



Agile ORLANDO JULY 24-28 2023

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Becky Kuzma

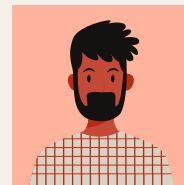
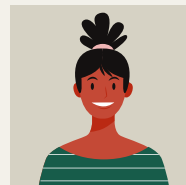
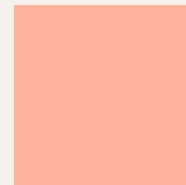
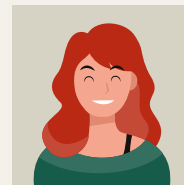
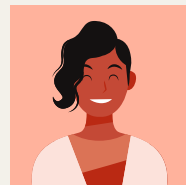
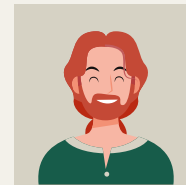
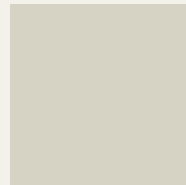
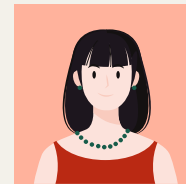
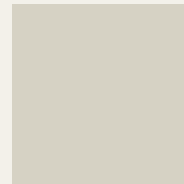
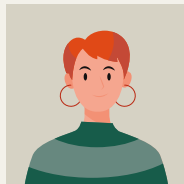
**One Size Doesn't Fit All: Supporting and Fostering
Neurodiverse Teams**



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One Size Doesn't Fit All: Supporting and Fostering Neurodiverse Teams



Before We Begin...

Introductions

Becky Kuzma (she/her)

- Agile Coach with a focus on building and empowering inclusive Agile teams
- Background in molecular biology, science nerd
- Experience championing initiatives in the DEIA space, partnering with leaders to create inclusive hiring and working norms
- When I'm not doing this, I love to fly fish, play pub trivia, and watch horror movies

Learning Outcomes

1

Be able to speak on the basics of neurodiversity

2

Experience through play some of the different challenges faced by neurodiverse individuals

3

Explore strategies and techniques to create an inclusive team work environment

4

Experience through play the benefits of neurodiverse teams

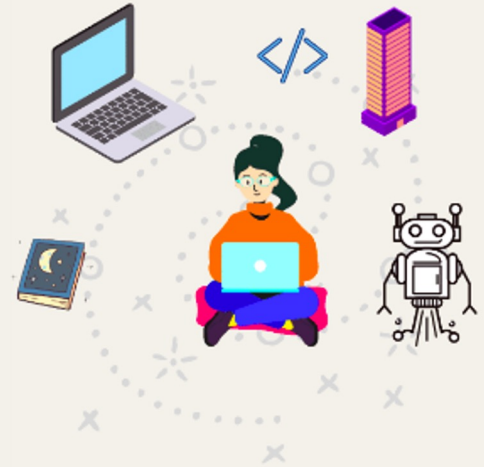
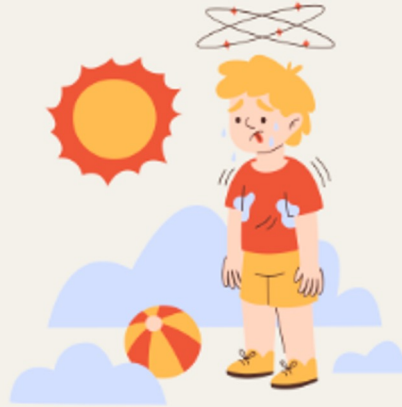
What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is a non-medical term to describe the diversity of human minds, the infinite variation in neurocognitive functioning within our species.^[7]



Diversity from a biological standpoint

Diversity is critical for survival. Species need to adapt to new environments to live.



