



AUTSCAPE 2014

Autism through the lifespan

4th – 7th August 2014

Belsey Bridge Conference Centre, Bungay, Suffolk

Part 2: Programme

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Activities.....	3
Drop In.....	
Entertainment Evening.....	
Evening Activities.....	
Home groups.....	
Information Centre.....	
Interest Groups.....	
Leisure.....	
Lounge and Bar.....	
Massage with Heta.....	
Play Area.....	
Rounds.....	
Sensory Room.....	
Sparklies.....	
Swimming Pool.....	
Table Tennis.....	
Tennis and other ball games.....	
Crèche Times.....	
Schedule.....	7
Monday 4th August.....	
Tuesday 5th August.....	
Wednesday 6th August.....	12
Thursday 7th August.....	15
Lectures and Workshops.....	17
Accessing formal support through the lifespan (Yo).....	17
The Autism Genome Project and Genocide: The Unbearable Uncertainty of Being (Autistic) (Alistair de Gaetano).....	17
'Here be Dragons' – the LifeJourney and the Quest.....	18

Autistic adults and projects: Ethical and respectful treatment of participants (Heta).....18

Autistic identity, personal and collective (Damian Milton and Susy Ridout).....19

Do engineers make good advocates? (Diederik Weve).....20

Integration problems in high functioning autism (Dorit Ben Shalom).....20

Neurotypical Awareness (Alastair B. Cooper).....20

ESA and PIP: maximising your chances of success (Elaine).....21

Sensory Toy Making Workshop (Katie Gaudion).....21

Introduction

The first thing you need to know is that everything at Autscape is completely optional. You are not obliged to attend anything, speak to anyone (unless you are a parent or carer), or participate in any way. If you are interested in doing things, there is plenty going on throughout the day, serious, fun, structured and unstructured.

There are two programmes at Autscape – these are the Formal Programme and the Alternate Programme. The Formal Programme follows the theme for the year and consists of various lectures and workshops whilst the Alternate Programme has a wide range of more informal activities such as art and interest groups, sparklies in the dark and table tennis. You can choose to attend whatever you want from each of the two programmes though there will usually be events for each scheduled at the same time. There are also the core activities which are the basic things that are central to Autscape such as registration, meals, breaks and orientation.

This document includes a schedule telling you when and where everything is happening at Autscape and descriptions for each session.

Activities

Drop In

Come to the drop in area, just outside the main hall (Norfolk), to chat with people, do some simple crafts, help with a jigsaw, decorate your badge, or play a board game.

Entertainment Evening

The Entertainment Evening has become a regular feature at Autscape. We have had various acts musical and otherwise. If you are interested in performing this year you can contact Trish Jubb (who is one of the onsite team members) and can also be emailed on trish.jubb@btinternet.com (not for any other Autscape use please), with the subject "Entertainment Evening" or sign up on the list in the information area at Autscape. In an attempt to ensure the evening does not last too long, we are asking that people limit performances to 5 minutes.

Evening Activities

Various Locations

Between 8pm and 11pm the onsite bar will be open and a lot of people are likely to engage in informal, unstructured activity. There are also a number of planned activities in this time that are available to you. Some of these are listed below in the schedule. Others will be announced in the Information Area.

Home groups

Are you looking for some help with meeting new people? Home groups have been created to help people, especially those who are new, feel comfortable at Autscape and get the best out of the experience by providing a small group that they can get to know a bit better and identify with. The daily home group meetings are scheduled in the programme just after dinner (see the schedule further ahead). To join a Home a Group go to Waveney during the registration period and see Caroline. She will assign you a Home Group colour and tell you where your home Group will meet. If you arrive late, or you wish to join a Home Group later, go to Waveney 5 minutes before Home Groups start and Caroline will then assign you a Home Group colour. The location of the Home Groups will also be available in the info area.

Information Centre

This is where any changes to the schedule are announced and you can pick up handouts and sign up for activities. It is in the same area as the Drop In centre above.

Interest Groups

Interest groups are designed to meet people with a common interest. Like Home groups, Interest groups meet periodically, (see the schedule ahead) though you are not assigned to an Interest group. If you want to participate simply go to the one of your interest. Consider bringing something relevant which might provoke interest if the group are slow to get going. This year we will have the following Interest groups.

