How to Self-Identify Guided Learning Path—Curriculum Overview

How to navigate the curriculum

An important note regarding the design of this learning program before you begin.

The content in this learning path is intentionally organized and presented for neurodivergent brains.

The strategies I used will benefit non-neurodivergent people as well but are specifically designed to be inclusive of those with neurodivergent brain wiring. This design approach is called “universal design” because it is built to support as many neurotypes as possible.

Here are some of the learning strategies I employed to support neurodivergent brains, specifically:

- I used a **“whole-to-part” learning approach** to design the curriculum. This means, context is provided before details wherever possible. (This is considered the optimal learning approach for autistic “bottom up processing” brains)
- I also used a **“recursive” learning approach**. This means the content continually moves back and forth between larger context and details. (This is my design approach for “dual cognition” brains… brains that constantly move between context and details)

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- I also used **layered and blended learning approaches**, meaning there are various different types of learning content (articles, videos, PDF downloads, interactive exercises) intentionally organized to give your brain information in different ways. This creates stronger connections between content and solidifies ideas in your brain.
- I also designed the curriculum for **easy movement between sections and pieces of content**. Meaning, you can follow your brain wherever it wants to go.

So, general guidance for moving through this material is to follow the order presented, but if you feel your brain needs to move ahead to something and then return later to an earlier piece of content, **follow your brain's lead.**

Curriculum Overview

STEP 0: Guided Learning Path Overview

1. A Guided Learning Path to Self-Identification and Self-Diagnosis (Article)
2. Ethical concerns regarding self-diagnosis—My philosophical stance on the necessity of self-diagnosis (Article)
3. Curriculum Overview (This document) (PDF)
4. Your Self-Assessment—What to Expect (PDF)

STEP 1: Understanding How Autism is Diagnosed

1.1 Understanding the Diagnostic Criteria

- How Is Autism Diagnosed? (Article)
- Autism Explained in Under 2 Minutes (Video)
- How Autism Is Diagnosed: The Criteria (Video)
- How Autism Is Diagnosed: The Levels (Video)
- DSM-5-TR: Autism Spectrum Disorder (URL / PDF)

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1.2 Understanding How Diagnosis Fits into the Larger Picture of Neurodivergence

Section Note: This section contains the same piece of content in multiple formats for accessibility.

Blended Learning

- The Neurodivergent Iceberg (Video)
- The Neurodivergent Iceberg (Article)
- The Neurodivergent Iceberg (PDF)

1.3 Navigating Autistic Self-Discovery

Article Learning

- Why licensed practitioners are not always better equipped to diagnose autism (Article)
- Self-Diagnosis—What the research says (Article)
- Why self-diagnosis can 100% be valid (Article)
- 5 reasons self-diagnosis unequivocally helps (Article)
- Invalidating statements you can safely ignore as an undiagnosed autistic person (Article)
- Dear self-diagnosed autistic soul… (Article)

STEP 2: Understanding Your Internal Experiences

2.1 Understanding Autism from the Inside

Video Learning

- What is distinct anxiety as defined by the researchers? (Video)
- Distinct anxiety and the importance of supports (Video)

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- 7 signs you might have distinct anxiety (Video)
- When autism doesn't look like anything (Video)
- Why internalized autism is not just another term for masking (Video)
- The neurodivergent crisis no one is talking about (Video)

Article Learning

- Distinct Anxiety Overview (Article)
- Autistic Anxiety—what psychologists have been missing (Article)
- How do you tell the difference between autistic (distinct) anxiety and any other type of anxiety? (Article)
- Internalized autism, why it matters (Article)
- The internal experience of internalized autism (Article)
- How masking can lead to internalized autism (Article)
- "Invisible" autism is not just hidden traits, it's hidden needs (Article)
- Why internalized autism is hurting so many of us (Article)
- 9 signs you might have internalized autism (Article)

2.2 Signs You Might Be Autistic

Article Learning

- 9 signs you might be autistic (Article)
- 8 signs from your childhood that you might have been undiagnosed autistic (Article)
- 5 signs you might be autistic: girls and women edition (Article)
- 5 more signs you might be autistic: girls and women edition (Article)
- 10 signs you might be autistic… workplace edition (Article)

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- 5 extremely reliable signs you might be autistic (Article)
- 5 hyper-specific examples of my autism… (Article)

STEPS 3 & 4: Mapping your Experiences & Completing Your Self-Assessment

- Autistic Self-Identification & Diagnosis Interactive Guide (57 pages)
    - Childhood and Adulthood Experience Mapping
    - Individual Criterion Self-Assessments (A1–A3, B1–B4)
    - Final Assessment Matrix
    - Interpreting Your Results
    - Final Self-Assessment Reflection

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