

Another development during the 1993 conference was the recognition of a new segment of the ANI [Autism Network International] community, and the adoption of a new term to refer to it. One of the people who had been corresponding with ANI members online, and was attending this conference to meet with us in person for the first time, was not autistic. He had hydrocephalus, another congenital neurological abnormality. In our online discussions he had been noticing many similarities between his experiences and characteristics as a person with hydrocephalus, and the experiences and characteristics of autistic people. At the conference he met Kathy [Lissner, now Kathy Grant], who was not online at the time and did not know who he was. He introduced himself to her, explaining that he was interested in exploring similarities between himself and autistic people. He briefly summarized the effects of hydrocephalus in his life. Kathy considered this for a moment, and then warmly exclaimed "Cousin!." From that time on, the term "cousin" has been used within ANI to refer to a non-autistic person who has some other significant social and communication abnormalities that render him or her significantly "autistic-like." The broader term "AC," meaning "autistics and cousins," emerged soon afterward.

Jim Sinclair. "[Autism Network International: The Development of a Community and Its Culture.](#)" 2005.