- Sci fi
- Animals - pets and otherwise
- Green/Eco and gardening
- Computers and gaming
- Talking about autism
- Creativity (Art, writing, music and more)

Four interest groups will run at a time and each will run twice. See schedule for details.

Leisure

This is time that is generally unstructured. You could use it to socialise, do something on your own or rest. You could also organise an activity of your own for people or take part in one organised by another participant e.g. board game, discussion.

The swimming pool is open throughout this time and there are also some Autscape-facilitated activities during this time. Some of these are listed in the schedule below. Others will be announced in the Information Area.

Lounge and Bar

The venue's bar will be selling drinks and snacks between 8pm and 11pm each evening. The lounge will be open for casual socialising during these times.

Massage with Heta

These will take place in the prayer room (when it is not being used for other activities). There will be sign up sheets for this available in the information area.

Play Area

There is a play area outside which may be used by children any time and adults when no children are using it or with the consent of their parents or carers.

If you are using the play area at night please remember there are bedrooms close by and noise carries. Keep all talking to a minimum at such times.

Rounds

It is traditional at Autscape for small groups to gather in the garden to sing simple songs such as rounds. Feel free to join in, everyone is welcome. This activity takes place during breaks, after meals and at other times. Meet at Overnight Guest Reception.

Sensory Room

We have a small sensory room set up for participants to explore and enjoy equipment at their leisure. This is open throughout the day.

The projector is on loan. There are instructions regarding how to use it in the information area. If you would like to try a different lens or wheel and don't know how to change them ask any organiser to give you a hand.

If you have the projector on a quick speed, please slow it down before you leave the room.

At certain time there will be scheduled activities in this room as well as some silent times.

Sparklies

Time to share enjoyment at light up toys and glowsticks. Meet in the Waveney. Autscape provides glowsticks for you to use at this activity. Monday and Wednesday evening.

Swimming Pool

The unheated outdoor swimming pool is open throughout the day during daylight hours. If the gate is locked ask for a key at the office beside the sensory room. Remember you may not swim alone. The second adult does not have to be swimming, but must be in the pool area with you. Please be respectful of programme sessions taking place during the morning and late afternoon and keep noise to a minimum during those times.

For more information see part one of the information pack.

Table Tennis

The table tennis table is in the Waveley Room except when the room is in use for other activities.

Tennis and other ball games

Equipment may be borrowed from the office beside the sensory room. A deposit may be required.

Crèche Times

Monday: 2:30pm to 6pm

Tuesday: 9:00am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm

Wednesday: 9:00am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm

Thursday: 9:00am to 1pm and 2pm to 3:30pm

Childcare takes place in the Suffolk Hall.

Schedule

Monday 4th August

Time	Activity				
4pm – 5pm	<p>Registration <i>Overnight Guest Reception & The Lounge</i></p> <p>On arrival please go to the Overnight Guest Reception where you will receive your room key. You may then either go to your room and register later or go straight to registration (see Part 1 for full details).</p>				
4pm – 5:30pm	<p>Drop-in Activities During registration, the following drop-in activities will be available to join at any time.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p>Decorate your badges <i>Drop-in Area</i> Help others to identify your interests, or just decorate for fun. Remember to leave enough uncovered that others can tell what it says.</p> </td> <td> <p>Sign up for Home Groups <i>Waveney</i> If you would like to be in a Home Group see Caroline in the Waveney room to be assigned a home group colour.</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p>Childcare Meet & Greet <i>Crèche (Suffolk Hall)</i> People bringing children to Autscape may use this opportunity to get familiar with the childcare rooms and staff. (Closes at 6pm)</p> </td> <td> <p>Sign up for research <i>Waveney</i> If you want to take part in research see Ben for further information and a consent form. You can also approach him at any other time.</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Venue tours run between 5pm and 5:30pm. Please meet in the Drop In Area</p>	<p>Decorate your badges <i>Drop-in Area</i> Help others to identify your interests, or just decorate for fun. Remember to leave enough uncovered that others can tell what it says.</p>	<p>Sign up for Home Groups <i>Waveney</i> If you would like to be in a Home Group see Caroline in the Waveney room to be assigned a home group colour.</p>	<p>Childcare Meet & Greet <i>Crèche (Suffolk Hall)</i> People bringing children to Autscape may use this opportunity to get familiar with the childcare rooms and staff. (Closes at 6pm)</p>	<p>Sign up for research <i>Waveney</i> If you want to take part in research see Ben for further information and a consent form. You can also approach him at any other time.</p>
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5.30pm – 6pm	<p>Orientation <i>Norfolk Hall</i> At orientation the on-site team will explain a few things about how Autscape works. It is always good to have a refresher and there have been a few changes since we were last at this venue so please come along even if you have attended Autscape before.</p>				
6pm – 7.30pm	<p>Evening Meal <i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i></p>				
7pm – 7:30pm	<p>Rounds (<i>Meet in Overnight Guest Reception</i>)</p>				