Neurotypical

A **neurotypical** person is someone with neurocognitive functioning that is considered “typical” by dominant societal standards^{[8][9]}



Strong social and communication skills



Navigate socially complex situations with ease



Makes friends and establishes romantic relationships with ease



Ability to participate in loud, crowded, or visually overwhelming settings with ease

Neurodivergent

A **neurodivergent** person is someone with neurocognitive functioning that diverges from what is considered “typical” by dominant societal standards^[9]



Neurodivergent

This includes individuals with diagnoses such as, but not limited to:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Dyslexia
- ADHD/ADD
- Mood disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Many more

Neurodivergent

You do not need a medical diagnosis to be neurodivergent



The Neurodiversity Paradigm^[9]

- 1.) Neurodiversity is a natural and valuable form of human diversity.
- 2.) There is no one “normal” brain or “right” style of thinking
- 3.) Like other forms of diversity, neurodiversity is subject to inequities in power, but also is a source of creativity and potential when embraced

Neurodiversity Movement

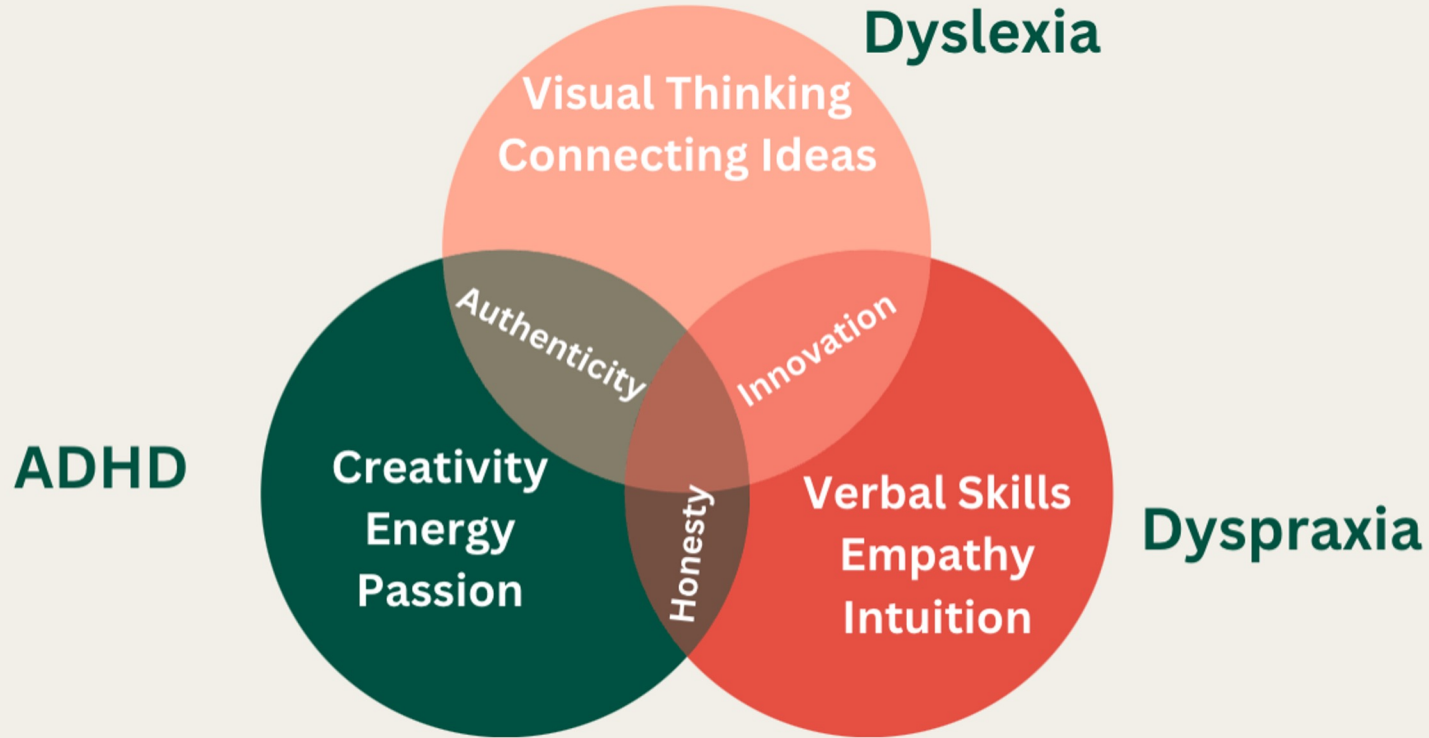
The Neurodiversity Movement is a social justice movement that seeks civil rights, equality, respect, and full societal inclusion for the neurodivergent^[9].

