



April Neurodiversity Newsletter

Building amazing communities together!



Neuro-diversity and Synaptic Pruning.

Find out what “Synaptic Pruning” is and how it could be the cause of neuro-diversity in the population.

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Understanding Interaction Overload in Autistic Individuals.

Interactions form the backbone of human relationships, yet they are not experienced uniformly. For autistic individuals, interactions that may seem neutral or positive to neurotypical people often come with a much higher cost.

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A Polar bear in a Rainforest!

Harriet Manners, a high-flying secondary school student who is targeted by bullies, but by accident becomes a supermodel. The books have been adapted into a family friendly series on Netflix. In episode 9 Harriet opens up to Toby about how she feels.

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Having Agency Over Your Own Life:

Agency is the capacity to make choices, take control of one’s own life, and act according to one’s values, beliefs, and desires. It encompasses a sense of autonomy and self-determination, where individuals have an active role in shaping their futures and responding to life’s challenges.

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In the workplace.

Neurodiversity is the idea that neurological differences, such as those associated with conditions like ADHD, autism, dyslexia, and others, are not deficits but rather variations of human cognition. Just as we celebrate diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture, we should also embrace the diversity of our minds.

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Neurodiversity and *Synaptic Pruning.*

Neurodiversity and Synaptic Pruning.

Neurodiversity is the concept that variations in brain functioning, cognitive processes, and behaviours are natural and valuable parts of human diversity. Individuals who are neurodiverse may experience differences in how they think, learn, process information, and interact with the world, but these differences are not inherently medical or pathological.

Neurodiversity emphasises strengths alongside challenges, viewing these differences as part of the individual's identity rather than as deficits to be fixed. Genetic factors play a significant role in neurodiversity. Specific genetic variations can influence brain development, particularly during synaptic pruning, a process where unnecessary neural connections are eliminated. In neurodiverse individuals, this process may be disrupted, leading to atypical patterns of neural connectivity. These atypical connections can contribute to unique cognitive strengths and challenges. Genetic variations may also affect neurotransmitter production and regulation, further impacting brain function and behaviour.

However, it's important to note that neurodiversity is a spectrum influenced by both genetic and environmental factors. Early life experiences and social interactions can shape neurodiverse traits. Synaptic pruning is a natural process that occurs in the brain during early childhood and adolescence. It involves the elimination of unnecessary synapses to create efficient neural networks. In neurodiverse individuals, this process may be altered, leading to the retention of non-typical neural connections. This could explain unique patterns of thought and behaviour associated with neurodiversity, such as synaesthesia, where the brain processes information through multiple senses simultaneously.

While more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between synaptic pruning and neurodiversity, this theory offers a potential explanation for the cognitive strengths and challenges experienced by neurodiverse individuals. It highlights the importance of embracing neurodiversity and recognising the value of diverse thinking styles.

Interesting article on Synaptic Pruning for the dedicated reader.

<https://embrace-autism.com/synaptic-growth-synaesthesia-and-savant-abilities/>

Understanding Interaction Overload in Autistic Individuals.

Interactions form the backbone of human relationships, yet they are not experienced uniformly. For autistic individuals, interactions that may seem neutral or positive to neurotypical people often come with a much higher cost.



Neurodiversity and *Interaction Overload.*

Understanding Interaction Overload in Autistic Individuals (cont.)

This disparity arises from differences in how autistic and neurotypical brains process social and sensory input. When the energy required to navigate these interactions exceeds what an individual must give, they become overwhelmingly negative.

The Effort Behind Every Interaction: For many autistic individuals, seemingly simple social tasks—like maintaining eye contact, understanding unspoken social cues, or interpreting tone of voice—require intense cognitive effort. This extra effort stems from the need to consciously process what others intuitively grasp. Where neurotypical individuals often rely on instinctual social navigation, autistic individuals may need to mentally script conversations or consciously decode nonverbal communication. This additional workload applies not only to direct social exchanges but also to the sensory environment in which interactions occur. A crowded room, bright lights, or loud noises can further drain cognitive resources, making even brief engagements exhausting.

Neutral Versus Negative Interactions:

Through the lens of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), individuals are encouraged to assess interactions as positive, neutral, or negative. For autistic individuals, the neutral category—a space where interactions have minimal emotional or cognitive cost—often shrinks.

For instance:

- A neurotypical person may view a casual greeting as neutral or even positive. However, for an autistic individual, the effort to decide the correct response, modulate tone, and manage body language can make it negative.
- Group activities, which neurotypicals might find energizing, can be overstimulating and overwhelming for autistic people.