7.30pm – 8pm Home Groups

<i>Red</i> Norfolk Hall	<i>Blue</i> Waveney	<i>Green</i> Suffolk Hall
<i>Orange</i> Norfolk Syndicate Room 1	<i>Yellow</i> Lounge	<i>Black</i> Beccles

If you want to belong to a Home Group and have not been assigned a colour yet, then please go to Waveney 5 minutes before the start and see Caroline.

8pm – 11pm Evening Activities*Various Locations*

Between 8pm and 11pm each evening the onsite bar will be open and there is a general drop in area for chat, toys, board games etc in the info area (Norfolk Syndicate 2) facilitated by Stephen. The sensory room will be open until 11pm.

Other activities currently scheduled for Monday are:

8.30pm – 9.30pm*Norfolk Hall*

Film Screening: *High Functioning* (Dana Dimant)

Suffolk Hall

Activity: Crafts (Elaine)

Beccles

Discussion: *Gender identity including trans and non-binary* (Aurélien)

8pm – 9pm*Waveney*

Activity: *Sparklies*

Come and get some glowsticks and enjoy making patterns with them in the dark.

9pm - 10pm*Waveney*

Activity: *Table Tennis*

Tuesday 5th August

Time	Activity
8.30am – 9.30am	Breakfast <i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i>
9.30am – 11am	Formal Programme <i>Norfolk Hall</i> 9.30am – 10.15am Lecture: <i>Accessing formal support through the lifespan</i> (Yo) <i>Norfolk Hall</i> 10.15am – 11am Lecture: <i>The Autism Genome Project and Genocide: The Unbearable Uncertainty of Being (Autistic)</i> (Alistair de Gaetano) Alternative Programme <i>Lounge</i> 9.30am – 11am Film Screening: <i>Too Sane for This World / Citizen Autistic</i> (William Davenport) <i>Waveney</i> 10.15am – 11am Activity: <i>Making Loom Bands</i> (Elaine)
11am – 11.30am	Break <i>Dining Room</i>
11.30am – 1pm	Formal Programme The workshops below will run at the same time as each other. <i>Norfolk HJall</i> Workshop: <i>Autistic adults and projects: Ethical and respectful treatment of participants</i> (Heta) <i>Waveney</i> Workshop: <i>'Here be Dragons' – the lifeJourney and the Quest</i> (Lyte) Alternative Programme <i>Lounge</i> Film Screening: <i>High Functioning</i> (Dana Dimant)

1pm – 2.30pm

Lunch

Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)

2pm – 2.30pm

Interest Groups

<i>Creativity (Art, writing, music and more)</i> Norfolk Hall	<i>Animals – pets and otherwise</i> Norfolk Syndicate room one
<i>Green/Eco and gardening</i> Lounge	<i>Sci fi</i> Waveney

Rounds (*Meet in Overnight Guest Reception*)

Alternative hands on sensory experience group focusing on smell and taste (*Prayer Room*)

2.30pm – 4pm

Leisure

2.30pm – 3.30pm

Beccles

Activity: *Learn to draw Mandalas* (Lydia)

Make beautiful patterns using only a pencil, compass and a ruler.

3pm – 4pm

Norfolk Hall

Activity: *'Swop, Share, Sell and Buy'*

This is a get-together where you can bring along items that you want to swop, share or sell or simply buy something another person wants to sell. Autism related items are of particular interest.

