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Parallel Session 7b

Rethinking “normal” in the Workplace: What it means to build a more inclusive workplace culture

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Katy Alexander, *Digital Science*
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Rethinking “normal” in the workplace: what it means to build a more inclusive workplace culture

Session Chair: Sara Rouhi
Speakers: Katy Alexander, Valarie Guagnini, Dianndra Roberts
What does it mean to be normal in the workplace?

As we consider the day-to-day challenges that many of us carry into our professional lives, we often overlook invisible attributes that disrupt the perceptions of normal.

This Fireside Chat unpacks the systemic oppression that disadvantages minorities including disabilities, commonly known as ableism, and how our neurodivergent colleagues find successful ways to use their perspectives in advantageous ways.
Keywords

• Diversity tax: an unintentional burden placed on marginalized individuals to help address diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) issues and participate in these efforts

• Masking: a process in which humans change or “mask” their natural personality or needs to conform to social norms or conventional ‘expected’ behaviors

• Spoon theory: a metaphor describing the amount of physical and/or mental energy that a person has available for daily activities and tasks, and how it can become limited

• Self-regulation: a person’s ability to adjust and control their energy level, emotions, behaviours and attention in ways that are socially acceptable
Additional Reading

- Top autism tips: employment - reasonable adjustments
- Guest Post – Reducing the Burden of Diversity Tax: Recommendations for Organizations - The Scholarly Kitchen (sspnet.org)
- But You Don't Look Sick? support for those with invisible illness or chronic illness The Spoon Theory written by Christine Miserandino - But You Don't Look Sick? support for those with invisible illness or chronic illness
- Autistic people and masking (autism.org.uk)
- Top autism tips: employment - reasonable adjustments
- Ableist Attitudes: What They Are and Their Impact in the Workplace | Built In
- Toolkits for Equity – Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Communications (c4disc.org)
- The Accessible Workplace - Celebrating Disability