

Drudgery-and-Dreams-Episode-26-Im-Not-Rigid-Rigid-Means

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SPEAKERS

AJ Locashio, Molly Hicks



Molly Hicks 00:00

Welcome to drudgery dreams and in between the podcast for neurodivergent weirdos and queers who forget about struggling to adult we're struggling to human.



AJ Locashio 00:08

At least that's what everyone's telling us. You're right, pre shuffle. Hey, I'm Angela, bringing sense to the conversation. From here on my soapbox, I shed light on the things society doesn't want you to talk about, you know, the real shit that matters. intersectional thinking sexuality queerness neurodiversity consent, and the fact that self care is bullshit. For me, it's all about community, and how we can care for each other.



Molly Hicks 00:37

And I'm Molly giving a big Fork you to Cookie-Cutter Solutions, I help burnt out busiest Fuck neurodivergent and queer entrepreneurs make shit happen by providing out of the box solutions and sustainable systems to grow your biz. For me, it's all about doing what makes sense for your brain.



AJ Locashio 00:54

And that's what the chit chat let's get to it.



Molly Hicks 00:57

Keep listening. And Together, we'll explore the drudgery, dreams and all that shit in between,

get ready to call bullshit on what everyone's saying you should be doing



AJ Locashio 01:07

as we navigate the spectrum between what really matters to you, and the shit keeping you from it.



Molly Hicks 01:15

Hello, everybody. Angela and I were just behind the scenes laughing because today we're talking about rigidity. And how that affects everybody. And I was literally typing in the description of this episode. And at the bottom, it says go live. I hit it five minutes early and was like, Why did I do that? So talk about flexibility. Not so much. Okay, well, today. Like I said, we're talking about rigidity, and how that affects every aspect of neuro spicy life. This kind of was sparked by the fact that Angela is about to go on a very long traveling adventure. And I know that there's certain things that she needs in order to feel safe and happy and all those things. And so I was like, Hey, how's that going? And it really turned into a completely different conversation.



AJ Locashio 02:24

Right? Right. So I mean, we had a conversation because I talked to Sarah yesterday, who I will be seeing during this time. Oh, by the way, I'll be seeing Molly too, like, face to face for the first time ever in our life. That feels really weird to say actually. Anyway, I'm not gonna get stuck on that. Um,



Molly Hicks 02:53

talk to Sarah.



AJ Locashio 02:54

Talk to Sarah. Thank you. So yes, I was talking to Sarah and Sarah is a planner and started saying, Okay, well, I think we're gonna do XY and Z. And I said, you know, what, you know, as she was talking about, oh, we're gonna go to this coffee place. And we're gonna go to that. I said, I need you to go ahead and make your plans. But don't talk to me about them. Here's what I mean, by the end of the trip, we need to have this done. And this done. For me to have a successful trip, I need those things to be done. So that's what I'm going to stick to anything else, Sarah, I don't want to know about until the end, unless you want me to specifically put that as something that has to be accomplished. And she was like, Okay, good to know. And, you know, I explained, I explained to her because she and I are still getting to know each other as people, right. By the way, for anybody who's listening. Sarah is the National Board Chair for umbrella us. And I'm taking a business trip. And she and I are going to be sitting down and actually Jessica, our co founder is coming as well. So we're going to be sitting down Yeah, I know. Cool, right. I get to



Molly Hicks 04:25

meet her too. Yes, she



AJ Locashio 04:27

will be there as well. So yes, so when we have our sit down, get together. We you will get all three of us. I know right? It's exciting. We just got the confirmation yesterday that that just because coming so anyway, you know it, Sarah was like That's good to know. And I said so I started explaining because everybody thinks So I am very flexible, and that I am very patient. And, and I am in a lot of situations, for example, as a teacher, I'm exceptionally patient, and flexible in seeing the needs of other people and being able to quickly pivot and accommodate and change things and do what needs to be done. But that's because that's the expectation in that setting. Yeah, right. And, of course, it's taking me a long time to get to know that because I have myself and like, I'm not rigid. Rigid means. You know, rigid means that I don't accommodate other people that, you know, I'm in, you know, I'm completely inflexible, and I'm one of the most flexible people you've ever met. And when I actually get down to it, I am exceptionally flexible and cognizant of other people's needs. And I am also rigid in certain things, which has caused me significant difficulties in relationships in the past.