When these experiences accumulate, they can lead to social burnout, where the individual becomes entirely depleted and unable to engage further.

The Compounding Effect of Negative Interactions: A significant challenge for autistic individuals is the cumulative toll of repeated negative interactions. Each negative experience depletes energy reserves that might take hours or days to recover. This compounding effect can lead to heightened anxiety around future interactions, as the individual anticipates further exhaustion or failure. Over time, avoidance behaviours may develop, limiting opportunities for connection and personal growth.

Strategies for Managing Interaction Overload: While the challenges are significant, there are strategies that autistic individuals can adopt to better manage their interaction-related energy:

1. **Set Boundaries:** Recognising limits and communicating them to others can help reduce unnecessary social strain.
2. **Prioritise Positive Interactions:** Focusing on relationships and activities that bring genuine joy, or value can balance out the negatives.
3. **Utilise Recovery Time:** Building in periods of rest and quiet after taxing interactions allows energy reserves to replenish.
4. **Develop Scripts:** Pre-preparing responses for common social situations can reduce the cognitive load during interactions.
5. **Seek Support:** Working with a therapist or counsellor can provide tools to navigate challenging social situations.

Recognising the Value of Neurodivergent Experiences: It's essential for society to recognise and accommodate the needs of autistic individuals. While interactions may be more challenging for them, these challenges stem from unique perspectives and approaches that enrich communities. By fostering understanding and creating supportive environments, we can help reduce the burden of negative interactions, enabling autistic individuals to thrive.

In conclusion, understanding and addressing the costs of interactions for autistic individuals is crucial. With the right strategies and support, it is possible to create a more inclusive world where everyone can engage in ways that are meaningful and sustainable.



My Reflections on Neurodiversity

I have three grown up sons, two have diagnosed neurodiversity. As such I've had a front-row seat to the unique challenges and extraordinary strengths that come with neurodiversity. While the journey has been both rewarding and demanding, it has also provided me with invaluable insights into the needs and potential of neurodiverse individuals.

I've been wrestling with a lot of thoughts and feelings during my life, especially since learning about the increased likelihood of having neurodiverse children when one or both parents are neurodiverse themselves. It's a complex issue, and I'm still trying to process it all.

On the one hand, there's a sense of guilt. Did I somehow pass this on to my sons? Did I contribute to their challenges? These questions have haunted me in the past. But I'm also aware that it's not that simple. Neurodiversity is a spectrum, and many factors can influence whether a child develops a neurodivergent condition.

However, it's undeniable that my own neurodiversity has shaped my experiences as a parent. I understand their struggles in a way that many neurotypical parents might not. I can empathise with their sensory sensitivities, their social challenges, and their difficulties with executive function. I can offer them strategies and support that are tailored to their specific needs. My sons, in turn, have taught me so much about myself and about the world. They've helped me to appreciate the beauty of difference and to challenge my own assumptions about what it means to be "normal." They've shown me the importance of patience, understanding, and unconditional love.

It's true that their neurodiversity can be challenging at times. There are meltdowns, frustrations, and difficulties with everyday tasks. But there are also moments of pure joy, creativity, and brilliance. They see the world in ways that I never could, and they inspire me to think differently.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to be their father. I'm proud of the young men they are becoming, and I'm excited to see what they will accomplish in the future. As for my own neurodiversity, I'm learning to embrace it as a part of who I am. It's made me a unique and empathetic individual, and it's given me the ability to connect with others on a deeper level. I'm still working through these feelings, but I'm hopeful that with time and therapy, I'll be able to find a more balanced perspective.



"Do you ever feel like a polar bear in a rainforest?"

See page 5.



A Polar bear in a Rainforest!

Geek Girl: The teen drama tackling neurodiversity. Harriet Manners, a high-flying secondary school student who is targeted by bullies, but by accident becomes a supermodel. The books have been adapted into a family friendly series on Netflix. In episode 9 Harriet opens up to Toby about how she feels.

Harriot: Toby, could I ask you something? Do you ever feel slightly lost? Or out of place like a polar bear in a rainforest?

Toby: What kind of rainforest?

Harriot: I don't know, does it matter?

Toby: Yes, different rainforests have totally different vegetation. Some have more ground foliage in which case there'd more uh, cutting plants with your paws, and... But, yeah, you're speaking metaphorically, aren't you? Yeah, I am. Oh, yeah, okay. Got it. Then yes, yes I do.

