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Autism Spectrum Disorders, Empathy, and Communication:  
Revised Bare Bones Outline

Rigid vs. Fluid theme

Taught to think rigidly about ourselves, injury and healing, need rigid strength and perseverance, but we also need help, have internal and external needs for structure

What is assistive tech?

Cures/therapies vs. adaptive/assistive

NOW: shift in thinking about bodies toward holistic views of people, more fluid

Body as signifier vs body as medium: amy cuddy and marbles

History of autism: shift from dark other (rigid thinking) toward more fluid understanding

Paul Kotler: Sensory Processing, Autism, and neurotypical environments

Hindered Communication and Autism

Sensory Processing Differences that lead to this

Forms of interventions: improving functioning vs. improving functioning within context of social landscape that is fluid (changing elusive boundaries)

Cures and Therapies: improve functioning

Methods that do this with a more fluid view of the body: SI, Yoga

Adaptive/assistive: improve function in context

Methods that solidify confusing landscapes: 5 point scales, IEPs, IT firm, build bridge/interface for communication and interaction

Technology

Existing tech- wearable vests/sensory toys

Rapid prompting and typing/tap to talk

Kinect games and social robots- therapies that use body

Apps, practicing social interactions and appropriate responses- technologies that solidify social experiences

Problems: stigma, age appropriateness, understanding empathy (rigid view, cannot impose), needs fluctuate, assistive tech should be responsive

Why does it have to fit in a box? Projects that blur boundaries between art and design:  
Lygia Clark, handicap symbol, spikivest

Other influences: contact improv, movement as communication through tech

Goals and threads: body as medium, fluid response, attractive design, young adults in  
higher education and/or employment settings

Prototyping