Molly Hicks 06:24

It's, it's interesting, where the rigidity pops up for different people. Most people that I work with one of the key things that is an issue and just people in my life too, in general, is this rigidity component, because they don't see it as rigidity. Now, I'm trying to travel saying that we're gonna have extra letters in there by the end of this episode. Because they don't see it as that they see it as why can't I do this thing? Why can't I get over XYZ? Why do I have to do things this way, I got to try better, whatever bullshit, they're saying. And I find that there is, this is gonna sound weird. It's great that you know, your rigidity, because you can then adapt and work around it, I find that people are most miserable when they are ignoring or denying that piece of who they are. Because you can't accommodate you can't do things that you're going to enjoy if you're denying the parts that you need. And I know when we were prepping, I kind of talked about my kiddo, on the weekends. Our schedule is a hot mess, because it's the weekend and we can finally accomplish all the things that piled up. And I can't say to my kiddo, hey, we're going to run errands. And that means we're going to the grocery store, and we're going to Home Depot, and we're going to this place and that place. Because if that changes, Blaine cannot enjoy that adventure. Because then there was so worked up on do I get to stay in the car? Do I not get to stay in the car. And then if like Home Depot doesn't have the thing, and now we got to go to Lowe's, and that's across town. And now we have to have lunch. All of these things cause extra frustration and cause the kiddo to get distraught. And so we only announced the things that are concrete no matter what Pokeyman tournament is always at two o'clock. That is our anchor moment. Like Yep. And it's things like that, that make it easier to adjust. Like you said with Sarah, like, you know, you're gonna meet people and you know, you're gonna go to places that's the only expectation that you need. Because beyond that, if it doesn't go according to plan, it's going to dysregulate the shit out of you.



AJ Locashio 09:06

Right? Absolutely. And, and this is I'm actually going to bring in some some stuff because I wanted to look it up and I wanted to provide people with with some information, but I'm not quite ready to do that yet. Here is an example. We're gonna go to Texas Roadhouse for dinner. I go to Texas Roadhouse, I have the same meal every time. Let's say I get there and they say that their bread machine is down, and they're not serving roles today. I But that's part of what I eat. And now I can't or, or let's say they say they don't have white gravy. And they offer me brown gravy instead of white gravy. I am going to really struggle with that. And it would honestly be easier for me to go to a completely different restaurant than it would be for me to choose something different to eat at this one.



Molly Hicks 10:30

I actually have a recent example of this actually happening to me. So I never think of myself as rigid, but we both know, I have my things. And Blaine wanted McDonald's and I was like, I'm not eating McDonald's for the 8 million time this week. And Stephen said, What do you want and I was like, Chipotle. Chipotle is my happy place. And it's right by our house. So I was like, I'll just run in and get it. Now. The line was through the door, but I needed the fucking Chipotle. So I wait the whole goddamn time listen to everybody's sob stories about the week, which I could have cared less about. Already super grumpy. And they have a new meat out, which has like pineapple. Like it's really good. So you might not like it. That's okay. And so I didn't see it anywhere. So while I was in line, I was like, well, if they don't have it, I'll just get the veggie bowl because it has guacamole. And it's included. I don't have to pay extra for the guacamole. And I'm just like, I'm like guacamole. Like the whole time I'm in line. I'm thinking about this guacamole and how good is going to taste? Yep. So I get up to the front. And I'm like, I'd like oh, do you have this meat? She said no. I said, Okay, I'll get a veggie bowl. And I was trying so hard to be nice, because it's not her fault. And she was obviously new. And I was like, Okay, I'll just get half the rice. I'll get these beans. Like, I get sour cream and cheese and corn, salsa and everything. And guacamole. And she goes, we don't have any. We're out. And I said you don't have any guacamole in the entire store. You don't even have the ingredients to make guacamole. No, I at that point. First of all, let's just backtrack here. Guacamole is the meat of the veggie thing



