

# Happy Disability Pride Month

## Unlearning Norms, Reclaiming Ourselves

As we step into Disability Pride Month, we reflect not only on the systems that have historically marginalised disabled and neurodivergent people, but also on the internalised expectations we carry - often silently. So we're taking a moment at GRANN to honour not just who we are, but also the ongoing process of unlearning who we were told we had to be.

For many of us, neuronormative, ableist, and capitalist systems have instilled expectations about how we should move through the world - how we should work, communicate, behave, or "cope". So many of us have been taught to chase "independence" at all costs, to hide our distress, to perform productivity, or to shrink our needs into neat, palatable boxes. These aren't just habits - they're survival mechanisms forged under ableism, capitalism, and neuronormativity.

But what happens when we start to unlearn those systems?

July gives us space to reflect on this. To say no more to internalised urgency culture. To say yes to rest, to joy without justification, and to ways of being that honour our needs, not just our output.

This month, we celebrate the radical act of existing as ourselves, on our terms. Whether you're resting, resisting, or just remembering to eat or to drink your your cup of tea while it is still hot- it counts. It matters. And it's all part of reclaiming pride in a bodymind the world wasn't built for.

This month, we encourage you to explore what freedom might look like for you. Maybe it's turning off your camera during a Zoom call. Maybe it's wearing your noise-cancelling headphones at the supermarket. Maybe it's unapologetically asking for what you need - not because you have to prove yourself worthy, but because you already are.

## Disability Pride Month: A Brief History

Disability Pride Month began in the United States to mark the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990 - a ground-breaking civil rights law that recognised the basic rights of people with disabilities to access public life. and a pivotal moment for the rights of disabled people. The first official Disability Pride Day was held that same year in Boston, and over the years it grew into a global celebration of disabled identity and resistance.

What began as a legal milestone has since grown into a global celebration of identity, resistance, and community.

What makes Disability Pride so powerful is that it refuses to sanitise disability. It isn't about heroism or tragedy - it's about reclaiming disabled identity as something valid, powerful, and beautifully complex.

It's not about pretending the struggle is over - but about celebrating the people who live and thrive despite systems that try to fix or erase us. For Autistic and Neurodivergent, chronically ill, physically disabled, and mad communities alike - this is our history, our present, and our power.

Let's carry it forward with intention.

In 2025, Disability Pride Month also reflects how far we still have to go. Inaccessibility, medical gaslighting, and systemic barriers persist. But we don't just endure - we thrive in community, creativity, and shared resistance.

Let July be a reminder: We are not a problem to fix. We are a movement to honour.

## Celebrating Disabled Joy and Resistance

Disability Pride is not solely about public parades or loud celebrations. It is also about pajamas, pacing, playlists, and parallel play; the quiet moments of self-acceptance, the daily acts of resistance against ableism, and the joy found in living authentically. Whether it's taking a needed rest, engaging in a favourite hobby, or connecting with others who understand, every act of self-care and authenticity is a celebration.

Disabled joy is an act of defiance in a world that demands we constantly perform productivity or recovery. It is in the quiet reclaiming of our time. The joy of stim dances. The rest we give ourselves, even when everything says we haven't "earned" it. So whether you're out and proud or curled up with a special interest, know this: you're still celebrating. There's no wrong way to take up space.

## Autistic and Neurodivergent Pride

Autistic Pride Day (June 18) may have passed, but the celebration of Neurodivergent identity carries on. Autistic and otherwise Neurodivergent people have long been told our differences are deficits. Pride flips that narrative on its head.

Autistic Pride isn't about integration or assimilation. It's about showing up as we are - and being seen and loved in that. It is about visibility without apology.

We are not broken. We are not less. We are not unfinished neurotypicals. We are complete and complex - full of insight, innovation, and community care. It's about seeing ourselves not through deficit-based lenses, but as full-spectrum people with valid communication styles, sensory realities, and beautiful complexity.

Disabled joy is radical.

