



**Embrace all Diversity**

# Guidelines to support neurodivergent people at work & placements

**March 2023**



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# Peer-reviewed document



I would like to thank [Andie Barlow<sup>1</sup>](#), [Dr Hamilton Fairfax<sup>2</sup>](#), [Dr Max Buchanan<sup>3</sup>](#), [Dr Sarah Wigham<sup>4</sup>](#), who kindly supported with their input, valuable feedback, and revisions. I would also like to express my gratitude to the members of the Neurodiversity Network, the EDI department, and the staff at the University of Bath, [Dr Hazel Went<sup>5</sup>](#), and the illustrators of the wonderful images used in this guide. Additionally, I would like to thank all those who participated in forums and individually reached out to me for support, thus helping me to be proactive and encouraging me to create this document.

[<sup>1</sup>University of Bath](#), [<sup>2</sup>Devon Partnership Trust - NHS](#), [<sup>3</sup>Somerset Autism Spectrum Service NHS Trust](#), [<sup>4</sup>Newcastle University](#), [<sup>5</sup>Devon Adult Autism & ADHD Service](#)

Guidelines to support neurodivergent people at work/placements

March 2023

by Dr Nahory Hernández Mancilla



# Before we start, some key points

- ✓ Neurodiversity encompasses a wide range of individuals, this guide focuses on people with neurodevelopmental conditions such as **autism**, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (**ADHD**), the 4 Ds (**dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia**), **Tourette syndrome** (tics) which are **lifelong conditions and adjustments need to remain** valid (no expiration). Consider that not only these conditions could benefit from the recommendations. Remember to **be flexible, supportive, negotiate, and use people's strengths**.
- ✓ **Not all neurodivergent people are the same**. Assessment by specialists may be needed [Access to Work](#), [Disability Student Allowance](#), [Needs Assessment by Social Services](#) the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#) provides guidance and support as well.
- ✓ Neurodevelopmental conditions have **characteristics that may overlap** (e.g., sensory differences are often present in autism, ADHD, and dyspraxia).
- ✓ Neurodevelopmental conditions are present from birth and can include intellectual difficulties, which may require **specific adjustments to use unique strengths** in order to be successful in daily life.
- ✓ **Learning disability** (condition affecting learning and cognition across all areas) is **not the same as learning difficulty** (challenges with specific forms of learning, does not affect intellectual capacity, but the way information is processed is different).
- ✓ **Neurodivergent people have strengths** and areas where they may need support (see NICE guidelines & Equality Act below).
- ✓ **Small adjustments** and changes can make a **significant positive impact, please be kind and help!** The [Oliver McGowan](#) training prompts the Ask, Listen, DO (ALDO) approach.

[NICE guidelines for Autism](#), [NICE guidelines for ADHD](#), [Autism Act report \(p.40\)](#), [National Autistic Society](#), [Equality Act](#), [Tourette's Action Employment](#), [Disability rights](#)

Neurodivergent

AD/HD

Dyspraxia

Strengths



Creativity and 3D skills

Outside-the-box thinking

Empathic

Friendly

Great long-term memory

Drawing connections

Organisation & Pattern Recognition

Eye for detail

Passionate about interests

Hyperfocus

Tenacity & Imaginative

Practical & Innovative



Tourette's

Dyslexia (Dysgraphia & Dyscalculia)

Autism



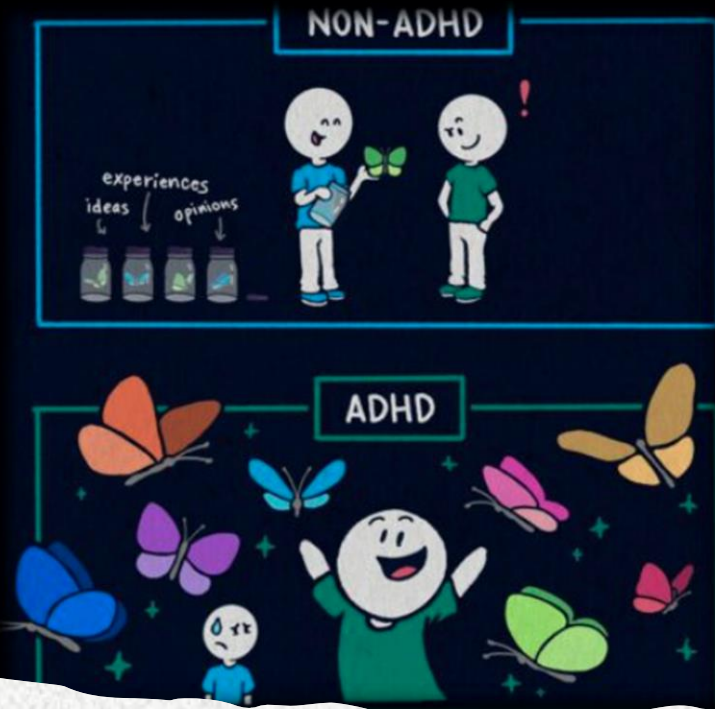
Embrace all types of Diversity by Nahory Hernandez Mancilla

Neurodiversity Network EDI growing together





# Images & Illustrations



Images & illustrations used in this guide after contacting illustrators

Dani Donovan

[@danidonovan](https://twitter.com/danidonovan)

[adhddd.com](http://adhddd.com)

[patreon.com/danidonovan](https://patreon.com/danidonovan)

Lily Spectrum

<https://aspigurl.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Lilyspectrumcomics/>

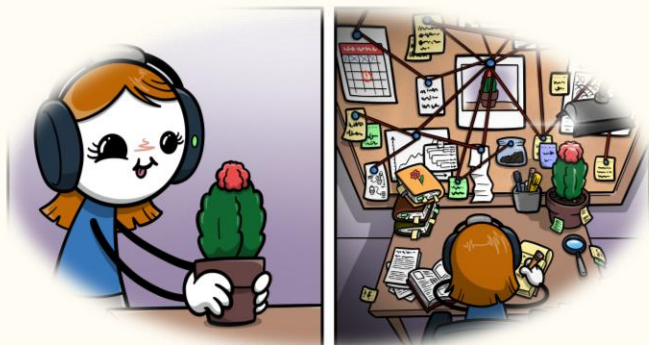
Abi Hocking

<https://youtu.be/ssfbXEc3tKc>

<https://www.fixers.org.uk/fixers/197-11834/abi-h.php>

# Neurodivergence – an asset

Neurodivergent people have **many strengths** that could be used to develop areas where they have challenges **allowing them to be themselves** and flourish!



Neurodivergent people can be a great asset!

[example1](#), [example2](#)

Genius Within Strengths & Challenges

[ADHD](#)

[Tourette Syndrome](#)

[Dyslexia](#)

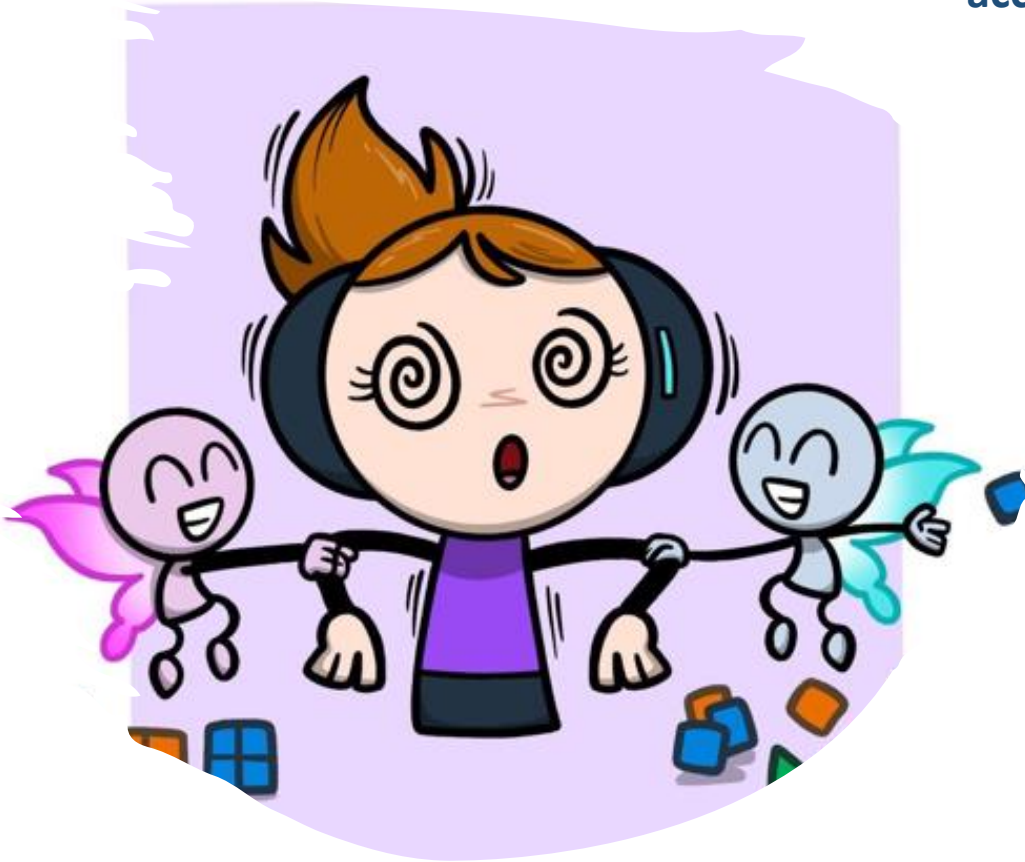
[Dyspraxia](#)

[Autism](#)



# Neurodivergence - videos

The impact of neurodiversity can vary depending on the specific context and environment. It may be perceived as both an **advantage** or a **disadvantage**, depending on the **specific situation** and the **level of support and accommodations** provided



## Dyspraxia

<https://youtu.be/ssfbXEc3tKc>  
<https://youtu.be/6a5zF6GKjY>

Coordination

## AD/HD

[https://youtu.be/jhcn1\\_qsYmg](https://youtu.be/jhcn1_qsYmg)  
<https://youtu.be/JiwZQNYIGQI>  
<https://youtu.be/E6LxfDFSZ0s>

Attention  
Impulse-control

## Dyslexia

<https://youtu.be/dPyzFFcG7A>  
<https://youtu.be/DgHDQeZ5QuA>

Information processing

## Tourette's

[How I turned my Tourette's tics into art](#)  
[What it's like to have Tourette's](#)

Repetitive movements

## Autism

<https://youtu.be/T1HQKB2txgY>  
<https://youtu.be/yKzWbDPisNk>

Interactions  
RRBs

Some **differences** may overlap amongst neurodivergent conditions. Examples include differences related to **executive function**, **sensory integration**, **self-regulation**, **organisation and information processing**, **focus and interests**, **communication**, and **memory**.



