

**Autistic Adults: Media Portrayal or Betrayal?**

**July 19, 2021**

**Program Script includes my opening announcements, introduction, some ads, future shows, and the Autistic Community Bulletin Board.**

Welcome everyone to Today’s Autistic Moment: A Podcast for Autistic Adults by An Autistic Adult. My name is Philip King-Lowe, the owner, producer, and host; and I am an Autistic Adult. Thank you so very much for listening.

Today’s Autistic Moment is always a free to listen to podcast that gives Autistic Adults access to important information, learns about our barriers, and helps us discover the tools and strengths we need for self-advocacy.

This first segment of Today’s Autistic Moment is sponsored by The Autism Society of Minnesota: Minnesota’s First Autism Resource. The Autism Society of Minnesota has been serving Minnesota’s Autism Community for the past 50 Years. Visit them online at ausm.org.

Some listeners have said that they cannot find the transcripts. The link to listen to each episode is created by the Anchor podcast creator. To get to the Program Scripts and Interview Transcripts go to either the New Podcast Episodes page or the Episode Index page on todaysautisticmoment.com and then click the hamburger menu. Scroll down to the episode you want to listen to. Under the title of each episode, is the link to listen, below that is the link for the Program Script that has these announcements that I am making now on them, the script for the future shows and Today’s Autistic Community Bulletin Board. The link just below is the Interview Transcript that has my conversation with my guests in print. Click or tap to open the scripts. The Interview Transcripts are sponsored by GT Independence. If you have difficulty finding anything, please send an email to PKLowe@todaysautisticmoment.com.

Today’s Autistic Moment is a member of the National Podcast Association that is also called the NPA. The NPA just started this year and includes over 1,000 different podcasts with their owners among their members. On July 11th, the National Podcast Association held their very first Podcastathon. It was a two-hour program that featured a 15-minute clip from eight different podcasts. A 15-minute clip of Today’s Autistic Moment’s episode *Autistic Adults: Our Diverse Gender Identities* with Enzi Tanner was among the eight clips that was selected to be heard on their show. I was so excited and honored that a clip from this podcast about Autistic Adults was heard by the many members of the National Podcast Association. I want to say a public thank you to the National Podcast Association, Enzi Tanner and especially you, my listeners for helping to make it possible. Today’s Autistic Moment is having a great impact.

On Tuesday, August 10th at 7:00pm central standard time, you are welcome to join me and Samuel J. Levine in a special live virtual event Autistic Adults & Employment. This exciting special live virtual event is sponsored by Minnesota Independence College and Community. Tickets are now on sale through todaysautisticmoment.com/lve/. There is only one more free ticket left. To get the last free ticket, register for the event through the link provided on the Live Virtual Events page on todaysautisticmoment.com, and click on the purple-colored link at the bottom of the page. When you purchase a ticket, click on the drop-down menu, and select First5. General admission is just $10.00 a person. If you want to get a $5.00 discount, go to the Subscriptions & Bonuses page to become a Podcast Planning Partner for only $15.00 a month. If you want to attend this and other events for free, join the Podcast Planners Plus Free Pass subscription for as little as $25.00 a month. After I receive the confirmation of your subscription, I will email you the promocode for the discount your subscription gives you.

The tickets are on a first come, first served basis and you only have until August 5th to purchase your tickets. So, get your tickets now while they last. You can also take advantage of other bonuses like newly published episodes, the *Monthly Moments Newsletter* sent to you by email, a free ballpoint pen and stylus, and become part of the planning for the future of Today’s Autistic Moment by participating in other subscription offers. The first Podcast Planning Partner’s Live Meeting will be on Thursday, July 22nd at 7:00pm central standard time. Subscribe now to receive a VIP invitation to participate. Listening to Today’s Autistic Moment is free and always will be. These subscriptions are to help build up the Adult Autistic community for Today’s Autistic Moment and make the podcast get even better than it is.

Emerson Malone wrote an amazing article on Buzzfeednews.com entitled: *How Autistic People Are Showing the Limitations of Person-First Language*. You can find the link to this exceptional article on my Adult Autism Resources Links page on todaysautisticmoment.com. Emerson interviewed Lydia X. Z. Brown. Brown was quoted as saying,

 “Person-first language actually had revolutionary origins. Unfortunately, that has become lost in most modern discourse, because the people who most loudly advocate for the use of person-first language are not disabled at all.”

Later in the article, Emerson uses the following quote from Emma Brown who is the co-chair of the University of Bradford in the UK.

“Autistic is something that I am. I have an Autistic brain, and everything I experience I do so through an Autistic (and ADHD) lens. I don’t see it as inherently negative. It is a neurology, and nothing to be ashamed of...”

