

Exploring the "Freedom to be Me" through Design Sprints with Neurodivergent Scholars



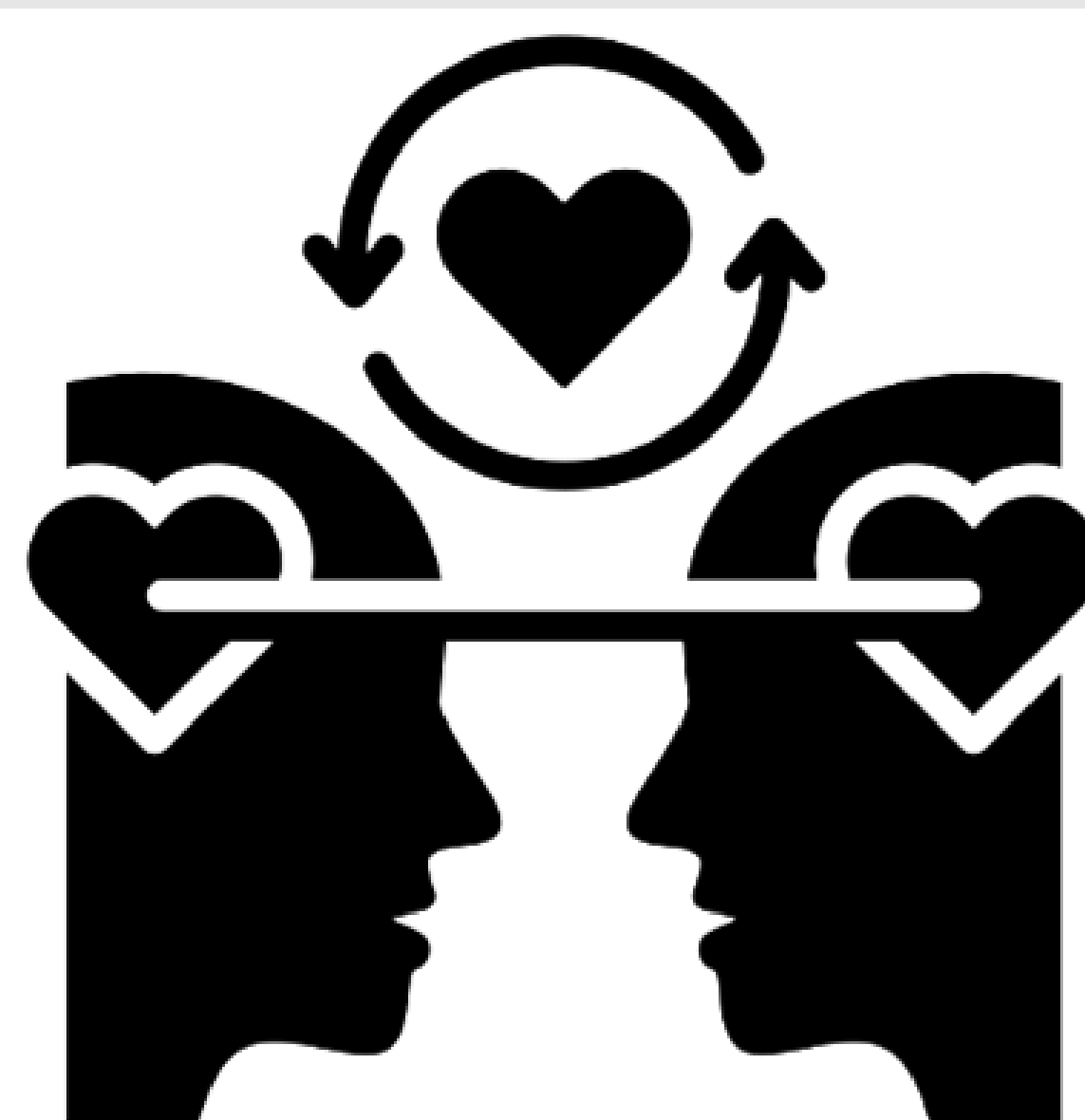
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Problem Statement

Neurodivergent individuals, especially autistic people, encounter stigma that negatively impacts their quality of life. Despite the potential of technology to shift perceptions, few solutions specifically address this stigma. There is a need for innovative designs that empower neurodivergent individuals and promote understanding and authentic expression in diverse environments. In this work, new design priorities for addressing social stigma against neurodivergence by applying our 5As framework to generate multiple potential technology directions beyond online spaces. This work aligns with the mission of the Neurodiversity Movement which is to empower all individuals by acknowledging their strengths and valuing their differences, rather than conforming to normative conventions.



Safe Spaces



Public Understanding



Authentic Expression

Future Directions



The 5As framework curates a hierarchy of disability justice principles. We found more than one principle can be addressed in a single design although not required, and that each serves an important purpose in promoting social justice. Given the expanding array of principles apply to these designs, we call on other neurodiversity technology researchers to suggest several more mechanisms to apply to the 5As as design aims as we collectively aim to reduce social stigma. Lastly, we invite future meetups at academic conferences that encourage communication across neurotypes.



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