

**OVERDIAGNOSIS
vs
UNDERDIAGNOSIS**

Confronting Media's
Damaging Narrative on
Neurodiversity

Newsletter
June 2023





OVERDIAGNOSIS, OR UNDERDIAGNOSIS?

WHATS NEW?

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The negative effects of documentaries that portray neurological variants like Autism and ADHD inaccurately and incorrectly cannot be stressed enough. These documentaries not only insult feelings, emotions and the lived experiences of neurodivergent people, but they also spread harmful biases and further stigmatize our neurological differences. By promoting sensationalized storylines, these videos ignore our actual realities and challenges, creating emotional pain and invalidating our struggles. Many people continue to wait months, and many spend half of their fortunes just to get a diagnosis. Diagnosis can be life saving in terms of validation, support and accommodations. However, after such a long struggle, creating a false narrative of their diagnosis and challenging their lived experience is harmful, disabling and unfair. It has a ripple effect which isn't limited to verbal discrimination. It goes a long way.

When these documentaries and shows portray Autism and ADHD as being over diagnosed, they fail to recognize the failure of the system that missed identification of many autistic people and people with ADHD thus totally failing to acknowledge the enormous percentage of underdiagnosis that occurs within many communities. This leads to a distorted magnified perception of the over-diagnosis of certain conditions, eventually creating further biases and doubt.

As a result of a recent BBC documentary on ADHD, late diagnosed people in the UK, who were previously provided with various accommodations in their workplaces, academic institutions and public, no longer receive them. Their supports and accommodations have been retracted. Even with a diagnosis, their support needs and accommodations are no longer recognized or are simply disregarded, thus worsening their problems and preventing them from receiving proper support that they rightly deserve.

Living in a world that's not designed for how our brains are wired is challenging within itself, add the reinforcement of false narratives, misinformation and stereotypes by these documentaries, the world becomes more stifling than ever.

As a neurodivergent-led organization, here's a message to the media:

Let us breathe. Let us exist. Create bridges, don't burn them.



May

Highlights

EXCERPTS FROM FEATURED ARTICLES

How I Lost My Clients in a Weekend - Part 1 & 2

The diagnoses I received were the pieces of the puzzle I had spent my entire life missing, and finding those pieces, after being convinced I'd never understand any of my "whys," gave me a relief I thought I'd die never feeling.

Read Part 1 [Here](#)
Read Part 2 [Here](#)



Kameko Thomas

Introduction - Swarit Gopalan



Swarit Gopalan

I love the fact that Kind Theory is appealing to a more diverse population that is keen to engage those like me. It is exciting to be accepted for who I am and for my perspectives to be valued to be given a platform like this.

Read Full [Here](#)

UNDERSTANDING ACCESSIBILITY



To celebrate Global Accessibility Awareness Day, Kind Theory organized a special interview with Emily Morson and Jamie Shields, our accessibility consultant. The interview focused on the topic of understanding accessibility. Emily and Jamie discussed various aspects of accessibility, highlighting its importance in creating an inclusive environment for everyone. During the session, they explored what accessibility looks like and why it is important. They discussed the significance of having a deeper understanding of accessibility and how it impacts neurodivergent people. If you missed the session, you can catch the entire interview on our YouTube channel [Here](#)

BOOK REVIEW SESSION

"A Day With No Words"
Ft. Vexatious AUDHD



We recently had a special book review session with Vexatious AuDHD, where we reviewed the book "A Day with No Words" by Tiffany Hammond. We discussed many aspects of the book and how beautifully Tiffany conveyed the message. Everyone shared their opinions and perspectives on the book, making the discussion interactive and fun. It was wonderful to meet other neurodivergent book enthusiasts. To round off the session, we played a game and gave away three copies of the book. We believe that such sessions are extremely to demonstrate the wonderful power of storytelling in neurodiversity awareness and education.