AJ Locashio 12:33

of the veggie bowl. i That's exactly what I was thinking is okay, that should have been announced when you ordered the vegetable



Molly Hicks 12:39

when I ordered, you should have said hey, that's great, but we're out of guacamole. Because I would have said Fuck you I'm leaving. If you don't have guacamole, I'm out. So at this point, now I'm bipolar. So it when I have a shift in emotion, it's like all of the happiness in the world is consumed by a black hole and nothing is left. Just to clarify. So at this point, the black hole has arrived. And my emotions are just and so I'm literally at checkout. Oh, take my boo. Okay, you know, like just super down. And I get to the car and Stevens like, did you get what you wanted?

And I went. And students like what, and I literally lost it. Because I had this expectation that I was going to have this very comforting Chipotle that was going to be so delicious. And yes, the bowl is probably going to taste okay, but it's not going to taste the way that I want or expect my Chipotle. I never ordered Chipotle without guacamole. I'm sorry, does that anyway, and I literally cried for 30 minutes. And I felt so stupid crying over a bowl without guacamole. But I was already having a bad day. And it just so like even the X in the sense of rigidity is like, even in a short span of time if you get excited about something, and you expect that and that's your expectation that that's going to happen. You cry i have i The amount of times this has happened and this is where my rigidity comes into is. I might not always have like, I have to have a strict schedule or like my kiddo has to put undies, then pants then shirt and cannot go out of order otherwise they get dysregulated it is always I get excited about something and then doesn't go well. Like went to Mickey's Merry Christmas party. It rained. I couldn't see any of my favorite characters. I cried the whole time saying my life was ruined. Like right. It's just so those are some alternative examples for people who are like I'm not like that. Well if you cry because they're out of guacamole then.



AJ Locashio 15:02

Yeah. So here's here's an area. It's so funny you were talking about the credit, I personally would not have paid for anything and I would have left as soon as they said we don't have guacamole. It's like, I'm sorry. That's like ordering chicken without getting chicken. It really was, you know that yeah, no, not not paying for that. Anyway, I



AJ Locashio 15:35

my friends who we RPOs think that it is hilarious how I get so attached to characters. And, you know, sometimes characters die. And for me, I go through an extensive period of grief. For example, we were playing Amber. And now mind you, Amber is a series of books from Rogers lazne. And it was turned into a Diceless RPG game. And basically, I have a character that I started a LARP in with Jordan. That's my partner. My, that's my husband. And that character basically, is what I've recognized is all of my characters are a shadow of that one. Any Amber fans out there will understand what that means. So anyway, we're playing this game. Jordan is the DM all of my favorite characters from the book were killed. And so was his character. Who was my mate?



Molly Hicks 17:24

Oh, no.



AJ Locashio 17:27

And for three hours, while everybody else is playing, I was curled into a ball on the couch, going through rolls of toilet paper, because I could not stop sobbing. Now granted, my character in game would have been somewhat that way from losing their mate. Yes. Who it was all her fault that he died, because he jumped in front of her as she was getting ready to be stabbed. Anyway. To this day, I am still emotional about that. It was just a shadow of his character, by