# Neurodivergence prevalence



Dyslexia (10-20%+)

Dyspraxia (6-10%) (see also)

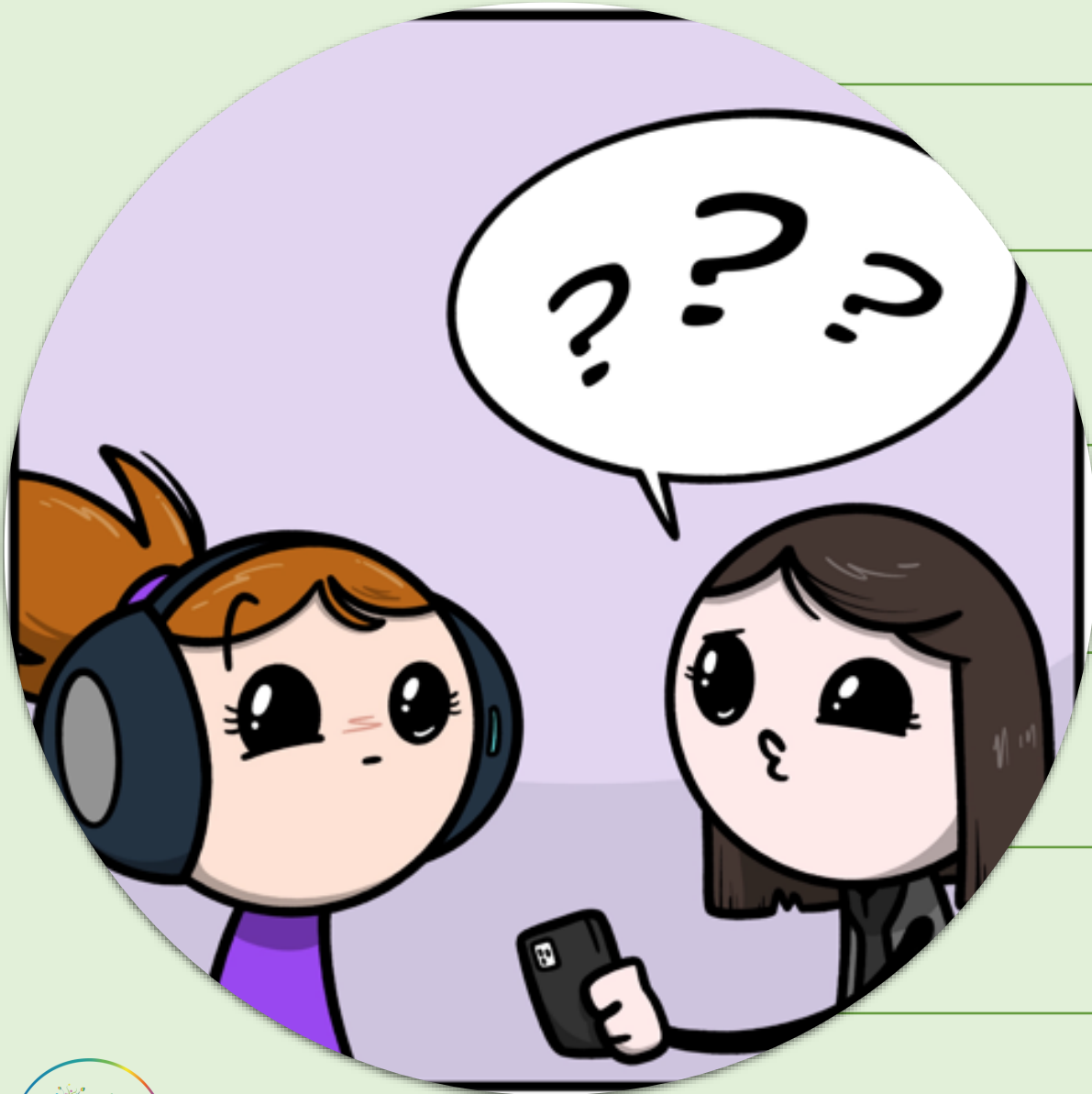
ADHD (2%-5%)

Autism (1.1%)

Tourette Syndrome (0.44-1%) (see also)



# Ensure applying is accessible (1)



Make sure your website/advertisement is accessible (**letter size**, option to **change colours bright or calm**)



Check reading age of your website/advertisement (11 years is recommended) this ensures **vocabulary is easy to understand**



Support offered application by **post, online**, with support **call, chat by text or voice recording**, or **direct specific link to local support from job centre**, and **videos explaining each step of the process**



**Provide examples of the job role/academic placement** (e.g., videos of what the role looks like in practical terms)



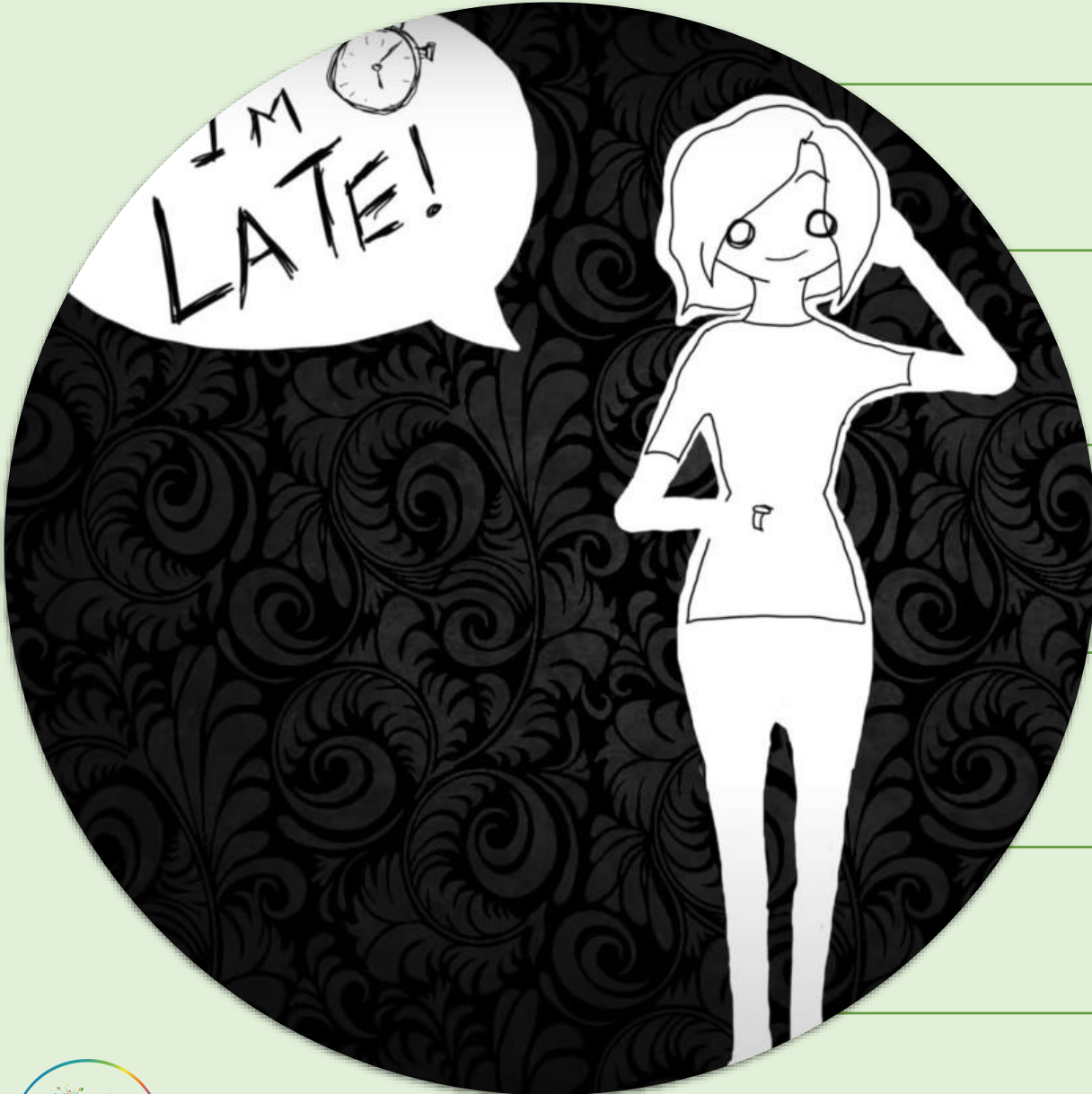
Before the interview, **ask about their strengths and interests in advance**. Some may not be comfortable doing 'small-talk'



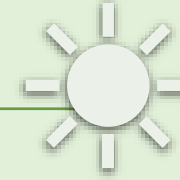
You can get further information with this [toolkit](#)



# Ensure applying is accessible (2)



Prompt people to disclose challenges and strengths and explain this is to make all the adjustments your company can provide



Allow them options to attend a time of the day when they are at their best (whenever possible)



Offer a general agenda/topics of the interview, a photo of the interviewers, map/video to get to the venue and who to approach when they arrive, or how to access online link if this is done online



People can [apply for communication support at a job interview](#) or employers can allow a friend/carer to support them (but keep addressing the interviewee), attend a time of the day when they are at their best (see [Processing Information & Different Communication](#) slides). This could be tailored for academic applications



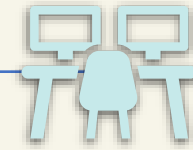
Offer guidance for clothing with specific visual examples (consider if a handshake is needed or not and make this explicit)



Allow them to contact you via proxy (a friend, family member, etc.). If possible, use [software](#) and [assistive technology](#) that can help them



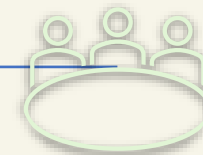
# Distraction: Getting back into 'the zone'



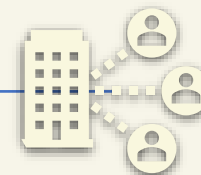
Simple and **uncluttered environment, earplugs**, desk facing away busy areas, multiple screens



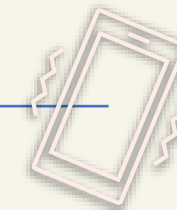
Some **ideas to play music that support concentration and focus**: [video 1](#), [video 2](#), [video 3](#).



Agree **specific times to approach** during the day (**preventing interruptions**), provide a '**do not disturb**' sign, agreeing when it is suitable to use or agree a sequence (e.g., 'Let's speak after we/you/I have finished X')



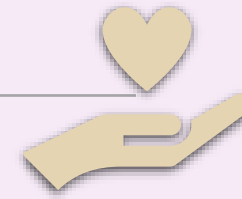
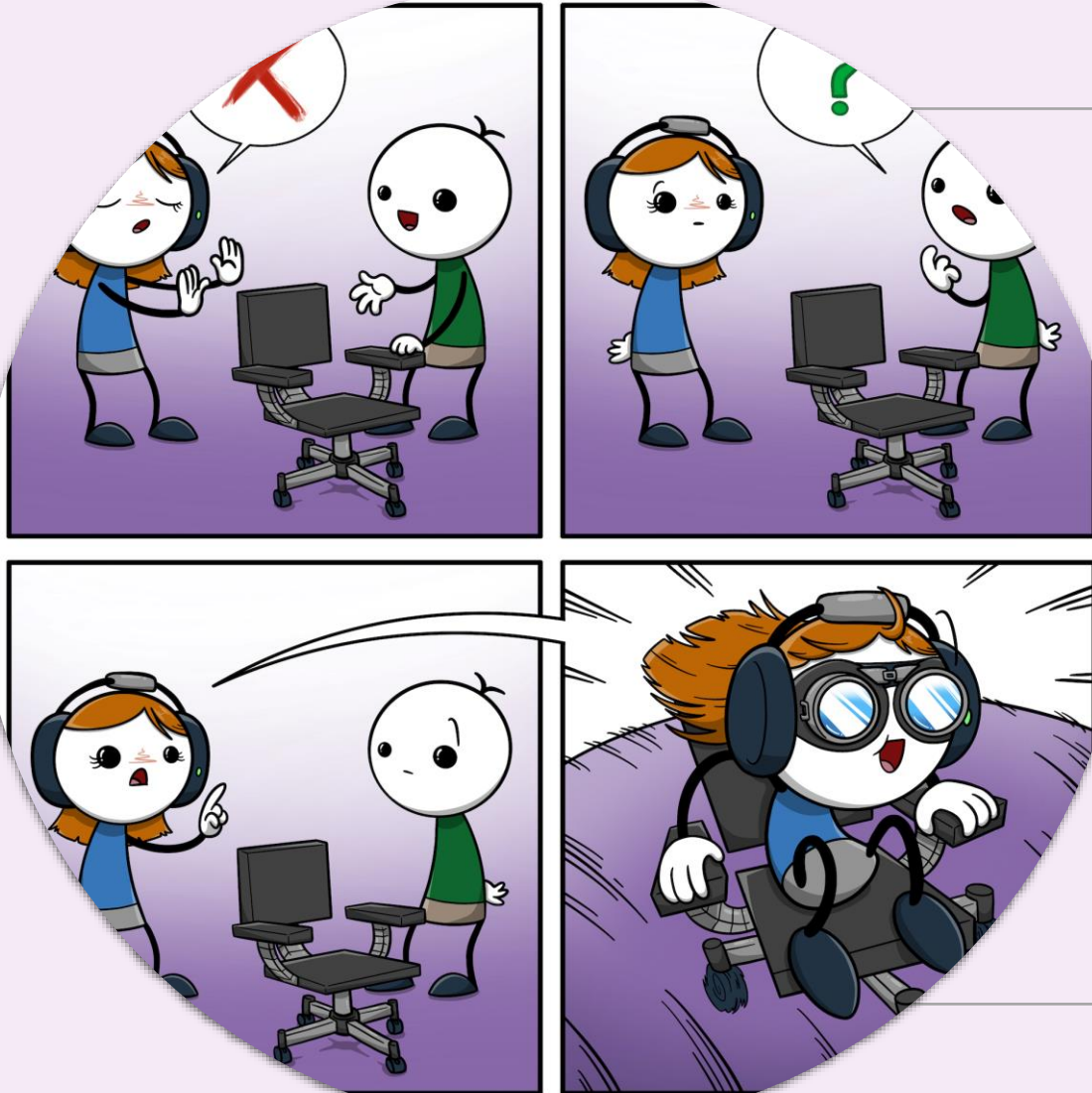
**Provide a quiet office space**, or a portable [soundproof booth](#), [sound absorbers](#), [pods](#), that block busy areas and allow working alongside colleagues