Harriot: You do? Because sometimes I feel like I'm made wrong rather not wrong just definitely different like I'm not made for here and I'm just constantly searching for somewhere safe, somewhere...

Toby: Snowy, where the other polar bears are.

Harriot: Yeah. I don't know how to find the other polar bears and it's exhausting and scary and I just constantly feel like I'm wondering around on my own.

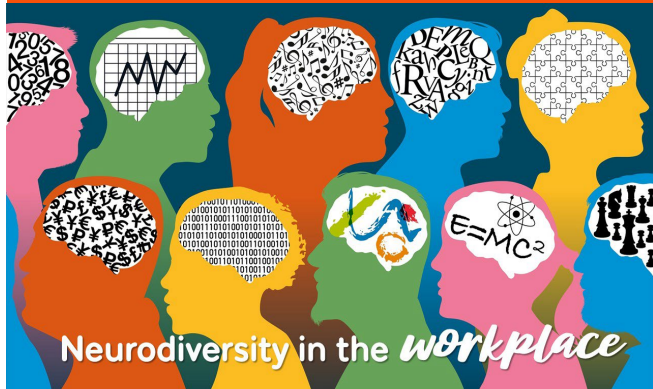
Toby: You're not on your own. But I know someday it's gonna be more... challenging than others. Just remember that polar bears are awesome. Well, we're the largest land carnivores in the world. We've got big paws that we can use to catch fish out of rivers and given our genetic relation to European brown bears I think with a bit of practice we're gonna climb trees too. Even the tall ones.

Harriot: But we still don't fit in. And everyone else can see it. Does that not bother you?

Toby: Nope. The rainforest is a dangerous place, most animals end up getting eaten. Just try to enjoy being a polar bear. We can be really powerful at times. Plus, though it's not a specific category of competition, we do have the biggest, fluffiest paws.

Thank you, Toby. You're so very welcome, Harriet.

“Do you ever feel like a polar bear in a rainforest?”



In the workplace.

Neurodiversity is the idea that neurological differences, such as those associated with conditions like ADHD, autism, dyslexia, and others, are not deficits but rather variations of human cognition. Just as we celebrate diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture, we should also embrace the diversity of our minds.

Unveiling the Spectrum: Navigating Neurodiversity in the Workplace: I have three grown up sons, two have diagnosed neurodiversity. As such I've had a front-row seat to the unique challenges and extraordinary strengths that come with neurodiversity.

The Benefits of Neurodiversity: Neurodiverse individuals often possess exceptional skills and talents that can be invaluable assets to any workplace. Here are a few examples:

- **Creative Thinking:** Neurodiverse individuals often think outside the box, leading to innovative solutions and fresh perspectives.
- **Hyperfocus:** They can become deeply engrossed in tasks, leading to high levels of productivity and attention to detail.
- **Strong Pattern Recognition:** Neurodiverse individuals may excel at identifying patterns and trends, making them valuable in fields like data analysis and problem-solving.
- **Empathy and Sensitivity:** They often have a heightened sense of empathy and can be highly attuned to the emotions of others.

The Challenges of Neurodiversity: While neurodiversity offers many advantages, it also presents unique challenges, particularly in educational and professional settings. These challenges may include:

- **Sensory Sensitivities:** Neurodiverse individuals may be sensitive to noise, light, or touch, which can impact their ability to focus and learn in traditional classroom or workplace settings.
- **Social Challenges:** They may struggle with social cues, communication, and building relationships, which can hinder their ability to collaborate effectively with others.
- **Executive Function Difficulties:** Neurodiverse individuals may have difficulties with planning, organisation, time management, and task initiation, which can impact their academic and professional performance.

A Personal Note: Raising neurodiverse children has been a journey of both challenges and triumphs. While there have been moments of frustration and uncertainty, we have also witnessed incredible growth, resilience, and determination. By providing our children with understanding, support, and opportunities, we have empowered them to reach their full potential.

I encourage you to embrace neurodiversity in our workplace and create a culture of inclusion and acceptance. By doing so, you will not only be supporting neurodiverse individuals but also fostering a more innovative, creative, and compassionate workplace for all.



Having Agency Over Your Own Life: A Perspective on Neurodiversity

Agency is the capacity to make choices, take control of one's own life, and act according to one's values, beliefs, and desires. It encompasses a sense of autonomy and self-determination, where individuals have an active role in shaping their futures and responding to life's challenges. With appropriate support and strategies, neurodiverse individuals can cultivate agency, leading to a more empowered, fulfilling life.