the way, he didn't actually die. But um, just for anybody who, who who needs to know, my husband was not that cruel. But I'm that way in our games, and if like our last game ended, like that character was retired and we started a new campaign. And I had to go through this period of grief. And I do the same thing when I end a series of books. I only like to read long, like epic series of books so that I can stay with a similar character and storyline and writing style and, and all of that. And you would think that this would have been something noticed years and years and years ago by a lot of people, including myself, and it wasn't, but you know, these are the some of the reasons why, like, you're called difficult, or you're called a brat. Or, you know, I've been called a brat because it's like no, or because I've cried because I go to the store to get something and they don't have it. I mean, when I moved to Montreal and had to go to the grocery store and learn all of the they didn't have a lot of the stuff you know being from Kansas and being able to buy the things that I need to make chili not necessarily and you know, Mexican food, like like these things are not always as accessible. Like they didn't have tortillas at the grocery store. And I don't make my If I don't make my own tortillas, well, they do. But it's a different peanut butter. Not that they didn't have the kind of peanut butter that I get. Right. So I stood in the grocery store and cried. And and, you know, these are things that when you look at somebody and you think that they're a brat, are they a brat? Or is there some cognitive and flexibility there, and knowing that could make a huge difference in the way that you communicate with this person, the way that you support this person?



Molly Hicks 20:40

I think this feeds into the sensory piece too. Because foods specifically, people talk about like, is is common for kids to like, I like chicken nuggets. But it's common for neurodiverse kiddos or adults, oh, my goodness, I do not want to talk to the person. I'm sorry, my phone up. For neurodivergent kiddos and adults, chicken nuggets might be a specific brand in a specific breeding, and a specific type of meat. And it can only be cooked in a specific way with a specific ketchup. Yeah, or whatever. So around, which is a sensory, like maybe one breeding is softer than another maybe one way of Smell, smell or, or all of those things. And so the rigidity is I know that I'm dysregulated when I eat this specific thing. So I will not eat this thing to protect myself from experiencing that. And that becomes a standard piece of that rigid feature. I don't want to try new chicken nuggets, I don't want the risk of being dysregulated. Therefore I won't or I don't want that mac and cheese because XYZ I can't eat somebody preparing that mac and cheese, because I don't know how long they cooked it and it might not be crunchy enough. And I need it to be crunchy enough. So I can only cook it for four minutes. And you know, it's all of these things. And a lot of this rigidity is not conscious, like it's your brain automatically protecting you based off of the input that it's getting, which is the part that I find so fascinating as the psychology nerd that I am, is a lot of people are like, are confused by how the brains work for neurodivergent. Folks, I mean, we're quirky and interesting, don't get me wrong, but it's our brains in some ways auto protect, sometimes against our will. And it's these symptoms are really protection, protective measures that are braids and back to just like Stimac just pinch, you know, I



AJ Locashio 22:52

just I felt like I was gonna drop it. Because I'm trying not to. I'm trying not to play with it like I normally do, because I don't want everybody to hear it. Oh, I have a new microphone that's more sensitive. And I don't want people to hear. Tick, tick. Yes, yeah. Because this is what it

sounds like, if I'm playing with it the whole time. So I was just Yeah,



Molly Hicks 23:19

yeah, sorry, you jumped. And I was like, Oh my God. But so my point is like, it always fascinates me how, like, I meet people who are not neurodivergent can't come up with words today. And they'll be like, I don't like it, but I'll eat it. Like, they don't have anything that's like, a it's not just regulating them. And they don't have that protective measure. They might in other aspects, but not in that, where we're like, nope, nope, not doing that. I'm not eating that. Because I know this is gonna be bad for me. And then I'm spiraling for three days. And I mean, our brains not



AJ Locashio 24:04

worth it to me. It Right. So not worth it to me to do that thing that you're asking me to do. And that's where it comes in that for us to understand that, because that's the decision that we have to make. Right? Like, the decision that I would make is if I were going to Chipotle, and they didn't have guacamole and I ordered a veggie bowl, then I have a decision. Okay, do I get chicken instead? So that I have the protein that, you know, number one I'm paying for? And



Molly Hicks 24:38

didn't even discount my meal yet. Yeah.



AJ Locashio 24:40

So like I would have gone through a thought process to make that decision in order to be able to come out of it and still be regulated. Yeah, but only because I know that about myself. Only because I've taken you know, I've taken the time effort and energy to put things in place to allow me to be flexible? Because I'm not.