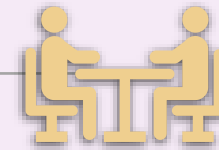
**Headphones and their chosen playlist to enhance attention**



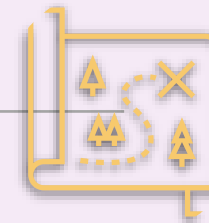
# Understanding workplace culture



Be patient and approachable, **accept their needs** even when unfamiliar to you



Assign a **buddy and work coach**, **'Access to Work'** to explain/practise specific workplace culture. For example, **suitable lunch times/breaks, clothing**, other staff members' special needs, etiquette for tea/coffee making, toilet breaks, **appropriate and expected responses/behaviours**, and provide assistance to **practise and understand with them**.

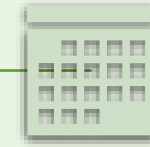
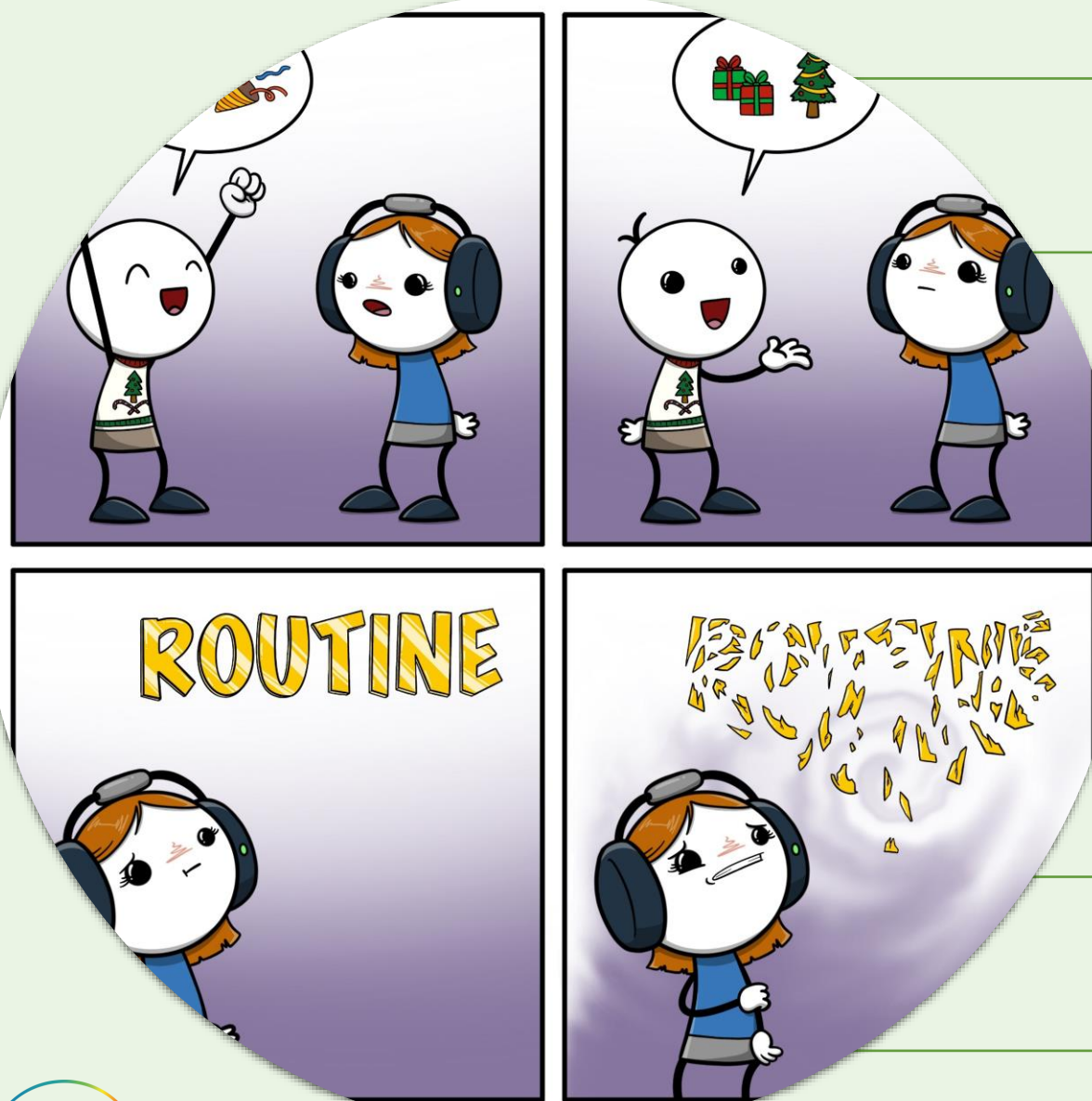


Provide clear **maps, videos**, and a **tour** to **familiarise them with location of the venue, their desk, and resources** (e.g., stationery, files on computer, where to find manager's office or assistance if needed)



Provide **step-by-step instructions** gradually **modelling behaviours** (use visuals, videos, etc.)

# Organisation and time management (1)



Provide a structure and **time for planning within working hours**. Try things to **identify what works better for them**.



Provide software to get organised and **modelling its use** facilitating training and **practising with them** (online or face-to-face)

**Model then let them do things with you** to identify **realistic range of time** to complete tasks and **provide flexibility**. Once they know the task well, let them try on their own and ask if they need a **follow-up from start to completion**



Plan a **main structure with them** so they can have **options to do something they enjoy** or find calming, **after a 'duty'**. For example, **reply to email(s) for X minutes**, then have a **brief break** listening to a song, watching a joke/brief video, etc.



**Plan breaks** with some structure but keeping novelty. **Pre-select two or three activities** (e.g., watch a video for X seconds, listen to one song, run downstairs) and **let them roll the dice or flip a coin** to choose the activity so deciding is not overwhelming

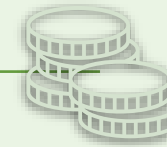


**Anchor** activities to support memory (e.g., after meeting, call X) or **pair tasks** (e.g., when I **check emails**, I **drink water**).

# Organisation and time management (2)



Plan **rewarding activities** after some tasks that were more challenging, **plan with them** which ones so they have options for the 'break'



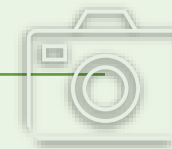
Make the decision easier for them, have them **flip a coin to choose between two activities** and then have them **roll dice to decide how long** they will work on that task.



Motivation will never come if we wait for it, so **help them to make it interesting** (e.g., a game to complete a task, such as establishing a (range) number for specific tasks: 1= clean left side of X drawer by throwing away pens that do not work anymore, 2= print X letter and prepare envelope (not post, just prepare), 3-6= start email to X person) assign a range for those activities that require more priority – help them to prioritise.



To decide the activity have them **roll the dice**; then to establish for how long they will do that activity for, they can roll the dice again but this time dice with larger numbers ([these are virtual dice](#)) so they can get the number of minutes they need to work on that task. See dice shapes [here](#)



Have them **take pictures of 'before and after'** they have done something so the reward and achievement are **more tangible**, and this can be the screenshot of a paragraph in a report, an email or task sent

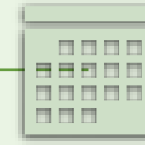


Mark a **Jenga game with numbers** and every time they pull a block, **the block belongs to a task** they have to do for 5-10 minutes. This is good for short tasks

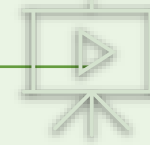




# Organisation and time management (3)



Use **alarms and many reminders**, you can help them with software, but make sure initially you sit with them and let them **put things on the calendar with you to build confidence**



Be **specific for each task and provide examples printed/videos so they can remember** without the need to wait for you to explain things again (help them to organise the videos/examples)



Provide a **range of time to build up confidence (e.g., finish one paragraph in 15-20 minutes)** once you have **provided examples** of what the task should look like (e.g., previous reports, previous illustrations, spreadsheets, notes, etc.)



Structure tasks **with them** (e.g., **help them to explore and reflect on their choices** by providing examples of how it may look like if they do option A or option B) and **kindly prompt self-review of progress** specifying pre-deadlines (dates planned to advance work before the actual deadline), and **follow-up completion**



**Buddy/work coach** to help organisation from start to finish, **sitting down with them** to get things organised and **do the actual tasks timely** even when they do not feel 'inspired'



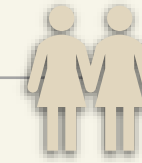
**Allow them to delegate** when possible (admin support) and use of **software** and **assistive technology** that can help such as **Dragon**

## THE CYCLE OF PROCRASTINATION





# Processing information (1)



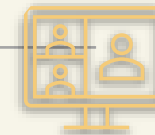
**Buddy/mentor** to show and model how software and processes work. **Agree with them a phrase or sign** to use when **you will expect them to contribute** and the content of this contribution.



Provide **practical learning, easy-read manuals or videos (provide direct links)**. Some people find it easier to process information and concentrate when they are **fidgiting, looking away** (not making eye contact), or when they are **pacing**. Allow opportunities for these behaviours



**Assistive technology** to turn text-to-speech from books ([hand reading pens](#)), pdfs to manipulate size, **colour overlays (software)**, **summarise information**, use **videos**, mind mapping, etc., and **practise with them how it works**



When **asking them questions or to decide something, use visuals or specific examples to illustrate**. Explore with them **pros-cons**, exploring potential consequences, and what their decision would mean in practical terms (give examples). **Give them time to assimilate the information** and talk to someone they trust before deciding



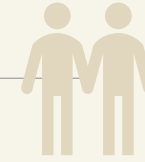
Provide **time during working hours** to read/watch the videos and **practise with a buddy/mentor** (online or face-to-face) until they are confident to do things autonomously. **Gradually** let them do tasks more independently



**Provide specific examples of what you expect** (e.g., reports, presentations, forms, contributions in meetings, etc.)



# Processing information (2)



Provide time and **1:1 support** to complete forms and specific examples of appropriate answers



Provide an overall agenda of meetings and appointments so they can be prepared with potential questions or answers. Create a list with them of the potential FAQs and practise with them



Coach them prior asking them to participate in meetings so that they are **aware of suitable responses**, times, and ways to participate. Previously agree what you will say (explicit phrase or cue) so they understand when you expect them to participate



Draft lists, scripts, or diagrams with them to prepare before meetings and **model appropriate responses and behaviours** so they know the expectations



Break down instructions into smaller specific steps with **pre-deadlines trialed and negotiated with them** (e.g., section 1 of report in 3-5 days, with 2-3 pages and paragraphs of 10-20 lines. Paragraph 1 start with X sentence, develop talking about X. One call of 30-45 minutes to contact person X to discuss XXX, ask X and have script prepared). Be ready to **tailor things as tasks change**