Lounge

Discussion: Advocacy, networking, social action and representation of autistic people in decisions made about us (Damian)

2:30pm – 4pm

Wavenley

Activity: Table tennis

Earsham

Activity: Sensory Play

4pm – 4:30pm

Break

Dining Room

4:30pm - 6pm	Formal Programme		
	These sessions will run concurrently.		
	<i>Norfolk Hall</i>		
	Discussion: <i>Accessing formal support through the lifespan (Yo)</i> (Follow on from 9:30 presentation)		
	<i>Waveney</i>		
	Workshop: Autistic identity, personal and collective part one (Damian Milton and Susy Ridout)		
	<i>Beccles</i>		
	Discussion: <i>The Autism Genome Project and Genocide: The Unbearable Uncertainty of Being (Autistic)</i> (Alistair de Gaetano) (Follow on from 10:15 presentation)		
6pm – 7.30pm	Evening Meal		
	<i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i>		
7pm – 7:30pm	Rounds (<i>Meet at Overnight Guest Reception</i>)		
7.30pm – 8pm	Home Groups		
	<i>Red</i> Norfolk Hall	<i>Blue</i> Waveney	<i>Green</i> Suffolk Hall
	<i>Orange</i> Norfolk Syndicate Room 1	<i>Yellow</i> Lounge	<i>Black</i> Beccles
8pm – 11pm	Evening Activities		
	8pm – 9pm		
	<i>Waveney</i>		
	Activity: Table Tennis		
	8pm – 9.30pm		
	<i>Norfolk Hall</i>		
	Activity: Learning to do Massage (Heta)		
	<i>Suffolk Hall</i>		
	Discussion: Alternative sexuality and relationships (Stephen)		
	8.30pm – 9.30pm		
	<i>Beccles</i>		
	Discussion: How age of identification/diagnosis of autism impacts (Caroline)		
	8.30pm – 10pm		
	<i>Lounge Bar</i>		
	Activity: Quiz (Elaine)		

Wednesday 6th August

Time	Activity
8.30am – 9.30am	Breakfast <i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i>
9.30am – 11am	Formal Programme <i>Norfolk Hall</i> 9.30am – 10.15am Lecture: Do engineers make good advocates? (Diederik Wieve) <i>Norfolk Hall</i> 10.15am – 11am Lecture: Integration problems in high-functioning autism (Dorit Ben Shalom) Alternative Programme Film Screening: Too Sane for This World / Citizen Autistic (William Davenport)
11am – 11.30am	Break <i>Dining Room</i>
11.30am – 1pm	Formal Programme These sessions will run concurrently. <i>Norfolk Hall</i> Workshop: Neurotypical Awareness (Alastair B. Cooper) <i>Waveney</i> Workshop: ESA and PIP - maximising your chances of success (Elaine) <i>Lounge</i> Discussion: Integration problems in high-functioning autism (Dorit Ben Shalom) (follow on to 10.15am lecture)
1pm – 2.30pm	Lunch <i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i>

2pm – 2.30pm	Interest Groups	
	<i>Creativity (Art, writing, music and more)</i> Norfolk Hall	<i>Computers and gaming</i> Norfolk Syndicate room one
	<i>Talking about autism</i> Lounge	<i>Sci fi</i> Waveney

Rounds (*Meet at Overnight Guest Reception*)

Alternative hands on sensory experience group focusing on smell and taste (*Prayer Room*)

2.30pm – 4pm	Leisure
	<p>2.30pm – 4pm <i>Waveney</i> Art workshop: Trish</p> <p><i>Sensory Room</i> Activity: Sensory Play</p> <p><i>Lounge</i> Film Screening: <i>High Functioning</i> (Dana Dimant)</p> <p><i>Beccles</i> Discussion: Autism and gender (Ben and Nat)</p> <p>3pm – 4pm <i>Norfolk Hall</i> Discussion: Our experiences of autism research (Larry)</p>

4pm – 4.30pm	Break <i>Dining Room</i>
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4.30pm – 6pm	Formal Programme These sessions will run concurrently.
	<p><i>Norfolk Hall</i> Discussion: <i>Do engineers make good advocates?</i> (Diederik Wieve) (follow on to 9.30am lecture)</p> <p><i>Waveney</i> Workshop: Autistic identity, personal and collective part two (Damian Milton and Susy Ridout)</p> <p><i>Beccles</i> Activity: Making sensory toys (Katie)</p>

 6pm – 7.30pm
Evening Meal*Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)*

 7pm – 7:30pm
Rounds (*Meet at Overnight Guest Reception*)

