





Different Voices, Different Perspectives: Neuroinclusion and Mental Health.

Presented by
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22nd February 2023

Everyone is unique

Our personal identity comes from our

- experiences
- background
- thoughts
- feelings



Today

Please feel free to ask any questions you may have...

- Your wellbeing is the most important thing in the room.
- My role is to make sure that your wellbeing has been looked after.
- You can opt out of any discussion.
- You can leave at any time.

This session is designed to improve your wellbeing, not detract from it.



Lisa Ventura

- Been in cyber security since 2009
- Founder of Cyber Security Unity
- Qualified Mental Health First Aider with Thrive



A personal story

I am #OpenlyNeurodivergent and diagnosed with:

- Autism in 2018
- BPD traits from trauma/abuse – 2022
- ADHD – 2022

As a result I have had a lifelong struggle with anxiety, depression and was also diagnosed with PTSD in 2014.

I have also experienced bullying and abuse in my work life and personal life through being neurodivergent.

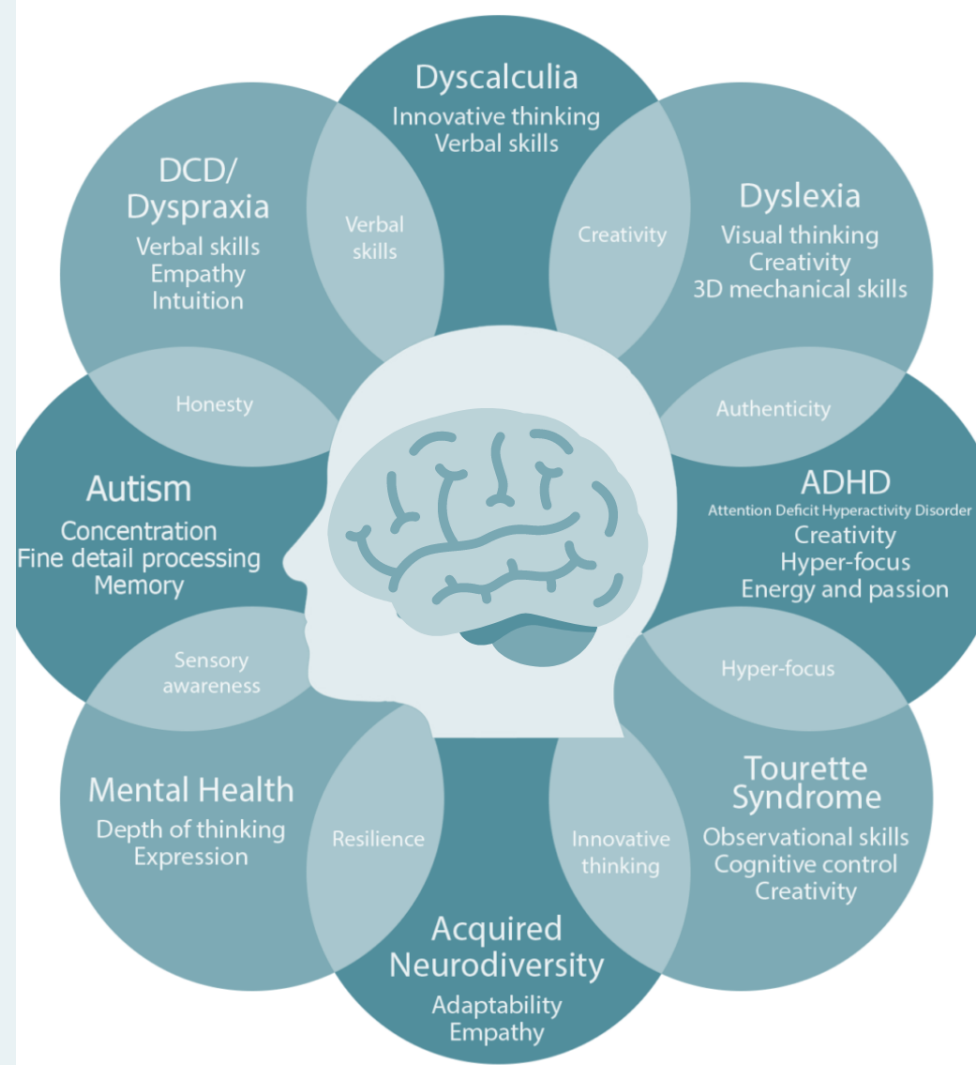


What is Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity is the concept that all humans vary in terms of neurocognitive ability.

