



INTEGRAL

Adult Autism Conference

Stronger Together

November 1, 2025

Guidebook

Welcome to INTEGRAL 2025: Stronger Together. We hope this guidebook helps you get the most out of this unique, collaborative conference.

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Schedule

- 9:00 am Doors open - breakfast snacks available; community tables open
- 9:30 am **Opening remarks**
Scott Allen, INTEGRAL Co-founder
- 10:00 am **You Are Already an Advocate**
Eunjeong Ko, Hope Shira Goldsmith, Yuhan Huang, Natalie Helen Kantor, Sara Park, Jina Chun, Daniel Pell, Abram Becker, and Tara Olivia Martens
- 10:25 am Small group activity
- 10:50 am Break (10 minutes)
- 11:00 am Community discussion
- 11:50 am Lunch (60 minutes) – community tables open
- 12:50 pm **A Beautiful Activism**
Rebecca Paradiso de Sayu
- 1:15 pm Small group discussion
- 1:40 pm Community discussion
- 2:30 pm Break (10 minutes)
- 2:40 pm Warm up
- 2:45 pm **Taking Action: Making Change Happen**
Panelists: TaMaya Travis, Tarah Stangler, Shain M. Neumeier, Kirsten Engel, Leann DaWalt
- 3:10 pm Small group discussion
- 3:35 pm Community discussion
- 4:30 pm Conference concludes
- 5:45 pm Post-conference hangout begins
- 6:00 pm Collaborative comedy entertainment with Nate Chappell
- 9:00 pm Post-conference hangout concludes

Program

Opening remarks

9:30am • Scott Allen, Moderator and Co-founder of INTEGRAL

INTEGRAL co-founder and team leader Scott Allen will offer a sober overview of challenges presently facing the autistic-adult community. He will also address the urgent need for autistic adults and their allies to become more unified, organized, and active in meeting autistic needs and defending autistic rights.

You are Already an Advocate: Collaboration, Community, and Autistic Advocacy

10:00am • Eunjeong Ko, Hope Shira Goldsmith, Yuhan Huang, Natalie Helen Kantor, Sara Park, Jina Chun, Daniel Pell, Abram Becker, and Tara Olivia Martens

This session shares our journey of building a cross-campus and community partnership to amplify autistic voices. Using a [Photovoice](#) methodology, we engaged autistic self- and community advocates to visually document their lived experiences of advocacy, identity, and inclusion. Drawing from these visuals (annotated collages combining words and images) the study participants described and interpreted their experiences in close collaboration with other participants and the research team.

Together, we explored how community-based participatory methods can empower autistic voices and inform more inclusive practices in higher education and community advocacy. This presentation will share lessons learned from our partnership-building process, the creative outputs from the project, and reflections from both researchers and community members on what it means to engage in authentic, equity-centered reflection and collaboration. Conference attendees will have a chance to experience the methods used in the study to explore events in their own journey as advocates/self-advocates.

A Beautiful Activism

12:50pm • Rebecca Paradiso de Sayu

Rebecca speaks to the tender, surprising, and deeply creative experience of inhabiting autism as a way of being. In this session, she invites participants to reflect on their autistic identities through the lens of beauty as a powerful form of activism. Rebecca believes that when our community knows who we are—individually and together—and we claim it as our birthright, our collective capacity for creativity, innovation, and wellbeing is infinite. We come into a power that cannot be taken away by any government or regime. Together, we will explore how reclaiming our identities as beautiful not only strengthens our collective wellbeing but also deepens our ability to stay rooted in possibility when traditional supports fall short. Participants will leave the session with a renewed sense of reverence for the strength of who we are together.

Taking Action: Making Change Happen

2:45pm • Panelists: Leann DaWalt, Kirsten Engel, Shain M. Neumeier, Tarah Stangler, and TaMaya Travis

This session will explore the concrete elements of creating change. How do we “do” community building and political advocacy? Many autistic people are extremely knowledgeable and passionate about the structural issues we face, but struggle to translate that into concrete action. During this session, we will hear from people with experience making change happen, both in & outside the autism community. We will also explore possible approaches to community building, political advocacy, and social change—for example, starting a community center for autistic adults.

Speaker bios

Scott Allen

Opening remarks



Scott was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome at the University of Pittsburgh in the summer of 2000, and revealed his diagnosis to his high-school classmates during a school-wide presentation in 2002. Since then, he has been a strong advocate for the rights, fair opportunity, and dignity of people on the autism spectrum. Scott received his Master of Science in Counseling and works as a counselor in Madison, WI, where he specializes in counseling autistic adults

without cognitive impairment. Scott facilitates groups for autistic adults through his employer and the Autism Society of South-Central Wisconsin, where he also volunteers on the Board of Directors. In addition, he co-facilitates an autistic-student empowerment group at the UW-Madison McBurney Disability Resource Center. He previously co-facilitated groups for autistic young adults as part of a research team at the UW-Madison Waisman Center. His advocacy work includes 22 years of public speaking about autism issues.

Nate Chappell

Collaborative comedy entertainment

Nate Chappell is an autistic podcast producer and comedy performer in Madison, WI.

Leann DaWalt

Taking Action: Making Change Happen

Leann DaWalt is the Director of the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at the Waisman Center.

Kirsten Engel

Taking Action: Making Change Happen

Eunjeong Ko, Hope Shira Goldsmith, Yuhan Huang, Natalie Helen Kantor, Sara Park, Jina Chun, Daniel Pell, Abram Becker, and Tara Olivia Martens

You are Already an Advocate: Collaboration, Community, and Autistic Advocacy



Our presentation includes faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students, and community advocates, and draws from the University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education, the Disability Cultural Center, and NeuroPride, a student-led neurodiversity group, in partnership with local disability advocacy organizations and individuals from the Madison community.

This ongoing study is led by Sara Park, Jina Chun, Helen Rottier, River Kratochvil, Muharrem Koc, Gizem Tekinarslan, Eunjeong Ko, Natalie Kantor, Hope Goldsmith, and Yuhan Huang. Abram Becker, Daniel Pell, and Tara Martens join the presentation as community members and participants of the study.

Shain M. Neumeier

Taking Action: Making Change Happen



Shain M. Neumeier (they/them) is a neurodivergent psychiatric survivor and attorney with the Committee for Public Counsel Services’ Mental Health Litigation Division. For the past seven years, both at CPCS and in private practice, they have defended people from civil commitment and involuntary medication orders. They have also been an advocate against the use of aversive behavioral modification and institutionalization at programs that use it. They have received numerous awards for their work, including the 2024 Paul J. Liacos Mental Advocacy Award and the 2018 Massachusetts Bar Association’s Young Lawyer of the Year Award. In their spare time, they play Dungeons & Dragons, go rollerskating, and spend time with their four cats.