 7.30pm – 8pm
Home Groups

<i>Red</i> Norfolk Hall	<i>Blue</i> Waveney	<i>Green</i> Suffolk Hall
<i>Orange</i> Norfolk Syndicate Room 1	<i>Yellow</i> Lounge	<i>Black</i> Beccles

 8pm – 11pm
Evening Activities*Various Locations***8pm – 9.30pm***Norfolk Hall***Activity:** Entertainment Evening

9:30pm – 10pm

Waveney room

Sparklies

Thursday 7th August

Time	Activity				
8.30am – 9.30am	Breakfast <i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i>				
9.30am – 10am	Vacate Rooms <i>Bedrooms / Beccles</i> Please use this time to pack and move your things out of your room. If it will take you a while to pack please don't leave everything until the last minute – remember you can use other time during conference as well if you need to. If you wish to you can store your bags in Beccles or keep smaller or valuable items with you.				
10am – 11am	Formal Programme <i>Norfolk Hall</i> Panel discussion on the theme of 'Autism through the lifespan'.				
11am – 11.30am	Break <i>Dining Room</i>				
11.30am – 1pm	Annual General Meeting (AGM) The AGM is your opportunity to have your say in the running of the Autscape Organisation. The accounts and annual report will also be presented and the election of directors to fill vacancies on the board will take place.				
12.30pm – 1pm	Interest Groups <table border="1" data-bbox="443 1196 1386 1406"> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Computers and Gaming</i> Norfolk Hall</td> <td><i>Animals – pets and otherwise</i> Norfolk Syndicate room one</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Talking about autism</i> Lounge</td> <td><i>Green/Eco and gardening</i> Waveney</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Computers and Gaming</i> Norfolk Hall	<i>Animals – pets and otherwise</i> Norfolk Syndicate room one	<i>Talking about autism</i> Lounge	<i>Green/Eco and gardening</i> Waveney
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<i>Talking about autism</i> Lounge	<i>Green/Eco and gardening</i> Waveney				
Rounds (Meet at Overnight Guest Reception)					
1pm – 2.30pm	Lunch <i>Dining Room / Ditchingham (Quiet Dining Room)</i>				
2pm	First transport to Norwich station leaves (meet in Overnight Guest Reception). Please be punctual.				
2.30pm – 3.30pm	Leisure 2.30pm – 3.30pm <i>Norfolk Hall</i> Film Screening: High Functioning (Dana Dimant) <i>Lounge</i> Film Screening: Too Sane for This World / Citizen Autistic (William Davenport)				

3:30pm – 4pm **Break**
Dining Room

End of Autscape 2014

4pm Second transport to Norwich station leaves. Meet in Overnight Guest Reception. Please be punctual.

Lectures and Workshops

Lectures and workshops take place as part of the Formal and Alternative Programme. There is a summary of each and some background information about our presenters this year.

Summaries

Accessing formal support through the lifespan (Yo)

This lecture will provide information and advice about accessing formal support throughout the lifespan. Information will be provided about the new systems currently being implemented or imminent for children and young people, for working age adults and for older adults. Particular attention will be paid to issues of transition between the systems at 18 and 65. The lecture will also address the issue of financial assessments which are currently of concern to many individuals who are finding themselves being asked to pay substantial (and unaffordable) sums towards their own care. The lecture will attempt to provide a realistic picture of the likelihood of accessing formal support and practical guidance as to how to go about doing so.

About Yo

Yo has been involved in advocacy work on behalf of herself and others which has often involved attempting to secure and retain formal support through the existing social care system for both adults and children. Recently, she has been studying the emerging legislation and policy in this area and keeping up with analyses of the changes underway.

Yo has a PhD in educational research which involved a significant proportion of social policy analysis. More generally she considers herself a legal/procedural obsessive and she loves learning about and decoding regulatory systems and legal frameworks.

The Autism Genome Project and Genocide: The Unbearable Uncertainty of Being (Autistic) (Alistair de Gaetano)

This lecture will examine how the search for the autism gene can give rise to a number of rights-related issues, not least to violations spanning the realm of the hierarchy of crimes related to genocide, as a consequence of applying eugenics. The lecture will examine the legal basis for research within the Autism Genome Project, as well as that covering prenatal genetic diagnosis (PGD) and embryo screening, and termination of pregnancies in the case of the foetus having a disability. These laws will then be analysed critically from a rights perspective, with major concerns being identified and discussed. Subsequently, an expanded version of the concept of genocide and the lesser crimes within its hierarchy will be presented, and the practices in question then analysed against these concepts.