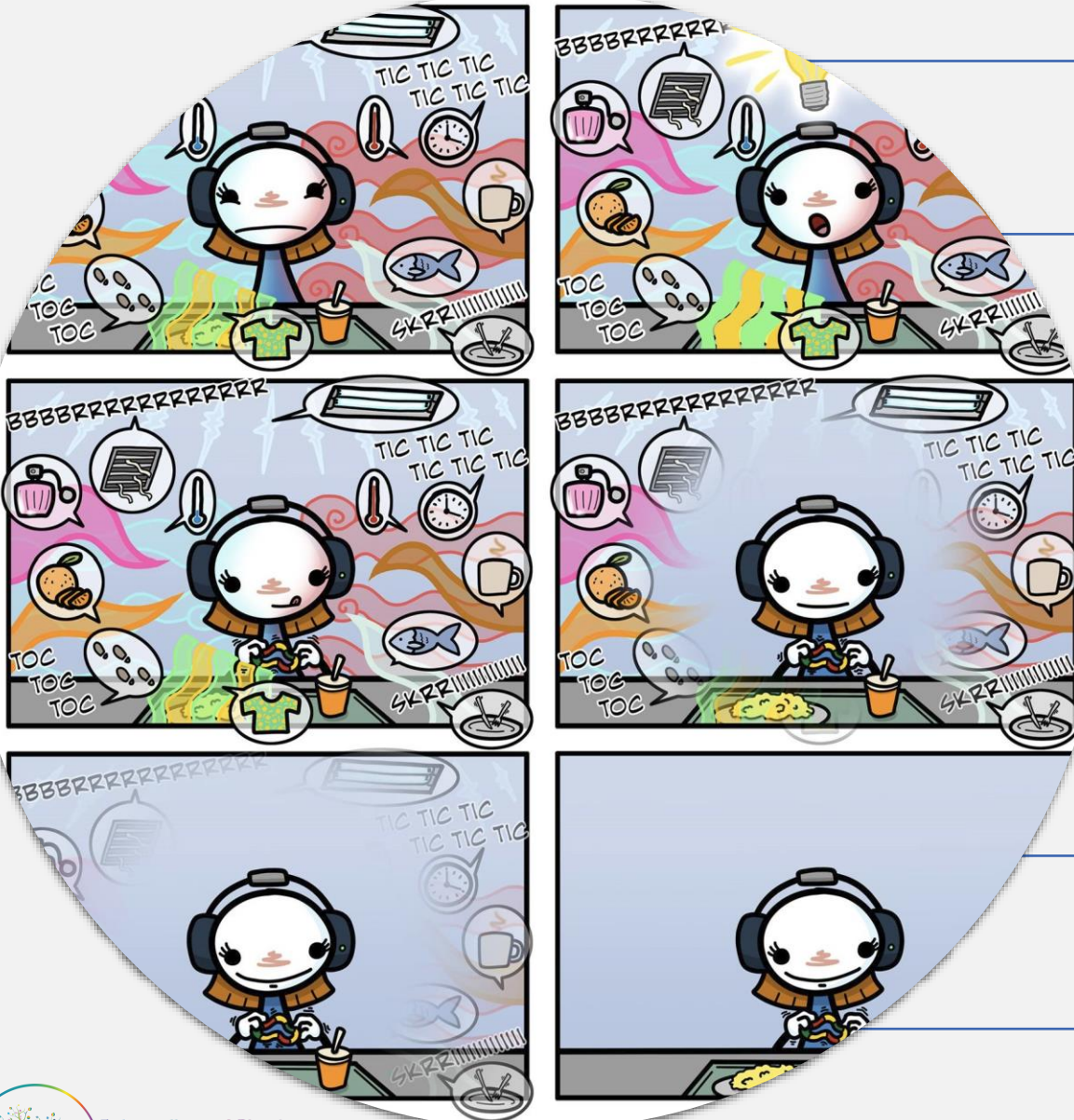


Provide time so they are not at a disadvantage and **plan in case they were unable to complete** (e.g., contacting work coach for alternative task if not within their control, or **sit with them to complete tasks**)





# Sensory differences: Hypersensitivity



Involve an occupational therapist (OT) or a specialist in sensory differences and neurodivergent conditions



Allow people to wear **noise-cancelling headphones/earplugs** or headphones and pick their playlist (e.g., [video 1](#), [video 2](#), [video 3](#)) that **supports concentration** and focus



**Tunable lights** ([video](#)), installed lights or lamps to **adjust colour and temperature of light**; this can also help [circadian rhythm](#) ([video](#))



Provide a **working space free of smells they perceive to be strong** (e.g., room free of food smells, people wearing lotions, strong smells from shampoo) and well ventilated



Where rooms with cleaning chemicals' smells are strong, try to **air the venue to reduce the smells**



Provide a **private space** that the individual can tailor (light, smells, noise) or **allow remote working**

# Sensory differences: Hyposensitivity



@ASPIGURI



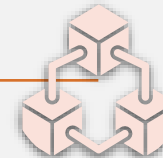
Provide **Tunable lights** ([video](#)), screens with videos playing moving lights; or a mobile phone stand that can charge phone and display moving lights/shapes



Allow them to **listen to music (headphones)** that **prompts concentration** and focus ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#), [example 4](#))



Smell of desired **scent** (bottle, container, dab on nose) to prompt **concentration and grounding**



**Fidget items** ([examples](#)), jewellery, spinners, chewable items, kinetic sand, or textured **furniture**. These are for people of any age, get feedback from people so you can provide items that support them.



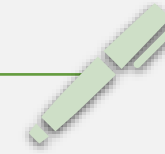
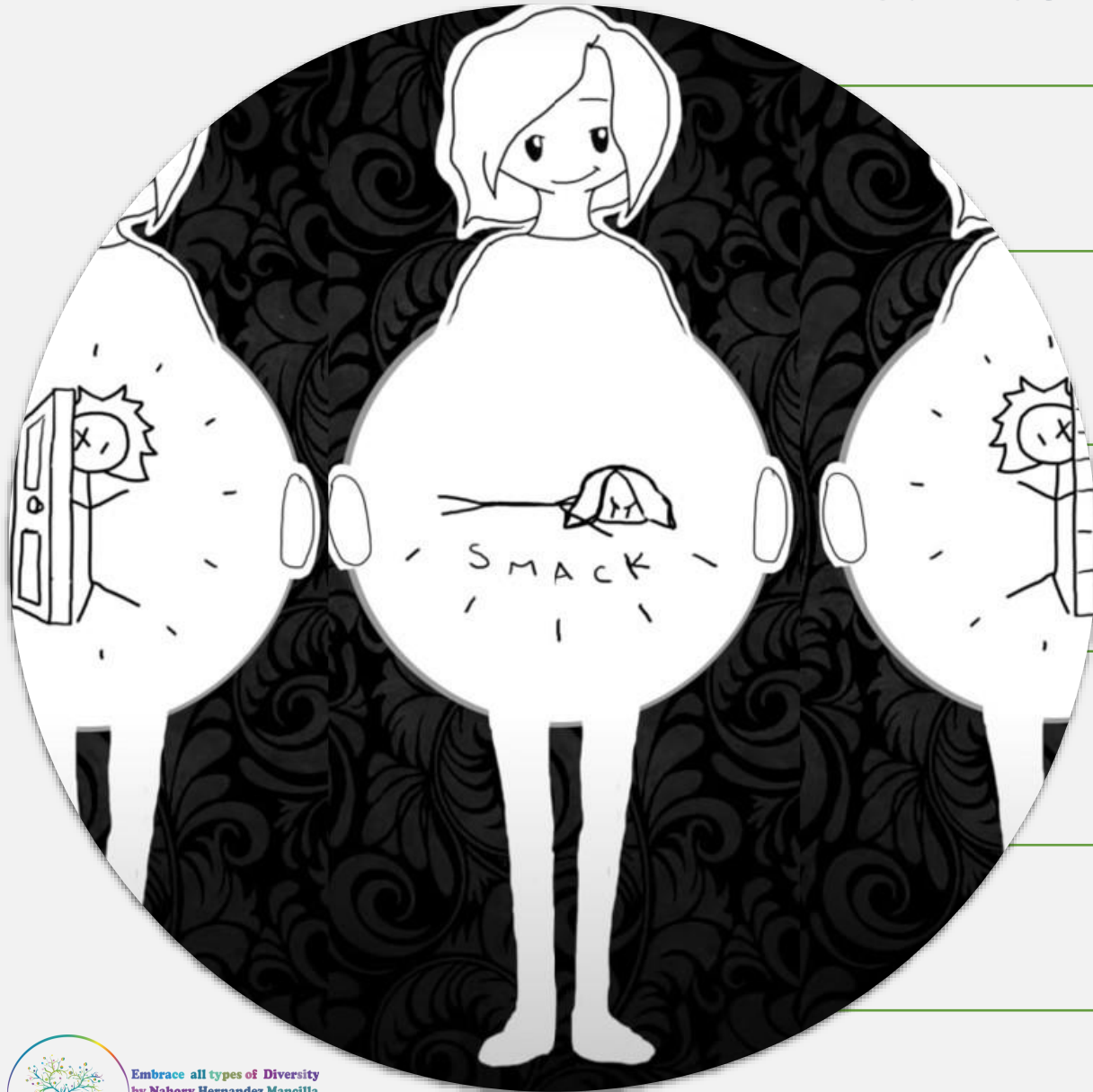
**Sit-stand workstation** and **moving chair** could support need for movement



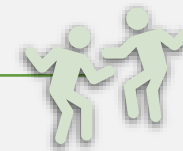
Explore items to prompt movement such as mini [portable pedal](#), [under-desk treadmill](#) ([examples](#))



# Sensory differences: Considering proprioception, vestibular system & interoception



Explore with them difficulties with proprioception. They may require a **laptop with speech to text/ dictation features**, a touch screen, special pens, [software](#) and [assistive technology](#)



Talk to your staff and explore with them any potential difficulties with **vestibular system (balance, orientation)**, coordinating movement with balance) enable **wide spaces, maps/videos, [travel mug](#), easy clean surface** areas, etc.



Talk to your staff and explore with them any potential difficulties with **interoception (timely awareness of internal sensations such as hunger, thirst, pain, temperature)**. Explore when eating/drinking, etc., are helpful features (e.g., when weather is very hot people may need reminders to drink water)



**Provide a private space that the individual can tailor to their needs** (temperature, how often they stand up/sit or move, where items are placed to avoid accidents), if not available **allow remote/hybrid working** (i.e., working from home or another venue in your organisation)



Provide a **location that is close to the bathroom** if needed and allow them to take **breaks as/when needed**. This can also help if they have co-occurring physical health needs

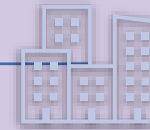


Provide support and encourage the **involvement of GP and specialist (OT)**

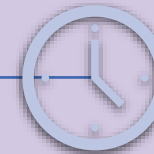
# Transport & Commuting



**Allow home working** (when needed or for specific working patterns – remember to negotiate)



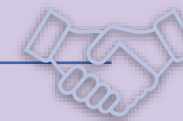
You can offer a **suitable nearer office to them** (consider needs to interact with others or to have colleagues around for safety reasons)



**Changing the working pattern/hours** so they get to travel at a **less busy time** but still doing the same number of hours



**Enable them by offering a parking space** when possible

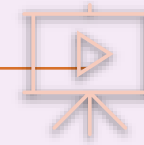


**Support them to negotiate** with a nearby organisation **to get suitable and safe parking.**



Support them to access a **'blue badge'** for **'non-visible disabilities'**. **Make sure you support them through the process**, do not only signpost them

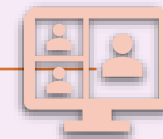
# Presentations & Meetings



Provide alternatives, perhaps **preparing a video (prior to presentation)**



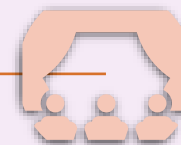
If working as a team, **allow flexible contribution**, so they can contribute **without presenting live** if this is challenging



Online presentations may be better when you **allow the camera to be off** and only content sharing