Rebecca Paradiso de Sayu

A Beautiful Activism



When it comes to imagining a more just and beautiful future, Rebecca dwells in possibilities. Her devotion to authenticity and wholeheartedness is the spiritual through line of her work and of her practice of living as a late-diagnosed autistic woman.

In her role as Co-Founder and Director – United States of the nonprofit Org School, Rebecca accompanies organizations as they rediscover their vibrancy, humanity, and relational agency. She delights in witnessing how seemingly mundane shifts can engender a profound sense of liberation.

She is also the Founder of Together in Beauty, where she accompanies individuals on the path of spiritual becoming. Some of her favorite topics to explore are the nature of truth, creativity, and what it means to reclaim our identities in a world content in telling us who we are. She also provides end-of-life companionship, tending to the sacredness of transitions.

Rebecca holds a doctorate and master's degree from the Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is a licensed social worker and a board-certified coach. More than anything, she is a lover of beauty, her family, and the gift of learning to be who we truly are together.

Devon Price, PhD

Organizing While Disabled: Exclusions, Exploitations, Faulty Frameworks... and Our Way Forward



Devon Price, PhD, is a social psychologist, professor, author, and proud Autistic person. His research has appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, and the *Journal of Positive Psychology*. Devon's

writing has appeared in outlets such as the *Financial Times*, *HuffPost*, *Slate*, *Jacobin*, *Business Insider*, LitHub, and on PBS and NPR. He lives in Chicago, where he serves as an assistant professor at Loyola University Chicago's School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

Tarah Stangler

Taking Action: Making Change Happen



Tarah Stangler (Tar-Uh Stang-ler) is the Harm Reduction Services Director at OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center and uses she / they pronouns. She is the child of a Korean immigrant, a staunch abolitionist and proud member of the LGBTQ+ community.

She dropped out of college in 2020 to dedicate her time to community organizing around abolition and racial justice as well as mutual aid and has continued to spend most of her time outside of work over the last 5 years doing exactly that.

In their professional role, they use their lived and living experience as a person who uses drugs to help the LGBTQ+ community navigate their relationship to substances in a way that is healthy for them. She also focuses on providing education to the community as a whole as a pathway to ending stigmatization of substance use and ensuring the legacy that those who started harm reduction (Black and Brown folks, as well as folks in the LGBTQ+ community and sex workers) is acknowledged and carried on.

TaMaya Travis

Taking Action: Making Change Happen

Conference information

Date: Saturday, November 1

Time: 9:30am–4:30pm (doors open at 9:00am)

Location: Goodman Community Center (Brassworks Building)

Our conference will be held in the Bea & Lau Christensen Room. From 9:00am to 9:30am and from 11:50am to 12:50pm, the community tables will be open—these are run by local autistic crafters, makers, and small business owners with goods to sell or information about their business, and by local organizations with resources and information relevant to autistic adults.

Food

Breakfast refreshments will be available from 9:00am to 9:30am. A catered hot lunch from [Stoddard's](#) will be available during our lunch hour beginning at 11:50am. Food will include a pasta bar and taco bar, along with dessert (cookie or brownie). There is outdoor space with limited seating outside the main entrance for those that wish to eat in open air (e.g., for Covid safety).

Post-conference hangout

Date: Saturday, November 1

Time: 5:45pm

Location: Goodman Community Center (Brassworks Building)

There will be a dinner break after the conference (dinner is not provided), after which we invite you to join us for a laid-back social gathering. This will take place in the NGL Room at Goodman.

Entertainment

At 6:00pm, local autistic comedian Nate Chappell will kick off our

evening with some (optionally interactive) collaborative comedy entertainment. Feel free to use the rest of the evening to get to know fellow attendees, discuss topics from the conference, or just unwind from the long day.

Sunday social

Date: Sunday, November 2

Time: 1:30–6:30pm

Location: OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center

The day after the conference we will be gathering once again for a Sunday Social. This is a casual event with a snacky potluck, games & activities, and more opportunity to hang out.

Food

The Sunday Social is a potluck. Some light refreshments will be provided by us, but we'd love for attendees to bring food as well. Plates, napkins, and eating utensils will be provided. If you are bringing food to share, please bring a serving utensil and, if homemade, a piece of paper listing ingredients. There are tables & chairs throughout the space to eat at.

Devon Price webinar

Date: Thursday, November 6

Time: 7:00–8:30pm

Location: Zoom

Included in your ticket is an INTEGRAL webinar featuring Devon Price, author of *Unmasking Autism* and *Unmasking for Life*. Devon's webinar is titled *Organizing While Disabled: Exclusions, exploitations, faulty frameworks...and our way forward*. Q & A and discussion will follow.

Accessibility information

Automated captioning will be available on Zoom, and will be projected on screen for in-person attendees.

Service animals are welcome. We ask that our attendees please read about [best practices/etiquette](#) when around service animals. Grass for animal relief can be found outside the main entrance (turn right; after a few sidewalk squares, there will be grass to the left of the sidewalk).

Accessibility information about our venues can be found on page 18 for the Goodman Center and page 26 for the OutReach Center.

Masks & Covid-19

We request and strongly encourage attendees to wear masks unless medically unable (we will also have extra masks on hand). However, they are not required. Air purifiers will be running throughout the event to mitigate risk, but they cannot eliminate risk (thank you to [Clean Air 608](#) for lending us two of the air purifiers in use this weekend). We ask that you stay home and attend via Zoom if you have tested positive for Covid-19 or are experiencing symptoms.

Autistic people are more likely to have chronic physical health conditions, and may be at higher risk for severe Covid-19 illness or Long Covid. Please keep this in mind when planning for and attending INTEGRAL.

Communication badges

When you enter the Goodman Center, there will be a table where you will check in and pick up a name tag (and pronoun sticker(s) if comfortable). To make communication between attendees easier, we will also have color communication badges. Color communication badges are small pieces of colored paper (green, yellow, and red) you

stick out of your name tag that tell the people around you what your communication preferences are.

Showing a **green** badge means the person is interested in being approached by people that want to talk. A **yellow** badge means the person only wants to be approached by people they've already met. A **red** badge means the person probably doesn't want to talk to anyone, unless they've told you otherwise. See pages 15–16 for more information about the color communication badge system.

Anti-harassment policy

We are committed to making INTEGRAL accessible to everyone. This means making physical & sensory accessibility a priority, and it also means building a community that is inclusive and supportive for everyone.

We will not tolerate hate speech, harassment, or abuse. This includes language & behavior that targets people based on race, gender, sex, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, age, class, religion, or other marginalized identity.

