

Segment 1

Transcript

Emergency Preparedness Planning for Autistic Adults

January 21st, 2024

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

Today's Autistic Moment is a member of The Autistic Podcasters Network.

Explore, Engage, Empower: Today's Autistic Moment-The Podcast for Intersectional Autistic Adult Communities

This first segment of Today's Autistic Moment is sponsored by The Autism Society of Minnesota, known as AuSM throughout Minnesota's Autism community. As Minnesota's First Autism Resource for more than 50 years,

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Thank you for joining me for *Emergency Preparedness Planning*. Eric Ringgenberg is my guest for this show.

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The first episode of *Autistic Voices Roundtable Discussions: Celebrating Intersectional Autistic Lives* in 2024 will be on Wednesday, February 21st at 2:00pm Central Standard Time. The roundtable discussion topic will be *Respect for Autistic Autonomy*. Exploring the importance of autonomy for Autistic individuals, our diverse panel will discuss how decisions affecting

health care, careers, clothing, food, living conditions and social interactions often neglect our preferences. Join us for a meaningful discussion on why respecting Autistic autonomy is crucial, the role neurotypical people should be playing in fostering understanding and support. Join us on Wednesday, February 21st at 2:00pm on the YouTube channel @todaysautisticmoment. The show will be recorded and made available for viewers to see whenever they want to watch it.

Think back for a moment to the early part of the year 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic. Were you prepared for how quickly the global medical emergency changed your life? In a matter of days and weeks, everything, everywhere was completely turned over on its head. Businesses closed their buildings and moved their employees to working remotely. Everything and anything that required one's physical bodies to be present in places other than our homes were closed or moved to other ways of functioning. Nothing was the same. That was a global emergency and look what it did to the world. Four years ago, my first show in 2021 was *Autistic Adults and COVID-19* when we talked about the tremendous impact it had on Autistic Adults.

On this show, Eric Ringgenberg is going to help us understand what events might be emergencies and how we can plan for what we are to do should they occur. Eric will talk about where you can find resources to help you plan for emergencies, how to create a support network when you are facing an emergency, and we will give you some ideas of how you can take care of yourself.

Join us after this first commercial break as Eric and I will talk about *Emergency Preparedness Planning for Autistic Adults*.

Commercial Break I

Podcast Apps

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Thank you for listening to Today's Autistic Moment.

Segment 2

Philip King-Lowe

Eric Ringgenberg Welcome back Today's Autistic Moment. I'm so grateful to have you here. So welcome.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yes, thank you for having me.

Philip King-Lowe

You're welcome. Um, this topic was one that I put out to many of my contacts within the Autistic community about emergency preparedness planning. And I know that you have done some skill shops and other trainings. So, you are really the best person to talk about this topic with. So, let's dig right in here. Where can we begin to explore emergency preparedness planning for Autistic Adults? And how this affects our intersectional communities?

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, well, it's important to remember that emergencies can happen to anyone, regardless of the identities that you may have. And for anyone, it can be very helpful to plan for potential emergencies, so that you can respond rather than just react. That's a phrase that I like to use pretty regularly. So, everyone's situation is unique. But you are always in the best position to know your own abilities and needs both before during and after an emergency. And being prepared really can have many benefits and planning and practice really do make a difference.

Philip King-Lowe

Now well, you mentioned earlier about what emergencies can really do to our, our nervous system, our anxiety system. And given that so many of us Autistics, we do intersect with anxiety issues, as well as, you know, the panic that can occur from a sensory overload from a sudden routine change that just can't be avoided when that adrenaline is run rushing in, and we have to make quick decisions. So how do you see this emergency preparedness planning? How does it work with individuals like us?

