

Navigating the Maze:

A Guide to Adult ADHD & Autism Diagnosis in America

A Minicourse by Tools, Resources and Insights

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Module 1: The Self-Discovery Phase

Before booking an appointment, most adults begin with a 'soft' assessment to articulate their experiences.

- Research 'Masking': Understanding how traits are hidden to fit in.
- Use Validated Self-Screeners: ADHD (ASRS) and Autism (AQ-10/RAADS-R).
- The Evidence Folder: Documentation of childhood and current struggles.

Module 2: Choosing Your Path

Primary Care (PCP): Fast and low cost, but often limited to ADHD.

Psychiatrist (MD): Can prescribe medication, but often symptom-focused.

Psychologist (PhD): Gold standard for neuropsychological testing (\$1k-\$5k).

Note on AuDHD: You will typically receive two separate diagnoses: ASD and ADHD.

Module 3: Finding a Neuro-Affirming Provider

1. Search Directories: NDTherapists.com or Neurodivergent Insights.
2. Ask the Question: 'Do you have experience with high-masking adults?'
3. Telehealth: Clinics like NeuroSpark or Sachs Center can practice across state lines.

Module 4: The Evaluation Process

Assessments typically take 3-6 hours and include:

- Clinical Interview: Deep dive into personal history.
- Standardized Tests: DIVA-5 (ADHD) or MIGDAS-2 (Autism).
- The Report: A detailed breakdown of your brain's processing style.

Module 5: Logistics and Costs

- Insurance: Usually covers ADHD, but may deny adult Autism testing.
- Out-of-Pocket: \$1,500 - \$4,000 for full batteries.
- University Clinics: Graduate students often charge \$300-\$800.

Resources Guide

Directories: NDTherapists.com, Neurodivergent Insights, Autism Society of America.

Screeners: ASRS (ADHD), RAADS-R (Autism), Embrace-Autism.com.

Assessment Clinics: NeuroSpark Health, Sachs Center, Prosper Health.

Advocacy: ADDitude Magazine, AANE, ASAN.