

Owl Blue



Understanding Neurodiversity within the Workplace

About Me

I am an Autistic/ADHD Female (Diagnosed 2019)

I have two daughters both diagnosed as
Autistic/ADHD/Complex Needs

Founder of Chasing Rainbows, a service providing
coaching, training and consultancy pre and post
diagnosis

Training provider for established Charities,
Organisations and Local Authorities

SENDCO Consultant for early years settings

Autism/ADHD Consultant/Coach, Blogger and
Founder of I am her voice- our autism journey and
writer of the 'Happy Being Me' Series

Owl Blue



Understanding Autism

Autism is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them. (Nas, 2018)

It affects 1 in 100 people in the UK (2017)

Autism is described as a condition on a wide spectrum, this means that one person with autism may share some similarities with another person with autism but it's not a "one size fits all" and autism affects everyone differently.

Some people with autism can live relatively independent lives but the majority may face further challenges as they age especially those on the more severe end of the spectrum who may need constant 1:1 support for the duration of their lives.

Understanding Autism

Masking Autism (Adult)

Masking/Camouflaging is the way in which a child/adult with Autism can try and act in a way in which it would appear that they are not struggling and/or have any difficulties

Autistic Adults may mask their traits as often they are more aware of what is socially acceptable around them

Often the child/adults motivations for masking their autistic traits are so that they can fit in, especially in social situations and feeling the need to please others

Owl Blue



Understanding Autism

Autism and Communication in the Workplace

Adults with Autism may often struggle to express how they are feeling, even when they are verbal

You might also find that they DO NOT like to ask for help, if they ask for help, to them it can seem as though it is a weakness and that they won't fit in

To some autistic adults, emotions and feelings can have a variety of different meanings from one person to the next

We may be verbal but we still need help to express ourselves and process feelings, regardless of whether we are children or adults

Understanding Autism

Autism and Communication in the Workplace

We struggle with non-verbal communication which means that we may not read other people very well, we can also become anxious if someone changes their tone of voice

We may misinterpret what you might be telling us, remember that we are inflexible, it is part of our diagnosis and we may take things literally, this can also cause an increase in our anxiety, again something we may try to mask

Owl Blue



Understanding Autism

Autism and Communication in the Workplace

Adults with Autism can be inflexible, therefore you may need to tell us things, as it is!!

We don't always read between the lines in conversation, we don't always get if there is a hidden meaning and/or participate in small talk, as often this can leave us feeling uncomfortable and can make things unpredictable in our mind, we don't know what to expect from small talk and we don't know what to expect from other people



Understanding ADHD

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

An Individual with ADHD has differences in their brain development and brain activity which means that they struggle with daily tasks such as sitting still and having self control which can make them impulsive

Any adult can find it difficult to concentrate, pay attention and stay focused, however those with ADHD struggle massively therefore it has a major effect on their daily living

Inattentive, Hyperactive and Impulsive are the three traits which can indicate that a person may have ADHD. The condition can also be diagnosed on one factor depending on the severity

Owl Blue

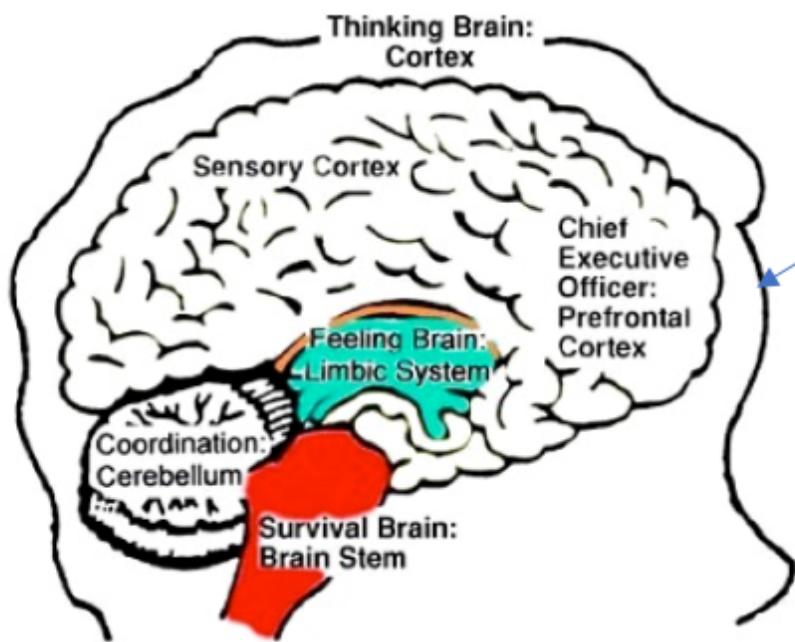


Understanding ADHD Executive Functioning

Executive Functioning is the cognitive process which organizes your thoughts and activities, manages times, priorities your daily tasks and helps you to make decisions

Adults with executive functioning difficulties often struggle to plan, organise and complete tasks. They often misplace things and forget what they are doing, often focusing on the tasks that they are interested in

People with Executive Dysfunction struggle with bigger tasks and often find it difficult to meet deadlines and stick to one thing at a time, often found in those with ADHD/Autism



Executive Function Skills

The Board of Directors that helps you do what you decide to do.

- **Initiation/ Activation**
- **Planning and Organizing**
- **Attention**
- **Self-Monitoring**
- **Working Memory**
- **Effort**
- **Emotional Regulation**

PTScaching.com

Cindy Goldrich, Ed.M., ADHD-CCSP

Understanding Sensory Processing Disorder/Issues

Sight
Touch
Smell
Taste
Sound

Proprioception (The ability to perceive the position/movement in our body)- Tight Hugs/Crashing into things- or avoiders will not like these particular movements.

Vestibular (Contributes to the sense of balance and spatial awareness within our sensory system, affects balance and co-ordination)- Spinners, Rocking, Hanging upside down, avoiders will be the opposite.

Interoception (The Sense that helps you understand and feel what is happening in your body



Sensory Resources and Strategies

- A wobble/wedge cushion for adults who find it difficult to stay seated, having a chair which allows you to move will also provide vestibular feedback, this is helpful for both Autism/ADHD/SPD
- Try a chair with handles, this will help children/adults who can't interpret where their bodies are in space
- Have fidget aids at your desk, be minding of the amount of pressure you are seeking when using one, often we are seeking tactile/proprioception input which often helps us to stay focused and alert

Strategies to help Support Autism/ADHD

Provide Accountability/Give Praise/Make it a priority

Write helpful lists or help them write one and post them up somewhere visible
door/board/office/fridge

Movement Breaks, Emotional Regulation
Coaching to help support their anxiety, allow them sensory breaks, try to UNDERSTAND their sensory needs