About Alistair de Gaetano

Alistair is reading for a full-time PhD in Law at Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. His main areas of interest are disability law and human rights, with a particular focus on the nexus between autism and the law, fuelled by the personal experience of growing up with Asperger Syndrome, and wanting to devote his energies to the field of autism. He is a qualified lawyer who aims to become properly involved in the field of disability and autism self-advocacy, and promote the concept of neurodiversity through his work. He currently represents 'Hidden Impairments' on the Malta Disabled Persons' Advisory Committee (DPAC).

'Here be Dragons' – the lifeJourney and the Quest (Lyte)

The theme of the Quest is one of great antiquity but may easily be dismissed as 'not for ordinary mortals such as us!'. This presentation explores the lifeJourney as both "a" quest and a constant renewal of quest each sunrise and sunset. Exploring perspectives may lead to discovery or re-discovery of aspects and assets that for many reasons might have been overlooked or suppressed in the day-to-day pressures and issues of survival. The use of metaphor, story and imagery – and eclectic references – in a gently interactive presentation will give some perspectives on motifs and recurring themes such as that of the helper, the talisman, the signs and symbols that may help us to stay or become true to ourselves and hold or find our sense of values and Selfhood – reminding us of our intrinsic power and our particular, individual sense of purpose and fulfillment. This presentation will be followed by an experiential workshop (instead of 'discussion') which will be facilitated and use art materials to explore and express personal responses to the lecture.

About Lyte

Lyte has been a regular attender of Autescape since discovering and identifying with the neurodivergent community as an adult. Life spent in 'socially enforced NT-emulation mode' resulted in survival but not in gaining the freedoms that appear to be on offer in wider society. This raises questions of how to reclaim a sense of 'wholeness' which Lyte has been exploring through a search for Meaning, and the seeking, learning, loss and findings encountered along the way.

An experienced teacher in higher and further education currently studying at post grad level in mainstream education, and with a backdrop of other areas of study including humanistic psychology and nonviolent communication, Lyte is a qualified and practicing artist. Recently Lyte has presented at Birmingham University and collaborated on papers featured in various academic journals such as 'Good autism Practice' and 'Autonomy', as well as being cited in other writings.

Lyte also ran a workshop in Autescape 2013 called "Sitting on a rock": exploring what may have been given up for lost.

Autistic adults and projects: Ethical and respectful treatment of participants (Heta)

This workshop is about the EU project Autism in Higher Education: Widening Access (AUTHEW). Many young autistic adults starting their studies are potentially quite vulnerable, undergoing a challenging and stressful transition in their lives. In this workshop, we wish to discuss ideas for contacting such individuals and encouraging participation in the project, while respecting their limits. Feedback collected from workshop participants will be presented (with permission) on the project website and used to instruct relevant stages of the project.

Workshop participants will be asked to discuss their experiences of cooperating with research projects and campaigns, both positive and negative. Questions that concern this project specifically may also be discussed.

About Heta

Heta Pukki has been involved in autistic self-advocacy in Finland since 1997, moving from establishing peer support groups to organising peer-run conferences and initiating an Empowerment Project for autistic adults. She completed an M.Ed. in special education, with a focus on autistic adults, at the University of Birmingham in 2009. Since then she has mainly worked as translator and educator, speaking to audiences of both autistic people and professionals on current topics in autism research. She is now working for the EU project Autism&Uni, mapping the situation of autistic students in higher education to promote the development of tools and materials to support them.

Autistic identity, personal and collective (Damian Milton and Susy Ridout)

This workshop will encourage people to explore their own personal identities and what autism means to them, by writing, drawing, or compiling aspects of their own personal stories. Participants will also be asked prior to Autscape if they wish to bring photographs or things which are meaningful to them to help create their stories/fragments/expressions of identity. This will be followed by an ongoing activity to create a collective timeline of autism/autistic culture and the Autscape community.

Participants will be introduced to some theories connected to the workshop activities, such as 'auto-ethnography', 'personal constructs', 'situated knowledge', and the 'sociological imagination' and how such concepts can help people to explore their own identities, both personal and collective. This will be followed by an open discussion regarding our collective history as autistic people and as a community, and indeed, what may lie ahead for autistic people.