Eric Ringgenberg

Well, like you mentioned, you know, that's why I really think creating a plan beforehand. So, when you do experience that that unexpected event or change, or you are trying to navigate those emotions and anxiety, if we take a little bit of time beforehand to create a plan and prepare accordingly, again, that really gives us something that that we can use to help ourselves should those sorts of situations arise. It's going to depend on kind of who you are, and especially where you live, what sort of things are going to be most meaningful to prepare for. You know, here in Minnesota, when it comes to different natural disasters. Some of the most common we would have to prepare for are things like tornadoes, winter storms, potentially flooding, but in other places around the country and around the globe, and may be things like hurricanes, earthquakes, heat waves. So, what's applicable is really going to vary. In addition to you know, some of the potential natural disasters that I mentioned, there's other types of emergencies that we might want to prepare for. Things like fires, power outages, unexpected illness or injury and events car accidents. And there's probably many other examples we can think of, as well. But those are some of the things that we want to be considering. You know, what's made the most likely or what has the, the highest potential likelihood of maybe occurring, and thinking about that both at home. But then also other places that you may spend time frequently. So that might be at work. It might be,

you know, other locations that you're at with a regular basis. But we want to be thinking about what might occur, where might we be? And what are some of the things we can do beforehand? Should that occur, so that we have a plan and what might be needed in order to stay safe and navigate those as effectively as possible.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah. Okay. As we move into talking about some various emergencies that can happen, I think we should also talk about our nonspeaking Autistics who may not who may not have the ability to speak of what their concerns might be. And then again, like I say, it's our intersection, other intersection of communities. So, let's give a few examples of an emergency and then how someone might prepare for them. So maybe start with weather changes, something like that?

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, well, if you look at some of the resources that have been created, both at the state level and as well as the federal level, some common tips for situations like that, but others as well, communicating with others to have an effective plan, and you mentioned that there may be communication differences. So that may not be strictly just communicating verbally. But communicating with others that you are around, or you regularly engage with is an important part of creating an effective plan. Part of that is practicing telling people about your personal support needs. And so again, there's no right or wrong way to do that. And it can look different ways for different people. But being able to effectively communicate your personal needs, especially in an emergency is a big part of creating a plan, and then teaching those who may need to assist you in an emergency on what to do.

So, again, there's multiple situations where that might arise. But commonly, you'll see examples given along those lines, especially for individuals that might have co-occurring physical disabilities or mobility issues. If assistance is needed to you know, swiftly and as quick as possible, be able to evacuate an area sometimes that does require the assistance of others. And so having that plan, having that communication, and really lining people up to effectively assist you go is a lot of what goes into some of those preparations.

Philip King-Lowe

So, let's do an example a hurricane, a tornado, flooding? What, what are some steps that you would suggest for preparing for those emergencies? And then I've got one in front of me that one doesn't really prepare for because they never think this is going to really happen. But go ahead, let's start with those.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, well forgive it for different situations, they kind of break them down into two categories, based on kind of your course of action. So, for some of the emergencies that can be experienced, some of them requires you to go meaning you leave immediately, and you evacuate the area that you're in. So, that's one of the two main categories of potential action. The other one is the opposite. It's to stay you shelter in place, you don't go out. And that can be vary in length of time. But we can think about whatever the emergency or the situation is, we might encounter is that going to require me to go or to stay, especially for things that require you to stay you know, we talked about having a plan, being able to evacuate as quick as possible. On the other hand, if it's more of the stay side of things, another aspect of