We also recognize that many people are nervous to share their ideas because they are afraid of saying something “wrong.” This fear can be especially common for autistic people that struggle with social anxiety. We want everyone to feel comfortable participating in the discussion, so we ask that everyone assumes good intent. If someone misspeaks or makes a small mistake, do not verbally attack them. Instead, respectfully share with them why what they said was hurtful or harmful (this could be in the discussion, or later one-on-one).

See the participation guidelines on pages 31 and 32 for more guidance on participating in discussion.

Color Communication Badges



Color Communication Badges are a system which were first developed in Autistic spaces and conferences. **They help people tell everyone who can see their badge about their communication preferences.**

A color communication badge is a name tag holder that can pin or clip onto clothing. In the name tag holder there are three cards: one green card that says “GREEN”, one yellow card that says “YELLOW”, and one red card that says “RED.”

The card that is currently visible is the active card; the other two are hidden behind the first one, accessible to the person if they should need them.

Showing a **green badge** means that the person is **actively seeking communication**; they have trouble initiating conversations, but want to be approached by people who are interested in talking.

Showing a **yellow badge** means that the person **only wants to talk to people they recognize**, not by strangers or people they only know from the Internet. The badge-wearer might approach strangers to talk, and that is okay; the approached people are welcome to talk back to them in that case. But unless you have already met the person face-to-face, you should not approach them to talk.

Showing a **red badge** means that the person **probably does not want to talk to anyone**, or only wants to talk to a few people. The person might approach others to talk, and that is okay; the approached people are welcome to talk back

to them in that case. But unless you have been told already by the badge-wearer that you are on their “red list”, you should not approach them to talk.

Color communication badges are a good aid because they allow people to **express their current communication preference quickly, nonverbally, and simply** - people can change what card is showing if their preference changes. They are a good way to prevent situations where someone is caught in a social situation they do not want to be in, or situations where someone wants to talk but can’t initiate.

This means that communication badges can help make conferences, conventions, meetings, college campuses, and other spaces more accessible. People with communication impairments, people who have trouble expressing their communication preferences, and people who have trouble reading social cues about communication preference, may find color communication badges useful.

Color communication badges also help all people, abled or disabled, to more easily and effectively let people know whether they want to be approached for conversations or not. This can create a positive impact on the social atmosphere where communication badges are being used.

If you have any questions about the color communication badge system, please contact ASAN by email at info@autisticadvocacy.org.

This Resource Guide was developed for ASAN’s Pacific Alliance on Disability Self-Advocacy project. Pacific Alliance is an effort funded by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to support self advocacy groups with technical assistance. For more about the ASAN or the Pacific Alliance, visit us at www.autisticadvocacy.org.

Contact us

If you have accommodations requests, questions, suggestions, or concerns (accessibility-related or not), please feel free to reach out to us at integral@autismsouthcentral.org or info@autismsouthcentral.org.

If you have any questions the day of the conference, you can ask any of our volunteers (we will have name tags that say “volunteer”).

Volunteer with us

Are you interesting in making next year’s conference happen? We’re looking for volunteers for the INTEGRAL planning team, and we need you! Meetings are virtual, and the time commitment is very flexible. Tasks are varied and all skills, experience levels, and backgrounds are welcome.

Fill out our short [volunteer interest form](#) and we’ll reach out!

Goodman Community Center

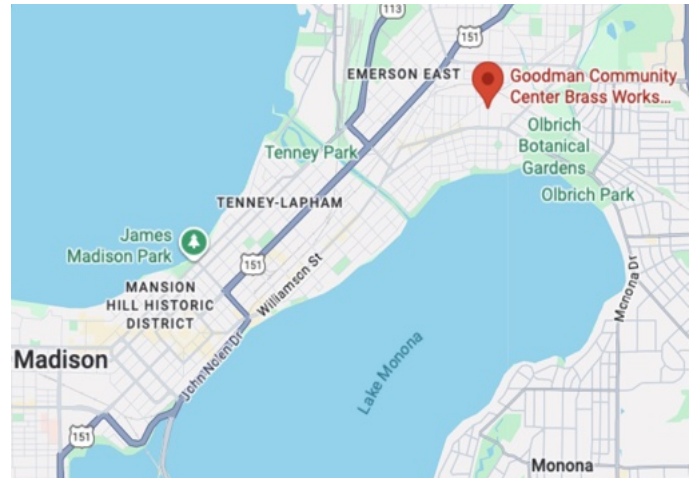
Location

[GCC website](#)

[GCC on Google Maps](#)

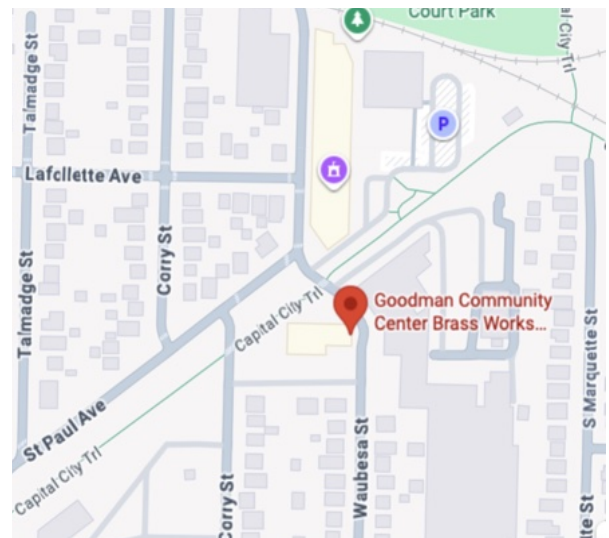


GCC Brassworks Building
214 Waubesa St.
Madison, WI 53704



If arriving by bus, GCC is a 3 minute walk from Route C, and a 7 minute walk from Route D. Plan your trip using Google maps or the Transit app.

GCC is easily accessible by bike. The Brassworks building is located directly adjacent to the Capital City Trail, and bike parking is plentiful. There's also a Madison BCycle Station in front of the Ironworks Building facing the bike path.



Parking

Brassworks parking lot: There are no marked accessible parking spaces next to the Brassworks building, so please leave spaces in this lot for those that need accessible parking.

Ironworks parking lot: This lot has 3 accessible spaces, though it's a 2 minute walk from Brassworks. There are ~50 standard parking spaces.

St. Bernard's parking lot: Goodman has reserved visitor spaces in the northeast corner of the St. Bernard's Catholic Church parking lot. Please only park in the yellow stalls.

Street parking around Goodman (Corry, Waubesa, St. Paul, Lafollette, Talmadge): Make note of posted parking restrictions on these streets.

Accessibility & amenities

Note: The numbers after certain locations of interest correspond with numbers on the map of the Brassworks building, which will be on page 25 (after the photo tour).

