



Autistic People Discussing Neurotypicals

- I'm a disabled worker. I work in a social center where I clean. I'm sad because I don't get along with my colleagues. They think I'm a retard because I have a speech impediment.
- You're not a retard. You speak 14 languages.
- But all with the same accent, like a retard, you see.
- In my workplace, most people ignore me or speak to me as if I am stupid.
- The other day a neurotypical colleague showed me a photo of his baby. He asked what I thought. I simply answered the question. It looked like an old fatty with a squashed face. I think he was annoyed.
- One of the women I work with showed me some photos and asked if I liked her dog. The only thing I could think to say was that he is better looking than your baby.
- Sometimes it's hard to be with neurotypical people.
- They're sensitive. You must learn to tread carefully.
- I don't see why I should. You risk burning out by trying to adapt.
- At work I am masking continually. I have to take myself off to hide in the toilet to avoid burning out or having a meltdown.
- I have autism, but it's not a disease.
- I'll always be autistic, and I don't want to change.
- Why is the onus only on us to declare our condition – to make ourselves stand out as if there is something shameful about being neurologically atypical?
- I often wonder if I should reveal my diagnosis or risk being overwhelmed in situations where others may not understand what I am experiencing.
- When I commit, it's always 100%. I don't do things by halves. It's always black or white, never grey. I expect others to do the same and I'm often disappointed.
- Words are important to us. They describe reality and relate to images. When we say something, it's solid. Words are vague to neurotypicals.
- They use idle phrases.
- What use are idle phrases? How are we supposed to know they are idle? Idle phrases are meaningless. So how can we trust them?
- I realize how wrongly I perceive other people's intentions, so I'm always cautious about being tricked ... of being too naïve. I've been trapped so often.
- Autism makes it impossible for us to focus on two things at once. This makes us oblivious to other people's intentions. We can be the smartest person in the room and also the most naïve.

- Neurotypicals talk about themselves in order to connect.
- It's absurd. I don't see the point.
- I don't see the utility of exchanging personal data. I'm more at ease talking about my interests. It's more logical.
- A secret is safe in autistic hands, as long as you make it clear it is one. Sometimes with neurotypicals it's not clear.
- When I'm sad, I prefer to be left alone. The best way to help me is not to help me.
- Fear would be irrational.
- I went to someone's to play War Hammer, but I had to leave. His deodorant smelled too strongly.
- Yeah, I've been there also.
- I have a serious problem. I have been invited to my boss' birthday party, which is tonight.
- There'll be alcohol, loud music, and lots of people. I'd rather you than me.
- I don't know anybody. I won't fit in. What if nobody talks to me? What if I get her a present she doesn't like?
- The prospect of being alone among strangers in an unfamiliar place. How could she do such a thing to you?
- I have been a criminologist for 20 years. I know all the ways that people can murder each other. I just don't know why they do. It doesn't make sense.
- The corroborating evidence suggests that a man is courting me. His comments seemed particularly bizarre.
- That's how it works. Smitten neurotypicals often say one thing to mean another.
- Strange.
- Yes, very strange.
- Have you ever had feelings for someone that are more than strictly professional?
- I don't know.
- I am concerned that I don't feel things.
- This is an issue for all of us.
- In romantic relationships, neurotypicals do everything they can to avoid saying what they really mean. They beat around the bush and hint at what they want. They assume the other person will understand the implied meaning.
- This doesn't work on us. If you want something from an autistic person, you have to say so.
- Everyone deals with death in his own way. My brother was very important to me. I still haven't processed it.
- When my father died, I didn't know how to react. I didn't cry. That shocked many people. But it was a misunderstanding.
- Like in "*The Outsider*", our reactions can sometimes lead to misunderstanding with neurotypicals.

- In an impressionist painting, neurotypicals see a landscape. Autistic people see blocks of color.
 - Neurotypicals lose details in the overview. It's our burden, but it can also be our strength.
 - The world needs people like us, who see only strokes of color, not the landscape.
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- Difference is a concept. A totally different concept that changes according to the society.
 - That's true. Where I'm from, being born different is lucky. I'm Cheyenne.
 - It's true that among Amerindians, it's lucky.
 - In some cultures, autism is linked to witchcraft.
 - When I was young, I was called a witch.
 - Back home we're considered sick people.
 - In the West of France right now it's a bit of a lottery for us.
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- A neurotypical told me that there are different ways to feel. You may not look at a flower as you walk by but still appreciate the poetry it embodies.
 - I don't like poetry. I don't understand how it is supposed to be moving.
 - Me neither. Poetry doesn't make me feel anything. But nature ... nature is powerful and captivating. Last time I walked in the countryside, I saw a sunset and I cried. I don't know why.
 - I'm indifferent to sunsets. It's simply the angle the rays travel through the atmosphere.