

For The Love Of Kink: Neurodivergent Aromantics Facilitator Notes/Guide Thrive 2024

Title: "For The Love Of Kink: Neurodivergent Aromantics" & [Slides](#)

[Aromatic Infographic.png](#)

[Aromantic Comic](#)

[Aromantic Subcategory Chart](#)

[Aromatic Infographic.jpg](#)

☐ Attraction: Terms for Types

📄 Thinking Relationship Anarchy from a Queer Feminist Approach.pdf

📄 queerplatonic-zucchini_revised-primer-2014_for-printing.pdf

📄 Non-monogamy for Human Sexuality.pptx

[The relationship escalator - by Margreet de Heer](#)

[AUREA: Aromantic-spectrum Union for Recognition, Education, and Advocacy](#)

Description: This class delves into the complexities of amatonormativity, dissecting its presence in both mainstream and alternative lifestyles. Through the lens of Drummer and Mxstress's relationship, we examine relationship escalators, presumed hierarchies, and how amatonormativity influences relationships even within queer and kink communities.

Aromanticism takes center stage as we navigate its various forms, linking them to neurodivergence and the nuanced perception of relationships. We explore the authentic freedom of expression in kink without romance and intimacy beyond traditional romantic paradigms. Participants will ponder the question: Can a life without romance be fulfilling? The class culminates in discussions on the performance of dominance and submission versus romanticism, the dynamics of platonic relationships, and the passionate development of interests within the context of neurodivergent aromanticism.

Session Notes *For The Love Of Kink: Neurodivergent Aromantics*

- Overview of Drummer and Mxstress's relationship [7 min]
 - What does aromanticism look like for each of us, individually?
 - How does it tie in to our neurodivergence?
 - What is our relationship structure?
- Aromanticism 101, destigmatization, demystifying [10 min]
 - Types of aromanticism, connection to neurodivergence, ability/inability to perceive differences or compartments of relationships (nebularomantic, arovague) [10 min]
 - One of the resources we have here is the Aromantic Subcategory Chart, and in this chart it designates a couple kinds of aromanticism that are directly related to neurodivergence. You might be arovague if your orientation is partially or fully influenced by neurodivergence.
 - You might be nebularomantic, for example, if you can't distinguish the difference between romantic and platonic attraction
 - (Share [Aromantic Subcategory Chart](#) in Chat)
 - Label disclaimer - use what labels feel good for you and don't feel like you need to be boxed into a label. I (Drummer) don't personally use any of these specific labels because they don't feel useful to me.
 - Types of love and affection or expression thereof [5 min]
- Amatonormativity, relationship escalators, and presumed hierarchy [5 min]

- What is amatonormativity?
 - Amatonormativity is the set of societal assumptions that everyone prospers with an exclusive romantic relationship. It tends to go hand-in-hand with heteropatriarchal ideas of what constitutes a “successful” relationship, such as a house and kids.
 - Amatonormativity is EVERYWHERE, all over our media, all over our music.
- What are the “social rules” of romance, and how does it connect to neurodivergence?
 - Ask the attendees to share some “rules” surrounding flirting and romance?
 - If you are neurodivergent, you may have a harder time perceiving or understanding the point of traditionally “romantic” activities
 - You may have a harder time perceiving flirting
 - The many unspoken, often conflicting rules about how to date other people
 - Some of this is relationship escalator, but some of it is the pressure of “romantic” activities such as physical intimacy
- What is the relationship escalator?
 - (Share [The Relationship Escalator comic](#) in Chat)
- How amatonormativity shows up even in “alternative” lifestyles, queerness, and kink [5 min]
 - In kink, we might see people ask “can you be in an M/s dynamic if you don’t love your partner?” or “Is it okay to not be in love with your submissive?”
 - In kink and non-monogamy, it might be assumed that there is a hierarchy where you love one partner “the most.”
- How amatonormativity shows up in ND media/dating advice [5 min]
 - There’s a number of ND people who feel pressure to seek romantic relationships as a validation of their self-worth or ability to be/seem “normal”
 - There’s shows focusing on autistic people dating
 - ND people’s struggles with dating and romantic relationships might be used to label various kinds of neurodivergence as “disorders”
- What are the consequences of amatonormativity?
 - Even for alloromantic, neurotypical people, amatonormativity can cause a lot of stress and pressure.
 - It’s well known that married cishet men live longer than unmarried cishet men, but longer than married cishet women, and one reason is because cishet men rely on their wives to be a social vehicle. Amatonormativity doesn’t encourage people to form other meaningful relationships outside of their marriages. This is also why divorce tends to hit men harder, because they relied on their wives as their sole source of emotional support.
- Without romance?
 - What does kink without romance look like? [5 min]
 - It might not look different at all

- Some aros might be willing to reciprocate romantic behaviors without feeling them
 - Performance of D/s versus performance of romanticism [5 min]
 - The way we “perform” our D/s dynamics does not mirror the way we “perform” romantic relationships, and for some of us it might be preferable or more fun.
- What does intimacy without romance look like? [5 min]
 - It might not look different at all, cuddling, kissing, and physical closeness might all be part of someone’s non-romantic relationship.
- Does this mean that it is “casual?” [3 min]
 - Not inherently
 - But it can be
 - Platonic relationships and playing with friends [5 min]
 - (Platonic relationships are not necessarily “casual” either)
- Can a life without romance be fulfilling? [2 min]
 - There are many other things in life than just your romantic partner
- Passion development (kinks & fetishes are just sexy special interests/SPINs) [5 min]
 - Tying back into the discussion of neurodivergence, one way to approach kink, sex, and fetishes is simply as sexy special interests you like to share with other people, because its fun and brings you joy.
- Questions [Remaining Time]