There are two entrances to the Brassworks building (both are push button automatic). The main entrance is on the north side of the building, facing the bike path. There is also an entrance on the south side.

The main conference schedule will be held in the **Bea & Lau Christensen Room** (1) on the first floor. Attendees will be seated at round tables on armless plastic chairs. No fluorescent lighting!

There will be a **sensory room** located in the NGL Room (2) throughout the day for those experiencing sensory overload, or for anyone who needs a break from the main conference room. The lights will be dimmed and stim/fidget toys will be available. Please keep this room quiet.

There are **restrooms** (3) with accessible stalls on the first floor next to the south entrance. The doors, however, are not automatic. There are also restrooms on the lower level and the 2nd level. There is a **gender neutral/family restroom** (4) across from the other restrooms on the first floor. A **drinking fountain** (5) can be found next to the first floor restroom. A **lactation room** (6) can be found on the second level. When entering the building from the main entrance, to find the **elevator**, turn right after the stairs. The elevator will then be on your right.

Photo tour of the conference event spaces

Below are photos of the Goodman Community Center Brassworks Building. Note that the rooms are not set up how they will be on the day of the conference. See also this [video tour](#) on Goodman's YouTube channel.



Main entrance of the GCC Brassworks building, taken from across the street (Waubesa St).



Close up of main entrance (main entrance faces the Capital City bike path). There's lots of bike parking just to the right of this photo.

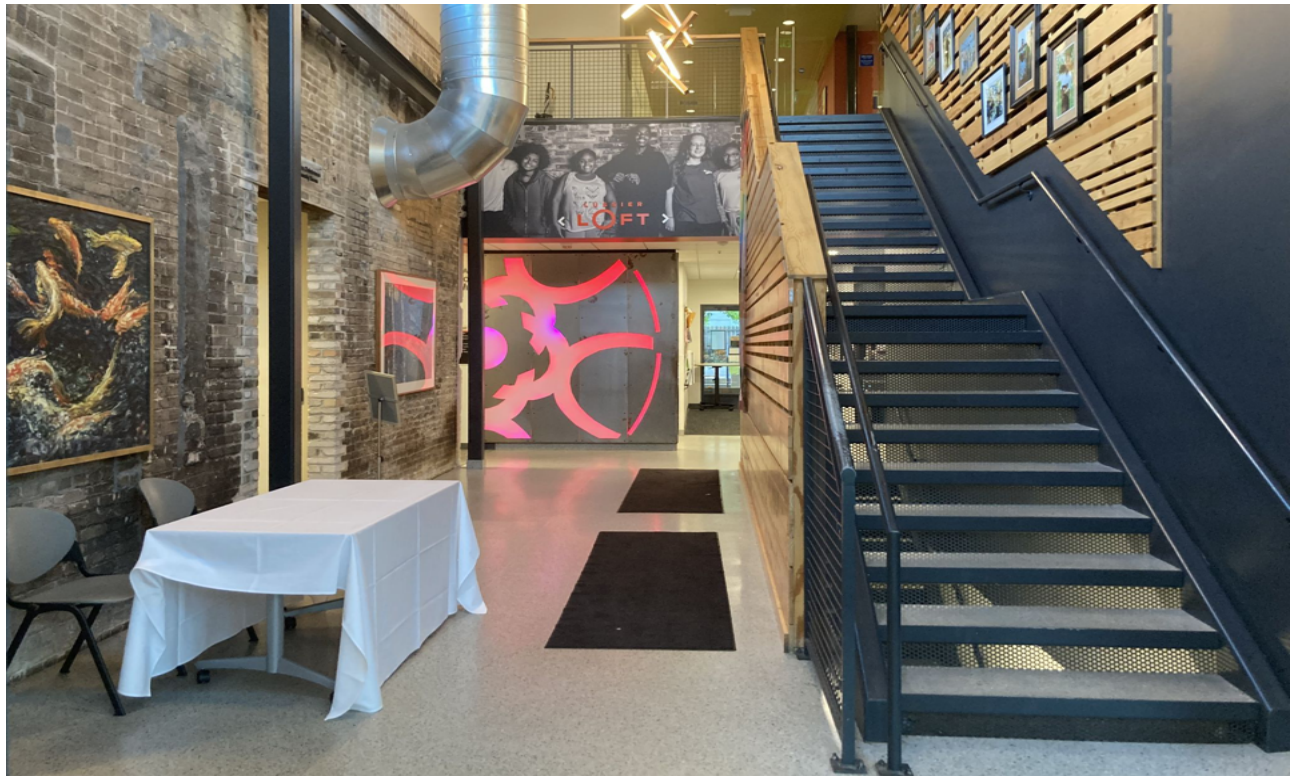


Photo taken from just inside the main entrance. The Christensen Room (the conference room) is on the left. Restrooms & water fountain are beyond the stairs on the right.



Doors into the conference room (on either side of the table). Photo taken from just inside the main entrance.



The conference room. It will be set up differently for INTEGRAL.



These are the chairs that are in the conference room and the sensory room. The tables will be round.



South entrance of the GCC Brassworks building.