that is to try to have some things on hand that might be useful or needed. So, some basic things again, whether at home, whether at work, things like a first aid kit, a flashlight, and batteries, compiling a list of emergency contacts or information so that you don't have to go searching for that or try to just remember it. But kind of having a list of important information readily available is another great step to take. And then you know varying levels of have personal supplies, depending on what you're looking at, sometimes places will say things like, you know, having a small stockpile of food of water, things of that nature. You know, that's kind of up to personal preference. And I also want to acknowledge that, when it comes to being able to set aside some of those things, that really has a lot to do with, with some of the access to resources and capital that someone may have, you know, another common suggestion that you'll see is to for medication to keep, you know, a week's worth kind of on hand, should these things arise, but I always note when I see that of many people, you know, have trouble just refilling their medication in general, rather than whether that's due to a shortage of it, whether that's due to the cost of it. And, you know, in my experience, most practitioners really aren't usually too keen and willing on kind of filling extra doses and stockpile piling that. So I always note that, that specific one and I get where the suggestion comes from, but when you actually consider the practical realities of actually doing so, you know, I think it's more difficult than just that idea to actually go that extra step of having some of those things on hand, but whatever is, you know, possible, or whatever you feel is the best fit, especially for those things that might require us to stay in a certain place for a period of time, having access to things that we might need, especially as they relate to our personal safety and our personal self-care. That's often a common suggestion, you'll see as well.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah. Well, I sent this to you back towards the end of last year. But um, I contacted Lisa Morgan, because she lives in Maine. And I contacted her. And she told me that someone that Lisa knows who is Autistic was in the Lewiston, area of Maine. While they were all on lockdown, because of the individual who shot and killed many people in the local bowling alley near there and the high school. Lisa's friend reported that their life pretty much was shut down because things were closed due to a shelter in place order. Their bank that stores were all closed. And her friend was understandably shaken up with the changes in her life. Because of this Shelter in Place Order. What might you suggest to someone in that situation? I mean, the gun violence we're seeing in the U.S. it's, it's, it's out of control. And you know, this is one of those things that we don't think it's ever going to happen in our neighborhood, but it happens. So, what are your thoughts about something like that?

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, that is an unfortunate reality, especially in the United States of things that we never hope to have to encounter directly or within our communities. But unfortunately, it is something that that may make the list of things that we want to consider preparing for, you know, that specific example, would be that an example of that kind of stay and shelter in place. And as I just mentioned, taking some preparations to make sure you have things on hand would fit into, you know, kind of that category of trying to prepare for that. Another thing I didn't mention yet is another great suggestion, really, for any of these examples and situations and whether you need to go whether you need to stay, but arranging for someone that you know, who may be more local, but not necessarily. It could be someone outside of the state are outside of your area as well. But just arranging for someone that you know, to check in with you should an emergency arise. And so that would likely you know, necessitate that things like cell phone services are probably still

working, given the situation that you're encountering, but just kind of touching base and making that preparation with someone else and say, you know if there is ever anything that happens, whether a natural disaster, whether it's something more manmade, like some sort of shooting or other, you know, local emergency, you know, could I just count on you to maybe check in with me and see how I'm doing, see if there's anything that I need, see if there's anything that you might be able to assist with. But that would be another step to do. And that's also something that you might be able to do for others as well just say, Hey, if you know we are, whether it's a neighbor, whether it's a friend, again, maybe it's a family member, and maybe they're local, or maybe they're not so local, but just making arrangements that should something happen, should you turn on the news and see that, you know, a situation is unfolding. And you know, that's near where I live? Can I count on you to maybe give me a call or check in with me and just see how I'm doing? That would be another great thing to try to arrange in advance, if possible.

After this next commercial break, Eric and I will talk about how the economic instability found in many of the intersecting communities affects emergency preparedness. We will also give you some ideas of some important things you can do to help you during an emergency.

Commercial Break II

Segment 3

Philip King-Lowe

How can we engage the intersectional Autistic Adults communities regarding emergency preparedness planning? And this is where I think we want to help our intersectional Autistic Adults to become engaged in doing the emergency preparedness planning. We're going to talk about that.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, well, again, I want to acknowledge that different people are going to have different access to resources and social capital. And when we consider intersectional identities, especially as we layer marginalized identities on top of one another, it's not uncommon that someone may begin to experience what I've seen referred to as intersectional stigma. And so, whether that stigma that might unfortunately go with some a disability, or someone that is nonbinary, or whatever it may be, I think we do have to acknowledge that that can create barriers to accessing resources, and maybe having what is needed to most effectively respond to some of these different situations. So, I think one of the first steps is to acknowledge and not kind of shy away from that reality. But then also to make sure that we are providing information and resources that are accessible, that can be utilized by a wide range of individuals. And that within our communities, whether that's in a larger scope, or a very much smaller scope, such as you know, making preparations in employer making preparations that work for how they're going to handle some of these things, or what their processes and procedures might be just making sure that we're considering everyone that is included, and that if there are some of those challenges that need to be a part of that planning, we take the time to do such, because it's important to kind of account for the idea that when an emergency when emergency arises, rather, you know, we all are kind of responsible for ourselves. But that also doesn't mean that all of our obligations to one another, just go out the window. So, as we provide information and