Rather than considering differences in our minds as “disordered” or “deficient”....

what if we were to create an environment where we value neurodiverse individuals and focus on developing their **strengths** and **talents**?

Why does neurodiversity matter?

- An estimated 1 out of 5 people are neurodivergent^[5]
- A neurodiverse workforce provides unique perspectives and skillsets^[1]



So what could it feel like to be neurodivergent?

- Grab a pen and piece of paper from the table
- Listen for my instructions



What was challenging? What was easy?

Challenges in the Workplace

There are many different challenges that neurodiverse individuals can face in the workplace, let's dig into some

After an interruption, how many minutes does it take on average to regain focus?

Time Management



23 minutes

UC Irvine: “Our data suggests that people compensate for interruptions by working faster, but this comes at a price: experiencing more stress, higher frustration, time pressure, and effort”^[2]

Time Management

For neurodiverse individuals, the cost of interruptions can be significantly greater than this

Time Management Adjustments

- Focus time - block time on your calendar for deep focus tasks
- Pause notifications (Gmail, Slack, etc.)
- Flexible working hours
- Calendar apps

How many types of communication can
you think of?

Communication

There are many different types of communication

When we talk about communication, people may have strengths and weaknesses in a variety of these types of communication.

Communication Adjustments

- Be mindful of vagueness, sarcasm and euphemisms
- Provide time to consider and respond to messages
- Use a variety of communication styles (visual, written, verbal, etc.)

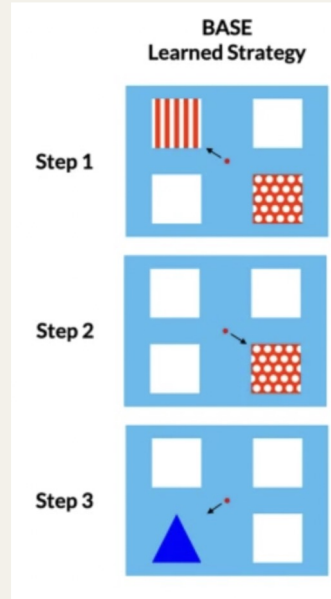
**Who is more open to change:
humans or monkeys?**

Handling Change

Monkeys!



a 2019 study by Georgia State University saw that monkeys are much more open to switching to more efficient strategies than humans.^[3]



Change Management

As a species, humans are very resistant to change and switching strategies.

Neurodiverse individuals can experience increased stress and anxiety from changing strategies, brainstorming with others, and trying out new things.

Change Management Adjustments

- Be mindful of change and the rate of change
- Communicate changes with advance notice when possible
- Explain reasons for change
- Provide opportunities to discuss changes and raise concerns

Why a Neurodiverse Team? Let's Try an Experiment!

- There are two types of puzzles to get done:
 - Word search - find the word within the grid of letters
 - Math crossword - Solve the math problem and write the answer in the crossword grid.
- Pair up with someone at your table
- On my signal, complete as much of each puzzle as you can in the allotted time, alternating between the two types.