Molly Hicks 25:09

Yeah, and I want to expand on this a little because this just came to me. We are trained to think of all these things that we do as negative traits, or what have you, when in reality, they're not traits at all.



AJ Locashio 25:28

Yeah, what do you have to be so difficult, right?



Molly Hicks 25:31

Don't be such a picky eater.



AJ Locashio 25:34

Stop being a bitch. Stop yelling



Molly Hicks 25:36

at me as my favorite. I'm not yelling at you. Um, anyway, I think I'm noticing a lot as I work more and more and more and more with different people who are neurodivergent in neurotypical spaces, or like, I'm helping, I just talk and then people are like, Oh, my god, is this me? And I'm like, Yes, it is, um, it's like, all the time, is they see those things as negative traits, and so they don't want to accommodate or feed into them. But when we shift the mindset of this isn't a negative trait. This is a protective measure, like in this instance, with the rigidity. And so when you lean into that, and you understand that, you can actually do more or accept more or handle more, or, or whatever. And that's huge for a lot of people. And the biggest thing that I think is important to note here is, it takes a while to do the mind shift, don't get me wrong. But this is something that can be accessible to all neurodivergent. Folks, if if we, as neurodivergent people continue to talk about it, and put the now you all know, I'm not a huge positive psychology person. But like if we put the positive spin on this, and we stop saying that we're broken, and we start saying, This is us. And this is why we do this, I think the why is the most important thing. It is going to be an accessible thing that all neurodivergent people can utilize once they hear it, because I'd say all people, well, yes, I mean, it does help because I am working with a couple people who work in a team of neurotypical people and the education to the neurotypical people on how the neurodivergent person is and works and that they're not lazy, that they're not scatterbrained that they're not all these things, significantly helps. Because understanding, yes, your brain thinks in a single thought, but their brain thinks and 50 thoughts at once, like explaining those things is super helpful, or they're gonna need you to remind them because that's just not there. Like it does significantly help. So, share. And almost always, if you see another neurodivergent person, and you're like, Oh, they're struggling, sometimes it really does help to just be like, Hey, do you need to break over here, like, if you're in a group, like, for me, business stuff is business networking. And there's almost always the wallflower table, which is really just the neurodivergent table. And so like, making sure that we don't send somebody who's going to dysregulate all those people to that table is important, because I know that that's going to make it so these people don't want to come back. Whereas we you know, not to be Clicky. But to make it so everybody can enjoy the experience the best way possible. Like those are the things that we can do when we're out and about in our different spheres of locations, to help ourselves and to help others. I think that's important. Yes, I totally just took a tangent. Well, but



AJ Locashio 29:07

actually, that leads into okay, my brain is going in like five different places right now of things that I would like to talk about on this. But you said one of the important things is to remember is that people have an notion of what rigidity is and that it's negative. So when I Googled this, I Googled rigid thinking. And then I took a screenshot of the first two things that popped up. Here's the first one. It's from a total approach. Now, me referencing these things does not

mean that I endorse these things. I am sharing information that came up on Google. It's the first two searches. That's it. Just put that out there right right away. This first one is from a total approach, and it's called the positive side of rigid thinking. This was the number one Google hit. It said, rigid thinking is characterized by a desire for predictability, displaying difficulty with unmet expectations, feeling compulsions to do certain things and data that the second thing that came up is Wikipedia, which says rigidity, parenthesis, psychology. Mental rigidity refers to an obstinate and ability to yield or a refusal to appreciate another person's viewpoint, or emotions characterized by a lack of empathy. So those are the first two things that popped up and look how vastly different they are. That is a great demonstration of how society sees rigidity there goes very different perspectives, depending on where you are the knowledge that you have, right. Now, I went to Psychology Today and again, this particular person who wrote this article, I am not endorsing this person. However, this article that was written in 2016, called cognitive rigidity, the eight ball from Hell is a good article as far as understanding this thing. And so this is written by James Coplin, who works with a variety of neurodivergent conditions or worked previously is retired now worked with a variety of nd conditions and children. So, he explains the externalizing behaviors and internalizing behaviors. And of course, we'll share this article and resources. But he talks about insistently repetitious behavior. Okay, going out to eat and ordering the same thing at the restaurant. Ilva Chino, my absolute favorite place to eat in the entire world. And it's only in Wichita, and they have two of them. And I only liked the first one, the original one. And I've been going there for 20 years now. And in 20 years, I've only ever ordered exactly the same thing every single time, except now I get water instead of wine. But I get the same thing every single time. And for anybody who goes there wants to know it's the Bianca and it comes with a side salad. And that's what I get every single time and then I get tiramisu for dessert.



