

EMPOWERING THE SILENCED: THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY FOR NON-SPEAKING INDIVIDUALS



Accessibility for non-speaking individuals is a matter of human rights. Imagine a world where you can't communicate, learn, work, or access health care, just because of the way you express yourself. This is reality for far too many non-speaking individuals. Everyone should be able to access these basic human rights. Yet for many non-speaking people, they are out of reach. Improving accessibility by providing accommodations such as understanding of sign language, assistive technology and communication supports that allow our non-speaking friends to communicate by making choices, enables them to communicate effectively.

Non-speaking people face ongoing discrimination and constant judgement. Too many people think that if you can't talk, you can't communicate. The judgement goes as far as to equate non-speaking with having little to no cognition which is FAR from the truth. Our non-speaking members of the community are insightful, capable, talented and have A LOT to say. So, let's try making this world accessible for our non-speaking friends.

It's time to embrace neurodiversity and fight for the place of non-speaking members of our society. Let's break down the barriers and challenge the stigma. Let's create a world that values and includes every unique, amazing person, no matter how they communicate and express themselves. It's time to celebrate the diversity of human communication and ensure that every person can live a full and happy life.

IN THIS ISSUE

	PG
Introduction.....	1
Featured Articles.....	1
January Highlights.....	2
Upcoming Projects.....	3-4
New Board Members.....	5
New Content Contributors.....	6

EXCERPTS FROM OUR FEATURED ARTICLES

Article 1

4 Accommodations to Advocate for Neurodivergent Learners in School by Brittney Geary



As a school psychologist, I work with kids to help figure out the way they learn best. Some fantastic teachers (with the resources available to do so) will accommodate learning needs of neurodivergent learners instinctively without the implementation of formal support. Having a discussion with the student's teacher is typically a good place to begin to explore the least restrictive ways to accommodate learning needs in the classroom.

Article 2

To Stay Healthy, Should You Show You're Autistic Or Not? Damned If You Do, Damned If You Don't by Emily Morson



The most stressful part of hiding is the experience of being "in the closet." When an autistic person fears that "if people knew what I am really like, they would reject me," it is not imposter syndrome; it is simple fact. And it weighs on you. Even when people in hiding are accepted, they can't get the full emotional benefit, because the connection isn't real. They know, "it's not really me that they love."



To access full articles, please visit:
<https://www.kindtheory.org>



JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

From personal and professional life challenges, our sessions with Dr. Javed are insightful, to say the least. Gain valuable insights into promoting neurodiversity awareness and acceptance, and learn how you can make a difference in the lives of those with neurodevelopmental disabilities by catching onto all 4 of our shared sessions with Dr. Tahleel Javed on our [Youtube Channel](#). Visit Kind Theory's Youtube Channel now to learn about her inspiring journey!



Heart to Heart Conversation with Dr. Tahleel Javed



Kind Theory and Reach Every Voice



REACH
EVERY
VOICE

In support of non-speaking neurodivergent students, Five spots for the Reach Every Voice online course on Accessible Academics were kindly gifted by Kind Theory. The course models how to break apart rigorous, grade-level instruction for students who may only communicate by making choices.

UPDATES ON THE UPCOMING PROJECTS

Building Safe And Supportive Communities (BSSC)



The BSSC program is a continuous effort to create safe and supportive communities for neurodivergent people. Through our three-track program, we make our environments, communities, systems and institutions not only supportive and inclusive but most importantly accessible for neurodivergent people.

"Update: Registrations Now Open for BSSC!"

Click now to learn more about the BSSC Program and to register yourself!

UPDATES ON THE UPCOMING PROJECTS

NOURISH DIVERSITY



Nourish Diversity is a 6-month program empowering neurodivergent individuals to make informed food choices. Each month covers a different topic, including the impact of neurodivergence on food and practical meal planning, with a focus on ADHD. The program includes interactive activities to make learning fun and informative.

**Rebecca King**

Becca King is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist from Charlotte, North Carolina. As an adult with ADHD who struggled for years with disordered eating, Becca is passionate about helping other adults with ADHD who struggle with binge eating, chronic dieting, and body image issues find food freedom and improve their self-esteem. She uses the Principles of Intuitive Eating and a weight-inclusive approach to nutrition for ADHD in her virtual practice.

"Update: Registrations Now Open for Nourish Diversity! Click now to learn more about the Nourish Diversity Program and to register yourself!"

GROWING THE KIND THEORY FAMILY: ADDITIONS TO OUR BOARD



Jeff Owens

Jeff Owens is Director of Technology at Semaphore Mobile, a neurodiversity advocate, and a parent of a neurodiverse child. He has a masters degree in piano performance and pedagogy from Baylor University where he also played on the men's varsity tennis team. Jeff runs the Autism-101.com resource website for newly diagnosed and self-identified autistic people. He was diagnosed with both Autism and ADHD as an adult.



Hi! I am Jeni - I am what you may call, "extra neuro-spicy". As an Autistic ADD-er and a survivor of two Traumatic Brain Injuries, I have a unique lived experience of my neurodivergence. I've been in the education field for 14 years, most of which has been spent serving neurodivergent children and their families. Currently, I'm working on my Masters in Social Work with the goal of helping neurodivergent adults navigate life in their own unique way. I'm excited to join forces with Kind Theory to build a rockin' support squad for the neurodivergent community. Let's do this!

GROWING OUR CONTENT FAMILY: NEW CONTRIBUTORS



Sherri Liska

Sherri Liska is a consultant and an advocate in the fields of autistic accessibility, education, and joy. As the owner of Freely Divergent Neurodiversity Consulting, she takes a gentle and welcoming approach to helping professionals and families improve their connections to their autistic clients, students, and loved ones.

When she's not monologuing about the importance of developing non-pathologizing diagnostic criteria for autism, you can find her proofreading social media copy, designing websites, voice acting, joyously tracking the relationships in her latest JRPG obsession, and fostering senior cats. Is the AuDHD THAT obvious?



Let's break down the
communication barriers
and truly make the world
accessible for all.