Videos are not the only option, a power point presentation with **animations and voice recordings** can make the content dynamic



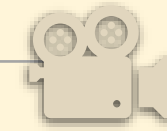
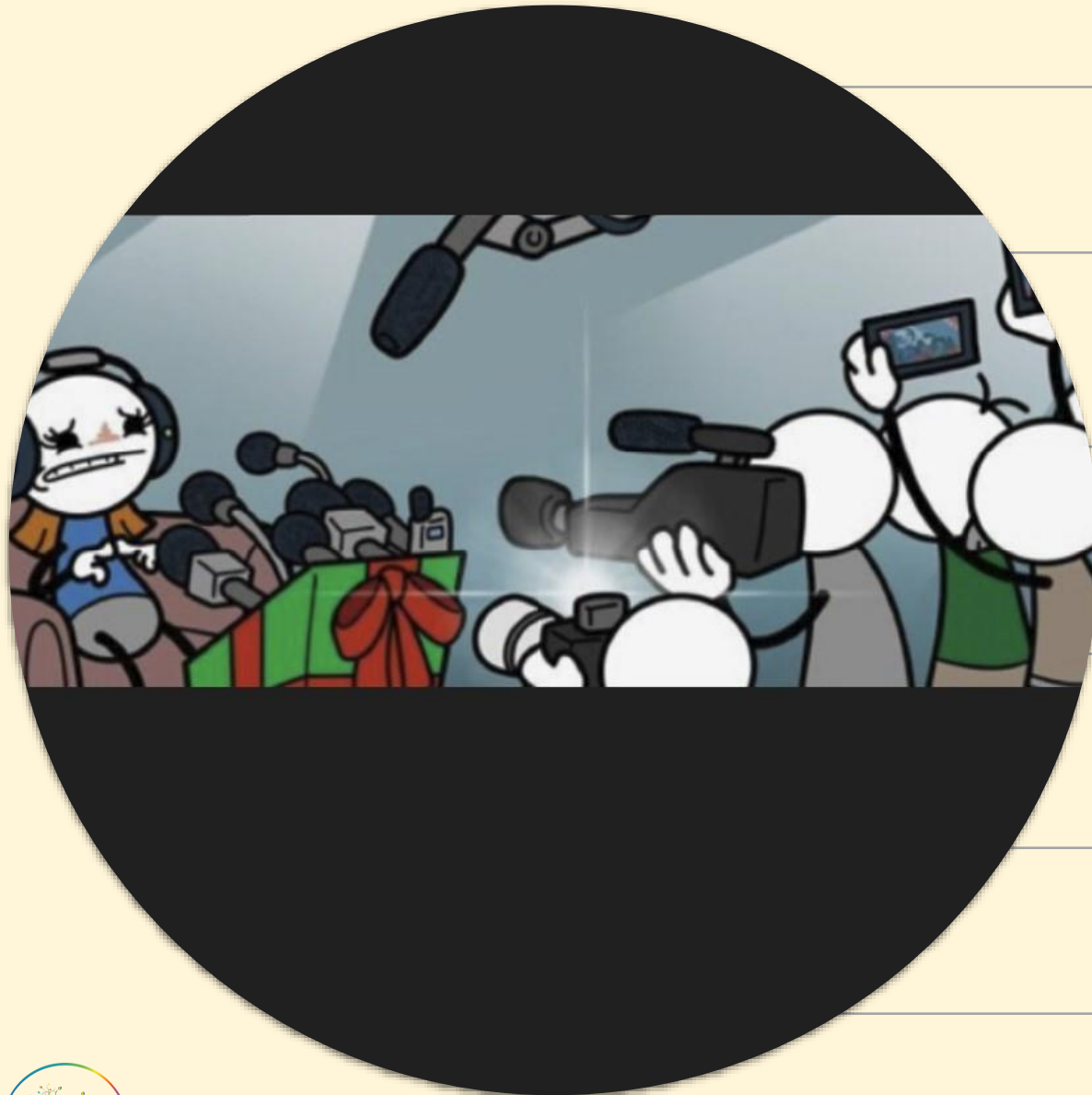
Use people's strengths and creativity, they can ask for a **'reader' to present their work**



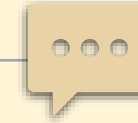
Explore difficulties and alternatives with them and **negotiate to 'meet in the middle'**



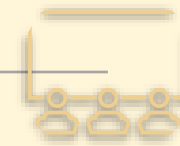
# Live recordings & Meetings



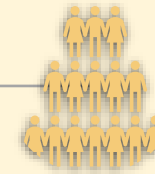
Offer **alternatives to record** their lectures/presentations on **their own terms** (e.g., previously recorded material available, so live recording is not needed)



**Help them to make the content of the presentation available** (e.g., content showed and recorded but camera not recording them directly)



Presentations, even when not recorded live, can be accessible but the **recording could be edited and done prior to the presentation (not live)**



Make sure you **offer this option to everyone**, so people have the right to choose what is best for them



**Use people's strengths and creativity** and your **organisation resources** (e.g., editing or communications team)



Explore difficulties and alternatives with them and **negotiate to 'meet in the middle'**



# Different communication needs (1)



**Ask for preferred means of communication** (e.g., texts instead of video/telephone calls, first emails then face-to-face)



Offer **verbal AND visual aids**, give time for them to process **information** (diagrams, [wheel](#), [atlas](#), [emoji](#)). If you are going to ask them to contribute during a meeting, **allow them to prepare their answer**, or to provide an answer later or by email/text.



**Enable access to a mentor/work coach** that can support development of assertive communication and self-awareness of situations that may be challenging (**helping individuals to understand the workplace 'culture'** but also coaching colleagues to understand the individual neurodivergent differences).



Offer alternatives – **video/telephone calls, face-to-face, text/typed communication, pictures, colours**. Some people may be able to **assign a colour/animal to an emotion**, or use a **scale 1-10**, but make sure you are guided by them, so **they explain to you what each colour or number means to them with an example**.

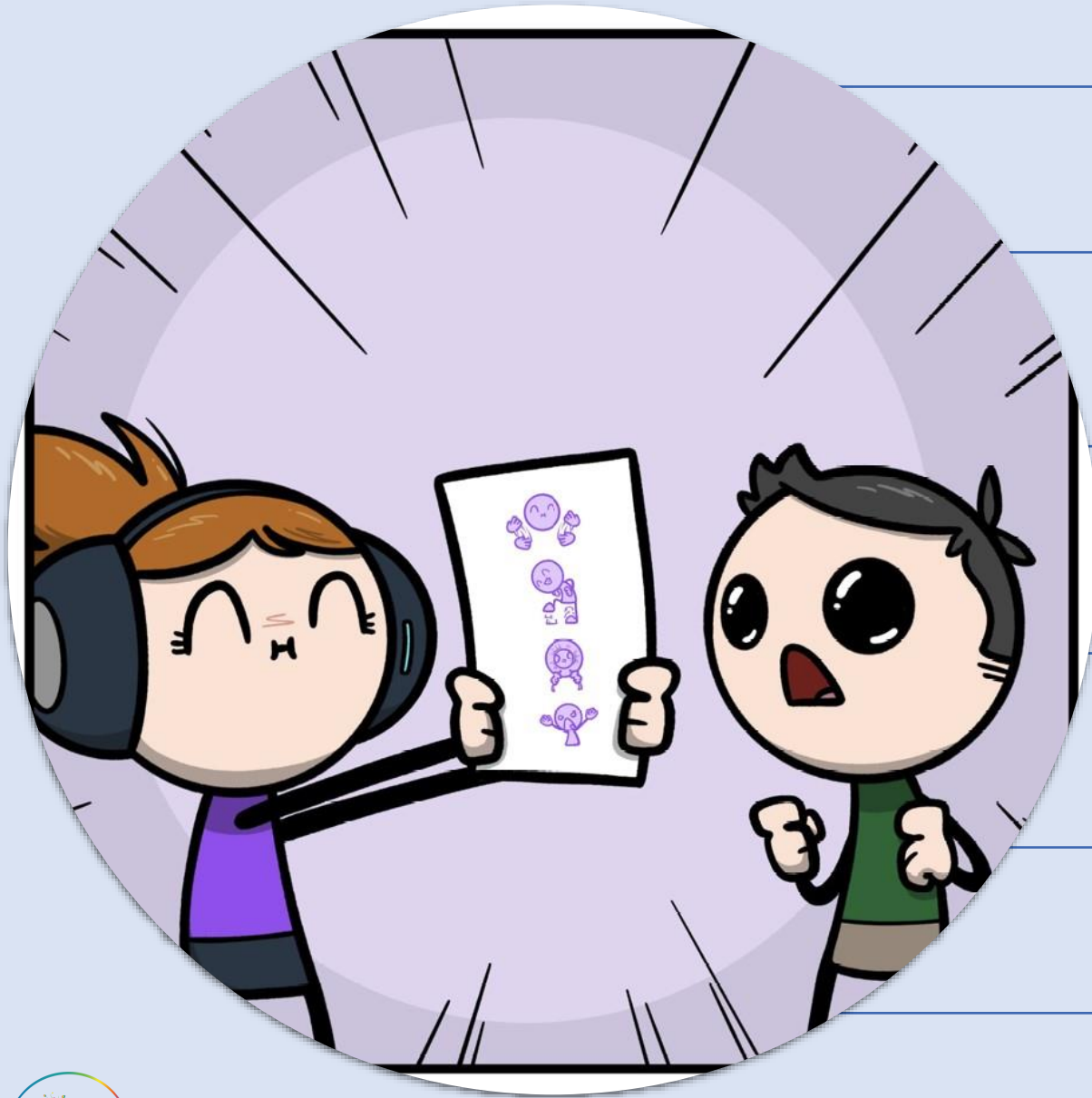


**Creating flexible scripts with them** to help them be prepared for unexpected situations and **support them to implement** what is considered a **socially appropriate response** in that specific workplace/setting. Illustrate with examples

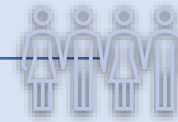


Explore difficulties and alternatives with them and **negotiate to 'meet in the middle'**

# Different communication needs (2)



Be mindful of **sensory processing** differences, as these **can interfere** with communication.



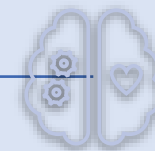
Coach people and **explicitly model behaviours** so they are aware of what is expected of them. Help them create **scripts that communicate messages in line with that setting culture/values**.



**Involve a communication or work coach** to support all parties involved **communication is the responsibility of ALL involved**, not only for neurodivergent individuals. **Avoid vague questions, provide examples** of appropriate answers and **explain why they are appropriate** (e.g., If you ask how they 'live the values of the organisation' **this is too vague** and abstract, so provide an example 'some people talk about their **colleagues/peers expressing they are helpful because** they supported with ...').