About Damian Milton

Damian is currently studying for a doctorate with the Autism Centre for Educational Research at the University of Birmingham. He is a member of the programme board for the Autism Education Trust, and a member of the scientific and advisory committee for Research Autism. Damian also works for the National Autistic Society and will also soon be working for London South Bank University. Damian's interest in autism began when his son was diagnosed in 2005 as autistic at the age of two. Damian was also diagnosed with Asperger's in 2009 at the age of thirty-six.

About Susy Ridout

Susy is currently studying for a doctorate at the University of Birmingham (Autism Centre for Education and Research) where the topic of her research is around opening up discourse opportunities for the involvement of autistics in autism research.

With several family who are autistic, and herself identifying as neuro-diverse (reflecting her various neurological challenges), she has spent her adult life working across disciplines to inform and challenge practice which marginalises or disenfranchises communities, and has been involved in the development of policy work in this respect.

She has been active in establishing the Theorising Autism Project with autistic colleagues and has recently presented at the London Centre for Social Studies (LSE) Methodology Conference, and at the Troubling Narratives; identity matters Conference in Huddersfield.

Do engineers make good advocates? (Diederik Weve)

What role models do young autistic people have while growing up with a diagnosis, when adult autistics are nowhere to be seen, autistic maturity being a black hole? The better we function, the more we may actively hide our autism. This plausible deniability on the part of the highest functioning autistics maintains the stereotypical views on autism and hinders society in developing normal relations with diverse individuals in the group.

The presenter, an engineer at Shell Netherlands, will discuss the 'Autism as a Diversity' project to promote awareness, understanding and acceptance of autism within Shell, and the 'Autism Embassy' programme, which helps autistic employees in large organisations communicate about their autism within the organisation.

About Diederik Weve

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Integration problems in high functioning autism (Dorit Ben Shalom)

A lecture about the presenter's research and experience on motor, emotion, memory and perception integration difficulties in autism.

About Dorit Ben Shalom

Dorit Ben Shalom is a cognitive neuroscientist who works at the Zlotowski Center for Neuroscience in Israel. She works on language, autism, and ADHD.

Neurotypical Awareness (Alastair B. Cooper)

This workshop will provide an opportunity for attendees to think about and discuss their relationships with the non-autistic people in their life – be they family & friends, partners, casual acquaintances, support workers, professionals or indeed strangers.

Specifically we will be looking to reflect on the general differences between us and neurotypicals (NTs) and how our being understanding towards and sympathetic of those differences can improve things, for us and for them. This is particularly important for adult autistic people who may both seek and are as entitled as anyone else to be equipped to hold down relationships and friendships independently.

About Alastair B. Cooper

Alastair is a high-functioning autistic person. He is presently on the board of directors of two autism-related organisations, Autscape, and also Creatovators - a community interest company based in East Dunbartonshire that runs a play scheme and one to one social skills sessions for autistic children.

He worked for just over a year at Specialisterne, a specialist autism employer. Whilst there part of his role included acting as a trainer and mentor for potential future employees who were also autistic.

ESA and PIP: maximising your chances of success (Elaine)

During the first part of this workshop there will be a presentation covering general hints, tips and advice on making a claim for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Personal Independent Payment (PIP). Following this, small groups will work on explaining different aspects of autism. This will then form the basis of teaching good practice and increasing awareness of what is required when answering the questions on the forms.

About Elaine

Elaine has been a member of Autscape and served on the board for the last four years. She first became interested in autism 17 years ago when her young son was diagnosed and went on to make friends with several autistic adults. Using her knowledge gained from helping with benefits applications while volunteering at the Carers Centre, she started to help autistics she knew to make successful benefits claims. She wrote a booklet about how to claim Disability Living Allowance for autistic people and prepared the casework for appeals tribunals although the majority of the work she does today is on ESA claims and mandatory reconsiderations as well as the new PIP. More recently she has undergone extensive training to become a volunteer at the Citizens Advice Bureau. Elaine is a self employed personal assistant who works for autistic adults, helping with benefits paperwork and other administrative tasks.

Sensory Toy Making Workshop (Katie Gaudion)

Hands on creative craft activity to learn how to make your own affordable sensory props.

About Katie

Katie is a designer and research associate at The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design at the Royal College of Art. Katie's research explores how design can improve living environments for adults with autism, making real-world application of findings.