



# A Life Lived Well as a Non-binary and Autistic Mental Health Advocate: Finding a Place of Hope

AUTHOR Yenn Purkis

COLLECTION EDITED BY Damian Mellifont, Jennifer Smith-Merry

COLLECTION  
Disability Studies

EDITION  
1st edition

MARKET  
College/higher education  
and Professional and  
scholarly

## This course reading...

- Explores the intersecting issues of disability, Autism, mental illness, incarceration and gender divergence.
- Draws from the author's lived experience.
- Provides a vital perspective to anyone who studies or works with disabled people, neurodivergent people, those with mental illness and queer people.

## What might it look like for an Autistic, non-binary person who lives with mental illness to live well and with hope?

In this book, author and advocate **Yenn Purkis** reflects on their experiences of life as an Autistic non-binary person who has a diagnosis of atypical schizophrenia. Exploring the intersecting areas of mental health and illness, neurodivergence and neurodiversity, and gender non-conformity, the narrative follows Yenn through experiences of incarceration, psychosis, employment, therapy both helpful and not, medication, diagnosis, stigma and anxiety.

Illuminating reading for students of disability studies, Autism studies, queer studies, and related social sciences, this book will also bring important perspective to those in practice and in training: doctors, psychiatrists, policy makers, teachers, and social workers. Yenn will describe a life well-lived, with and alongside Autism and mental illness, that will provide a vital perspective to anyone studying or working people who share these social identities.

**Yenn Purkis** (they/them) is an author, public servant and passionate advocate for Autistic people and their families. Living with diagnoses of Autism, ADHD and atypical schizophrenia, Yenn is a frequent speaker on the topic of mental health, and facilitates a support group for Autistic women and non-binary people. They have a number of awards for their work, including the 2016 ACT Volunteer of the Year and the 2019 ACT Chief Minister's Inclusion Award.

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