Molly Hicks 33:19

I do want to point out that you changed the wine thing, because you found out you were allergic to alcohol,



AJ Locashio 33:25

because I had a significant shift in the way my body reacted to the inflammatory processes caused by alcohol. Yes. Right.



Molly Hicks 33:34

So it wasn't just like, I'm going to show up one day and not drink it was a physical thing that was changing that for you.



AJ Locashio 33:41

It was a forced change. Absolutely. 100%. So, difficulty with unmet expectations. Okay, when I have a job interview, and people asked me what my weaknesses, I tell them that I struggle with expectation, and that that is something that I monitor for myself, and that I work very hard to set my own expectations for myself and for others. So that that is not difficult for me, because

it absolutely is in a previous marriage because I am no longer married to this person. That was one of the things that they said to me was you hold exceptionally high expectations for yourself and for other people. And that makes it difficult for you to have relationships. That was a really good thing for them to notice and to say, even though I disagreed with them at the time. Perfectionism Okay. Perfection of perfectionism is not always one of those things that people think about when they think about rigid thinking. Hello,



Molly Hicks 34:55

all right. It's one of the I don't tell people who tell me they're perfectionist that the Like, I'm pretty sure you're neurodivergent there, kiddo. Because it, it really is like, it has to follow these rules and everything has to be just the way I expected it to be. And, like, it's one of the key things of the not specifically DSM things that I look at, anyway.



AJ Locashio 35:21

Cuz Yes, yes, absolutely, that perfectionism piece is in there. And again, these are externalizing behaviors, these are the behaviors that can be seen from the outside that you know, we exhibit and other people can recognize or that we can recognize and other people. compulsions. Right? Because rigid thinking is not is not just an autistic thing. Notice that we have not been saying rigid thinking autism, rigid thinking autism, we've been saying rigid thinking and D because it does occur in a lot of different and D conditions. That is not only an autistic trait. Here's a big one for me, per separation. Hmm, okay. Notice the word persevere is in for separation. And this is absolutely something that I do even if I have the best live, I will per separate. After every one of our episodes. Tonight, when I go to bed, I will replay this entire episode in my head. I will think about all of the things that I said that I didn't say that I wanted to say that I wish I hadn't said. And I do that every time I have an interview or something like that.



Molly Hicks 36:41

I still do things over stuff that happened last night, I couldn't sleep because of all the things. I was thinking about how when I joined Mary Kay as a 21 year old, how I should have done things differently. I shouldn't have gotten the big inventory package, I should have handled little one. Like, for two hours, I couldn't sleep it was terrible. Yeah, I'm controllable.



AJ Locashio 37:03

Yep, yep. And it's, that can happen, like you learn something new. And you think about something, the way that you used to think about something, and how Oh, I wish I had handled this differently. And you know, it can be very disruptive. And then the next thing on this and this is in parentheses is agitation, aggression. And what was the third thing I have to look at this agitation, aggression and self injurious behavior. These are not, he says in the article, these are not direct expressions of cognitive rigidity. They're the downstream consequences that arise if a person with cognitive rigidity is not able to fulfill his or her rigidly held expectations. And I love that I love that that is put in this with, okay, so my expectation is that I'm going to go to Chipotle, and I'm going to get a veggie bowl, and I'm going to or I've already

planned this out, I'm going to get this new meat that I want to try. And if they don't have it, then I'm going to get a veggie bowl. And then I find out that they don't have guacamole. So now my plan B isn't going to work. Now I am agitated, I'm perhaps being aggressive to somebody. Molly actually pulled that back. And instead of being aggressive, sucked that into herself and just became, you know,



