

[Zeph] Hi, my name is Zeph. I'm an adult diagnosed autistic and a member of the steering committee of the UVM Autism Collaborative. On behalf of the UVM Autism Collaborative and the University of Vermont, I'd like to welcome you to our presentation on group participation for the focus groups you're going to be participating in. We'd like to thank you for joining us here at the UVM Autism Collaborative. We have some quick housekeeping that we wanna go over with you, and the housekeeping will help make the group easy, safe and welcoming for all.

First, we're gonna talk about participating in the group. Then we're gonna just touch on ableism a little bit. Then we're gonna talk about Zoom meetings.

First off, let's talk about participating in the group. All forms of participation are okay. We want the group to be safe and comfortable for everyone. So your video on or off, whatever you want. Picture on or off, whatever you want. Share your pronouns or don't. Eye contact is not expected. Bring your supports, they're welcome. Bring your stuffies, bring your emotional support animals, bring your pets, bring your kids, whatever you need even if it's not on this list, anything else you need to feel comfortable is totally okay. Just like all forms of participating are okay, all forms of communication are okay too. So you don't need to raise your hand. You can just go ahead and speak up. We want to hear from you. You can type in the chat box if you prefer to type rather than to talk. You can use gestures, you can use Zoom reactions and emoticons. You can raise your real hand or your virtual Zoom hand or any other way of communicating that works for you is totally okay.

Safety comes first. In our groups, we affirm identity. This includes differences in our brains, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, disability, ethnic background and more. Our groups are welcoming and affirming and we want you to feel safe and comfortable with us.

Here's a little introduction to ableism. Ableism is a very complex topic. We're just going to scratch the surface of it right now.

So what is ableism? Ableism is thinking that disabled people cannot do things or need to be fixed. Ableism is thinking that disabled people are less than others. Ableism is treating people badly because of their disability and it's not respecting human rights.

Why is knowing about ableism important? It's often really hard for us to see ableism because we learn it from our culture. You can help make group discussions safe by learning about ableism.

Now, a ways back, we didn't use identity-first language. There were words that people used to describe disabled people that made them less than human, and so there was a move towards person first language and the goal of this was to make disabled people more human and to help fight disability stigma. Along with the influence of disability culture and the pride movement, the autistic community started picking up on identity first language. This means that we identify ourselves as autistics. And as time went on, there emerged a preference for the autistic community to use identity-first language because autism is an important part of who we are. It's not something that we can leave at the door. It comes with us, and it's a part of us. Autistics overwhelmingly prefer identity-first language. You're gonna

learn more about ableism in the introduction to ableism module, but that's a quick start. This image was adapted from [neurology is not an accessory](#).

Now, let's talk about Zoom meetings. The groups you'll meet in, we'll use Zoom meetings. You'll receive an invite link and you can join from your phone or computer. You may be familiar with Zoom already, but if not, we have a few tips to help get you started.

Your Zoom control panel is at the bottom of your Zoom screen. We're going to go through the most important controls with you so you know how to use them. As we've mentioned, all forms of participation and communication are okay. If you wanna go on mute, click on Mute to turn off your microphone. You can stop the video by clicking on Stop Video and turn off your webcam. If your microphone or your camera are off you're going to see icons that say, Unmute and Start Video. Click on Unmute to turn on your microphone. Click Start Video to turn on your webcam.

Using closed captionings on Zoom is super easy. You click on the CC to turn on the closed captions. you'll see a pop-up message that says Live transcript ON. And if you wanna hide the captions, click on Hide Captions to turn off the closed captioning. Now, if your Zoom toolbar does not show a CC icon, what you're going to do is click on the three dots for more to access closed captioning. We're gonna show you this on the next slide. This is what your toolbar will look like if you have the More option without the closed captioning. You're going to click on the More icon to open up the menu that's shown below. And from these menus you can select Show Subtitles or View Full Transcript from the list.

To use chat at any time during the meeting, click on the Chat icon. The group chat will be monitored to make sure that everyone's input is included. The Zoom chat window will open to the right of your screen. Enter your comments in the field at the bottom of the chat window. To direct message in chat, including the facilitators, click on the tiny down arrow next to Everyone in the comments box. While it's not shown, this will display a list of people in the room. You can then direct message someone by selecting their name from the list. To close chat, you're going to click on the tiny downwards arrow at the top of the chat box, and then you're going to select Close.

Zoom also lets you use reactions and emoticons. To click on the reactions icon to get to the Zoom emojis and the virtual raise hands feature, you're going to click on the Reactions button. You can use these emojis to interact with the group conversation. They will show on your profile on the group. And if you wanna raise your virtual hand, click on Raise Hand. And remember, you don't have to raise your hand to speak. If you have something to say, it's okay to just speak up. We want to hear from you. There's even more emojis that you can use in Zoom. By clicking on the three dots for More in the Reactions, it'll give you more emojis to choose from. See? Look at all the emojis.

That's it, you're done. We hope that this little introduction to group participation will help make the group meeting safe, comfortable, and easy for everyone involved.