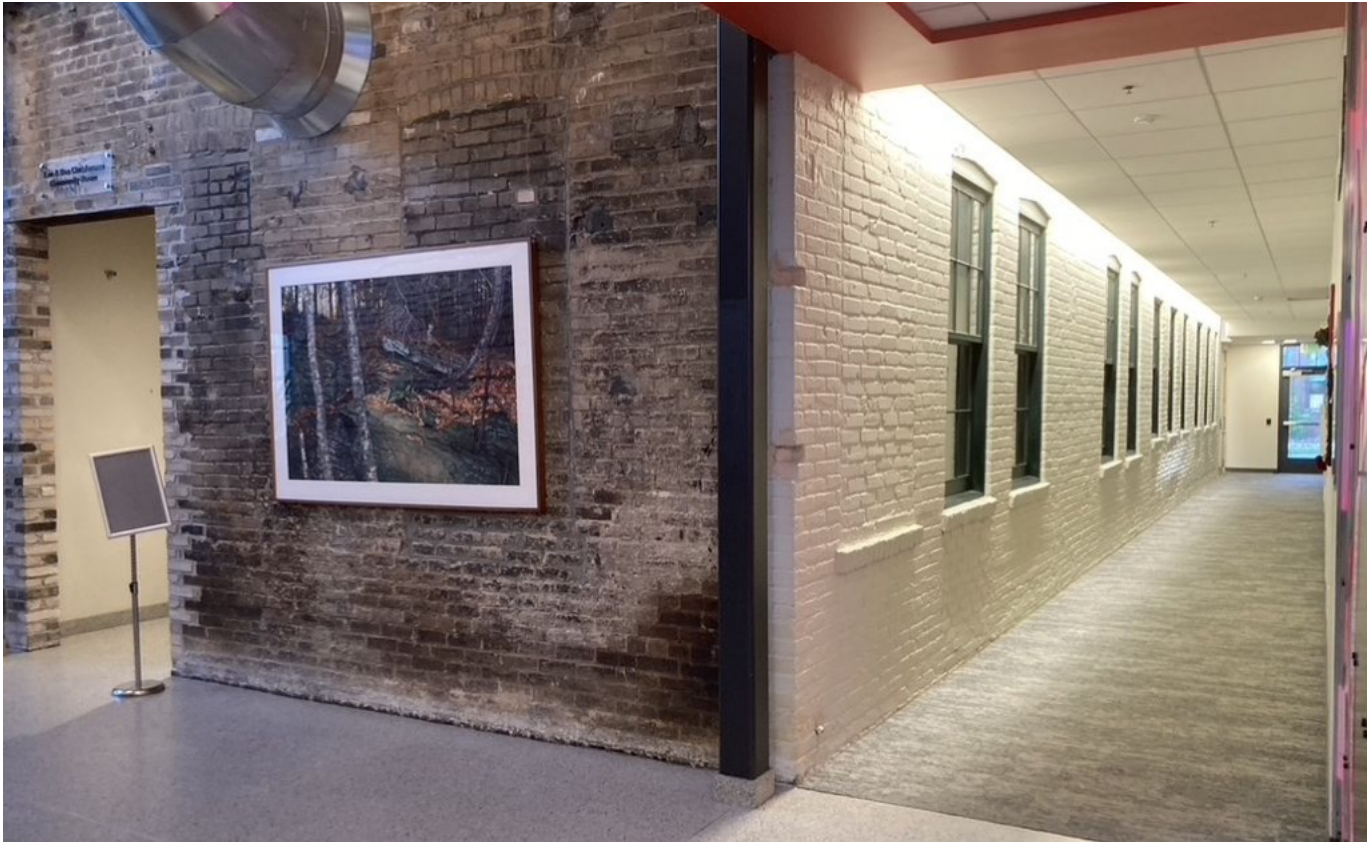
Photo taken from just inside the south entrance. The conference room is to the right of the stairs. Restrooms and water fountain are to the left, before the stairs.



Restroom and water fountain. A gender neutral/family restroom is to the right of this photo. South entrance is to the left of this photo. The conference room is behind the photo taker.



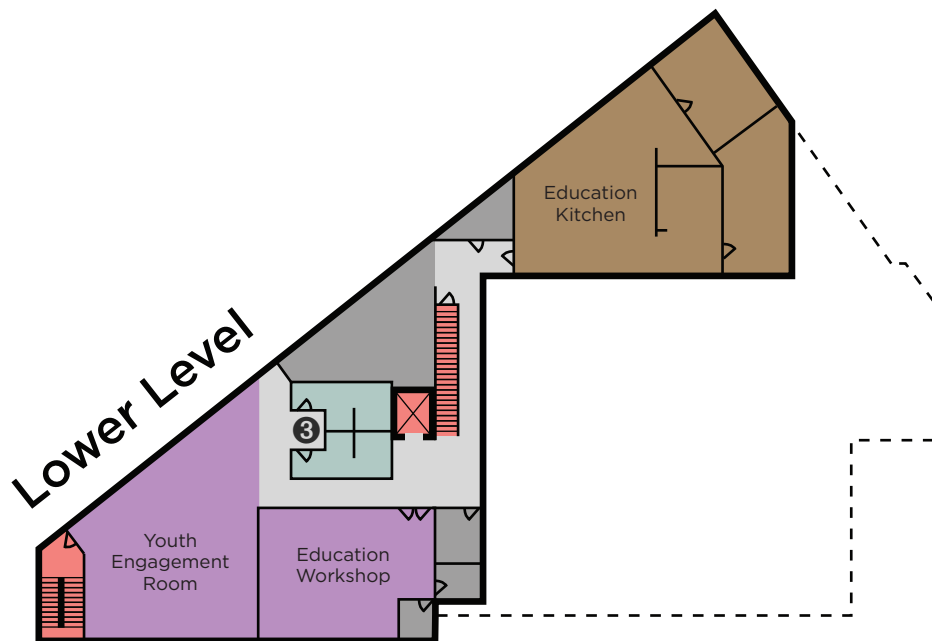
Doors to the conference room. Photo taken from the hallway in front of the restroom.



The NGL room (the sensory room) is at the end of the hallway on the right. The door to the conference room is on the left side of the photo.



Sensory room. Lights will be dimmed for INTEGRAL.



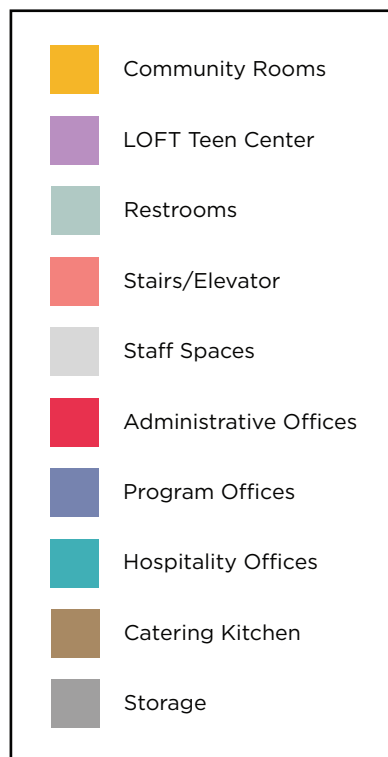
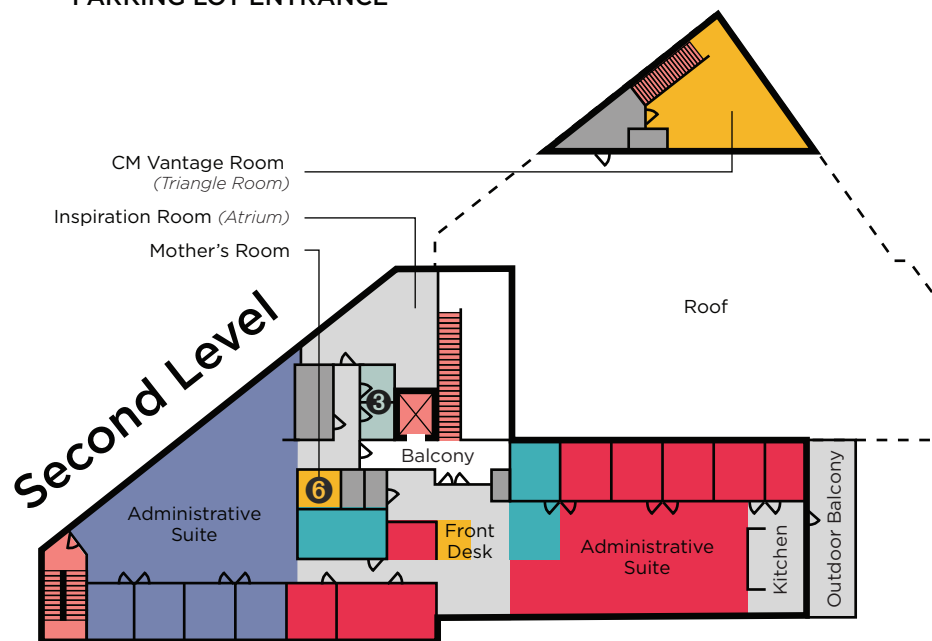
Goodman Community Center Brassworks Building Map