For people with neurodiversity diagnoses—such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and others—achieving a sense of agency can present unique challenges, as societal structures and expectations often fail to accommodate their needs or strengths. One essential component in building agency for neurodiverse individuals is self-awareness. Self-awareness enables individuals to understand their unique neurological makeup, strengths, and challenges. Recognising and accepting one's neurodiversity allows individuals to communicate their needs more effectively and develop coping strategies.

For instance, a person with ADHD may find it challenging to focus for extended periods but might excel in creative problem-solving. By understanding their own needs, they might adopt techniques like using timers for short work intervals or creating a stimulating work environment to enhance focus. Through self-awareness, neurodiverse individuals gain clarity on their strengths and limitations, which is crucial in making informed decisions and advocating for themselves.

Another important aspect of fostering agency is access to accommodations and tools that empower neurodiverse individuals. Such tools might include assistive technology for someone with dyslexia, structured routines for someone with autism, or medication management and organisational aids for someone with ADHD. When neurodiverse people have access to resources that mitigate their challenges, they can more confidently engage in daily tasks, personal development, and goal-setting.

For example, using voice-to-text software may allow someone with dyslexia to express their thoughts without the barrier of spelling or writing difficulties. Accommodations like these can serve as foundational supports, enhancing neurodiverse individuals' capacity to direct their lives and achieve their goals.

Support systems, both formal and informal, also play a critical role in enhancing agency. Family members, friends, educators, therapists, and support groups can offer encouragement and guidance, helping neurodiverse individuals navigate challenges. A supportive network provides a safe space to explore and affirm personal choices, empowering individuals to take risks and pursue goals they might have otherwise avoided.

BBC News - 'I felt broken until my autism diagnosis at 70'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy87542l14ro>

An estimated 90% of autistic people over 50 have not been diagnosed. 🧐 🧐 🧐

Having Agency Over Your Own Life: A Perspective on Neurodiversity (cont.)

For example, a mentor familiar with neurodiversity can offer advice on managing workplace dynamics, setting boundaries, or advocating for accommodations, helping build confidence and self-determination.

However, when agency is limited or removed, negative consequences often arise. Without a sense of agency, neurodiverse individuals may feel powerless or dependent on others for decisions that affect their lives. This lack of autonomy can lead to feelings of frustration, low self-esteem, or even depression. For instance, if a neurodiverse person is denied necessary accommodations or dismissed by authority figures, they may feel inadequate or incapable, reinforcing negative self-beliefs. In extreme cases, the erosion of agency can contribute to a learned helplessness, where individuals feel that their actions have little impact on their lives, leading them to give up on aspirations altogether.

In conclusion, fostering agency in neurodiverse individuals is essential for their well-being and growth. By developing self-awareness, accessing supportive tools, and building a robust support network, neurodiverse people can navigate life with a stronger sense of control and purpose. The consequences of lacking agency are significant, underscoring the importance of empowering all individuals, regardless of neurodiversity, to be active agents in their lives.



Having Agency Over Your Own Life: A Perspective on Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity: A Superpower for Innovation

Did you know that neurodiverse individuals often bring unique perspectives and innovative thinking to the table? 🧠 ✨

Neurodiversity is the idea that neurological differences are as normal as physical ones. Conditions like ADHD, autism, and dyslexia can lead to exceptional problem-solving, creative thinking, and attention to detail.

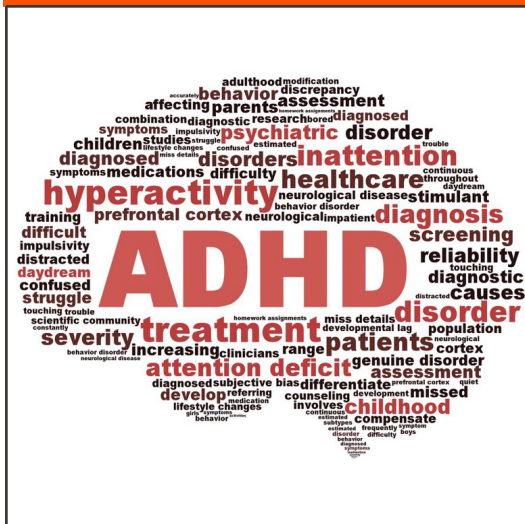
How Neurodiverse Colleagues Can Spark Innovation:

- Out-of-the-Box Thinking: Neurodiverse individuals often challenge the status quo, leading to ground-breaking ideas.
- Hyperfocus: Their ability to concentrate intensely on specific tasks can drive innovation.
- Unique Perspectives: Neurodiverse thinkers often see the world differently, leading to fresh insights.
- Adaptability: They can often adapt to change more easily than neurotypical individuals.