resources as we make preparations, not doing so with, you know, just kind of a singular sort of person in mind and accounting for different people have different identities, different needs, and our planning and preparation should be effective for all that may be able may need to utilize it.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah, and especially since I, you know, I had Angela (AJ) Locashio on in December, where we were talking about the fact that the experience of a black Autistic, a black, transgender Autistic, is going to be very different from a white man's experience. And then someone who's Latino or identifies with multiple, most, most Neurodivergents have multiple neurodivergence You know, autism, ADHD and all the other. And so, we recognize that those things are going to be different, especially in how a lot of our intersexual I'm sorry, intersectional communities are affected by the economic inequality that we see. We know that a lot of our Autistic friends and other intersectional communities, they live in poverty zones where just getting a hold of one day to meals is a lot is a lot more difficult. We know that we have some who, you know, are in positions where there is some violence around who they are, which shouldn't be the case. But that's how it is. We know that those experiences are going to be different for each one of them. And I think correct me if I'm wrong, it's a little difficult to help those communities for prepare, because you and I are not necessarily part of those other communities. But I think we need to talk a little bit about that. Go ahead.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, like you brought up I mean, if the practical reality of your day to day is, is getting food on the table for dinner tonight, or, or for this week, then the

idea of you know, stockpiling food in case something that may or may not happen arises, is not going to really be feasible for you. So that's a great example of, you know, as we look at some of the suggestions and kind of best practices for what to do to prepare for these situations, that's not always the piece that is as readily accounted for or kind of acknowledged. And so being able to take some of those extra steps, or like I mentioned with things like, you know, clothing and medication, having extras that are just set aside is definitely a luxury, that many individuals are just not able to, to really take that step to do. So. That's where, you know, again, I think it's important, and hopefully, we can continue to promote that within our communities, whether it's something that's, you know, more government driven, or even if it's just a very ground up, you know, kind of person to person sort of step doing things like donating to local food shelves, or you here in Minnesota, as we are kind of gearing up for winter. There's a lot of drives that help to ensure that if someone isn't able to afford or doesn't have access to a warm coat, and hat, and gloves, and boots, you know, let's try to do what we can to make those things available. Especially if there's those of us that may be fortunate in the sense of, you know, we have what we need, and maybe a little extra that we can share with others. So that's where I think as a collective, you know, again, whether that's very top down, driven by the government sort of program or not waiting around for that if it's not available, and kind of taking the initiative within our own communities and within our own connections to people know and care about trying to make sure that people have what they need in the day to day, but then also trying to account for, you know, we hope that these things don't arise, but we know from time to time, they will and we can't predict who that is going to impact. So, let's have some things in place to make sure that people can navigate those things if they do occur, to the best extent possible.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah. I feel like we need to acknowledge that we had an emergency a couple of years ago, that literally impacted everybody around the globe, and that I'm talking about the pandemic. I mean, we were the world was in a public health emergency crisis. And we know that, for a lot of Autistics, our social support networks were gone. PCAs were gone. Homemakers were gone. I mean, a lot of the services that we require to take care of ourselves to gain access to those things we need, those were gone. So that's one of those things where I think it's fair to say, nobody really prepares for that. And then when it comes, you realize, oh, I didn't do this, or Oh, I didn't do that. But we're gonna get into the question of empowerment a little bit, but I mean, that was one of those situations where it wasn't just one individual person area or if it was everywhere, absolutely everywhere. Go ahead and talk a little bit about that.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, I mean, a pandemic is another great example of a potential emergency to have to prepare for. And prior to 2019 I think for many of us, if we would have seen that on a list with things, like I mentioned of other natural disasters and emergencies, we probably would have scoffed a little bit and said, Oh, like, yeah, that's not, that's not going to happen. But obviously, it did. So, it's probably one of the biggest examples of that requirement to stay and shelter in place and not go out for a very prolonged period of time. And you mentioned how, you know, many people were quite unprepared for it. And it did have a very significant impact in in multiple ways, on probably everybody, but for some individuals to a much more significant extent. And so, another, you know, hopefully, it will be quite some time before we, you know, have to potentially go through something like that again, but also, let's maybe not be too short sighted and naive to think that it's, it's not possible to happen again. So again, like we talked about for some of the other scenarios, or potential events, you know, spending a little