214 Waubesa St., Madison, WI 53704

February 2025



Goodman
Community Center



- ① main conference room
- ② sensory room
- ③ restrooms
- ④ gender neutral/family restrooms
- ⑤ drinking fountain

OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center

Location

[OutReach website](#)

[OutReach on Google Maps](#)



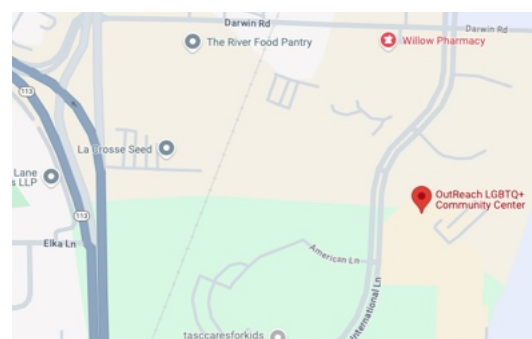
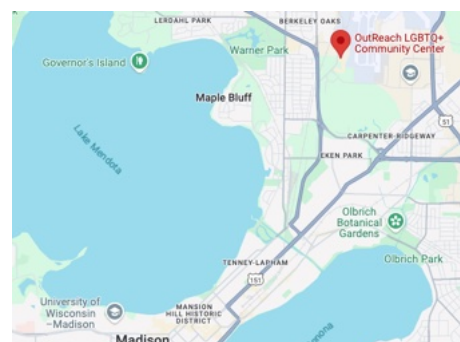
2701 International Ln #101
Madison, WI 53704

OutReach is served by Routes B and D of the Madison bus system. Plan your trip using Google maps or the Transit app.

Accessibility & amenities

There is a non-accessible restroom in the first-floor lobby. There is a wheelchair **accessible restroom** in the second-floor lobby. There is a **gender neutral restroom** in between the lobby and OutReach's library. A **drinking fountain** can be found next to both lobby restrooms, and there is a faucet in the kitchenette at OutReach. There is an **elevator** in the lobby.

An array of seating options are available throughout the space: plastic chairs, office chairs, fabric couches & armchairs, and "leather" couches & armchairs. OutReach has a variety of rooms; some rooms will serve as sensory rooms of varying degree; fidget toys will be available. During the Sunday Social, we will have unstructured activities in some of the different rooms/areas of the space.



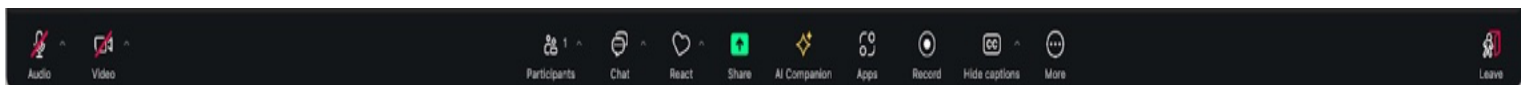
Zoom instructions

At the beginning of the conference

1. Mute yourself to make it easier for everyone to hear the speaker
2. Start video if you are comfortable
3. Change your screen name to name you want everyone to see during the conference
4. Open the chat so you can view/participate in the chat

Attendee Control Bar

The attendee controls appear at the bottom of your screen



Mute/Unmute Audio: change whether other participants can hear you

Start/Stop Video: change whether other participants can see you

Participants: see a list of participants in the room, including yourself

Chat: where participants can chat via text with each other in the room

Reactions: 2-6 reactions (depending on your zoom system) you can click on to display

AI Companion: you won't need to use this one for INTEGRAL

Apps: you won't need to use this one for INTEGRAL

Share Screen: you won't need to use this one for INTEGRAL

Record: you won't need to use this one for INTEGRAL

Captions: where you can read what someone is saying

Leave: Exit the room

How To Change Your Screen Name



1. After launching the Zoom meeting, click on the "Participants" icon at the bottom of the window.
2. In the "Participants" list on the right side of the Zoom window, hover over your name and click on the "Rename" button.
3. Type in the display name you'd like to appear in the meeting and click on "OK."

Participation at INTEGRAL

Being here is an important form of participation, and we're glad to have you here, even if you prefer to listen, rather than speak or chat via Zoom.

Here are some helpful guidelines & roles for INTEGRAL.

We hope you actively participate today, and we also understand that not everyone—autistic or otherwise—is comfortable asking questions or sharing perspectives in a public venue like this conference. That's OK. We respect your decision about whether or not to add to the conversation today, and we also want to help you feel as comfortable as possible about contributing, if you'd like. That's why we've put together some guidelines for how to participate, and some suggestions about the roles that autistic adults, non-autistic parents, and non-autistic professionals can and do fill at INTEGRAL.

We hope these guidelines and ideas about roles encourage you to be part of the conversation, and give a sense of how you might contribute. If you're not sure of whether a particular idea or wording is OK, feel free to ask one of our facilitators, who can help you figure that out. There are many good ways to contribute other than the ones we've listed here, so think of these suggestions as starting points, not as ending points.

How this conference is different

INTEGRAL is unique because we use a collaborative model—not the usual top-down lecture model of most conferences.

Our goal for this conference is for it to be a community effort.

It's a community made up of autistic adults, non-autistic parents, and non-autistic professionals, who will learn from each other to form a bigger and better-equipped network with more of the resources, insights, and diverse perspectives to take on the challenges faced by autistic adults today.

Our participants bring much life experience to the table.

- Many autistic adults have knowledge about autism that no one else has. In fact, many times they have had these insights before they were scientifically recognized.
- Non-autistic parents have been advocating for their children since they were born and are looking for ways to change our culture to be more accepting.
- Non-autistic professionals, too, want to make a big difference in making the lived experience of autistic adults positive and fulfilling.

We want this community effort to start a conversation that continues to make a difference. We hope today you learn from listening and by adding to the conversation if you are able.

