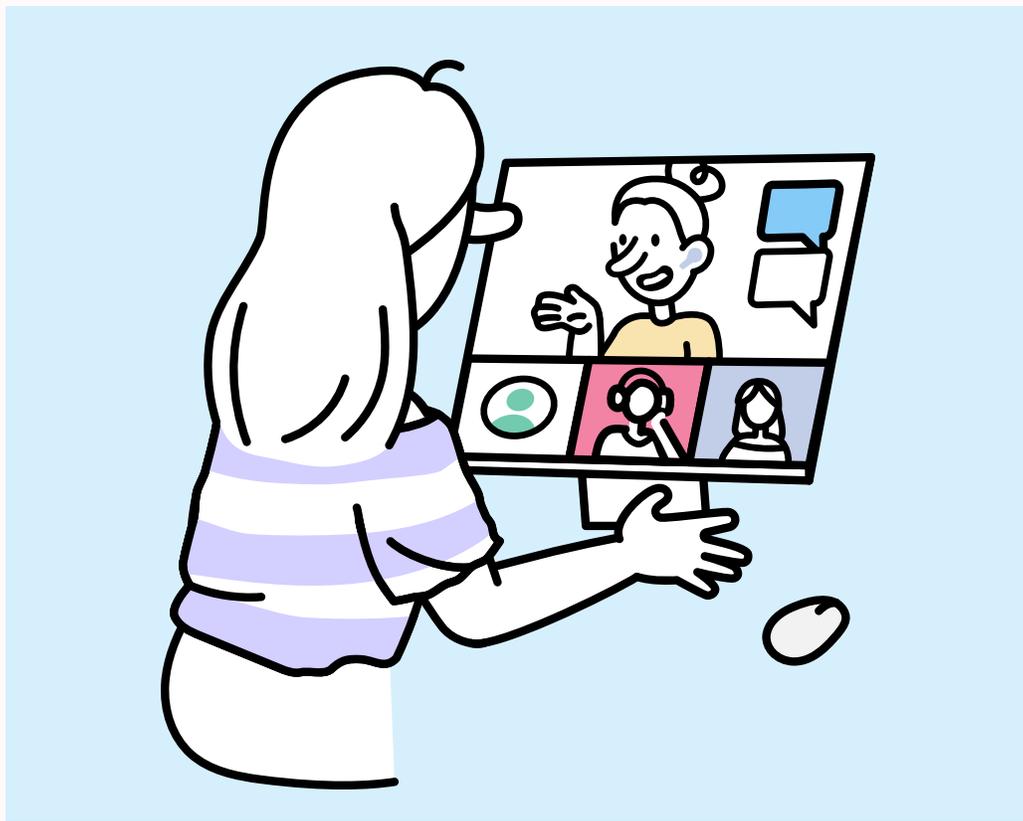


# 5 Easy Ways

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**To Make A Video Conference Accessible**

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**FOR AUTISTIC PERSONS**

And Other Neurodivergents

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# #1 Create opportunities for pre-conference reflections:

## SHARE WHAT TO EXPECT



Send out agenda for conference if available.

## GET THOUGHTS GOING



Provide ahead of time any questions up for discussion during meeting.

## OFFER CHANCE TO WRITE & SHARE THOUGHTS/QUESTIONS



Create a pre-meeting padlet or other forum for participants.

## SCHEDULE TIME FOR SMALL TALK



Invite participants interested in chatting to log in a few minutes before the start.

**i** Many unique thinkers ruminate more intricately than others and need space to sort out their thoughts before meetings.



"I think in so many words. There are always so many words, but most of them I don't even understand, even when I do understand them."---Jessa Sturgeon, *All the Weight of Our Dreams*, 73.

# #2 Tailor your handouts and slides



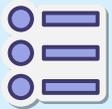
**Do**



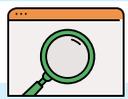
Use a soft color scheme



Create simple layouts



Add bullet points for organisation



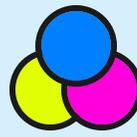
Use straightforward language



Provide concrete examples



**Don't**



Use bright color contrasts



Make busy designs



Create dense walls of text



Use vague speech



Give abstract instructions

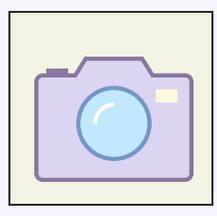
**i** Bright colors, visual clutter, and wordy instructions can be a distraction for minds that are already quite vibrant and creative.