time thinking about if something like that were to occur again, maybe this time around, what are some steps I could take? Or what was I may be missing out on? When we went through that in the last couple of years? Previously, but another great example of an a very practical example of things that we can't foresee or predict, necessarily, but we might be able to take some time planning and preparing for should that arise.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah. Those are good answers. Now that we have explored emergency preparedness planning, and talked about how we can get Autistic Adults engaged, how can we empower them to create personalized plans and manage their sensory stress? And I think this is a great time for you to talk about one technique that you really do teach about, and that's, this is a great moment to maybe prepare a social narrative, that sort of thing. So go ahead and talk about that.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah. Well, first, I'll start off by saying, you know, some of the resources that you can find out there, again, often at the state or federal level, different entities and organizations that have publicized some things. One tool that you'll commonly find is some sort of kind of planning worksheet, that could help you to do take some of the steps, like I mentioned, of whether that's a checklist of things to have on hand, a place to kind of write down and compile some of that important information or emergency contacts. There are some tools out there that are kind of templates or worksheets, in a sense, to help you put down information or navigate some of this planning. And give you some structure in doing so. Thank you also for the suggestion of potentially using or writing a social narrative, to go along with that sort of

thing. As you mentioned, that's a tool that I've found very effective for a wide variety of situations, which could also include things like we've talked about. So, to give a more specific example, it could be something like taking some time to prepare a social narrative that maybe you could keep in the glove box of your car right next to your insurance and registration. So that if you ever do get in a fender bender, or some sort of car accident, which, you know, that's happened to me a couple of times and for anyone and I can relate to the idea of it can be very overwhelming. It's very unexpected. There's kind of this rush and flood of emotions and anxiety. But that might be something that as you are kind of first, coming to terms with what has happened in that moment, before maybe you step out of the car, you take a couple of deep breaths, and you review the social narrative that's going to remind you of whether it's some of your own self-care techniques. Some of reassurance that, you know, you'll, you'll be able to work through this. And maybe just some reminders of things like, it's very important to make sure you get the other driver's insurance and contact information, you may want to take some photographs with your cell phone of damage, or where the where the accident took place, kind of the scene of the accident. So, again, for any of us, those can be very difficult kind of nerve-racking sort of events. And it's easy to maybe forget to do some of those things. But a great example that you brought up of a way to prepare for that should it arise might be doing things like writing a social narrative, that again, you keep handy, so that if it does occur, that's there you supporting yourself in a very difficult moment.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah, yeah. Well, um, let's also go back to the end of my last question, because it goes without saying that an emergency is going to impact our sensory stress. I think we need to be prepared that we're going to be, we're going to have to have some triggers in there. And we're going to have