Let's celebrate and empower neurodiverse colleagues to thrive in the workplace. By fostering an inclusive environment, we can unlock a wealth of creativity and innovation.

Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs is more people who have come alive.

Howard Thurman



Imagine your brain is a browser with about 50 tabs open. All. The. Time. With notification on!!

How to navigate the challenges and celebrated the unique strengths that come with this Attention Deficit Hyperactive disorder (ADHD). Also, I will discuss how workplaces can create inclusive environments that support individuals with ADHD, fostering their success and contributions. ADHD, is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects a person's ability to pay attention, control impulsive behaviour, and manage hyperactivity.

ADHD is a chronic condition that includes attention difficulty, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness. It's about the brain's unique wiring affecting focus, impulse control, and activity levels. It's a pervasive pattern of behaviour that's present in multiple settings, impacting an individual's ability to function effectively in daily activities.

The Strengths: ADHD also comes with a unique set of strengths that can be harnessed for success. These include:

- Creativity and innovation: ADHD minds often think outside the box, leading to innovative ideas and solutions.
- Passion and enthusiasm: Individuals with ADHD often have a deep passion for their interests, fuelling their drive and determination.
- Hyperfocus: When engaged in something they love, individuals with ADHD can demonstrate intense focus and concentration.
- Resilience: Facing challenges early on can build resilience and the ability to bounce back from setbacks.

By recognising and nurturing these strengths, we can help our children thrive.

The Challenges: Let's start by acknowledging that raising children with ADHD can be demanding. It often involves managing impulsivity, hyperactivity, and difficulties with focus and organisation. These challenges can manifest in various ways, such as:

- Academic struggles: Difficulty completing assignments, staying organised, and managing time effectively.
- Social difficulties: Challenges in building and maintaining friendships, understanding social cues, and regulating emotions.
- Executive functioning challenges: Difficulties with planning, prioritising, and problem-solving.

These challenges can be overwhelming, but it's important to remember that they don't define our children. They are capable, intelligent, and full of potential.

Medical Interventions: Medical interventions can be a valuable tool in managing ADHD symptoms. These include stimulant medications like methylphenidate and amphetamines are commonly prescribed to help improve focus and reduce impulsivity. Non-stimulant medications like atomoxetine are also available.

ADHD - Imagine your brain is a browser with about 50 tabs open. All. The. Time. With notification on!! (cont).

Social and Counselling Solutions: In addition to medical interventions, social and counselling support can be crucial for individuals with ADHD. Here are some options:

- **Therapy:** Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) can help individuals develop coping strategies and improve their emotional regulation.
- **Educational Interventions:** Accommodations and modifications in the classroom can help students with ADHD succeed academically.
- **Family Therapy:** Family therapy can improve communication and understanding within the family unit.
- **Support Groups:** Connecting with other families who have ADHD can provide valuable support and advice.
- **Social Skills Training:** This can help individuals develop the social skills needed for successful relationships.

Supporting ADHD Individuals in the Workplace: Workplaces play a crucial role in supporting individuals with ADHD. Here are some strategies to create inclusive environments:

- **Understanding and Awareness:** Educate your workforce about ADHD, its symptoms, and how it manifests in the workplace. This can help foster empathy and understanding.
- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Offer flexible work options, such as flexible hours or remote work, to accommodate the unique needs of individuals with ADHD.
- **Clear Communication and Expectations:** Clearly communicate expectations, deadlines, and priorities. Provide written instructions and use visual aids to support understanding.
- **Organisational Tools and Strategies:** Provide tools and strategies to help individuals with ADHD stay organised, such as task management apps, time-blocking techniques, and noise-cancelling headphones.
- **Supportive Management and Mentorship:** Offer guidance, mentorship, and regular check-ins to provide support and encouragement.
- **Accommodations and Adjustments:** Be open to reasonable accommodations, such as quiet workspaces, ergonomic furniture, or assistive technology.

By implementing these strategies, workplaces can create environments where individuals with ADHD can thrive and contribute their unique talents.