Molly Hicks 38:50

but that's where the ideation comes in. As well like that self harm scenarios, yes. Whether you have intent to follow through on these things as that's not the part that I'm talking about the part where you just can't stop thinking about it. For some people with severe depression, that as a symptom of other things, like that's what you're talking about, like the secondary consequences of, of this. And for me, that's how that plays out is I might not be outwardly aggressive. Although I've checked a Wii Remote at a few people in my past. Like, it's like, as a kid, I used to kick people, I just you just kick the shit out of people, but literally, like kick them. But now it's just this ideation that like, is uncontrollable, which I don't think a lot of people really talk about that component ever. And it's for me and a lot of people in my neurodivergent circle. Like that is a really troublesome symptom of all the things Yeah,



AJ Locashio 39:59

well, and Let's look at that self injurious behavior piece, right? That does not always have to be a thought out thing, it doesn't have to be a purposeful thing. I scratch the back of my head, I see you shaking your head, because you've seen me do this. When I get agitated, it happens in a couple of different areas, if I get agitated, or if I get really, really, really into something, and it's going a little differently than I'm expected, like reading a book or something. And I'm thinking it's gonna go this way, and it goes that way, or whatever. I can't I scratch the back of my head. And I don't recognize that I'm doing it. And I will do it until I bleed.



Molly Hicks 40:48

I was laughing because I do the same thing. It's always funny, when we find out we do the same. Angela and I are creepily, the same indifferent at the same time. Um, no I so I have server, whatever dermatitis and



AJ Locashio 41:05

separate dermatitis, that's



Molly Hicks 41:07

the word. Um, and so as I get stressed, I itch, itch. And so pretty much I feel like most of my scalp is a scab, but I do it to my ears too. And I almost always have a cut or a scrape, because I can't stop.



AJ Locashio 41:22

Yeah. So here's an example of some of the I have something that I have done recently. I love the massage guns. And I use the end of it, that has the two prongs that go like this, I'm showing two prong side, it has the little the little Snake Snake bite, two prongs that can go like on either side of like your spine. So I have this and I use it all the time. I love that vibration, it goes on for 10 minutes, you turn it on, I turn it on the high and I put it on my muscle, or, you know, I tend to get a really tight jaw. So I'll keep it on the low setting. And I'll use it like oh my face. I was reading a book. And I have this nerve that's in my like on my ankle. And I really like how it feels on that. But if I am not conscious of what I'm doing, I will kind of set it on and dig it in. And I've done that recently. Until it just scraped all of the skin off of my each side of my ankle. It felt really good. I know it felt really good on that nerve. But I wasn't paying attention to what I was doing because I was in my book. And so it was just staying in one place. And like the kind of rubbery thing, and it just until I was bleeding. That's what it's talking about with self injurious behavior. Because I was, you know, seriously into this book, I was compulsively reading, right, like, I wouldn't stop the reading, nothing was gonna make me stop. And there was something happening. And it was like, I'm not meeting my expectations quite and I was you know. So that's why I really, really liked this, like this article. So that's the externalizing behaviors, and then you get into the internalizing behaviors of this. And perfectionism is on there again. Which I think is not surprising, because it's an internalized behavior, obsessions. Right? And then in parentheses, the consequences of these are anxiety, depression and suicidality. And I would like to start having the conversation of cognitive rigidity in this context. Because I think it would really, really, really help people understand when I look at this and and I look at the difficulty with unmet expectations, and I can start understanding the difference between my dog Alfredo is stretching in the background it is howling at the moon. It is really cute.