"Eventually, Lawrence of Arabia arrived at the College Theatre and I simply hated it--for its noise, its bigness, the brightness of its colors, the everlasting swelling of the orchestra, all of which I found alarming and unpleasant affronts." --Tim Page, *Parallel Play*, 46.

# #3

## Prevent information overwhelm



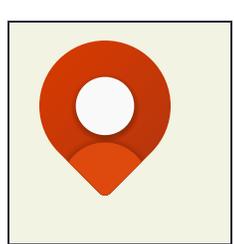
**Use optional camera policy:** To maximize focus on the content of the meeting, allow participants to choose to leave camera on/off.



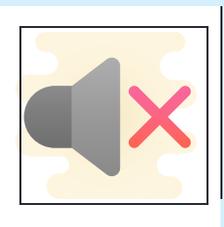
**Take periodic breaks:** Allow space for participants to gather their thoughts after each speaker. Also give them a minute to reflect on questions before discussion begins.



**Appoint a moderator:** Designate someone to coordinate who speaks when. Hand-raise functions are helpful.



**Be specific:** Pointing out something on a slide? Describe where it is exactly. "Look at the bottom of the page, in the third column, labelled 'population,'" is clearer than, "Look at 'population.'"



**Allow silence:** Do not force anyone to speak. Use chat function if necessary.

**i** Watching oneself on camera and listening to talks back to back, can overwhelm minds that absorb more information than others.



"I hated the camera because it felt like an intense eye staring at me and I didn't know what to do."  
---Dawn Prince Hughes, *Songs of the Gorilla Nation*, 38.

# #4

# Prevent sensory overload

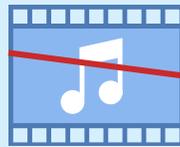


## Hearing

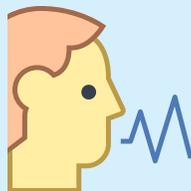
Set volume of videos at low-medium



Avoid playing background music in videos if words are being spoken



Try not to abruptly raise your voice



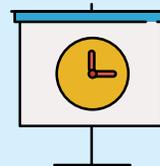
## Sight



Avoid using bright or flashing lights



Avoid playing videos that change images rapidly (every 10 seconds)



Minimize screen time by making sessions concise where possible



**i** Being highly perceptive often comes with physical sensitivity.



"The hum of the florescent lights was like the roar of an engine. . . . The ticking of the clock was like knives slicing through my brain." --Anand Prahlad, *The Secret Life of a Black Aspie*, 65.

# #5 Encourage further inquiries

## SUPPLY NOTES THEY MAY HAVE MISSED



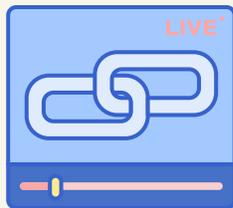
Provide handouts/slides if available

Create opt-in mailing list



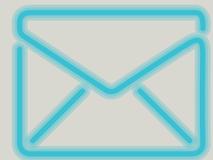
HELP PARTICIPANTS KEEP IN TOUCH

## MAKE OTHER INFO READILY AVAILABLE



Did you recommend a resource that is hard to locate? Provide links, etc.

Where possible, follow up with responses to any questions that remained unanswered.



LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE LISTENING

**i** In the minds of complex thinkers, more rich ideas and questions often rise to the surface after meetings.



"If I had to ask questions, it was as though I did so to the air. It had been this way as long as I could remember, and I used to become frustrated, wanting to know something but finding it was more of an obstacle to address someone than the question was worth." --Donna Williams, *Nobody Nowhere*, 49.

## Works Cited

Page, Tim. *Parallel Play: Life as An Outsider*. New York: Doubleday, 2009.

Prahlad, Anand. *The Secret Life of a Black Aspie: A Memoir*. Fairbanks, AK: University of Alaska Press, 2017.

Prince-Hughes, Dawn. *Songs of the Gorilla Nation: My Journey through Autism*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2005.

Sturgeon, Jessa: "Sometimes I Wonder If I'm Being Masochistic," *All the Weight of Our Dreams: On Living Racialized Autism*, edited by Lydia X.Z. Brown, E. Ashkenazy, Morénike Giwa Onaiwu, 72-75. Lincoln, Nebraska: DragonBee Press, an Imprint of the Autism Women's Network, 2017.

Williams, Donna. *Nobody Nowhere: The Extraordinary Autobiography of an Autistic*. New York: Perennial, 2002.

## Resources

[www.padlet.com](http://www.padlet.com)

[www.slido.com](http://www.slido.com)

[www.mentimeter.com](http://www.mentimeter.com)



[igtas.org](http://igtas.org)