

Neurodiversity Affirming Checklist

These are non-negotiable. They must do these to *be* neurodiversity affirming.

- ☐ goals are defined by the individual *only*.
- ☐ listens to and learns from lived experience and the community they are supporting.
- ☐ rejects neuronormative, capitalist definitions of success or independence.
- ☐ their focus is on reducing distress, not traits.
- ☐ they allow individuals to define what is meaningful for *them* as well as what is functional or distressing for *them*.
- ☐ recognises, accommodates and respects stimming, sensory needs, eating differences, special interests and communication needs.
- ☐ prioritises connection over compliance.
- ☐ values different ways of playing, socialising, paying attention and learning.
- ☐ presumes competence.
- ☐ focuses on the *why* behind *all* responses, behaviours and distress.
- ☐ teaches and encourages self-advocacy
- ☐ accommodations are given and available regardless of a diagnosis
- ☐ recognises intersectionality.
- ☐ respects mind and body autonomy.

These are preferable but negotiable. If they do, you've hit the jackpot but if they don't, they may still be learning.

- ☐ uses neurodivergent over neurodiverse.
- ☐ recognises altered states, plurality and hearing voices as a part of the diversity of being human and not as signs of an illness.
- ☐ honours and learns from Mad Pride, Psychiatric Abolition, The Hearing Voices Movement and other radical movements.
- ☐ recognises that what we label as a mental illness or disorder is a cultural judgement rather than a biological reality.

This is the stay away list. If they do these things, they aren't affirming.

- ☐ they prioritise compliance and label individuals as non-compliant.
- ☐ withholds a desired object or activity to achieve compliance.
- ☐ enforces eye contact and keeping still.
- ☐ refers to Autism and ADHD as a disorder.
- ☐ uses exposure and tolerance to treat sensory and eating differences.
- ☐ focus is on getting you to fit in, appear normal or meet neuronormative goals expectations or standards.
- ☐ reinforces binary ways of thinking e.g. right/wrong, normal/abnormal.
- ☐ refers to individuals as naughty, lazy attention-seeking, needy or demanding.