

Defiance: A Misunderstood Behavior

Understanding Defiance Through a Neurodiverse Lens

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For generations, neurotypical society has operated on an unspoken assumption: if a person can't or won't follow the rules, they must be defiant, oppositional, or have a problem with authority. Words like "noncompliant," "rebellious," and "disruptive" became the labels assigned to people whose behavior didn't align with expectations. But what if the problem wasn't a lack of discipline, but a difference in brain wiring?

Neurotypicals create the rules. These rules are often structured, linear, and require a steady flow of impulse control, working memory, and emotional regulation to follow. For most neurotypical individuals, this comes naturally. But for the neurodiverse—especially those with ADHD, autism, FASD, or learning disabilities—those same rules may feel confusing, overwhelming, or even unmanageable.

Many neurodiverse individuals don't break rules intentionally. Instead, their behavior is often reactive, driven by executive function deficits. They may not remember the rule, or they may act before considering consequences. In some cases, they genuinely don't understand *why* the rule exists, especially if it hasn't been explained in a way their brain can process.

Defiance in Neurotypicals vs. Neurodiverse Individuals

Aspect	Neurotypical Defiance	Neurodiverse Defiance
Intent	Often deliberate or based on belief	Often impulsive or due to confusion
Understanding of Rule	Usually clear	May be partial or missing entirely
Trigger	Perceived injustice, threat to autonomy	Cognitive overload, frustration, sensory issues
Frequency	Situational	Chronic without support or structure
Motivation	Autonomy, fairness, protest	Confusion, fear, internal chaos

Neurodiverse individuals have often been punished, restrained, or isolated not because they chose to misbehave, but because they didn't understand the expectation or lacked the neurological ability to meet it.

Let's be clear: accountability is important. But before labeling someone as defiant, we must ask *why* the behavior occurred. Was it willful? Was it avoidable? Or was it the outward sign of a brain struggling to manage itself in a world built by and for neurotypicals?

Understanding this distinction could change everything in corrections, education, and mental health. It could replace punishment with support, judgment with understanding, and defiance with growth.

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Words That Harm: Misinterpretation Through a Neurotypical Lens

When neurotypical society uses labels to describe challenging behaviors, those words often carry assumptions — assumptions the neurodiverse do not experience in the same way. Below is a comparison of common descriptors and how they are often misinterpreted by neurodiverse individuals:

Neurotypical Label How It May Be Experienced by the Neurodiverse Individual

Noncompliant	"I'm confused. I don't understand what's being asked of me."
Oppositional	"I'm overwhelmed and trying to protect myself."
Lazy	"I don't know how to begin or organize my thoughts."
Disruptive	"My energy is uncontrollable, and I don't know why."
Manipulative	"I'm trying to cope the only way I know how."
Doesn't care	"I care deeply, but I don't know how to show it right."
Resistant	"I'm afraid. I've failed too many times already."
Lacks motivation	"I'm paralyzed by shame and don't believe I can succeed."

These interpretations are not excuses — they are clarifications. They reveal how the same word can mean vastly different things depending on who is receiving it.

When Misinterpretation Becomes Identity

Let's begin with misunderstanding — and what it does.

When a person is impacted with constant criticism and negative judgment, it reinforces an already poor sense of self-worth. Over time, this erosion isn't just emotional — it becomes energetic. The individual's self-perception emits a lower vibration, one filled with fear, shame, and internal confusion. And as that frequency is projected outward, the world reflects it back.

In metaphysical terms, every human thought and feeling carries a vibration — a kind of frequency that communicates how we see ourselves and the world. If we feel broken, we vibrate brokenness. If we believe we are flawed, we send out signals that attract rejection, misunderstanding, and more failure. This isn't mysticism — it's feedback. And the neurodiverse experience this cycle far more often than others.

When neurodiverse children are constantly misunderstood — when their behaviors are interpreted through a neurotypical lens — the result is not just emotional damage. It's cognitive misalignment. The

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issue isn't that they're *labeled* as defiant; it's that years of being misunderstood distort how they think, how they see themselves, and how they relate to the world.

Over time, this creates improper thinking — not because they're bad or resistant, but because their internal compass is shaped by rejection, fear, and the belief that they are inherently wrong. Their thoughts no longer align with opportunity or belonging. They expect failure, anticipate rejection, and live in a frequency of internal chaos.

They're not vibrating defiance — they're vibrating confusion and shame. And that vibration shapes every interaction, every attempt at growth, every choice they make.

The Energetics of Self-Perception

Thoughts are causes; conditions are effects. If our internal feelings about ourselves are good, our thoughts and lives reflect that in a positive way. But when we believe we are flawed, unsafe, or unworthy, our internal state sends out what can be understood as negative vibrations — an emotional frequency that shapes our external reality.