When there are challenges, facilitate and encourage **communication in the presence of impartial observers, union representatives, or work coach** to support objectivity. **Be prepared to review policy to make the process less overwhelming** so they are not at a disadvantage

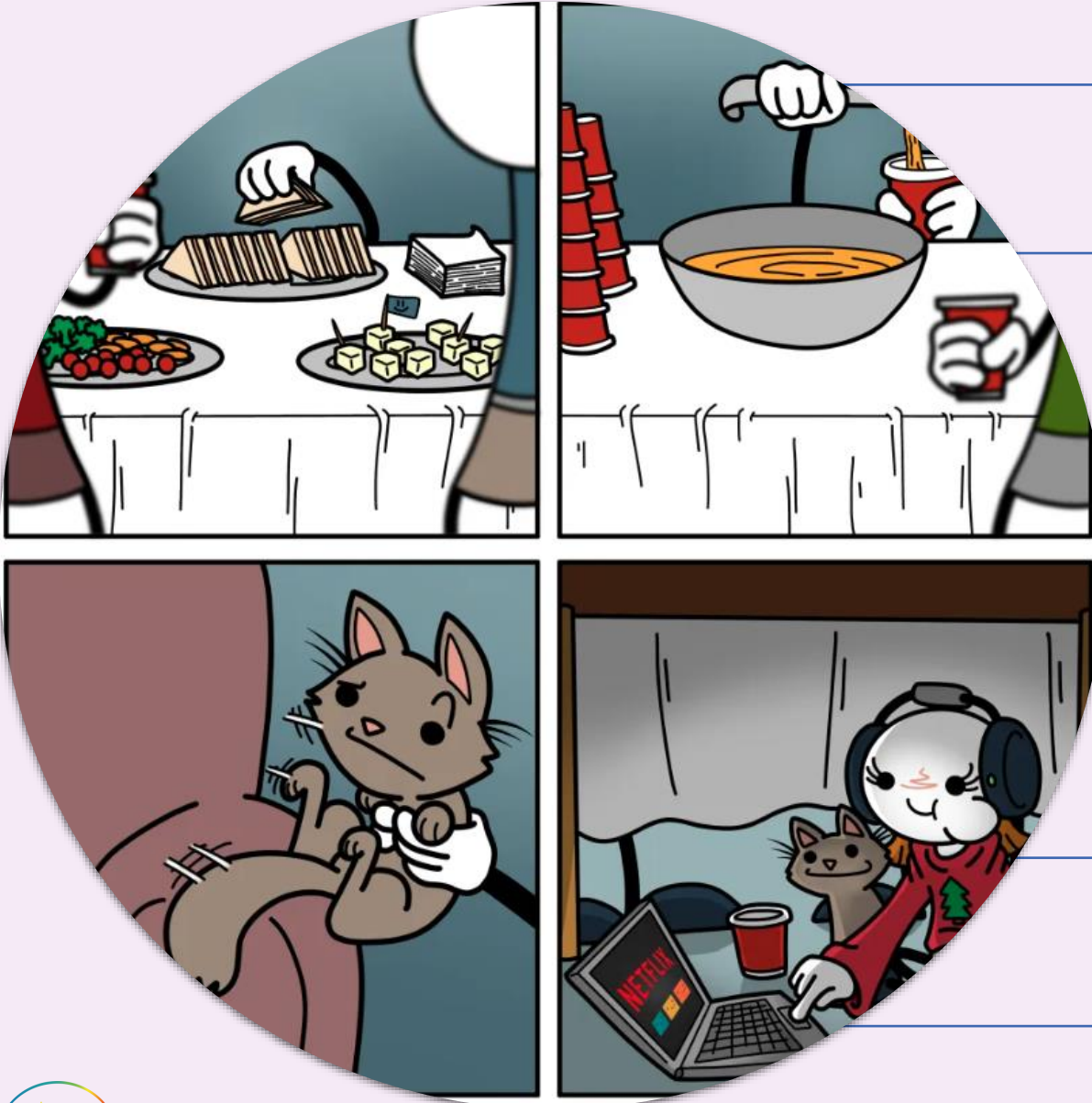


**Incorporate individual counselling and support as part of the process** (e.g., mediation, disciplinary process) for exploring and supporting other areas that may be contributing to challenges (for all involved).



**Communication challenges** may be present for different reasons for any individual, **not only for neurodivergent individuals**. Avoid taking a blaming approach, instead **support by modelling kind understanding**.

# Different behaviours



Let them be themselves, help them reduce stress levels (enable timely access to psychological support that is personalised and neurodivergent-friendly)



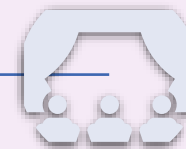
Ask yourself/your work setting if you could be more accepting of the behaviour if it does not hurt anyone (e.g., having a tangible, rocking, tics, fidgeting, etc.).



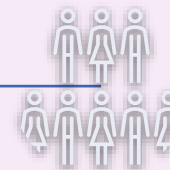
Plan with each person to manage challenging situations that may cause anxiety. Consider that focusing too much on something (e.g., tics) may exacerbate these actions, so **adopt a compassionate, accepting, and gentle approach**. Remember some concentrate more and manage communication better when they can fidget or when they do not have to make eye contact



As part of the processes make referrals to suitable support (e.g., mental, physical health) but **make sure that you refer and follow-up**. Overwhelming referral processes may impede them from accessing the support.



Make access to support an integral part of the process. Conduct investigations in a non-blaming manner, and assign a support person (e.g., buddy, advocate, union, communication coach), to attend meetings with individuals.



When disciplinary procedures happen, explain expectations in your specific setting. Give **specific examples of acceptable behaviours** and situations, **model and rehearse with them** giving them time



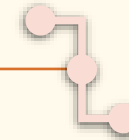
# Prone to accidents



Provide [software](#) and [assistive technology1](#), [assistive technology2](#), using voice-activated software to perform tasks, adaptive equipment such as ergonomic chairs, non-slip mats, special holders, etc.



Involve an occupational therapist (OT) or specialist to make practical recommendations



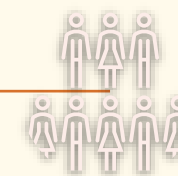
Simplify tasks **break each activity into smaller and manageable steps**, provide one **short sentence instructions** (written and auditory/video and modelling) and **practise with them**



Be prepared, you may need to get extra material to **have material readily available** if someone is prone to breaking things. **Be kind, these things are not done on purpose or out of carelessness**



**Provide wide space/desk and practise with people how to move** in that particular environment



**Model, prompt and foster an inclusive environment** that empowers people and is a non-blaming culture

# Evaluations, exams, appraisals



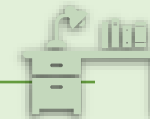
Provide **assistive technology**, the **overall agenda of the day** for them to know your/the organisation's expectations.



**Prepare them in advance**, make sure there are **other professionals supporting structure, sleep, mood, healthy eating**. **Involve a multidisciplinary approach**, neurodivergent people have often co-occurring conditions, **involve counselling, GP, social care professionals** to empower them to manage stress levels.



Do **mock interviews/sessions** or **rehearse with them the process** from visiting the venue, to go step-by-step of the process that day and **similar questions they will be asked that day**. Set up **multiple reminders** using software, calendars, etc.



Provide a **private space without interruptions**, where they can move or read out loud or use their **special software** or offer a **reader to explain instructions** in different ways to **support information processing**. This is to **enable people**, so they are not at a disadvantage.

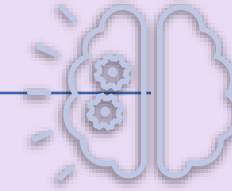


**Ask for their preferred means of communication**. Some may be able to verbalise their answers but not typing/writing them, others may be able to type but not verbalise. **Give them the opportunity to type in front of you** or for a **supporter to type/write their answer** or **audio record their answers**.

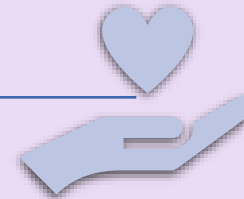


**Allow them to record meetings, supervision and rehearsals for their personal use**. Sign and agree with them to not show or share the recordings. The recordings are to **support information processing**, not to evaluate you.

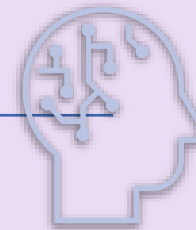
# Acceptance



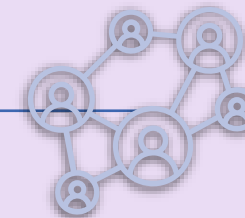
Neurodivergent people **NEED these accommodations**, these concepts may be 'different' for some people to understand, but we ask for your kind acceptance. Neurodivergent brains process information differently



It is not special treatment; it is **empowering people to achieve and grow with you and with the organisation**



Use **people's strengths** to contribute and **complement other's work** and develop other areas that need support

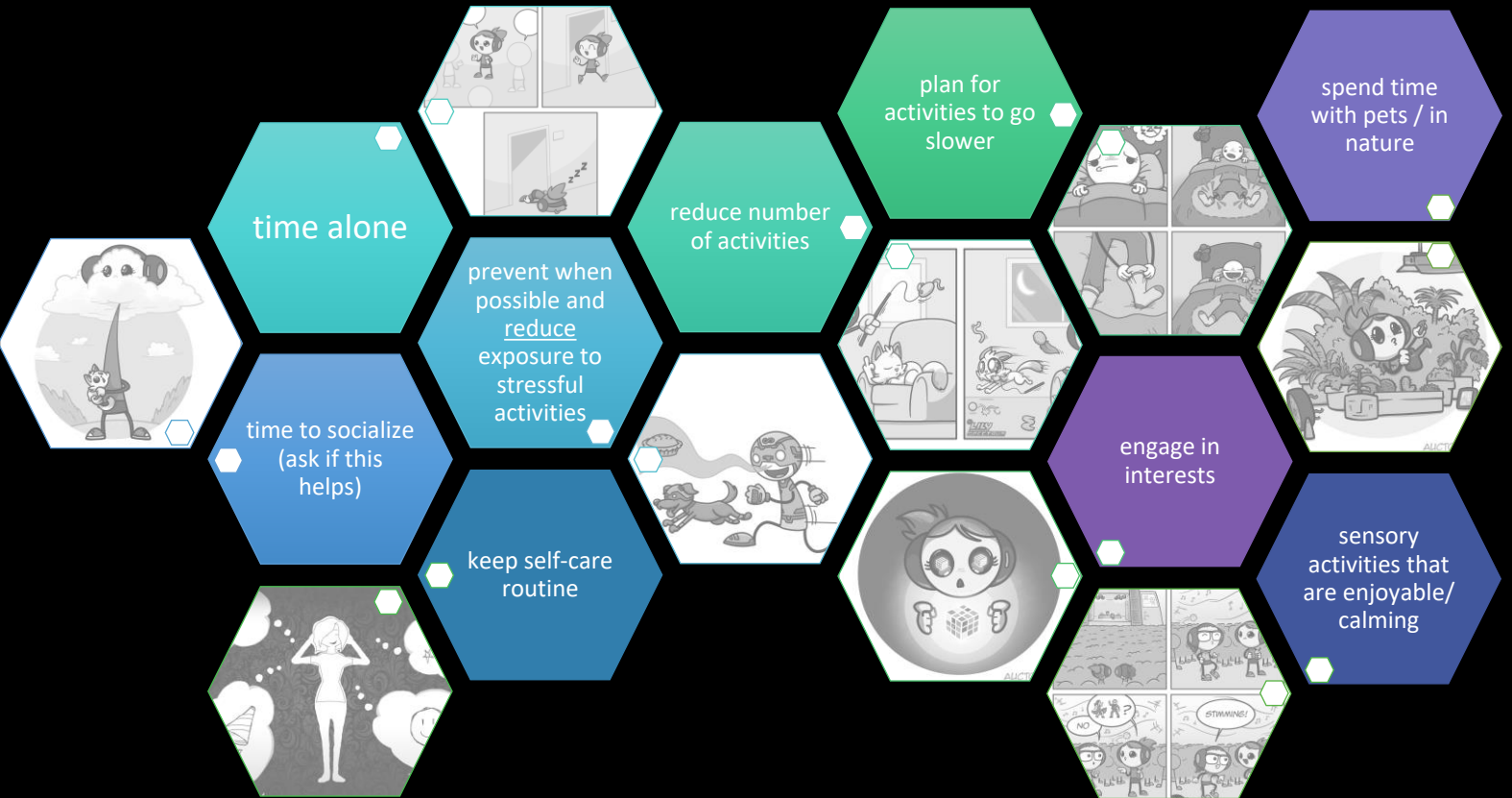


Be **flexible and kind to them and to yourself!** You are **learning together** what works best for each particular person to empower them to support the organisation/project



# Neurodivergent burnout

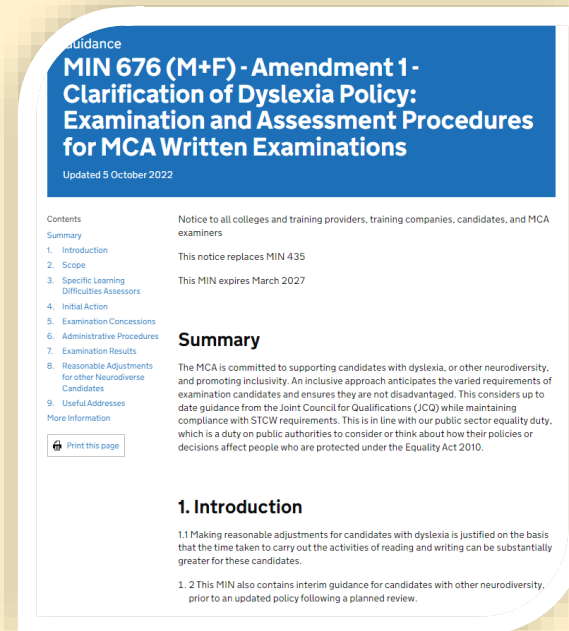
- Neurodivergent people experience burnout for different reasons that may not be 'usual' for non-neurodivergent people. Neurodivergent people may need to rest longer or do activities they find restoring.
- Ask or explore with each person what motivates them and helps them feel well, as they may not be aware themselves. Be kind to them and yourself and learn together! There is no one right answer or one-size fits all, so try things with them. Your flexibility and kindness will go a long way!