Participation guidelines (at a glance)

1. Listen respectfully to the conversation.
2. Let others know when you appreciate their ideas or perspective.
3. Be curious and ask questions about the main topic.
4. Share an experience about something related to the main topic.
5. Describe a problem or experience that you think deserves to be talked about.
6. Suggest a general solution to a general problem.
7. Suggest a specific solution to a specific problem.
8. Ask for feedback about possible solutions you've suggested.

Participation guidelines (in depth)

1. Listen respectfully and be open to what has been said, is being said, or may yet be said. Encourage people to be open to what others share.
2. Ask questions about the issue, or let others know what you appreciate about what they've shared. Thank others for sharing their perspectives.
3. Share some experiences with problems that are related to the main issue, or be curious and ask questions about the issue. Think about questions that you might ask about it.
4. Describe a problem that you think deserves to be talked about, or share some of your experiences with problems that are related to the main issue. Encourage others to share their experiences.
5. Propose a general solution to a general problem, or describe a problem—or part of a problem—that you think deserves to be talked about. Ask others whether it might be worth talking about.
6. Propose a specific solution to a specific problem, or propose a general solution to a general problem. Listen to the proposed solutions of others.
7. Propose a specific solution to a specific problem, or discuss the proposed solutions of others.
8. Invite other people to give feedback on solution-focused ideas that you have shared, or politely offer feedback to others.

Your role at INTEGRAL (at a glance)

We hope autistic adults will:

- Participate if and when you can
- Share your experiences
- Ask questions about needs, policies, and systems
- Talk about what needs to change in our lives, and how

Also:

- Ask non-autistic people about their perspectives, insights, and role in helping us
- Ask non-autistic professionals about how their professions help us, or need to change
- Constructively compare and contrast other perspectives with your own

We hope non-autistic parents will:

- Participate, please
- Offer perspectives about challenges, supports, policies, etc
- Own their roles in improving autistic lives
- Look for common ground with autistic adults here today

Also:

- Ask questions about the autistic experiences
- Offer general observations or ideas for feedback
- Propose possible solutions to autism-related challenges

We hope non-autistic professionals will:

- Participate, please
- Bring your expertise into the discussion whenever appropriate
- Explain how your profession thinks of or approaches autism issues
- Describe your profession's role in the autistic adult community

Also:

- Ask questions about the autistic adult experiences
- Offer general observations or ideas for feedback
- Propose possible solutions to autism-related challenges

Your role at INTEGRAL (in depth)

Autistic Adults

At INTEGRAL, autistic adults play both of the most important roles: the role of people who need support, and the role of people with life experience of autism. Many autistic adults have insights about autism that no one else has—insights about strengths, challenges, emotions, psychology, society, lifestyle, values, and so much more. In fact, the autistic adult community has often known about aspects of autism for decades before these were officially recognized in the sciences, and the limited research on autistic adults means that autism experts still have a lot to learn from those adults themselves. Further, parents who are raising autistic children stand to learn a lot from the experiences and attitudes of autistic adults.

At INTEGRAL, we hope that autistic adults in our audience will engage with each other and with non-autistic parents and professionals in attendance. Many autistic adults have first-hand experience with learning how to communicate with non-autistic people, facing anti-autism stigmas, the joys of autistic interests and relationships, and countless other major and minor details of autistic life. Most of these details, especially the subtle ones, are not yet widely known or recognized by non-autistic people, and even many autism specialists have not been exposed to first-hand accounts of life by autistic adults.

Autistic adults at INTEGRAL can therefore help fill the gaps that service providers, clinicians, researchers, and others need in order to build up an accurate, thorough picture of the true diversity, complexity, and insights of autistic adults.

Parents of Autistic People

At INTEGRAL, parents—both autistic and non-autistic—play several important roles. First, they are usually the primary caregivers for autistic people from birth through young adulthood, and often well into the later adult years—with all of the trials and challenges this entails. This also

means that autistic people are shaped in childhood by the attitudes of their parents (or other caregivers) more than by any other source.

Second, parents of autistic people have and will play key roles in shaping public attitudes, organizational standards, and legislative policies regarding autistic people. Third, parents of autistic people have important insights into the challenges of raising and supporting autistic people from childhood, from feeding to communication to education to social stigmas, and, therefore, where supports may be most needed.

Despite these important roles and the impact that non-autistic parents have on the lives of autistic adults, these two groups have never formed a single natural community. In fact, misunderstandings and hostility between these groups, in both directions, has tended to divide rather than develop strong, sustained links between them.

Since each group plays such a huge role in the life of the other, INTEGRAL hopes to bring them closer together. Non-autistic parents at INTEGRAL are therefore invited and encouraged to listen and connect with autistic adults, as well as to share perspectives that only parents will ever have, all in the spirit of working together to improve autistic lives across our society.

