



Celebrating Neurodiversity: Understanding Autism

In our Native cultures, every person brings unique gifts. Autism is one way a person's brain may work differently, and that **difference should be respected**, not feared.

What is Autism?

Autism, or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is a condition that affects how a person communicates, learns, and experiences the world. Autistic people may have strong interests, sensitivity to light or sound, or need routines to feel safe. Some may speak with words, while others use different ways to communicate.

What Does Neurodivergent Mean?

"Neurodivergent" means a person's brain works in ways that are different from what is considered "typical." Autism is one form of neurodivergence. Being neurodivergent is not a problem to fix—it's a way of being that deserves understanding, support, and honor.

In our communities, we know that all people are sacred. By learning about autism and honoring neurodiversity, we keep our circle strong and welcoming for everyone.

For support or more information, or to connect with a culturally responsive therapist, visit our website at: www.morningstar-counseling.com

Asking for help is ok!



For Relatives living in Nebraska:

All Nations Crisis Textline

Text "Support" to 33464 to chat with an All Nations team member.

We are here seven days a week from 8am-Midnight



**In Our Tribe
Everyone Fits Together**

How Can We Be Inclusive?



Listen with Respect: Every person's voice matters, even if they communicate in unique ways.



Create Safe Spaces: Loud places or changes in routine may be overwhelming. Be patient and make room for calm and quiet.



Celebrate Strengths: Many autistic people have amazing focus, creativity, or deep knowledge of their interests. Lift up those gifts.



Walk Together in Understanding: Learn from autistic people and their families. Inclusion starts with compassion.

Sources:

www.autismspeaks.org
<https://lewiscar.sites.grinnell.edu/HistoryofMedicine/uncategorized/everything-in-nature-goes-in-curves-and-circles-native-american-concepts-of-disability/>