# Equality & Inclusion: Your rights

- Legally, in the UK the [Equality Act 2010](#) is a good starting point to review what constitutes [reasonable adjustments](#).
- The [Citizens Advice Bureau](#) also provides guidance and helpful summaries.
- Reasonable adjustments can involve **changes in policies, working practice, [adjusting working hours](#), physical layouts, providing extra equipment, [more time](#)** (for exams, job tasks), assistive technology, or **practical support, etc.** Remember the support is permanent applicable to children and adults.
- Neurodevelopmental conditions are a protected characteristic under the [Equality Act 2010](#).
- Some policies provide guidance for the difficulties such as the [Dyslexia Policy](#) and the [Autism Act, 10 Years](#) (p.40) which **formally support reasonable adjustments** such as **extra time, remote working, etc.**, for the **inclusion of neurodivergent people**.
- See guidance on **employing people with diverse health conditions** [here](#) and other documents on **equality and diversity** [here](#).

Please consider the term 'disability' is legally used to implement adjustment that could support individuals to not be at a disadvantage. **Remember neurodivergent people also have strengths.**



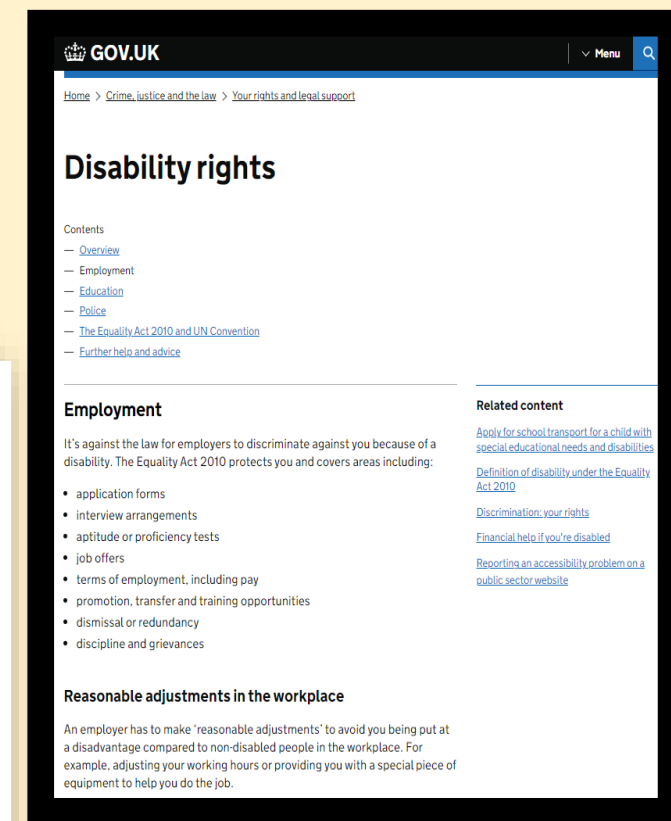
Guidance  
**MIN 676 (M+F) - Amendment 1 - Clarification of Dyslexia Policy: Examination and Assessment Procedures for MCA Written Examinations**  
Updated 5 October 2022

Contents  
Summary  
1. Introduction  
2. Scope  
3. Specific Learning Difficulties Assessors  
4. Initial Action  
5. Examination Concessions  
6. Administrative Procedures  
7. Examination Results  
8. Reasonable Adjustments for other Neurodiverse Candidates  
9. Useful Addresses  
More Information  
[Print this page](#)

Notice to all colleges and training providers, training companies, candidates, and MCA examiners  
This notice replaces MIN 435  
This MIN expires March 2027

**Summary**  
The MCA is committed to supporting candidates with dyslexia, or other neurodiversity, and promoting inclusivity. An inclusive approach anticipates the varied requirements of examination candidates and ensures they are not disadvantaged. This considers up to date guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) while maintaining compliance with STCW requirements. This is in line with our public sector equality duty, which is a duty on public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010.

**1. Introduction**  
1.1 Making reasonable adjustments for candidates with dyslexia is justified on the basis that the time taken to carry out the activities of reading and writing can be substantially greater for these candidates.  
1.2 This MIN also contains interim guidance for candidates with other neurodiversity, prior to an updated policy following a planned review.



GOV.UK  
Home > Crime, justice and the law > Your rights and legal support

## Disability rights

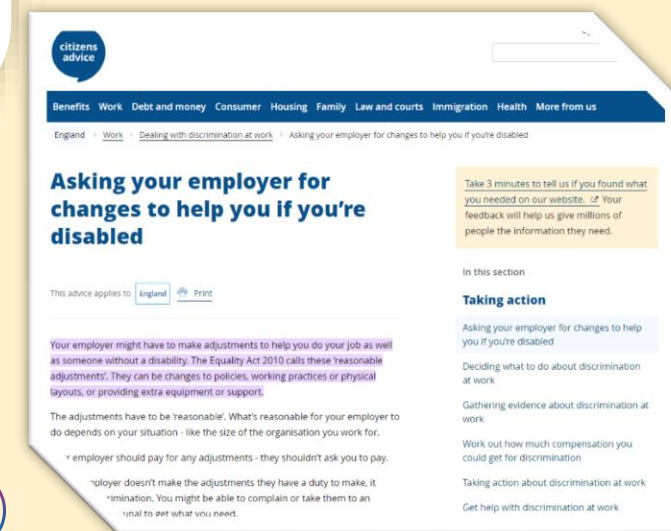
Contents  
— [Overview](#)  
— [Employment](#)  
— [Education](#)  
— [Police](#)  
— [The Equality Act 2010 and UN Convention](#)  
— [Further help and advice](#)

**Employment**  
It's against the law for employers to discriminate against you because of a disability. The Equality Act 2010 protects you and covers areas including:

- application forms
- interview arrangements
- aptitude or proficiency tests
- job offers
- terms of employment, including pay
- promotion, transfer and training opportunities
- dismissal or redundancy
- discipline and grievances

**Reasonable adjustments in the workplace**  
An employer has to make 'reasonable adjustments' to avoid you being put at a disadvantage compared to non-disabled people in the workplace. For example, adjusting your working hours or providing you with a special piece of equipment to help you do the job.

**Related content**  
[Apply for school transport for a child with special educational needs and disabilities](#)  
[Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010](#)  
[Discrimination: your rights](#)  
[Financial help if you're disabled](#)  
[Reporting an accessibility problem on a public sector website](#)



citizens advice

Benefits Work Debt and money Consumer Housing Family Law and courts Immigration Health More from us

England > Work > Dealing with discrimination at work > Asking your employer for changes to help you if you're disabled

## Asking your employer for changes to help you if you're disabled

Take 3 minutes to tell us if you found what you needed on our website. Your feedback will help us give millions of people the information they need.

In this section  
**Taking action**  
Asking your employer for changes to help you if you're disabled  
Deciding what to do about discrimination at work  
Gathering evidence about discrimination at work  
Work out how much compensation you could get for discrimination  
Taking action about discrimination at work  
Get help with discrimination at work

This advice applies to [England](#) [Print](#)

Your employer might have to make adjustments to help you do your job as well as someone without a disability. The Equality Act 2010 calls these 'reasonable adjustments'. They can be changes to policies, working practices or physical layouts, or providing extra equipment or support.

The adjustments have to be 'reasonable'. What's reasonable for your employer to do depends on your situation - like the size of the organisation you work for.

- employer should pay for any adjustments - they shouldn't ask you to pay.
- employer doesn't make the adjustments they have a duty to make, it's discrimination. You might be able to complain or take them to an employment tribunal to see what you need.

# NEURODIVERGENT THINKING STYLES

## DYSLEXIA

Dyslexics are famed for general inventiveness & creativity, can excel at pattern-spotting.

## DYSPRAXIA

Dyspraxics tend to be good at 'big picture' thinking, pattern-spotting & inferential reasoning. They are often resourceful & determined problem-solvers.

## DYSCALCULIA

Creativity, strategic thinking, practical ability, intuitive thinking & problem-solving are standout strengths.

## DYSGRAPHIA

Strengths include enhanced listening skills, ability to recall oral details, memorisation, & storytelling.

## AUTISM

Typical strengths associated with autism at work include problem-solving & analytical thinking.

## ADHD

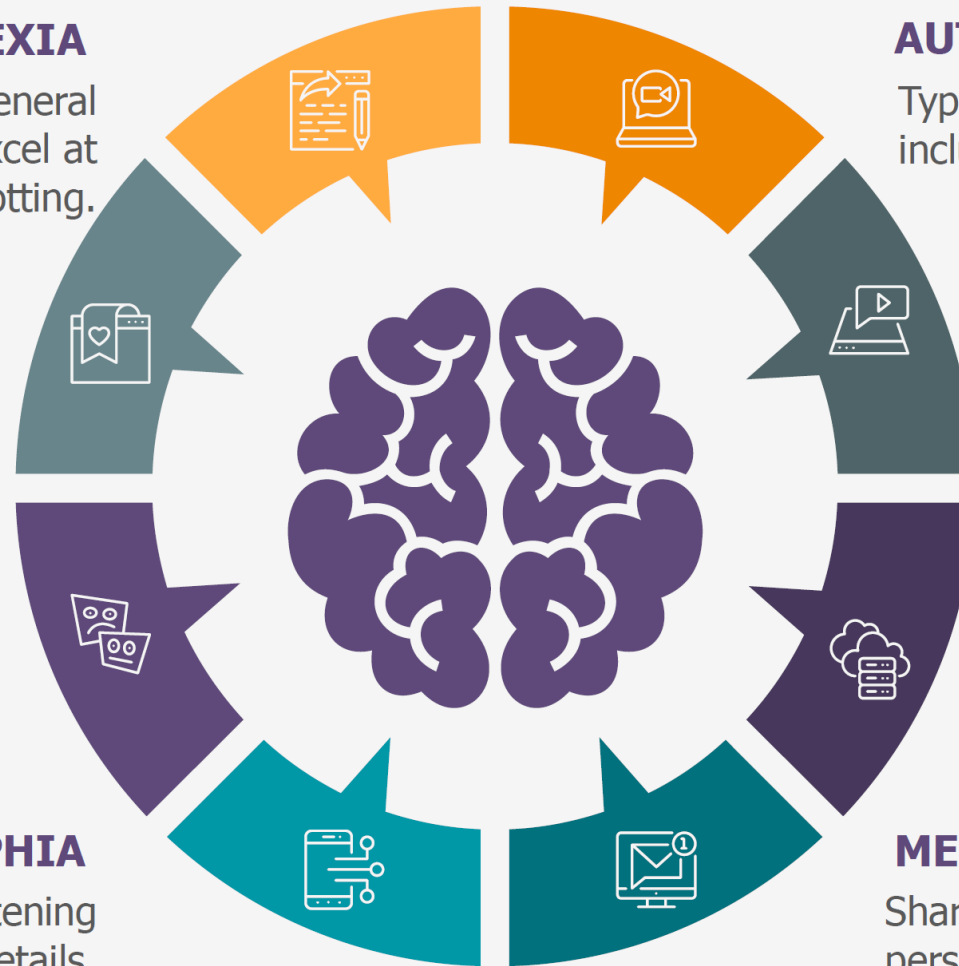
Insightfulness, creative thinking & problem-solving are strengths often associated with ADHD, with an ability to multitask & take calculated risks.