Analyze Your Results

- Ask your partner what their favorite activity is
 - If you both share the **same** favorite activity - **you are an 'S' team**
 - If you have **different** favorite activities - **you are a 'D' team**
- Check your answers against the solutions at your table
- Tally up how many answers you got right across **both** puzzles
- Write your cumulative score on a sticky and bring it up to the front

Experiment Debrief

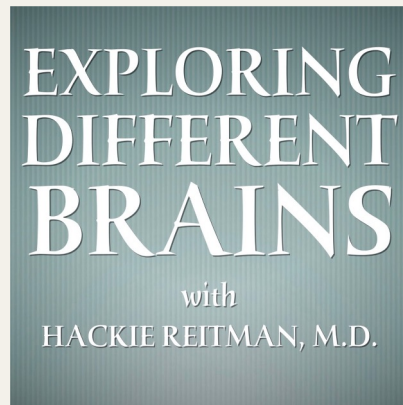
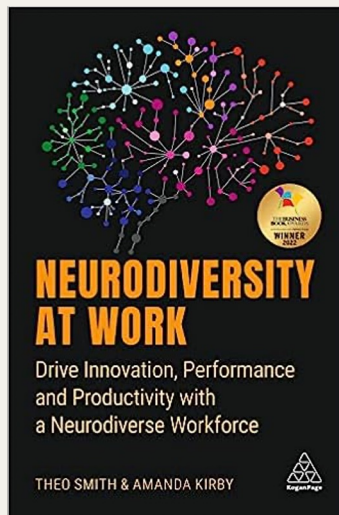
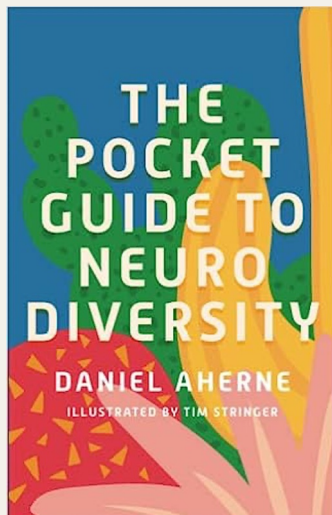
- What kind of pair completed the most puzzles?
- How did diversity help or hinder doing the work?
- How did lack of diversity help or hinder doing the work?
- What plausible parallels do you see with the work we do every day?

So What Can I Do?

As a leader, there are several things you can do to foster and support neurodiverse teams...

Educate Yourself!

- Start by doing your own research
- Seek different perspectives
- Podcasts, articles, workshops, etc.



Lead By Example

Start talking about the factors that help you work your best. Here are some ways to get the conversation started:

- Regular 1:1's
- Manual of Me
- Team canvas

One size doesn't fit all

Hello,
I'm **Steven**



My Working Hours

Mo: 09:00 - 17:00
Tu: 09:00 - 17:00
We: 09:00 - 17:00
Th: 09:00 - 17:00
Fr: 09:00 - 17:00



My Communication preferences are...



EM@IL

Google Meet

Conditions I like to work in

I like a quiet working environment, if there is a task that needs focus.



I like having headphones in.

I need to be able to move from space to space



Things I need



COFFEE



The best way to give me feedback is ...

Feedback is a gift

I like receiving feedback face-to-face

I see all feedback as a learning opportunity, so I like total honesty.

Include examples!



Things I love

"I like hearing what others are working on."



Swarming

Sketching

Things I struggle with



Politics

"No, but"

Source: Steven Sampson-Jones on LinkedIn









Team Canvas

Version 0.8 | theteamcanvas.com | hello@theteamcanvas.com

Most important things to talk about in the team to make sure
your work as a group is productive, happy and stress-free

Team name

Date

PEOPLE & ROLES  What are our names and the roles we have in the team?	COMMON GOALS  What you as a group really want to achieve? What is our key goal that is feasible, measurable and time-bounded?	VALUES  What do we stand for? What are guiding principles? What are our common values that we want to be at the core of our team?	RULES & ACTIVITIES  What are the rules we want to introduce after doing this session? How do we communicate and keep everyone up to date? How do we make decisions? How do we execute and evaluate what we do?
<div><div>PURPOSE</div><div>Why we are doing what we are doing in the first place?</div></div>			
PERSONAL GOALS  What are our individual personal goals? Are there personal agendas that we want to open up?	NEEDS & EXPECTATIONS  What each one of us needs to be successful? What are our personal needs towards the team to be at our best?		
STRENGTHS & ASSETS  What are the skills we have in the team that will help us achieve our goals? What are interpersonal/soft skills that we have? What are we good at, individually and as a team?		WEAKNESSES & RISKS  What are the weaknesses we have, individually and as a team? What our teammates should know about us? What are some obstacles we see ahead us that we are likely to face?	

