

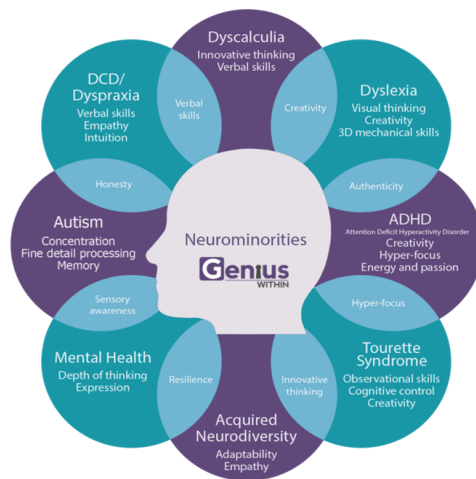
Disclosing a Diagnosis

There should be no pressure when it comes down to deciding whether or not to disclose your diagnosis. This decision is unique to each individual and the reasons one may disclose a diagnosis is also unique. Whether you aim to obtain accommodations, allow for more open and honest communication, build trust, or enhance teamwork, divulging your diagnosis with employers could help with overall job satisfaction and comfort levels. This decision still requires careful consideration and deliberation as self-advocacy does not always result in ideal outcomes which is something that must be taken into consideration. In the end, disclosing a diagnosis is an individual choice that provides the opportunity for promoting awareness, understanding, and support.

Due to the complexity of this process, it is important to gain insight from a member of the autistic community. Dr. Stephen Shore is an autism self-advocate, a professor, and an author. His expertise is in autism and employment as well as self-advocacy, which is what makes him a perfect candidate to outline tips and tricks for those who may want to disclose their diagnosis. Here's Dr. Stephen Shore's video "Autism & Disclosure: Tips For Sharing Your Diagnosis" for more information.

[Autism & Disclosure, with Dr. Stephen Shore | EDB 219](#)

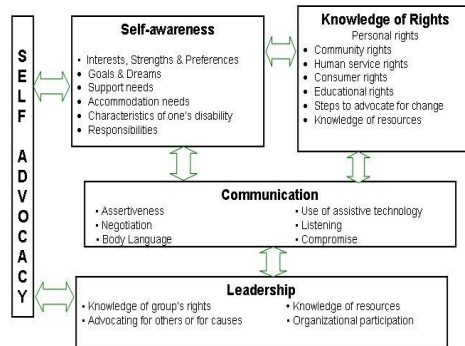
Highlighting Strengths



Focusing on deficits or the obstacles that may present themselves to neurodiverse individuals can serve to further inhibit overall opportunities and well-being. While being neurodiverse poses challenges that do not exist for most neurotypical people, it also creates distinct and special characteristics that are strengths. It is important to move away from a deficit-based approach and mentality to improve confidence in your abilities as this translates into the quality of work. Your lens as a neurodiverse person is vital because it is coming from a different perspective and thought process than neurotypical people may have. These are just some of the strengths that are typically associated with different neuro minorities, but there are many more. Not everyone has the same strengths, with or without the same diagnosis. Special interests and experiences during life all shape the specialties each individual has. It is not only important to be confident and able to identify your strengths for your edification but to grow as a professional who can recognize areas of weakness and strength.

Self-Advocacy and Script

Self-Advocacy Characteristics



Self-Advocacy can be challenging for several reasons. Anxiety regarding the outcome, societal stigma, and fear of judgment can all come in the way of addressing your needs. Since the act of standing up for oneself is so difficult, it sometimes makes it easier to break it down into sections. This infographic highlights the characteristics it takes to self-advocate and what each one consists of. It can be used as a helpful guide when trying to decide how to advocate for yourself as a reminder of the qualities a self-advocate has.

Clear communication can be difficult. When there are extra challenges that are present in social situations involving social communication, it can be useful to have a foundational idea of the concepts that you want to touch on. Asking for accommodations is one form of self-advocacy that is very common to experience. This can be an intimidating process as it also often entails the disclosure of a diagnosis, however with the support of the ADA this process is significantly easier. The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures access to reasonable accommodations and provides the

resources and support necessary if the proper steps to meet these accommodations are not reached.

For more information on reasonable accommodations and other ADA-related FAQs follow this link: <https://adata.org/factsheet/reasonable-accommodations-workplace>

To ask for accommodations in the first place, it is necessary to contact your supervisor, manager, or human resources (HR) department. Be clear in an email or a face-to-face conversation that you would like to arrange a time to meet up and discuss accommodations. Once you've got a time set, here's one way that you could go about initiating that conversation.

Y/N: Good morning thank you for taking some time to meet with me today to discuss getting some accommodations put into place for me.

Boss: Good morning and of course. How can I help you?

Y/N: I would like to talk about potentially getting some potential adjustments in my workspace and communication that I feel would greatly improve my productivity in this workplace. I think that these accommodations would improve my well-being greatly which will reflect in my work.

Boss: Thank you for letting me know, please let me know what I can do for you.

Y/N: It would be constructive for me to have a space or room that I can go to that is quiet and has no distractions. I can be overwhelmed when there are a lot of things going on around me - distractions or loud noises. I also want to wear headphones at my workplace if I am feeling overwhelmed. Having this space or option would help me to refocus on the task at hand and recollect my thoughts.

Boss: Those are all reasonable accommodations that I believe we can easily incorporate. Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

Y/N: Yes, and thank you. Sometimes, communication can be difficult for me when I am not 100% positive about what is going on. This could be resolved by having written directions because it gives me a distinct path to follow. If I were to get these accommodations my productivity would greatly increase because I would be able to fully understand what my obligations are.

Boss: Of course, would shifting more communication into email be a good way to accommodate this?

Y/N: I would greatly appreciate that. Thank you for hearing me out and implementing my accommodations, I feel that with these in place, you will see a boost in performance.

Boss: I appreciate you letting me know and I am glad to get those accommodations in place

Reference List

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