Molly Hicks 44:36

I just thought it was funny. He made an appearance he doesn't normally



AJ Locashio 44:39

write like he's like, oh. So that managing those expectations, understanding the difference between standards and expectations, and then being able to communicate those recognizing them and yourself, being able to communicate them with others. It really can help you in relationships. Which is important to everybody, even people who don't want to have maybe romantic relationships, it helps you in any other relationship that you have with any other human being. Because managing our expectations with other human beings can be difficult. And then can cause problems with communication, and break down relationships that don't need to be broken down. We just need to have this understanding of each other. And be able to manage those expectations, which helps us manage a lot of this other stuff as well.



Molly Hicks 45:48

Great. I had a thought and then I lost it. It's one of those days. Thanks. Yeah. I don't know. I think maybe we should close there. Because I feel like there's three other episodes in us on different things in here. And we're already at 46 minutes. So



AJ Locashio 46:12

I'm a fast. It does. It does go by fast. So Okay, last thoughts then on rigidity. Molly?



Molly Hicks 46:23

Yeah, I think I think a, I'd like people to look at the rigidity in a different light, and kind of use it as a tool and understand it, and start accommodating it instead of making it accommodate you. Because that's not going to be fun. It for sure. And I'm taking catalogue of all the things that might be your rigid things like what how are you looking at things? And how are they rigid, and which ones. And just understanding how those play into your life, I guess is how I'm saying what I'm trying to say. Because a lot of us need tangible evidence of things. And until we write it down or talk about it and say it out loud. Those are abstract things, which some of us might do great at, and some of us might not. And so by writing them down or sticky, noting them or drawing pictures of how they affect however you process information, I would suggest that you do that to try and understand yourself more.



AJ Locashio 47:47

And I will just piggyback off of that, because here's a concrete example of that. Prior to my understanding of autism, and that I am autistic, I believed that my lack of wanting to schedule and organize things was because of ADHD and that I couldn't. And that is the furthest thing from the truth for me, because I actually am very good at structure and scheduling, and having things in order and organizing. However, because my expectations because I could not manage my expectations in those areas. It caused me such a significant dysregulation. I lived a majority of my life, almost 40 years of my life, believing that I couldn't do that. When in actuality I just needed it, I needed the structure, I needed the organization in order to be regulated. And it was my environment and the people around me causing an our lack of understanding of that, that was causing significant distress for me and for them. Which is why I could be a teacher and I could be in a very unstructured setting and seem like I am patient and flexible. Because that is the expectation in that setting. As a teacher you have to be flexible thinking on your feet with it all the time. That's the expectation therefore it was easy for me Yes, okay.



Molly Hicks 49:58

Okay, one last thing because Is this triggered something for me? Um, this is kind of irrelevant but irrelevant. So just bear with me when you are trying to find solutions to rigidity, and like scheduling or doing things, tools that help kiddos help adults, visual schedules, having a rigid schedule with flexible time pockets. My favorite. I mean, if you need to eat the same thing every day because it brings you comfort and take a vitamin to make up for it, do it. Like all of these things are helpful. Having a capsule wardrobe, so you don't have to make as many choices. Like all these things we do for kids work for adults.



AJ Locashio 50:45



AJ Locashio 50:15

We don't grow out of our neurodiversity, or nerd virgins. We don't grow out of our neurodivergence, folks. It stays with us.



Molly Hicks 50:54

Yes, so So I just want to remind you that if something worked really well as a kid and you thought you outgrew it, try it again. Anyway, sorry, that was and it's perfectly



AJ Locashio 51:05

okay to do that. Thanks for listening to drudgery dreams and in between a weekly live podcast coming to you every Tuesday at 9am Central 7am Pacific. If you're catching this live on YouTube, be sure to subscribe to our channel for updates when we're back here next week. For all you podcast geeks, subscribe on your favorite podcast app. If you'd like to support the podcast, be sure to leave a rating and review and share with your friends. To catch all the latest from us. Visit us at drudgeryanddreams.com and follow on your favorite social media platforms at drudgeryanddreams.com. Thanks again. See you next time. See ya