Team Canvas by theteamcanvas.com. Created by Alexey Ivanov, Dmitry Voloshchuk
Team Canvas is inspired by Business Model Canvas by Strategyzer.

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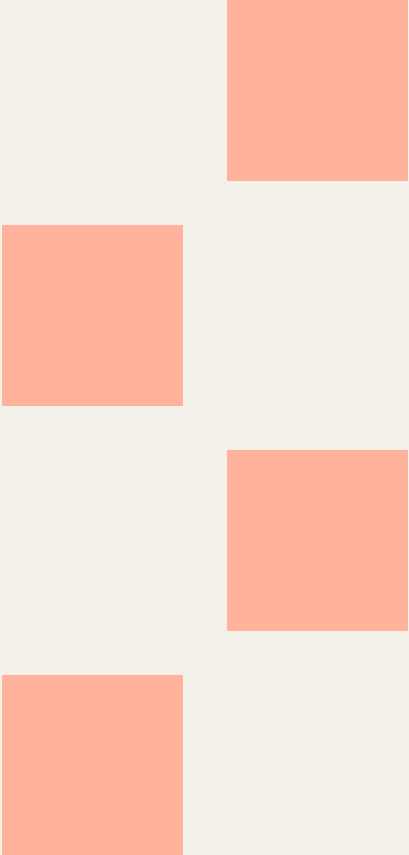
Cultivate a Culture of Learning

Identify your “information gaps”, and seek to fill them

- Ask open questions and actively listen
- Share your learnings
- Co-create an experiment with your team, try something new out for a sprint or so

Table Discussion

- What are the barriers to achieving a team environment that is more inclusive of all individuals?
- What would it take to remove those barriers?

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide consists of six orange squares of varying sizes arranged in a staggered, staircase-like pattern. One square is at the top left, followed by two more in a descending diagonal. Below these, there are three more squares, with the bottom-most one being the largest and positioned further to the left.

“Diversity really means becoming complete as human beings - all of us. We learn from each other. If you're missing on that stage, we learn less. We all need to be on that stage.”

~ Juan Felipe Herrera

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consists of two squares. The one on the left is orange and the one on the right is a light grey color. They are positioned side-by-side.

Fostering and Supporting Neurodiverse Teams

What is one small step that you want to take towards supporting and fostering a neurodiverse team?

Thank You!



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/becky-kuzma/>

Resources

Research Publications

1. Doyle, N. (2020). Neurodiversity at work: a biopsychosocial model and the impact on working adults. *British Medical Bulletin*, 135(1), 108.
2. Mark, G., Gudith, D., & Klocke, U. (2008, April). The cost of interrupted work: more speed and stress. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 107-110).
3. Watzek, J., Pope, S. M., & Brosnan, S. F. (2019). Capuchin and rhesus monkeys but not humans show cognitive flexibility in an optional-switch task. *Scientific reports*, 9(1), 13195.

Articles

1. Mahto, Hogan, Hatfield, Sniderman. (2022) A rising tide lifts all boats: Creating a better work environment for all by embracing neurodiversity. *Deloitte Insights*.
2. Austin, R. D., & Pisano, G. P. (2017). Neurodiversity as a competitive advantage. *Harvard Business Review*, 95(3), 96-103.
3. Baumer, Frueh. (2021). What is neurodiversity?. *Harvard Health Publishing*
4. Cleveland Clinic Health Library, Neurodivergent definition
5. Judy. (2023) What Does Neurotypical Mean?, *Very Well Health*

Books

1. The Neuroqueer Heresies, Dr. Nick Walker

Tools

1. Manual of Me - <https://www.manualof.me/>
2. Team Canvas - <https://www.theteamcanvas.com/>



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JULY 24-28

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