moments when we might not be feeling rational, we're going to have moments when listening to someone help us or tell us what to do is not going to be simple. And then I, my good friend, Lisa Morgan likes to talk about those moments when we're unintentionally harmed by well-meaning professionals who do not necessarily know or understand what they're doing. Talk a little bit about how we can work with that.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, well, that's really where I think having some techniques that work for you, in that kind of whether we think of it as self-regulation, or emotional regulation, or however you want to refer to it. You know, for some individuals, there's different deep breathing techniques, there's different potential stims, that might be useful in trying to regain some of some of that, you know, kind of composure in the moment, but having those, your knowing kind of what some of your go to strategies are for those sorts of purposes. And, you know, I think, getting a lot of practice with using them, it can seem a little counterintuitive, at least to some individuals of, well, if I'm feeling perfectly calm and collected right now, then why do I need to do those sorts of things? Or why do I need to practice them rather, we need to practice them in those moments. Because when those situations do arise, we want to be able to fall back on those strategies. And don't have that kind of repetition, or sometimes even kind of muscle memory of effectively engaging in some of those techniques, it's going to lessen or lessen their effectiveness, or it's going to be kind of harder to do what we need to do when we are experiencing that actual stress and emotion. So, there's a wider, you know, a rationale, I guess for, for having those sorts of things to fall back on. But it definitely fits the topic of our conversation here today. Again, different mindfulness techniques, including things like deep breathing, or just how to effectively communicate during times of distress. Those are things we want to have identified and hopefully also practiced

before we really need to put them into action in those very stressful sort of moments.

Philip King-Lowe

Well, here's one suggestion I want to give to my audience and some folks that may or may not apply to you. But a couple of years ago, actually, when we were in the middle of the pandemic, and we all had to make the rush to reorganize the Minnesota Autism Conference and did that first one when we were united with the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin. And one of the recorded workshops that was done was about preparing a panic toolbox. This was one thing that was suggested. The individual who did that actually sells some beaded bracelets that you can put under hand, and you can even put things like, if there are certain smells, for example, or things that you don't like, you might want to replace it with a scent that you do. And so, this particular, right, these bracelets, they can come with whatever, scented oil and lavender or I don't know, lemongrass or whatever it is some people find mint to be the kind of thing that can decrease a, an anxiety explosion. But the thing is, you put a little bit of this on a one bead, and that way, if you're feeling stressed, you can sniff it and then it can kind of help bring you down a little bit. You know, having your favorite fidget maybe in that toolbox or someplace where you can grab it, if you're in such a situation, whether that be something on your belt or something in your pocket, something you know, right next to you on that table, that can be extremely helpful for managing your sensory stress. And in case you're needing the sensory pressure, there are those fidgets that are spiked, so it can put a little pressure in your hand and, and some other things like that. So, I mean, these are some ways and, boy, you know, lots of times when you're in the middle of an emergency or a panic like that, and you've got the adrenaline coming in. And for some of us who are also ADHD, the adrenaline is actually, we actually work better under with all that adrenaline in us. But

then there's also the thing of, you're gonna go through this moment where there's an emergency, and then later on, you're going to experience the emotion of what just happened. That's depending on your particular neurology, that can be different for everybody. So, I think, let's, let's talk about, let's talk a little bit about some, some self-care, while you're in the middle of an emergency, when all of these different things are happening. And you're just trying to cope with and then also cope with the aftermath that, you know, oftentimes, it's the tornado is one thing, but the damage, at least behind is the other. So, see if you can see what you can do with that.

Eric Ringgenberg

I mean, you gave a lot of good examples of things that in the moment can help with trying to work through that. And I agree with all of the suggestions that you provided. I also agree with that idea that after the fact and everyone's response to different events like this are going to be, it's going to impact them differently. That might be you know, how quickly it kind of sets in and maybe starts to have an impact for some people that might be more immediate, whereas others there can be a delay between when that sets in. But you know, everyone reacts differently to traumatic events and potential grief. So just knowing that those are very normal responses for all humans, but also the idea again, that it's going to have a different impact. And that also includes impacting people to a different intensity or degree. So, two individuals may go a very, through a very similar event, and one person, it may have a relatively minimal or more mild sort of impact further down the road. Whereas another person, you know, even though it's over, they may have a much harder time coming to terms with what they went through or what occurred or kind of depending on the outcome, that definitely can potentially be an onset for some post-traumatic stress or trauma, as well as just being able to cope with that in a more long-term. So, if you are finding yourself in that sort of situation where something has