Conclusion: ADHD is a complex condition, but with the right support and interventions, individuals with ADHD can lead fulfilling and successful lives. By understanding the challenges and embracing the strengths, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for everyone, and we can empower them to reach their full potential. Workplaces that embrace neurodiversity and create inclusive environments play a vital role in helping individuals with ADHD succeed in their careers. Let's work together to build a future where everyone, regardless of their neurotype, can thrive.



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Intrinsic motivation is one of learning's most precious resources. It bolsters us to stick out the tough moments of a challenge and pursue what we love to do.

~ Rachel Simmons

Intrinsic motivation is the internal drive to pursue goals and tasks for personal satisfaction rather than external rewards

Unlike extrinsic motivation, which depends on external incentives like pay or recognition, intrinsic motivation stems from personal interest, curiosity, and a desire for growth. In the workplace, this type of motivation can be a powerful force for creativity and innovative problem-solving. When employees are intrinsically motivated, they feel a stronger connection to their work, which encourages them to think more freely and explore new ideas.

This motivation fuels creative thinking by allowing individuals to take risks and experiment without the fear of failure. Engaging deeply in tasks they are passionate about enables people to view challenges from different perspectives, leading to unconventional, "out-of-the-box" solutions. Intrinsic motivation also creates a sense of ownership and pride, which empowers employees to push boundaries and approach problems in novel ways.

Leaders can foster intrinsic motivation by creating a supportive environment that emphasises autonomy, mastery, and purpose. When employees feel they have control over their work, opportunities to improve their skills, and understand how their contributions matter, they're more likely to be motivated from within—driving creativity, engagement, and innovative decision-making across the organisation.



Out-of-the-Box Thinking: Neurodiverse individuals often challenge the status quo, leading to ground-breaking ideas.

*Great things
never came
from comfort
zones!*



Free

to Talk

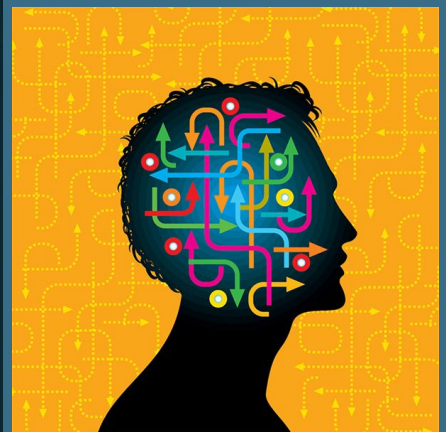
Great things never come
from COMFORT ZONES!

Step out of your comfort zone and watch great things happen!

It's easy to get stuck in our routines and become comfortable with the familiar. But the truth is, great things never come from staying in our comfort zones!

Taking risks, trying new things, and pushing ourselves beyond what we think we're capable of is what propels us towards success.

Creativity: Logic will get you from A to B, but **CREATIVITY will take you somewhere you didn't know existed!**



The Future of Work: A Hyper-Efficient Approach.

Work will champion those who can bring something different, something unique to the arena. This is why employers are opening their eyes to neurodiversity's of different types and managing these individuals in ways that maximise their potential to the business.

**THE MOMENT YOU
REALIZE HOW
IMPORTANT TIME IS,
YOUR ENTIRE
PERSPECTIVE WILL
CHANGE.**

UNKNOWN

The landscape of work is undergoing a radical transformation, driven by technological advancements, particularly the rise of AI. As AI takes over mundane, repetitive tasks, the demand for human workers will shift towards roles that require creativity, problem-solving, and strategic thinking.

A New Era of Work: The future of work is moving away from a traditional, task-based model towards an outcomes-based approach. This shift is characterised by:

Maximising Idea Generation:

- Encouraging innovative thinking and out-of-the-box solutions.
- Prioritising creativity and strategic thinking over routine tasks.
- Fostering a culture of experimentation and risk-taking.

Quality Over Quantity:

- Focusing on the quality of work, not the sheer volume.
- Emphasising the importance of deep work and focused attention.
- Avoiding multitasking and prioritising single-tasking for optimal results.

Outcomes-Based Performance:

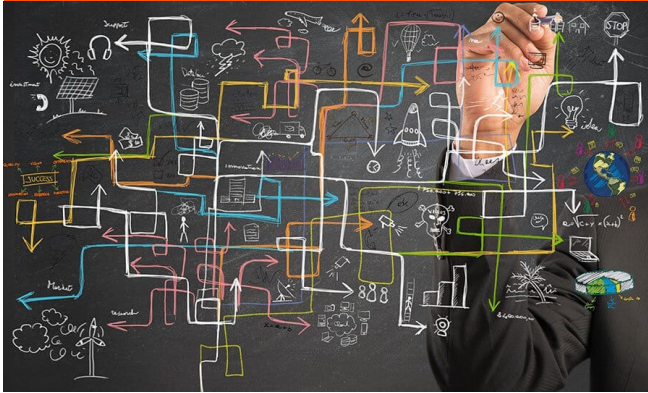
- Measuring success by the impact of work, not the hours spent.
- Setting clear goals and objectives to drive productivity.
- Empowering employees to take ownership of their work and outcomes.

