**Neurodiversity – Additional Resources**

Below are some brief explanations of language and descriptions of various neurodivergent conditions (not an exhaustive list), and some links for further information and reading.

**“Neurodiversity”** is a term first coined by Australian sociologist Judy Singer – it recognises that all humans have brains that work in different ways – like fingerprints no two human brains are the same – there is no one definitive “normal” brain. This is a part of human variation.

Helpful video by Jessica McCabe ‘What exactly is neurodiversity?’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALJ3CFRRZpo>

**“Neurodivergent”** people experience, interact with, and interpret the world in unique ways. The world is often not designed with them in mind, so people can face very real challenges. Often these can be overcome through understanding of difference and adaptations being made. Just as with neurotypical people, everyone who is neurodivergent is different and their experiences, skills and challenges will all be unique. Often people will have a “spikey profile” with high levels of skill in some areas, while having significant challenges in others.

**Autism**

A neurodivergent condition, which means people have differences in the way they experience social interaction & communication, sensory differences, and highly focused interests. Many autistic people also experience extreme anxiety. It is a spectrum condition which means that people are affected in different ways and is officially considered a developmental disability.

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: tenacity and honesty, great focus on detail especially when linked to their special interest and finding and creating patterns.

Approximately 1-2% of the population are autistic.

**Resources:**

* Purple Ella is an autistic woman who also has ADHD and talk brilliantly about her experiences (there are many other autistic speakers who are also fabulous – some other names to look out for are Harry Thompson, Dean Beadle, Temple Grandin): [www.purpleella.com](http://www.purpleella.com)
* The National Autistic Society website:[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)
* National Autistic Society video ‘Can you make it to the end’ (about sensory overload – trigger warning if you have sensory differences yourself you might find it too much) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPknwW8mPAM>
* The PDA Society website: [www.pdasociety.org.uk](http://www.pdasociety.org.uk)
* “Amazing Things Happen” video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbwRrVw-CRo&t=98s>
* Bristol Autism Support [www.bristolautismsupport.org/](http://www.bristolautismsupport.org/)
* Autism Families website: [www.autismfamilies.co.uk](http://www.autismfamilies.co.uk)
* Some authors to look out for: Luke Beardon, Heidi Mavir, Rose & Jodie Smitten, Siena Castellon
* Useful guide on language that is used about autism now (which terms are preferred etc) <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/help-and-support/how-to-talk-about-autism>

**ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)**

A neurodivergent condition officially characterised by inattentiveness, hyperactivity, challenges with organisation and impulsiveness. People who have ADHD may also struggle with sensory overload and processing.

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: being very alert and able to hyper-focus; having passion and enthusiasm and strong visual skills.

Approximately 5% of the population have ADHD

* ADHD aware website: [www.adhdaware.org.uk](http://www.adhdaware.org.uk)
* Article about ADHD from Attitude magazine: <https://www.additudemag.com/what-is-adhd-symptoms-causes-treatments/>
* Video by Purple Ella about ADHD: <https://www.purpleella.com/2020/10/30/getting-diagnosed-with-adhd/>
* Jessica McCabe’s website ‘How to ADHD’ with loads of great videos explaining ADHD and different elements of it: <https://howtoadhd.com/>

**Dyslexia**

A specific learning difficulty, meaning someone has challenges with reading, writing and spelling that can have an impact on education and in the workplace. As well as literacy there can also be an impact on processing (auditory and visual) and organisational skills.

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: being excellent at processing and picturing 3D objects and being very creative – many dyslexic people have showed a natural talent for jobs such as engineering, graphic design and the arts.

Approximately 10% of the population are dyslexic

**Resources:**

* British Dyslexia Association: [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)
* “See Dyslexia Differently” video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11r7CFlK2sc>

**Dyspraxia (Developmental Coordination Disorder – DCD)**

A developmental condition affecting movement and physical co-ordination in children and adults. It can cause challenges for people around their fine and gross motor skills (making them seem clumsy).

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: being extremely creative, have excellent verbal skills and being very empathetic.

Approximately 5% of the population are dyspraxic.

**Resources:**

Dyspraxia Foundation: [www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk)

**Dyscalculia**

A specific learning difficulty related to understanding numbers which can lead to a diverse range of difficulties with maths – which are out of step with the person’s abilities in other areas and their educational level/age.

Some people who are dyscalculic can learn to “do” maths, but do not understand the processes and come up with convoluted solutions. As well as issues with numbers it can also affect sense of time & sense of direction.

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: being very creative, loving words and being excellent communicators, and being intuitive and practical.

Dyscalculia often co-occurs with other neurodivergence such as ADHD (20% of children with ADHD have Dyscalculia) and autism.Approximately 6% of the population have dyscalculia.

**Resources:**

* British Dyslexia Association: [www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyscalculia](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyscalculia)
* Dyslexia Information Centre: [www.dyscalculia.me.uk](http://www.dyscalculia.me.uk)

**Tourette’s syndrome**

A neurological condition characterised by tics (involuntary sounds and movements). Despite the image that is often portrayed of the condition, only 10% of people with Tourette’s have “rude” language or gestures as their tics. People with Tourette’s experience a lot of isolation and discrimination because of other people’s prejudice.

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: creativity, verbal communication and the ability to hyper-focus.

Approximately 1-2% of the population have Tourette’s Syndrome.

85% of people with Tourette’s have co-occurring conditions such as ADHD or OCD.

**Resources:**

* Tourette’s Action: [www.tourettes-action.org.uk](http://www.tourettes-action.org.uk)

**OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder)**

An anxiety-related condition where a person experiences frequent intrusive and unwelcome obsessional thoughts, commonly referred to as “obsessions”. For someone with OCD, what they worry about (whatever intrusive thoughts they have) seems very likely to happen and their sense of responsibility means that they feel they must act in order to prevent it. In other words, the two beliefs create an ever-increasing cycle of obsessions and compulsions.

Everyone is different but some commonly seen strengths are: being very attentive and having good attention to detail.

**Resources:**

* OCD UK: [www.ocduk.org](http://www.ocduk.org)