



■ Bex @Schnumn Tue Apr 26 13:31:06 +0000 2022

Autism self-diagnosis is valid and here's why: <https://t.co/tjwSUNDFxt>

MANY AUTISTIC PEOPLE CHOOSE NOT TO PURSUE A FORMAL DIAGNOSIS FROM A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL AND INSTEAD DIAGNOSE THEMSELVES WITH AUTISM.

IN THE PAST, SELF-DIAGNOSIS HAS BEEN CONTROVERSIAL BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY, BUT THESE DAYS MANY PEOPLE ARE ADVOCATING FOR THE VALIDITY OF SELF-DIAGNOSIS.



ONE OF THE STRONGEST ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF SELF-DIAGNOSIS IS THAT A FORMAL DIAGNOSIS IS NOT ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE.

MARGINALISED PEOPLE OFTEN FACE MEDICAL BIAS WHICH CAN GET IN THE WAY OF A FORMAL DIAGNOSIS.



THE DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS CAN ALSO TAKE SEVERAL YEARS. THIS CAN BE VERY STRESSFUL FOR A LOT OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE.



A DIAGNOSIS CAN ALSO BE EXPENSIVE. EVEN IN PLACES WITH SUBSIDISED HEALTHCARE, A PRIVATE DIAGNOSIS MAY BE BETTER THAN GOING THROUGH THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM.



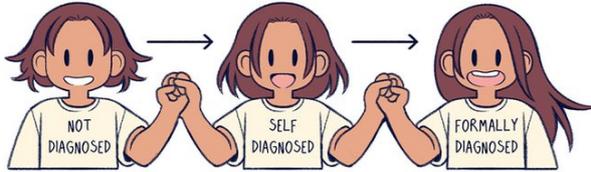
UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE STILL MANY MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND AUTISM AND MAKE THEIR DIAGNOSES OR LACK THEREOF BASED ON OUTDATED AND HARMFUL STEREOTYPES. IT IS COMMON FOR DIAGNOSED AUTISTICS TO HAVE HAD SOME TROUBLE GETTING THEIR DIAGNOSIS BECAUSE OF THIS UNFORTUNATE REALITY.

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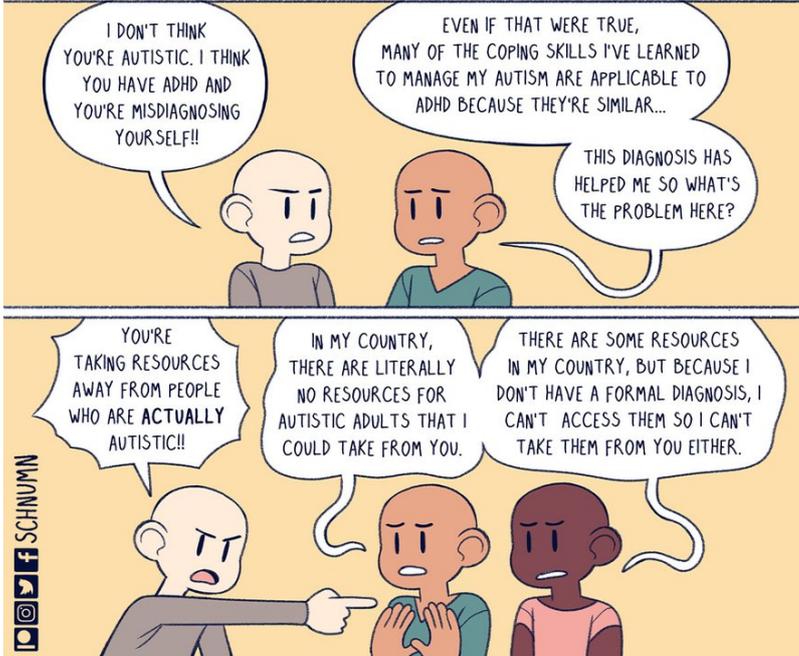


YOU MADE EYE CONTACT WITH ME. THEREFORE, YOU CANNOT BE AUTISTIC.

A PERSON'S SELF-DIAGNOSIS MAY BE A STEP ON THE WAY TO PURSUING A FORMAL DIAGNOSIS, SO EVEN IF YOU REALLY DO BELIEVE THAT HAVING A FORMAL DIAGNOSIS IS THE ONLY VALID WAY TO BE AUTISTIC, YOU STILL SHOULDN'T TREAT SELF-DIAGNOSED AUTISTIC PEOPLE AS BEING ANY LESS AUTISTIC THAN IF THEY WERE MEDICALLY DIAGNOSED.