Leveraging Brain Science for Optimal Performance: Dr. Mithu Storoni in her book "Hyperefficient" provides a compelling framework for optimising work performance by aligning it with the natural rhythms of the brain. By understanding the three speeds at which our brains operate, we can strategically allocate tasks to maximise productivity and minimise stress.

- Zone 1: Ideal for routine tasks and mindless work.
- Zone 2: The sweet spot for creative and complex problem-solving.
- Zone 3: Reserved for moments of intense focus and hyper-productivity.

By prioritising Zone 2 activities, we can enhance our cognitive abilities, boost creativity, and achieve higher levels of performance. If you free your teams to spend their key working time in Zone 2 then you will get the maximum out of them, reduce burn out, increase work enjoyment and build a robust bottom line.

Hyperfocus: The ability to concentrate intensely on specific tasks can drive innovation.



Navigating the workplace as a neurodiverse individual can be a unique and challenging experience.

While communication difficulties are often highlighted, there are many other obstacles we face that significantly impact our professional development and career growth

One common struggle is sensory overload. Loud noises, bright lights, and crowded environments can be overwhelming, making it difficult to concentrate and perform tasks effectively. This can lead to anxiety, stress, and even burnout.

Another challenge is executive functioning difficulties. This includes problems with time management, organization, and prioritization. We may struggle with deadlines, forget important tasks, or have trouble switching between different projects. This can impact our productivity and lead to feelings of inadequacy.

Additionally, many neurodiverse individuals experience social challenges. This can include difficulty understanding social cues, interpreting nonverbal communication, and engaging in small talk. This can make building relationships with colleagues challenging, hindering teamwork and collaboration.

It's important to remember that these challenges are not a reflection of our abilities or intelligence. With understanding, support, and reasonable accommodations, neurodiverse individuals can thrive in the workplace and make valuable contributions to their teams.

What is the Most Difficult Question You Have Asked Your Boss?

I once asked my boss "Why she had taken the majority view over mine?" Well maybe I was a little more subtle than that.

This question isn't about ego or being difficult—it's about perspective. Sometimes, I see things from angles others don't and see stories that other cannot see, and that can be both a gift and a challenge. There are moments when the solution I envisage seems clearer, more efficient, or simply more innovative than what the majority suggests. But it's often hard for others to grasp because it doesn't fit the standard.

It's hard for someone to see "outside the box" when all their colleagues are happy sitting insider the box and their view seems like the safe path. Their story the safe story.