occurred, and it's, you know, it's not actively occurring anymore, but it definitely is having a very tangible impact on you. It's always important to find a trusted individual to, to be able to talk to about that and tell them that you are you're experiencing challenges or maybe struggling with it. That could be seeking some sort of more professional sort of assistance, but not necessarily it doesn't have to that could include talking to a friend, a family member, etc. But just be aware of that to a degree Um, those individuals can be very helpful and, and supportive. But if you are really struggling and dealing with trauma and, you know, coping and working through that, it's usually best, if possible, to also seek some outside kind of professional assistance as well. So, the what's going to be needed and kind of how to navigate that is going to depend on the individual and the circumstances. But I definitely want to say that there's nothing wrong with or it's not abnormal by any means, especially if you go through something very significant to not only experience challenges in the short-term that are related to it, but also to maybe experience some longer-term challenges, as well, as you seek to move forward or, you know, kind of move on after those events occur as well.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah, I agree.

After this final commercial break, Eric will talk about some educational opportunities at The Autism Society of Minnesota. Immediately following that, Today's Autistic Community Bulletin Board.

Commercial Break III

Future Shows

Today's Autistic Moment will once again present two shows in February for Black History Month. On February 4th Jen White-Johnson will be my guest

for *To Be Pro-Neurodiversity is to be Anti-Racist*. Join us for an insightful discussion with Jen White-Johnson, an ADHD, black, Boricua mother of an Autistic Child and an Art Activist for Disability Culture & Justice. We'll explore the intersectionality of Neurodiversity and racial justice, addressing the presence of racism within the movement. Learn how to actively promote inclusivity and equality in advocating for Neurodiversity while acknowledging and addressing biases in diagnostic criteria. This conversation strives to empower individuals to work together for a more just and inclusive advocacy movement.

On February 18th, join me to welcome back Precious Lesley for *Education & Health Care Disparities for Black Autistic Adults*. Precious Lesley will explore the intricate intersectionality of race, gender, and socioeconomic status in the experience of Black Autistic Adults specifically within the realms of education and health care.

Check out the [Future Shows](#) page on todaysautisticmoment.com for all upcoming shows and guests.

If you would like to offer to be a guest on Today's Autistic Moment, go to the [Be My Guest](#) page on todaysautisticmoment.com to fill out the Guest Intake Form.

If you have any topic suggestions, please go to the [Contact Us](#) page and submit your ideas.

Thank you for listening to Today's Autistic Moment.

Segment 4

Philip King-Lowe

Well, Eric, before we conclude this excellent talk. Tell us a little bit about some of the educational opportunities that are coming up in at the Autism Society, Minnesota this year?

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, well, we are definitely looking forward to and putting a lot of time and preparation into planning for our annual State Conference. And so that come that is every April, and this year, I believe the dates are April 17 to 19th. That will be in person in Minnesota, but also there will be some sessions that are recorded and available asynchronously. So, look for more information to come out about that sometime in the near future here. Likewise, nothing has been announced yet. But we're looking at putting together a couple of different workshop opportunities in 2024, as well. So, we just did one last week that was very interesting on Gestalt language processing. And things of a similar sort of nature will be scheduled and put together and announced as soon as possible for 2024 as well. But our website ausm.org is a great place to go to keep updated. And as those announcements come out, to be able to get more information and to register if you would like to do that. Also, we have a newsletter that you can sign up for, that's another great way to kind of stay up to date with things that are happening, some of which that are in person, but many of which also are virtual or hybrid. So even if you are outside of the state of Minnesota, it's not uncommon for us to get participants and registrations as well from other areas, if there's meaningful opportunities and information that you would like to be able to access.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah, well, it's always a pleasure for me to interact with AuSM and everybody there. It's no mistake than not. It's public news that I am so appreciative of all the things that The Autism Society of Minnesota has given me, including the progress on Today's Autistic Moment. So, you know, this is always very exciting. Well, Eric, thank you so much for being here today and giving us all this incredible information. You mentioned some websites, perhaps where people can find some resources to help them with the planning. But you're here to give us those again, or give us those?