For some people, the variation between their strengths and weaknesses is more pronounced which can be an advantage but can also be very challenging

Neurodivergent people tend to find some things very easy and other things incredibly challenging. This can lead to inconsistent performance at school or work.



Neurodiversity and Mental Health: Are They The Same?

Neurodivergence is different from mental health conditions such as anxiety or depression, as it doesn't appear suddenly in adulthood or after a pivotal experience.

The only exceptions are with conditions such as schizophrenia, which often begins in someone's 20's or 30's.

Research shows that anxiety and depression are more common in some neurodiverse individuals.

* Alexander-Passe 2015; Pozuelo, 2017

**"WHY FIT IN
WHEN YOU
WERE BORN TO
STAND OUT?"**

-DR. SEUSS

Neurodivergency and Mental Health

Links with Physical Health

Neurodivergent people are more than twice as likely as those who are neurotypical to have hypermobile joints

They are also far more likely to experience pain on a regular basis

Research shows They are more susceptible to autoimmune illnesses and chronic conditions such as fibromyalgia

* Brighton and Sussex Medical School, 2022



Neurodivergency and Mental Health

The Cost ...

Poor employee mental health costs employers £56 Billion a year

The average cost of mental health in the workplace is £1684 per employee per year

Only 25% of neurodiverse employees feel financially secure and emotionally balanced

50% of neurodiverse employees feel burnt out from work, compared to 38% for neurotypical employees

* Deloitte, 2022



Let's look at the stats

- [illegible]

3 reasons why those who are neurodiverse might be more susceptible to mental health issues:

- A lack of support in the workplace
- Anxiety around work performance
- The biggest reason - masking to fit in with neurotypical employees



Masking

Masking is a survival tool for engaging in neurotypical societies and organisations

Many neurodivergent people do it to fit in, avoid bullying or criticism, or to avoid being judged

People may also mask to avoid stigma, to be more successful at work, to make friends/social connections and to have a sense of belonging



Why aren't today's workplaces conducive to those who are neurodivergent?

- Open Plan Offices
- Colours and Décor
- Too much Noise
- Frequent interruptions
- Frequent meetings, either in-person or virtual with no "down" time in between them



How you can support those who are Neurodiverse in the Workplace - 1

Be supportive of workplace adaptation requests such as:

- Flexible working hours
- Working from home/hybrid working
- Providing breakout or quiet spaces
- Be mindful of bright colours or patterns in the office
- Having “down” time in between calls and meetings
- The need to use headphones to block out noise



How you can support those who are Neurodiverse in the Workplace - 2

Improve workplace wellbeing by :

- Implementing a good wellbeing system such as an employee assistance programme
- Display support literature
- Provide clear information of what and who to go for support
- This will help neurodivergent individuals feel much more confident and secure in their roles.



How you can support those who are Neurodiverse in the Workplace - 3

- Encourage openness
- Treat every employee equally
- Talk about their differences to help them feel much more supported in the workplace



Other ways to help - 1

Accept that neurodivergence is a part of human diversity

Recognise that neurodivergence doesn't define someone, but it can be an important part of their identity

Recognise that no two neurodivergent people are the same; they will have different goals and needs



Other ways to help - 2

Advocate for practices that accept and accommodate neurodivergence

Speak up if you hear or see someone prejudiced against someone who is neurodivergent

Be an ally for neurodivergent people by telling them they can come to you if they need to talk or need some help

Celebrate those who are neurodivergent in the workplace – they are different not difficult



We are here to help

- If you want to find out more about Thrive – Please reach out.
- The Next Free Webinar is on Wednesday 29th March 2023 and is entitled “Setting Healthy Boundaries on Social Media” and will be hosted by our very own Social Media guru Sophie Neal.



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Thank you

You are the only one of you.

Look after yourself and stay safe.



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