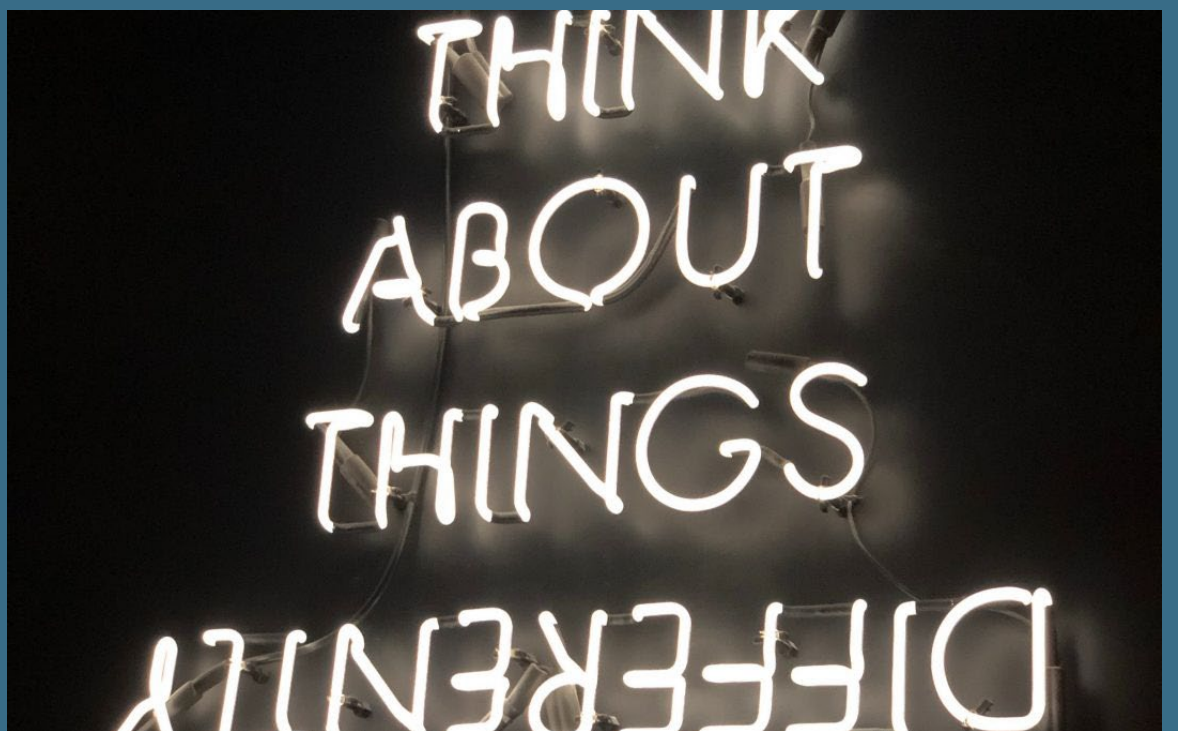
It made me wonder, does the majority always see the best path? Or does being in the majority just make it easier to stick with what's comfortable? Sometimes, the best answers come from those of us who think differently. And in that moment, it felt like my view was overlooked not because it wasn't valid, but because it was unique.

"NEURODIVERSITY
MAY BE EVERY BIT
AS CRUCIAL FOR
THE HUMAN RACE
AS BIODIVERSITY
IS FOR LIFE IN
GENERAL."

STEVE SILBERMAN

BBC News - Families 'left in lurch' on child autism diagnoses, report warns - BBC News

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cy435yk4vj4o>



SIGNS OF AUTISTIC BURNOUT

LACK OF
MOTIVATION

MORE DIFFICULTY
WITH SELF-CARE

NEEDING MORE SLEEP
OR DIFFICULTY
SLEEPING

NEEDING MORE TIME
ALONE TO RECHARGE

INCREASED SENSORY
SENSITIVITIES

HUGE DIFFICULTIES
WITH SELF-
REGULATION

FEELING EXHAUSTED
OR LETHARGIC



MEMORY LOSS

UNABLE TO MASK
ANYMORE

LOSS OF SPEECH

INCREASED NEED
TO STIM

EASIER TO REACH
OVERWHELM OR
MELTDOWN

© Spectrum Gaming

Autism Burnout is real.

I wanted to talk about something that has been part of my working life throughout my career — autism tiredness and burnout.

As you know, I'm on the autism spectrum, and navigating life in a neuro-typical world can often feel exhausting. This kind of tiredness is more than just needing a nap — it's the result of constant sensory overload, masking, and adapting to social norms that aren't always intuitive for me.

Everyday interactions, loud environments, and even trying to keep up with social expectations can leave me feeling drained. I have been burnt out in the past with my burn out symptoms being very similar to depression, it can be hard to communicate or even engage in the simplest of tasks, and it often feels like I'm retreating into a shell.

It's not something that can always be seen, but it's very real. Burnout isn't just physical fatigue—it's emotional, mental, and sensory exhaustion. This doesn't mean I don't enjoy being with friends or doing fun things, but sometimes I need more downtime to recover, and that's okay.

Being neurodivergent can be a superpower but with that power comes some downsides. Downsides that if they are not managed properly can lead to serious mental and physical symptoms. Navigating a neuro-typical world comes with unique challenges. Thanks for being patient with me when I need space or time to decompress. 💙

✱ A Prescription + For Nature

Just 20 minutes in nature each day
+ can improve your mental wellbeing.

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/prescription-for-nature>

How nature helps restore us

Spending time connecting with nature is brilliant for our mental wellbeing. It can reduce stress and anxiety, lift our mood and help our minds rest. Experts recommend 20 minutes a day to gain the benefits.

Because nature is so good at helping us feel well, we're encouraging everyone get their daily dose of it. From nature soundscapes and insect-spotting to house plant-potting, we've got a prescription to suit everybody. And, while we find new ways to thrive in nature, we might discover ways to help nature out a bit, too