## TOURETTE SYNDROME

Often creative & energetic, with acute perception. Humorous, empathetic & completer-finishers.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Sharp memory, empathy, personal strength & resilience.



Infographic from [Genius Within](#), Angie Alderman



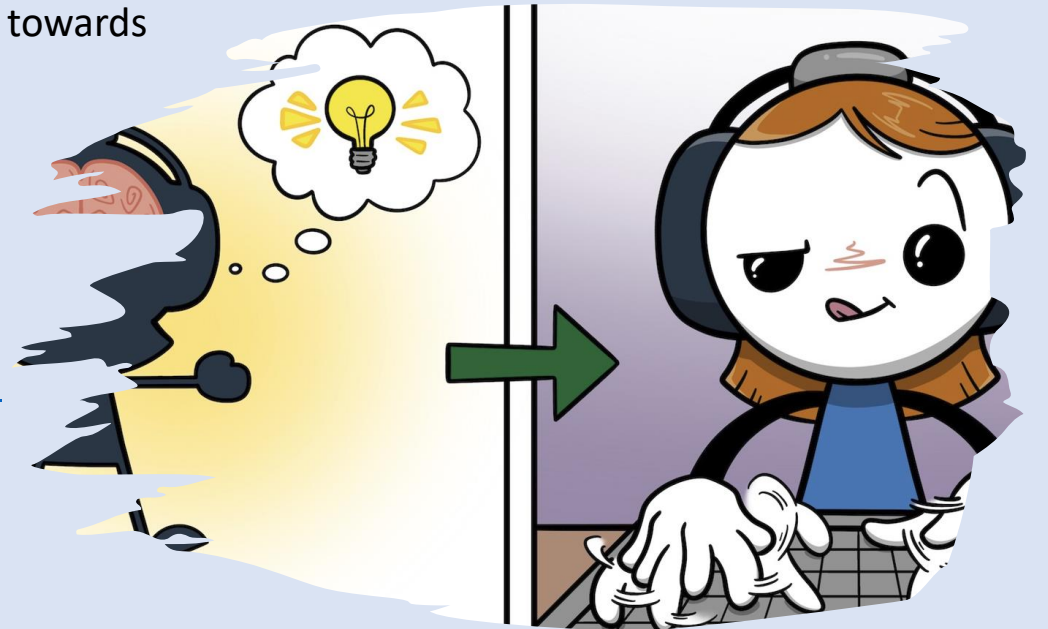
# Autism strengths



(by Russell et al., 2019)

# Employment links

- [Access to Work](#) is a government funded employment support scheme that can give grants for reasonable adjustments at work.
- [Pluss](#) is an organisation that offers support to people with disabilities to move towards employment <https://pluss.org.uk/>
- Your local [JobCentre](#) will have information about local services
- [Disability Employment Advisor](#)
- Neurodivergent coaching neurodivergent [Genius Within](#) and [No Drama Lamas](#)
- How to [support mental health at work](#):



# Useful links: Adult assessments, diagnosis, management

- [Autism getting assessed](#) & [autism assessment](#)
- [ADHD diagnosis](#) & [ADHD aware](#)
- [Dyslexia diagnosis](#) & [dyslexia assessment](#)
- [Dyspraxia \(DCD\)](#) & [dyspraxia assessment](#)
- [Tourette syndrome](#) & [TS assessment](#)





# Further information (1)

## ALSO ADHD:

Passionate Outspoken Strategic

Creative Fun Caring Generous

Humorous Empathetic Spontaneous

Authentic Inclusive Charismatic

Futuristic Romantic Opinionated

Big-Hearted Adaptable Intuitive

Memorable Friendly Honest Positive

Entertaining Curious Adventurous

Inspiring Brave Enthusiastic Eager

Resilient Influential Resourceful

## ADHD

- <http://www.addiss.co.uk/>

- <http://aadduk.org/>

A great place to start and get information, it is informative and comprehensive. You will find strategies, ideas and information about policy.

- See [Dani Donovan ADHD in the workplace resources](#)

- <https://www.additudemag.com/category/explore-adhd-treatments/treatment-reviews/>

- <http://ukaan.org/index.htm>

- <http://www.adhd.org.uk/>

- <http://www.additudemag.com/index.html/>

# Further information (2)

## Autism

- <https://autismandhealth.org/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/support/>
- <https://www.autistica.org.uk/> (Based in America, and created by autistic people working hard to support the autistic population)
- <https://skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Autism-Fwk-easy-read.pdf>

Core capabilities framework for supporting people with autism (Easy Read)

## Dyspraxia

- <https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/dyspraxia-adults/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/DyspraxiaIRL/>
- <https://dyspraxia.ie/Adults-with-Dyspraxia-DCD>
- <http://www.dyspraxiauk.com/>



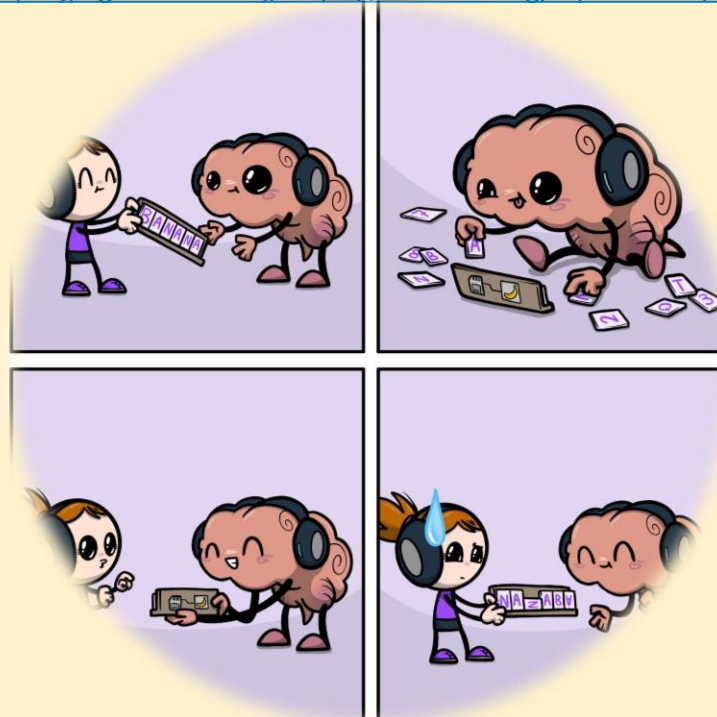
# Further information (3)

## Tourette's Syndrome

- <https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/67-what-is-ts.html>
- <https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/84-employers.html>
- <https://movementdisorders.ufhealth.org/2020/01/31/strengths-of-tourette-syndrome/>
- <https://www.tourettes-action.org.uk/20-getting-diagnosed.html#:~:text=TS%20can%20only%20be%20diagnosed,autism%2C%20dystonia%20and%20Sydenham's%20chorea>
- [Information TS](#) (copy-paste the link using Google Chrome): <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://tourette.org/wp-content/uploads/Young-adult-final-tool-kit1.pdf>
- [Managing TS](#) (copy-paste the link using Google Chrome): <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://tourette.org/wp-content/uploads/Full-Provider-Tool-Kit-rev.pdf>

## Dyslexia

- <http://www.key4learning.com/>
- <https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/>
- <https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyscalculia/how-can-i-identify-dyscalculia>
- <https://www.dyslexia.uk.net/employers/access-to-work/>
- <https://abilitynet.org.uk/news-blogs/how-can-dsa-help-students-dyslexia>





# Self-help

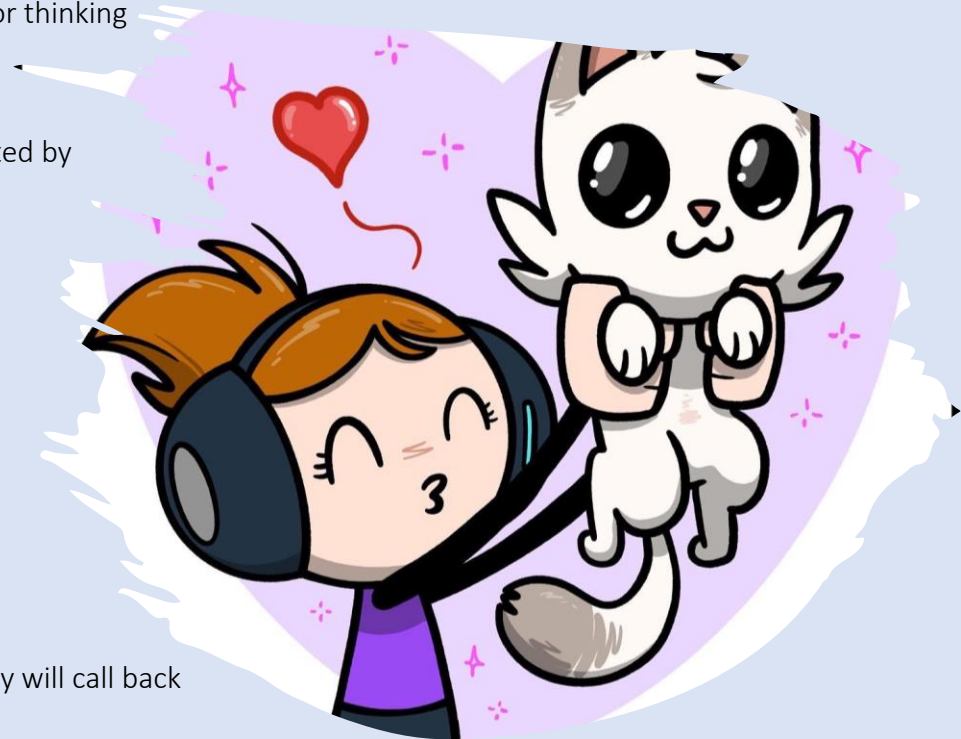


You can also find some self-help materials for co-occurring conditions

- <https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/mental-health>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/self-help-therapies/>
- <https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>
- <https://www.nhsinform.scot/symptoms-and-self-help/self-help-guides>

# General support: Reach out, keep trying, you are not alone!

- **Samaritans:** 116 123 (free). Text 077 25 90 90 90. Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)
- **National Autistic Society (NAS)** - 0808 800 4104 - <https://www.autism.org.uk/>
- Search online for your **local GP surgery** (UK) - <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp>
- **Text** the word '**Shout**' to **85258** and they will call you back. If you're feeling low, anxious, worried, lonely, overwhelmed, or thinking about hurting yourself. Shout is a free, confidential, anonymous in the UK. <https://giveusashout.org/get-help/>
- **RISE:** 0300 323 9985. National refuge: 0808 2000 247. RISE is an independent registered charity that helps people affected by domestic abuse. <https://www.riseuk.org.uk/get-help/support-advice>
- **Victim Support:** 0808 168 9111. <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/more-us/contact-us/>
- [University of Bath EDI](#)
- [University of Bath autism resources](#)
- [Access to work](#) for ALL conditions, including mental and physical health (support for employed people)
- [Disabled Students Allowance \(DSA\)](#)
- **SANELINE:** 0300 304 7000 (temporarily closed but can leave name and telephone for a call back on: 07984967708). They will call back after a few days. The service offers emotional support and information if you are struggling with your Mental Health.
- **Relate:** 0300 100 1234. Relationship support for everyone (not free).



# Key Message - Contact us

“We are all different. Be curious to know us. **Your openness to help us and kindness to accept our challenges and strengths can make a difference!**”

Thank you for your interest in supporting us!”

Please **contribute** with ideas, **help improve this guide**, and **contact the author**:

Dr Nahory Hernández Mancilla  
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Other guides and training can be tailored to specific environments, please get in touch!

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You can find the most updated version of the guidelines here: <https://neurodivergentfriendly.com/guidelines>



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