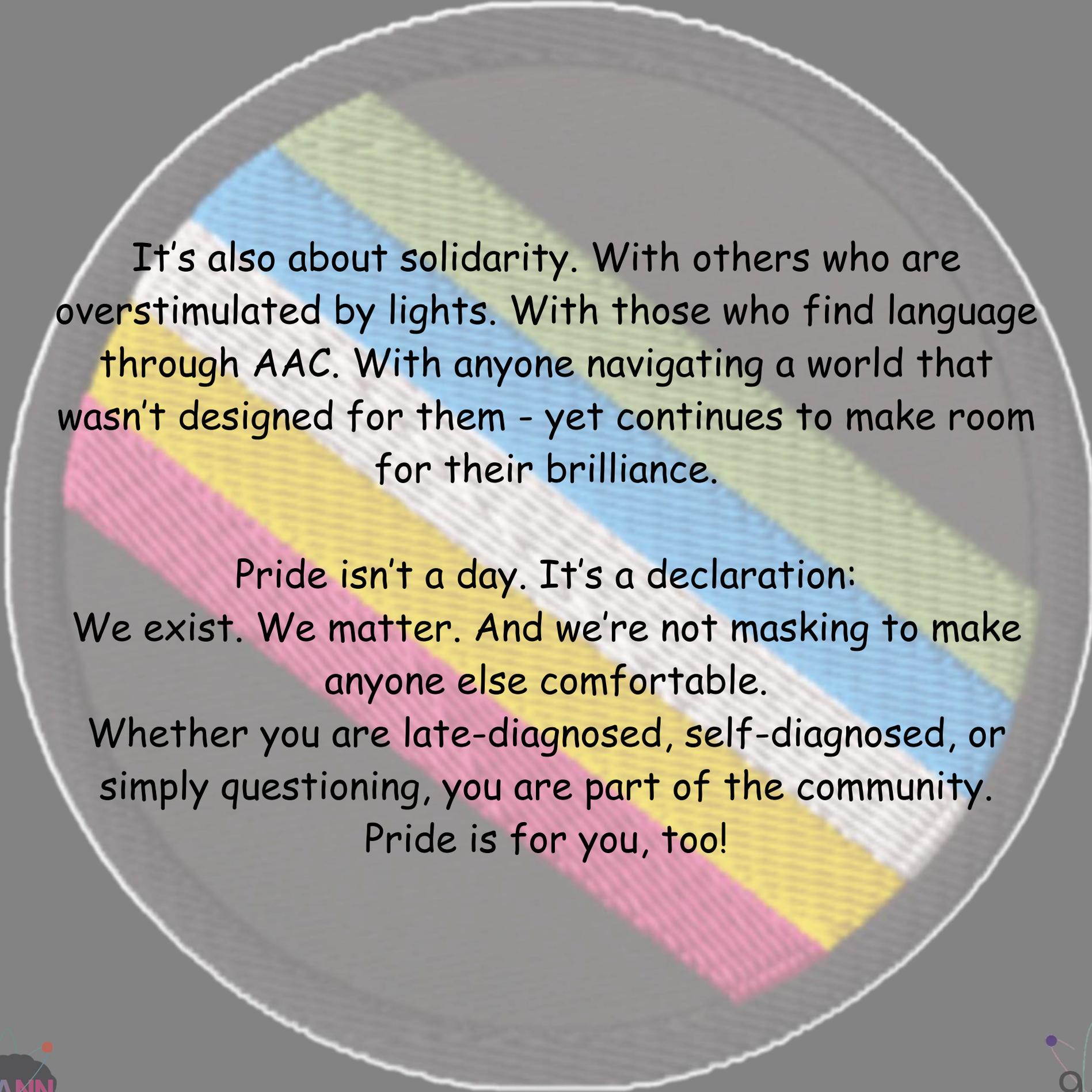
Not because it's rare, but because it's constantly undervalued by a society obsessed with productivity and palatability.

Joy can be loud - flapping, spinning, singing in the supermarket. Or quiet - watching the same comfort show for the 33rd time, wearing the same shirt every day because it feels right, refusing to feel bad for needing naps, headphones, or help.

Resistance can also look like not explaining yourself. Like cancelling your plans, again, without having to "justify" yourself or offer an apology.

Let this month be a reminder that rest is not laziness, it's survival. That pacing yourself is not weakness - it's wisdom. And that joy - especially disabled joy - is not a reward.

It's your right.



It's also about solidarity. With others who are overstimulated by lights. With those who find language through AAC. With anyone navigating a world that wasn't designed for them - yet continues to make room for their brilliance.

Pride isn't a day. It's a declaration:  
We exist. We matter. And we're not masking to make anyone else comfortable.

Whether you are late-diagnosed, self-diagnosed, or simply questioning, you are part of the community.  
Pride is for you, too!