I am sharing this with my listeners as part of my explanation of why I use identity first language. Since I began hosting Today’s Autistic Moment, I have heard many Autistics saying openly that many of us have had it with non-autistic people deciding for us who we are, should be and/or how we ought to be to be fitted into the world to win the approval of the neurotypical majority. These attitudes are driven by an ableist culture. If you listen to the episode *Autistic Adults and Living Independently*, Dan Carmichael from GT Independence said that “what needs to change is what people view as normal.” On the episode *Autistic Adults and Autism Acceptance*, Ellie Wilson said that there is a therapist at The Autism Society of Minnesota who is fond of saying that “Normal is a setting on a washing machine. Normal does not apply to people.” I am one of many Autistics who see ourselves as neurodivergent. We do think, talk, act, and process things very differently from how the neurotypical majority does. Many Autistics such as I have gone through a process to accept being unique as one of our greatest strengths as individuals with a personality and not limited to a diagnostic pathology that dehumanizes us.

Regardless of what group of people you are from that has a history of being “othered,” the media plays a powerful role in that it reflects what society looks like. The media is well known for getting everyone’s attention by whatever sensations they create. Autistic people are one group of people that are portrayed and betrayed by the media. The entertainment and news media continues to use the harmful functioning labels thinking that they are doing Autistics a favor. Many continue to say that Asperger’s is high functioning and therefore it is “mild” and not as “severe” as the Autistics with higher support needs who use augmentative and alternative communication devices. While the show Atypical on Netflix puts a face, name and a productive character on an Autistic guy named Sam; it also betrays Autistics with stereotypes that suggest that all Autistics are probably like Sam. Stereotypes like these suggested by similar shows can cast dark shadows on neurodiversity. In other media portrayals, Autistic people are betrayed when the Autistic character is prone to criminal and violent behavior, lazy, abusive, and unable to appreciate the consequences of our actions further stigmatizes all Autistic people. Among the reasons this happens is because Autistics or often characterized in the media by neurotypical people, neurotypical values and what is defined as normal by ableism and the neurotypical majority. These are only a few examples of how many Autistic Adults feel when the media attempts to portray us. Many Autistic Adults feel that the media betrays us.

My guest to talk about this important topic is Nicola Whiting. Nicola is the co-owner of Titania Group, she is also Autistic, an Amazon best-selling author and is listed as one of the top 20 most influential women working in cyber security. Nicola received the United Kingdom’s inaugural “National Cyber Citizen Award” for her “outstanding contribution to the world of cyber security and protectional and awarded an MBW by the Queen for services to International Trade and Diversity.” Nicola joins me today to talk about this important and sensitive topic Autistic Adults: Media Portrayal or Betrayal?

After this first commercial break I will begin my conversation with Nicola Whiting. Stay tuned.

**Future Shows**

On August 9th, you do not want to miss listening to the episode *Autistic Adults and Gaslighting*. Gaslighting is a form of manipulation and abuse concentrated on making someone doubt reality. It can include lies and constant coverups, broken promises and erodes one’s sense of what is real. Lyric Holmans, the Neurodivergent Rebel joins me to talk about what gaslighting is, with some advice on how to recognize it and protect ourselves from abusers.

On August 23rd, Zephyr James will be my guest to talk about *Autistic Adults and Interdependence*. Interdependence is best understood as depending on each other in seeking health relationships, connected communities, building strong families, and understanding the connection of independence with interdependence. Zephyr James is the Community Engagement Manager at the Autism Society of Minnesota who is leading this project. You will not want to miss this episode.

There are some great shows coming up in the Fall about subjects like Dating, Romantic Relationships and Sexuality. Let’s Talk About Consent. Socializing with other Autistics and Preparing for Holidays that are not so sensory friendly.

I would love your help to prepare for these and other shows. Become a Podcast Planning Partner or a Podcast Planner Plus Free Pass subscriber and you can join me and other Autistics on July 22nd and August 19th to suggest topics and questions you would like me to ask my guests. Go to todaysautisticmoment.com/subscribe/.

Thank you for listening to Today’s Autistic Moment.

**Today’s Autistic Community Bulleting Board**

Minnesota Independence College and Community is having a virtual Open House on Thursday, July 29th at 7:00pm central standard time. Go to miccommunity.org to register.

Minnesota Independence College and Community invites you to join them for MICC’s IndePENNdence 5K race on September 19th in Donaldson Park in Richfield, Minnesota.

The Autism Society of Minnesota invites you to reach out to your golfing friends and golf clubs to participate in the 26th Annual AuSM Golf Classic at The Royal Club on Monday, August 2nd, 2021, beginning at 12pm at The Royal Golf Club on 11455 20th Street North in Lake Elmo, MN 55042. Sponsorships are available. Go to ausm.org to register.

Please follow Today’s Autistic Moment on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Please send an email with comments and questions to PKLowe@todaysautisticmoment.com.

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