ONE OF THE MAIN ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE VALIDITY OF SELF-DIAGNOSIS IS THAT SOMEONE MAY MISDIAGNOSE THEMSELVES, BUT IT IS JUST AS COMMON TO BE MISDIAGNOSED BY A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL, ESPECIALLY FOR MARGINALISED PEOPLE. COMMON MISDIAGNOSES INCLUDE ADHD, PTSD AND BPD.





WITH ALL OF THIS SAID, SELF-DIAGNOSIS DOES NOT AND SHOULD NOT HAPPEN OVERNIGHT.



I made this comic last year for the SENSORY anthology but I never posted it, so I'm sharing it this year as part of the [#AutisticComicTakeover](#) for [#AutismAcceptanceMonth](#). Self-diagnosis is valid and don't let anybody tell you otherwise. Gatekeeping harms everyone. Trust yourself

I know I haven't been posting comics for a while because I've been so busy planning things for Autism Acceptance Month! I have a few announcements coming up so watch out for that ■ Make sure to check out [#AutisticComicTakeover](#) for more comics like this!

I'm just gonna address a few things that keep coming up in the comments :3

'How do I know I'm autistic?' Seek out resources, follow autism advocates, watch videos, read books... I meant it when I said that self dx shouldn't be done overnight. Be serious about your research!

'idk if I'm comfortable self-dxing yet' That's fine! The point of my comic is Not to pressure people into self-dx, just to say that if/when you choose to self-dx, you are valid in doing so. Definitely *don't* self-dx if you're uncomfortable or unsure! It's a journey

Resources:

[#AutisticComicTakeover](#)
[#ASDComicTakeover](#)

A fantastic resource by [@mykola](#) <https://coda.io/@mykola-bilokonsky/public-neurodiversity-support-center>

This book*: <http://shorturl.at/cyCQX>

My video playlist*:

<http://shorturl.at/ctzC9>

*Both of these are about women but can apply to anyone who masks

Another thing that keeps coming up: autism is not a mental illness. It's a neurotype. It's a developmental disability. It's not a mental illness.

More reasons why a formal diagnosis is not the only valid way to be autistic:

Do you need a doctor to diagnose you with avoiding eye contact?

With not understanding social cues?

With special interests?

With pattern recognition?

With sensory issues?

With having a routine?

If the shoe fits, it fits. People get so mad about self-diagnosis because they don't actually understand what autism is. It's closer to diagnosing yourself with being gay than diagnosing yourself with cancer.

'But what if people make up being autistic as an excuse for shitty behaviour?'

Autism isn't an excuse for shitty behaviour. To claim otherwise denies autistic people our autonomy. This comic sums it up very well:

<https://twitter.com/Mrsquidgreen/status/1512441114367860746?t=gIFA8REtm-eC4qxP648Z4A&s=19>

But also, I am fascinated with society's skepticism of disability. People are more bothered by the possibility of a handful of people faking it 'as an excuse' or 'for attention' than they are by scores of disabled people being denied care and dignity.

'Only Doctors are qualified to diagnose' Is someone who spent years researching autism, reading up on it and talking to autistic people (something doctors in training often neglect to do) really less qualified than a doctor who maybe learned about autism briefly in med school?

In an ideal world, all autistic people would have access to a diagnosis made by a professional with up-to-date knowledge of autism but that is Not reality. The reality is that most people who get diagnosed later in life have to really fight for it, and many of us can't do that.

Most people seeking a diagnosis don't get to go straight to a specialist. Our access to specialists is barred by general practitioners who commonly believe things like

-Women can't be autistic

-You can't be smart and be autistic

-You can't be autistic if you make eye contact

So yes, I firmly believe that people who have spent a long time seriously researching autism on their own are more qualified to diagnose themselves than general practitioners who spend less than an hour talking to you and deciding you don't need to see a specialist.

I try to be thorough with my responses and meet people where they're at rather than being snarky, bc I think it's the most helpful thing to do. But also it's stressful and exhausting so if you got anything out of this thread/comic, please buy me a coffee ■ **<https://www.ko-fi.com/schnumn>**