These vibrations are not imaginary. They are behavioral patterns, emotional cues, and the energy we bring into our relationships, decisions, and challenges. They determine how others respond to us, how opportunities open or close, and how we interpret setbacks. When someone's internal vibration is based on self-hatred, fear, or confusion, they're far more likely to live a life of rejection, isolation, and dysfunction.

Negative vibrations are not random. They are shaped by misunderstanding and mislabeling, particularly in childhood. When a neurodiverse child is constantly corrected, punished, and rejected, those vibrations harden into identity. That child may never receive the support needed to lift them into self-understanding.

These are the people who commit crime, fall into addiction, and lose themselves to systems that don't understand them. Their lives are not defined by moral failure — they are the downstream effect of persistent misalignment between who they are and how they are perceived.

Now is the time to identify these two forces — neurotypical systems and neurodiverse experience — and examine their interaction. One creates the conditions; the other tries to survive them.

The Roots of Crime in Misaligned Thought

Let's make something perfectly clear: when the human psyche is shaped by trauma, ADHD, FASD, learning disabilities, autism, dyslexia, or any other neurodevelopmental disorder — the resulting thought patterns are not criminal in the moral sense. They are simply misaligned.

Through no fault of their own, the individual's thoughts become attuned to the frequency of crime — impulsive decisions, distorted perceptions, survival over structure. These are not choices made in rebellion but behaviors emerging from confusion, fear, and unaddressed neurological dysfunction.

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The criminal act is often the final expression of years of internal misinterpretation. Not evil. Not defiant. But lost.

To correct this, we must first understand it. And to understand it, we must finally listen to those who have lived it.

To be corrected, we must adjust our thinking.

Restoring the Frequency of Belonging

This isn't about behavior alone — it's about resonance. The neurodiverse individual doesn't just struggle with expectations; they often live in a world that reflects back a warped version of who they are. Over time, that distortion becomes their truth. But it's not the truth. It's the residue of misunderstanding, rejection, and misalignment.

The psyche adapts to survive. If the world says, *You are broken*, the neurodiverse child doesn't fight it — they absorb it. And what they absorb becomes how they think, how they feel, and what they expect. Their internal frequency begins to match their external experience.

But just as a soul can be pulled downward by misunderstanding, it can also be lifted by insight. A single truth can begin to shift the vibration. A moment of clarity — *You are not broken, only misread* — can begin the long process of healing.

These changes do not happen through discipline or punishment. They happen through love, structure, understanding, and truth. They happen when we rebuild the internal compass — not with lectures, but with resonance. With words, models, and systems that match the mind of the individual they're meant to serve.

When the neurodiverse person begins to think new thoughts — thoughts of worth, purpose, and dignity — the vibration rises. That frequency begins to shape their reality. The world opens. Possibility returns.

We don't fix defiance. We restore alignment. And in doing so, we restore the person.

A Life Misunderstood: ADHD in the 1950s

He was just a boy in the 1950s, barefoot in summer, pockets full of marbles and questions. His world was made of rusted fences, chalkboards, and the rattle of school bells. But from the very beginning, something was different.

He couldn't sit still. His body moved on its own. The teacher's voice faded into a dull buzz while his attention darted to the shadows on the walls. His classmates followed directions with ease. He didn't. And when he failed — again — the punishment was swift. "Lazy." "Troublemaker." "Won't apply himself."

There were no thoughts to explain it. He didn't wonder why. He simply reacted. What others absorbed effortlessly never reached him at all.

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He was confused, deeply and constantly. And worse — he was alone in that confusion. Everyone around him assumed he was choosing to fail. But he wasn't choosing. He was drowning in a world that made no sense.

By adolescence, the labels had stuck. He was the bad kid. The one who laughed too loud, skipped school, talked back. But he wasn't defiant — he was disoriented. He didn't know how to *be* what they wanted. He only knew how to survive.

He didn't think about what was happening. He just reacted. Nothing made sense, so he responded the only way he could — with whatever came to mind in the moment. His behavior wasn't calculated; it was survival. He wasn't bluffing, he was lost. He wasn't pretending, he simply didn't know. He moved from one moment to the next with no sense of why he was wrong — only that he always was.

No one saw the disorder. No one saw the ADHD.

He was arrested at seventeen.

In prison, he finally had silence. But not peace. The shame grew roots. He believed what they'd told him — that he was defective. That he deserved this. He never learned how to think differently, because no one showed him it was possible.

That boy — and thousands like him — wasn't born broken. He was born different.

Different isn't defiance. And different isn't a crime.

But misunderstanding can become a sentence. One that lasts a lifetime.