

# MSHA 2022

**Title:** Autism & Neurodiversity: Reimagining the Strengths of the Human Spectrum

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**Day/Time:** Friday, March 25, 1:30-4:30 pm

## Overview of Learning Outcomes

By attending this presentation participants will be able to:

- highlight one underlying difference between the medical and social models of disability.
- identify at least 3 key features or themes associated with the neurodiversity paradigm.
- list and discuss at least 3 ways that the neurodiversity paradigm could shape their clinical practice to improve client experience.

## Abstract

Are you curious about the neurodiversity paradigm and how it could shape your clinical practice to improve client experience? The first half of the presentation provides an overview of key features and themes of the neurodiversity paradigm. The speakers draw on both existing scholarship and first-person perspectives of individuals on the autism spectrum. The second half of the presentation will focus on implications for clinical practice: a) integrating first-person perspectives into evidence-based practice, b) building on client strengths, and c) modifying the environment to facilitate access and meaningful engagement.

## Application Activities

1. Imagine a current autistic client (any age) who may be unfamiliar with the neurodiversity paradigm. How would you explain it to them or their family member?

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2. What are two questions/concerns that your client or their family member might have about the neurodiversity paradigm, and how you might respond?

a. Question/Concern:

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Response:

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b. Question/Concern:

Response:

3. Specify one additional way you could incorporate a first-person autistic perspective into your client's current services.

4. How might you translate the following commonly used descriptors into neurodiversity-affirming language?

a. Janelle is high-functioning.

b. Micah is hyper-fixated on movies.

c. Jude over-reacts when he loses a game.

d. Lucy does not demonstrate appropriate social behavior on the playground.

5. Specify at least one environmental change that would help support your client's goals.

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