Neurodivergent "Spicy" Brains:

- Time Blindness
- Rejection Sensitivity
- Executive Dysfunction
- Emotional Dysregulation

Diagnosis Specific Symptoms:

ADHD: Persistent difficulties in following directions, remembering information, concentrating, organizing tasks, completing work within specified time frames, and appearing timely in appointments.

Anxiety Disorders: often severe chronic conditions, which can be present from an early age or begin suddenly after a triggering event. They are prone to flare up at times of high stress and are frequently accompanied by physiological symptoms such as headache, sweating, muscle spasms, tachycardia, palpitations, and hypertension, which in some cases lead to fatigue.



Autism (Spectrum Disorder): experience difficulties with social communication and interaction and also exhibit restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.

- Lack of mutual sharing of interests
- Lack of awareness or understanding of other people's thoughts or feelings
- Atypical behaviors for attention:
- Poor eye contact, Aversion of gaze can also be seen in anxiety disorders, however poor eye contact in autistic children is not due to shyness or anxiety; rather, it is overall diminished in quantity.
- Facial expressions: they often do not know how to recognize emotions from others' facial expressions, or they may not respond with the appropriate facial expressions.
- Unusual speech: speaking in a flat, monotone voice or they may not recognize the need to control the volume of their voice in different social settings.

Dyscalculia:

- Difficulties with processing numbers and quantities, including:
 - Connecting a number to the quantity it represents (the number 2 to two apples)
 - Counting, backwards and forwards
 - Comparing two amounts
- Trouble with subitizing (recognize quantities without counting)
- Trouble recalling basic math facts (like multiplication tables)
- Difficulty linking numbers and symbols to amounts
- Trouble with mental math and problem-solving



- Difficulty making sense of money and estimating quantities
- Difficulty with telling time on an analog clock
- Poor visual and spatial orientation
- Difficulty immediately sorting out direction (right from left)
- Troubles with recognizing patterns and sequencing numbers

Dyslexia

- Difficulty recalling past conversations; often accused of “not listening”
- Trouble remembering names
- Mispronouncing words when speaking, or misspelling words when writing, without realizing
- Confusing visually similar words like “can” and “cab”
- Avoiding reading whenever possible, or preferring short articles or essays over long novels
- Struggling to pronounce unknown words when reading out loud
- Reliant on spouse, children, or family members to help with written correspondence
- Getting lost easily, particularly with written directions
- Becoming self-conscious when speaking to a group; using filler words or starting and stopping sentences repeatedly

Dyspraxia

- posture and fatigue.
- Less close control - writing and drawing are difficult.
- Difficulty coordinating both sides of the body.
- Unclear speech, often word order can be jumbled.
- Clumsy movement and tendency to trip over.



- Grooming and dressing more challenging - shaving, applying makeup, fastening clothes, tying shoelaces.
- Poor hand-eye coordination.
- Difficulty planning and organizing thoughts and tasks.
- Less sensitive to non-verbal signals.
- Difficulty distinguishing sounds from background noise.
- Notable lack of rhythm when dancing or exercising.

Hyperlexia

- precocious and unexpected reading skills and abilities in children way beyond their chronological age.

Obsessive Compulsive

- **Obsession Themes**
 - Fear of contamination or dirt
 - Doubting and having difficulty tolerating uncertainty
 - Needing things orderly and symmetrical
 - Aggressive or horrific thoughts about losing control and harming yourself or others
 - Unwanted thoughts, including aggression, or sexual or religious subjects
- **Compulsion Themes**
 - Washing and cleaning
 - Checking
 - Counting
 - Orderliness
 - Following a strict routine
 - Demanding reassurance



PTSD/CPTSD

- Re-experiencing the trauma through intrusive distressing recollections of the event, flashbacks, and nightmares.
- Emotional numbness and avoidance of places, people, and activities that are reminders of the trauma.
- Increased arousal such as:
 - difficulty sleeping and concentrating,
 - feeling jumpy,
 - and being easily irritated and angered.
- recurrent distressing dreams in which the content or affect (i.e. feeling) of the dream is related to the events
- intense or prolonged psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic events
- physiological reactions to reminders of the traumatic events
- irritable or aggressive behavior
- reckless or self-destructive behavior
- hypervigilance
- exaggerated startle response
- problems with concentration

Synesthesia

- Irregular Sensory Experiences
- Consistent Reactionary Triggers
 - The same trigger will always cause the same senses to intertwine.
- Involuntary and Automatic Perception
- Simple and Objective Sensations
 - Ex: This means that visual synesthetic sensations will consist of a geometric pattern or a color, rather than a complex visualization.