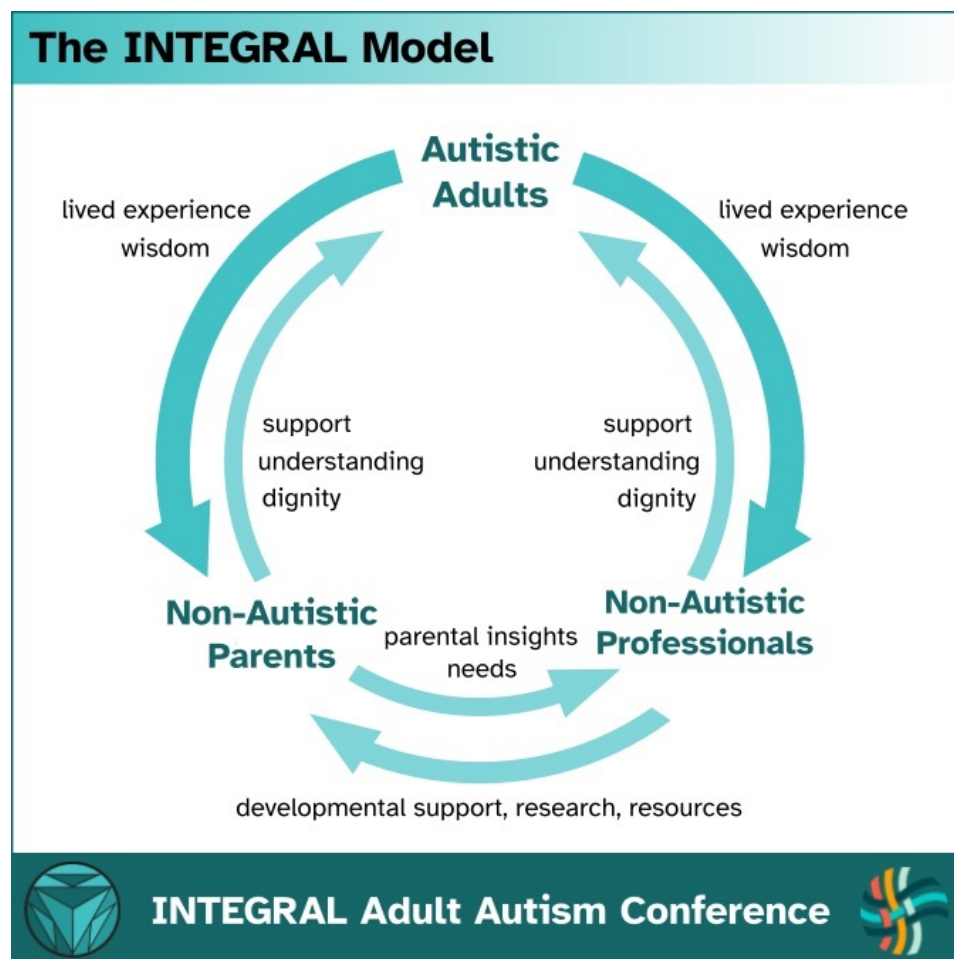
Autism Professionals

At INTEGRAL, professionals—both autistic and non-autistic—play a number of key roles. In fact, the sheer number of professional roles in the lives of autistic adults makes it hard to generalize about them. From professional caregivers and social workers to scientists and social-justice advocates, from healthcare workers to educators and from community leaders to politicians, a wide range of professionals have serious impacts on the lives of autistic adults.

What they all have in common is their unique power to both provide support and advocate in favor of the needs, rights, and dignity of autistic adults. Professionals bring professional credibility to the public image of autism, and, for better or worse, stand as gatekeepers for autistic adults who need help from our society.

At INTEGRAL, we want professionals with a stake in autism to learn directly from autistic adults in an open-ended, non-clinical space where autistic adults have the power to present their own narratives on their own terms. We also want professionals, wherever appropriate, to describe and own their roles in both supporting autistic people and advocating for social change.

Both groups have much to teach the other: Professionals can learn details of adult autism they are unlikely to encounter in “official” sources, while they can also orient autistic adults to the political and logistical challenges that must be tackled in terms of advocacy. In either direction, autism professionals are a vital part of improving society’s understanding and acceptance of autistic people.



Sample discussion questions

Throughout the conference, we will be having discussions in small groups & as a community. Discussion questions will be provided to help guide our conversations. Provided here are a sample of the general discussion questions we'll be using during the conference.

1. What do you consider to be the greatest challenge facing the autistic adult community in the U.S. today?
2. What do you consider the greatest challenge facing the autistic adult community in our area?
3. Realistically speaking, what do you think should be the highest priority for action by the autistic adult community in our area?
4. What are your thoughts on how the autistic adult community in our area should get more organized in order to advocate for its rights or to meet its needs?
5. Do you believe that community building, mutual aid, or political organization is more crucial for our autistic adult community, and why?
6. If there were one goal that our autistic adult community could realistically achieve, which goal do you think that should be? Why do you believe this is a realistic goal?

(questions continue on next page)

7. How can we avoid perpetuating marginalization and oppression (such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism) in the communities and coalitions we're building? What can we do to reject and resist bigotry, discrimination, and institutional exclusion and exploitation as we build new systems?
8. Autistic adults and their allies come from a wide range of political and cultural backgrounds. What's one thing that you think might help members of the autism community overcome political polarization and division, in order to build a stronger coalition on behalf of all autistic adults?
9. Since the needs of autistic adults could not be adequately met by existing systems last year, and are facing major losses to those supports and rights this year, what is one way you believe autistic adults and their allies can make sure that their needs are met?
10. How do we, as a community, secure the good will and resources needed for growing and sustaining new systems, such as community centers, affordable housing, autistic businesses & unions, and other ways of meeting our needs?
11. How do we partner with other groups & communities to resist ongoing threats like mass automation, mass surveillance, and a resurgent eugenics movement?

Getting to know other INTEGRAL guests

Getting to know new, unfamiliar people can be socially anxious for many autistic and some non-autistic people. Since INTEGRAL is a place where guests are encouraged to make connections with each other, we offer this guide to help anyone who may be feeling nervous or confused about socially appropriate ways to get to know people at the conference.

1. Introduce yourself to those around you. Letting others know your name is the most essential part of an introduction. If comfortable, you can also share what pronouns you use so others know how to refer to you (for example, someone may like an idea you shared, and they may want to tell a friend of theirs about it. Knowing your pronouns might make it easier for them to refer to you and your idea).

It's also helpful if you share something about what you do for a living, or what you are studying, or what autism issues matter most to you, or why you decided to attend the conference. Sharing whether you are autistic or non-autistic is especially helpful. If you are non-autistic but are neurovariant in some other way, such as having ADHD, consider sharing this, too.

You don't have to share any or all of these things, but it's OK to do so. Sharing such details usually helps others understand, predict, and support each other better.

2. If something about the current topic or about the conference seems interesting or important to you, share this with the people around you. You can start with a basic version of what you think or feel about it, and then provide more detail depending on how others respond to you.

Progress cannot be made on important issues unless people talk about them. Sharing perspectives, experiences, suggestions, and resources can help solve bigger problems.

3. Ask the people around you what they think about facts or issues that seem interesting or important to you, give them time to share their ideas, and then politely share what you think or feel about their ideas. Let them do the same to you.

It's OK to politely disagree with people whose ideas are different from your own. In fact, two or more people calmly discussing why they disagree with each other can be one of the most productive ways to examine issues and gain new perspectives.

4. If you feel comfortable with a new person and are interested in knowing more about them, consider asking them about more details of their job or goals, or about their interests, hobbies, favorite books/movies/shows/games, or other things that you might like to know about or make connections over.
5. Remember that people in general, and autistic people in particular, have many different styles of communication. Be patient, kind, and supportive about people whose method of communication is different from your own.

If you are struggling to communicate in some way, it's a good idea to ask others around you to be patient and supportive of your communication needs. If you can be specific about how they can be supportive of you, this will help them support you in a clearer, more direct way.

We hope these suggestions help you have good conversations and connect with interesting and helpful people!

In memory of Mark Huntsman

Mark Huntsman was an active member of our local autistic-adult community. In late 2024, Mark took his life in response to serious challenges with both mental and medical health. We will fondly remember him as a supportive, passionate, good-humored member of our community, whose insights and encouragement helped many fellow autistic adults understand themselves in prouder and more hopeful terms.

Thank You!



You!

Yes, you! Thank you for helping create this community—contributing your perspective, listening to fellow attendees, exchanging ideas, centering autistic adults, and fostering further understanding.