Pathology Model:
Autism "refers to a group of complex neurodevelopment disorders characterized by repetitive & characteristic patterns of behavior & difficulties with social communication & interaction. The symptoms are present from early childhood & affect daily functioning."

There is no cure for autism & therapists should not provide therapy with an intent to "cure" autism.

We don't "Treat Autism". "Autism Intervention" looks like:
- ABA/Behavior Modification
- Positive Reinforcement
- Training neurotypical social skills, & teaching masking
- Insisting on spoken communication/Verbal Behavior®
- "Whole Body Listening"
- Gatekeeping AAC
- Goals for sensory tolerance or extinguishment
- Denying access to supports, accommodations & modifications
- Extinguishing echolalia, monotropism, stimming or Autistic "quirks"

Neurodiversity Model:
ASAN (Autistic Self Advocacy Network): "Autism is a developmental disability that affects how we experience the world around us. Autistic people are an important part of the world. Autism is a normal part of life, & makes us who we are. ASAN (& we) believe that instead of trying to change disabled people, we should work to make sure people with disabilities can access what we need."

Some Autistic people have intellectual disability, others do not. Some Autistic people can speak, others do not speak. Some Autistic people need a lot of support in their daily lives, others may need less. Some Autistic people have other disabilities in addition to autism, others do not.

Therapies should help Autistic people, not train them to appear "less autistic" or meet neurotypical standards or clinical outcomes.

We don't "Treat Autism". Empathetic & Respectful Therapy for Autistic people looks like:
- Unrestricted AAC access with core language & modeling
- Improving communication abilities in the client’s preferred mode
- Teaching self-advocacy
- Providing supports, accommodations & modifications
- Equitable inclusion
- Perspective-taking for ALL, problem solving, empowerment ST/OT/PT using a trauma-informed approach

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