DESIS AND NEURODIVERSITY SERIES

by Samar Waqar

DESIS AND AWKWARDNESS AROUND ADULT AUTISM & ADHD

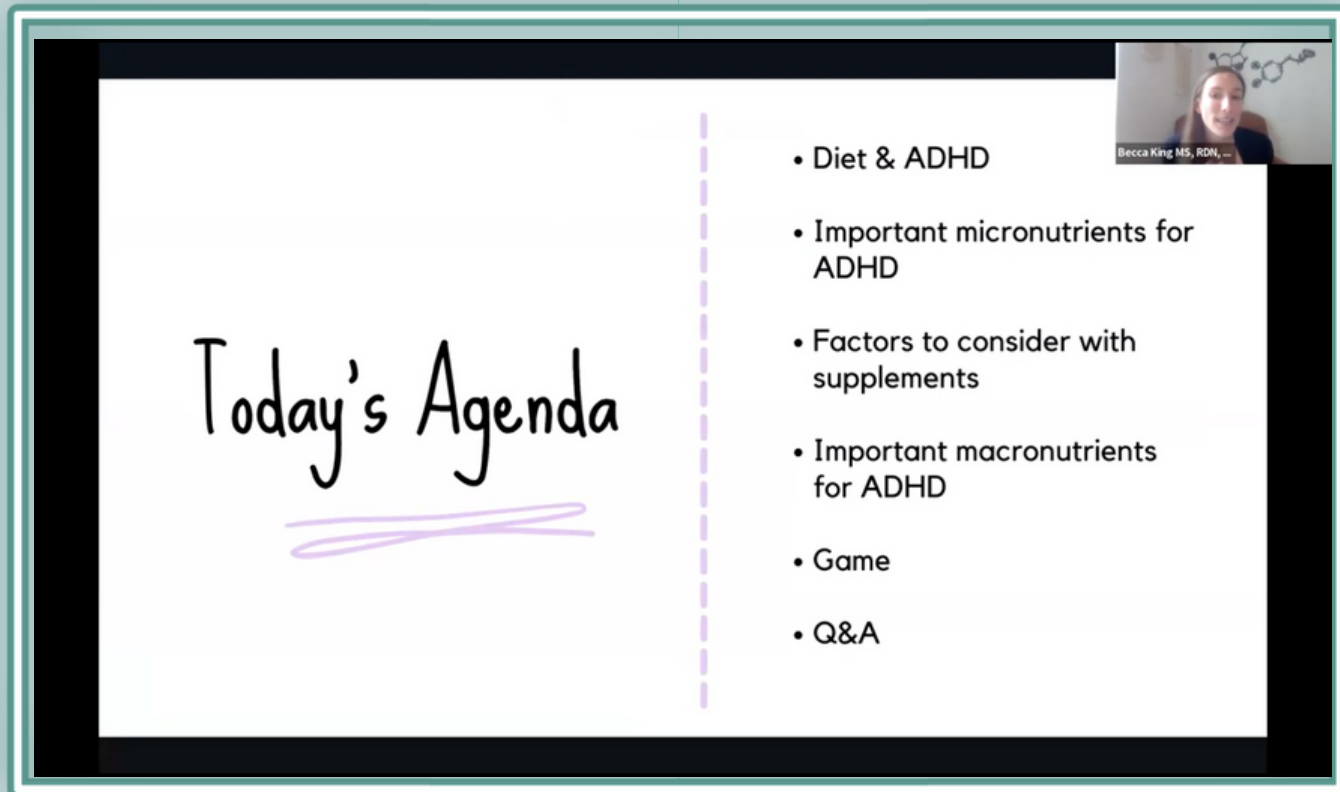
In May, we discussed about the stigma surrounding adult Autism and ADHD in the Desi Communities, specifically focusing on awkwardness around neurodiverse conditions within the Desi community. Samar, our founder and executive director who is also a Brown Neurodivergent, shared her own experiences. She talked about the challenges we face in raising awareness and promoting acceptance within the Desi community.

To spread the word, we created a series of posts on social media and published a detailed article on our website. You can find them on our website and social media. We hope that by talking about it and raising awareness, we can foster a more understanding and inclusive environment for neurodivergent people within the Desi community.

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

[Part 3](#)



We had our third Nourish diversity session on May 21, 2023. The main focus of the session was on three important nutrients for ADHDers. To start things off, we had a fun game where participants got to caption three hilarious memes. The winners even got a giveaway prize! Moving forward, Becca King gave us a rundown of the three nutrients. She explained why they're so important and shared some great tips on where to find them in food. The session ended with an interactive Q&A where Rebecca patiently answered all the questions in detail. If you couldn't make it, no worries! You can catch the whole session on our YouTube channel.

Get ready for our fourth session coming up in June 2023! We can't wait to see all of you again.

WELCOME OUR NEW CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS

Kameko Thomas

Kameko Thomas is a writer and disabled neurodivergent (Autism, ADHD, PTSD, OCD, MDD) Black woman living and working at the intersections of race, gender, and invisible disability. She is the Principal Writer + CEO of Vonem Creative Media, a strategic communication and narrative storytelling firm built to create a more inclusive world for neurodivergents. Kameko has a BA in English from Wiley College and an MA in English & Creative Writing from Southern New Hampshire University, where she was selected to join Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society.




Swarit Gopalan

I am an 11-yr old autistic, nonspeaker that uses letterboard to spell/keyboard to type to communicate. I live with my family in Florida and go to Invictus Academy for school. I find a lot of solace in expressing myself through poetry. Music and nature also help me stay in the present, there is nothing better for me than to have my movement create a symphony with nature and to truly enjoy the sights and sounds. Living in harmony with nature is my life's mission.

Right from the time of diagnosis, we are only told about all things we cannot or will not be able to do. Along with the check that is written to the doctor for the diagnosis, it often feels like our agency is written off too, especially without a reliable communication mechanism. Time to change the paradigm with more non speaker voices. It has always been a dream to share my thoughts and perspectives with the world so that I can be one of the catalysts to creating a better understanding of non speakers in general. My hope is that my words will help change the world from sympathy and pity for those like me to one of deeper understanding of our lives and allyship to ensure our rights.



Don't Forget to follow Kind Theory on Social Media to know more about our upcoming events and projects



It's time to rewrite the story,
amplifying the stories of the
underdiagnosed, shattering the
shackles of media's stigmatization,
and fostering a narrative rooted in
empathy, not sensationalism.