

My favorite parts of autistic culture:

- **We're willing to openly ask about things we don't understand, and to explain things to people who ask for clarification.** Don't get a joke? No problem. We'll walk you through it step by step so you understand why it's funny. When someone needs help understanding a complicated topic, doesn't know a vocabulary word, or wants to know more about a certain subject, we're there to help each other out!
- **Our open-minded acceptance of other people and their mannerisms, needs, and quirks.** We don't care if you're awkward around us- seriously. We're awkward too! And if you want to yell and flap and spin in circles? That's totally cool. We might even cheer you on!
- **We don't judge people.** Most of us know what it's like to be picked apart by peers, to be belittled and made to feel self-conscious. We know that life is too short to waste time judging other people for their behaviors or appearances. So as a general rule, we just don't do it!
- **Our witty, creative sense of humor.** Autistic people are some of the funniest people I've ever met. We can deliver things in a deadpan way that's hard for neurotypicals to achieve. And sometimes we're hilarious without trying to be, when we say things seriously that are slightly socially inappropriate but just right for the situation.
- **We group stim with other autistic people!** Some of my favorite moments with other autistic people have been when we're stimming with each other's hands, jumping and flapping together, playing with the same stimmy object, or doing echolalia & palilalia together.
- **We pay attention to each other's sensory & access needs, and help out as much as possible.** I can't even count the number of times Laurel has helped me through sensory overload, covered my ears for me, etc. And online, when someone needs help doing something, we lend a helping hand. Need captions for that video? No worries, we're already on it.
- **The ways we support other autistic people who are dealing with traumatic experiences, and help them work through their feelings.** There's a lot of hardship that autistic people experience, from bullying to workplace discrimination to parental abuse, and we're always there to lend comfort and a listening ear to community members who are having a rough time.
- **How loving we are, towards each other and those around us.** Autistic people are my biggest hype-people, by far. The autistic people who follow my personal account leave the majority of the comments, and all of them are so full of love. When we like

something that someone has said or done, we're not afraid to comment and let them know!

There are probably more things that I've forgotten, but I think this sums up my favorite parts of being in the autistic community, in-person and online. There are probably exceptions to everything on this list, but as general rules these are things I've observed.

What are your favorite parts of autistic culture?

~Eden 🐸