

Neurodivergent actors



Dan Aykroyd in 1984 Ghostbusters.

Dan Akroy

Dan Akroy is a 71-year-old actor and writer. He is known for his role as Ray Stantz in *Ghostbusters*. He has written and acted in many parts of the *Ghostbusters* franchise. He was in the 1980 movie *The Blues Brothers* and has been involved in other entertainment media.

When he was 12 years old, after being expelled from two different schools, he was diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome. He had physical tics but by 14 with the help of therapy, his symptoms eased. In the 1980s he was diagnosed with Asperger's. In an interview with CBS's George Stephanopolus, he says "I was able to overcome it and channel it creatively."

He was captivated with ghosts and law enforcement from a young age, saying "One of my symptoms included my obsession with ghosts and law

enforcement—I carry around a police badge with me, for example. I became obsessed by Hans Holzer, the greatest ghost hunter ever. That’s when the idea of my film *Ghostbusters* was born.” He got obsessed with a famous ghost hunter stating, “That was when the idea of my film *The Ghostbusters* was born.” He is very open about how his experiences being neurodivergent have changed his life and shaped him.



Emma Watson at 2022's BAFTAs red carpet.

Emma Watson

Emma Watson is a 33 year old actress. She is best known for her role in the *Harry Potter* movies and is also celebrated for playing Belle in the 2017 live-action remake of *Beauty and the Beast*. Other roles include movies such as *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Bling Ring*, and *Little Women*, to name a few.

Emma Watson has been diagnosed with ADHD and has been medicated since childhood. She has accredited her ADHD for her ability to hyperfocus on her

passions, including her schooling and acting career. She uses her large platform to raise awareness of neurodiversity and advocate for mental health. She is a strong-willed passionate woman.



Mark Ruffalo at the She Hulk premiere.

Mark Ruffalo

Mark Ruffalo is a 55 year old actor. He is best known for playing the Hulk in the Marvel cinematic universe. He has had roles in *The Adam Project*, *Now You See Me*, *13 Going On 30*, and *Spotlight*. He currently has 4 upcoming projects in various stages of production.

He has been diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD. He has three children: all of them diagnosed with dyslexia and two of them diagnosed with ADHD. He said as a child grade school was hard feel: strange, unique, and freakish. He says he would like his younger self to know there is help and there are ways to deal with it (Youtube, 5 Jun. 2017).



Renée Rap at 2023's VMAs red carpet.

Renée Rap

Renée Rap is a 23 year old actress, singer, songwriter, and former Broadway star. Her biggest acting role so far has been to star in Max's *The Sex Lives of College Girls*. She previously played Regina George on Broadway's *Mean Girls Musical* and is currently planning to be in the *Mean Girls Musical* movie. Her most listened to songs on Spotify are *Pretty Girls*, *Too Well*, and *In the Kitchen*.

Renée Rap was recently diagnosed with ADHD. When she was younger and undiagnosed, she would write songs but give up mid-way through never thinking they were good enough, as an adult reflecting on it she thinks her ADHD may have contributed to her feelings (MTV, 8 Dec. 2022). In an interview with *Official Charts* she said "I didn't know I had ADHD as a kid, I just thought I was really dramatic!" She has attributed her humour and creativity to her ADHD while acknowledging it can mentally mess her up at times.

Resources

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000101/?ref=nm_sr_srg_0_tt_1_nm_7_q_dan%2520a

<https://childmind.org/blog/dan-aykroyd-says-being-on-the-spectrum-helped-him-make-ghostbusters/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XftZWhTnveo&t=34s>

<https://www.montgomeryacademyonline.org/blog/dan-aykroyd-battling-with-a-spergers-and-tourettes1651/>

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2521032/Dan-Aykroyd-I-Aspergers--symptoms-included-obsessed-ghosts.html>

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0914612/?ref=nm_sr_srg_7_tt_0_nm_8_q_emma

<https://adhdaptive.org/adhdaptive-blog/f/emma-watson-and-adhd#:~:text=Watson%20has%20attributed%20her%20ADHD,focused%20for%20hours%20on%20end.>

<https://adhdembrace.org/famous-people-with-adhd/>

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0749263/>

<https://www.dyslexicadvantage.org/mark-ruffalo-the-hulk-i-am-dyslexic/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6f8x009cTA>

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm10727174/>

<https://www.mtv.com/news/jhxzyr/renee-rapp-mtv-push>

<https://www.officialcharts.com/chart-news/renee-rapp-snow-angel-interview/>

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000164/>