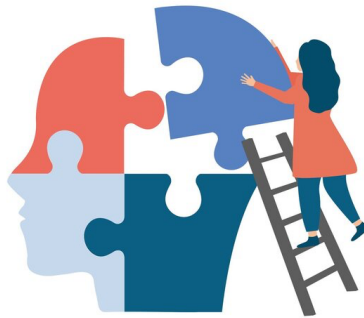


**Neurodivergent Life Paths & Transitions:
Adulthood to Elderhood**
Part of The Unfolding Neurodivergent Journey Series
An online webinar with
Sandra Thom-Jones, PhD

Zoom Webinar
8 July 2026, Wednesday
Times:
12:00 pm – 3:00 pm, London UK
9:00 pm – 12:00 am, AEST

CPD hours: 3



Location: Online streaming only
(all our webinar tickets now include complimentary access to a video recorded version for 3 months or 1 year, depending on the ticket type)

The Missing Conversation: Neurodivergence Across the Lifespan

Clinical discourse on neurodivergence has been dominated by childhood—early intervention, school accommodations, developmental milestones. **Even conversations about adult diagnosis tend to focus on young adults, as though neurodivergent life somehow pauses in middle age or vanishes entirely in elderhood.** This session addresses the glaring gap in both research and clinical practice: what happens as neurodivergent people move through adulthood, navigate major life transitions, and age?

Dr. Sandra Thom-Jones brings unparalleled expertise to this overlooked territory. As an autistic academic who worked for more than two decades in senior university leadership before transitioning to consultancy and advocacy, she combines scholarly rigor with hard-won personal insight. **Her trilogy of books—*Growing into Autism*, *Autistics in Academia*, and *Autistics at Work*—represents the most comprehensive examination of autistic adult life currently available, grounded in both research and lived experience.**

This session maps the terrain of neurodivergent adulthood with specificity rarely found in clinical literature. Employment represents one critical domain: how do neurodivergent adults navigate workplace dynamics, career development, and professional identity when most organisational cultures assume neurotypical



communication and collaboration patterns? What strategies support sustainable employment rather than burnout cycles? How do disclosure decisions shift across career stages?

Parenting creates another layer of complexity. Neurodivergent parents face unique challenges—executive function demands, sensory overwhelm, navigating educational systems—while often managing their own late diagnoses and unresolved trauma from childhood. Thom-Jones examines how neurodivergent adults create families, raise children (both neurodivergent and neurotypical), and develop parenting approaches that honour rather than suppress their own neurology.

Self-advocacy evolves across the lifespan as well. **The session explores how neurodivergent adults develop capacity to articulate needs, negotiate accommodations, and push back against systemic barriers—skills often absent from childhood experiences defined by compliance and masking.** What does authentic self-advocacy look like in midlife? How do people reclaim agency after decades of adaptation?

But it's the later-life transitions that reveal the most urgent clinical gaps. Healthcare systems already fail neurodivergent adults; these failures compound in elderhood when communication challenges intersect with cognitive decline screening, when sensory sensitivities complicate medical procedures, when lifetime masking makes accurate assessment nearly impossible. Aged care facilities designed for neurotypical dementia patients can be catastrophic environments for autistic elders.

Thom-Jones also examines social connection in later life—how neurodivergent adults maintain relationships, build community, and navigate increasing isolation as social networks contract with age. She addresses the specific concerns of ageing autistic people about loss of independence, environmental control, and dignity—concerns shaped by decades of having their autonomy overridden by "helping" professionals.

This isn't just about identifying challenges. Thom-Jones demonstrates how neurodivergent adults develop remarkable strengths across the lifespan: deep expertise in special interests, authentic relationship patterns, creative problem-solving, and forms of resilience built through navigating a world not designed for them. The clinical task is supporting flourishing at every life stage, not just managing deficits.

For therapists working with neurodivergent clients beyond young adulthood—whether supporting career transitions, relationship challenges, parenting concerns, or ageing anxieties—this session provides frameworks and strategies currently absent from most training. You'll leave understanding how to support dignity, autonomy, and continued growth across the entire arc of neurodivergent life.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Recognise the unique challenges and strengths of autistic adults as they progress through key life transitions
2. Understand the challenges experienced by autistic adults in accessing appropriate employment, healthcare, and other services—and how these can be addressed
3. Recognise the gaps in knowledge and service provision for neurodivergent people as they age, the urgent need for these gaps to be addressed, and the concerns of aged and ageing autistic people

About Sandra Thom-Jones

Dr. Sandra Thom-Jones is an autistic author, academic, and advocate. She is the author of *Growing into Autism* (Melbourne University Press, 2022; 2025), *Autistics in Academia* (Cambridge University Press, 2025), and *Autistics at Work* (Melbourne University Press, 2025). Sandra worked for more than two decades in the university sector as a researcher and senior leader. She now works as a consultant providing a range of



services for autistic people—as well as research and consultancy services for education, employment, and healthcare providers—through her website www.autisticprofessor.com. Sandra also writes fiction short stories with autistic characters and is currently working on her first novel.

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