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, so, a couple of the resources that I use to put together some of the information that I've shared previously, as well as some of the things I shared today. The Minnesota State Council on Disability has put together some great resources along these lines. There's also I haven't really looked since we're based in Minnesota. I haven't really looked at other states to see if they have similar sort of things. But if you are if you are from a different state, definitely could see your do a quick Google search to see if similarly, your state has anything available. Otherwise ready.gov is a federal website that has to do with emergency preparedness. And I can pass along a couple of these links to you as well, so that you might be able to list them on your websites for easier access.

Philip King-Lowe

Yeah, absolutely. Sounds good. All right, Eric. Well, again, thank you for being here today. And we will be talking with you very soon.

Eric Ringgenberg

Yeah, absolutely. Thank you again for the opportunity to join and thank you as well for the great work you're doing with this podcast.

Philip King-Lowe

Thank you.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

Today's Autistic Community Bulletin Board

All of these events with their links can be found at
todaysautisticmoment.com/bulletinboard.

Join The Autism Society of Minnesota for their *Adult Coffee Club*. The next Coffee Clubs will be on Tuesday nights from 5pm to 7pm at Dogwood Coffee in St. Paul on February 6th, March 5th, April 2nd, May 7th, and June 4th. Please RSVP at ausm.org.

Understanding Autism virtual classes will be offered by The Autism Society of Minnesota. These classes are perfect for Autistic individuals, caregivers, those who want to understand the basics of Autism and support Autistic people. Classes will be on February 12th from 10am to 12pm and April 8th from 10am to 12pm. Classes are free of charge, but you must register to attend.

On January 23rd beginning at 7-8:30pm there will be a skillshop at The Autism Society of Minnesota entitled: *Examining Our Roots: History of the Neurodiversity Movement* by Ira Eidle. The Neurodiversity movement has existed for roughly thirty years. Much of that history is not well known by most people. There is a lot to discuss when it come to the movement's

history, and how it compares to other disability sub-movements as well as the greater disability rights movement. It is still a young movement, although a lot of progress has been made since it started. This panel will go over the different eras thus far of the movement, highlight key movements, and discuss the strengths as well as the shortcomings of the Neurodiversity movement.

On Tuesday, February 20th beginning at 7-8:30pm there will be a work shop at The Autism Society of Minnesota called *Learning to Drive While Autistic*, presented by Kathy Woods.

Go to ausm.org to get more information about these and other social and educational events, including your opportunity to enter the lottery for AuSM's Summer Camps at The Autism Society of Minnesota.

MNeurodivergent is a social club rooted in a vision of bringing Neurodivergent Minnesotans together to build meaningful connections. Its core principle is to foster an environment where all are treated with dignity and respect regardless of ability or preferences. Go to the bulletin board at todaysautisticmoment.com and click on the Meet Up link to become a member and attend their events.

Today's Autistic Moment is here because of the generosity of supporters and sponsors. Please join the supporters by clicking on Support Today's Autistic Moment on todaysautisticmoment.com. If you work for a company and/or organization that supports Autistic Adults and the movement for Neurodiversity, I would love to have you sponsor ads on the show.

If you would like to sponsor an ad and/or have questions about Today's Autistic Moment, please send an email to todaysautisticmoment@gmail.com.

Thank you for listening to Today's Autistic Moment: A Podcast for Autistic Adults by An Autistic Adult.

May you have an Autistically Amazing day.