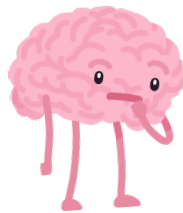


# Open Communication

In groups when people are having convos and talking to each other

I like to listen to what people are saying before I input my thoughts

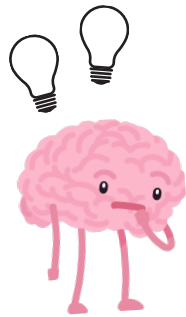


# NeuroTypes



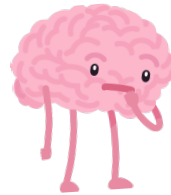
# Mental Health

However when i am asked for my opinion my flight or fight response kicks in and i worry and get anxious just in case my thoughts are wrong.



# Executive Functioning

**POOF!**



Because of this, my mindset has changed, all the thoughts and ideas i have are gone. Poof.

# Intrusive Thoughts



# Shame

This makes me less likely to be able to participate again or feel safe opening up and talking

So my voice goes unheard.



**Let me explain...**

# Open Communication

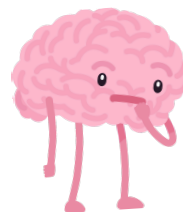
START  
HERE

I experience challenges in engaging in group discussions due to anxiety about potentially interrupting, saying something incorrect, or causing distress to others. This approach stems from a desire to ensure that my contributions are thoughtful and accurate so I can't be told I've done or said something wrong. Individuals with autism may exhibit heightened sensitivity to social cues and a preference for structured communication.

In autism, the amygdala may be hyperactive or show altered connectivity with other brain regions involved in social processing. These differences can contribute to challenges in interpreting social cues, regulating emotions, and navigating social interactions, which may manifest as heightened anxiety, difficulty in social communication, or sensitivity to sensory stimuli.

In groups when people are having convos and talking to each other

I like to listen to what people are saying before I input my thoughts

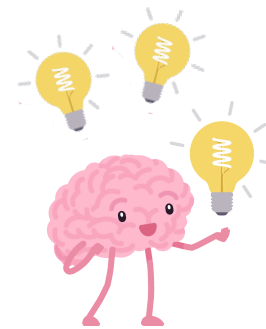


# Neuro Types

The differences in the amygdala that lead to heightened sensitivity to social cues and emotions in autism may contribute to racing thoughts. This means I get a lot of ideas simultaneously based upon what other people are saying along with worries about eye contact and looking like I'm listening.

When it comes to ADHD, that urge to blurt out thoughts or interrupt can be quite common. People with ADHD might experience difficulties with impulse control, which can lead to challenges in waiting for their turn to speak. The need to express thoughts immediately can stem from the hyperactivity and impulsivity aspects of ADHD. It's like your brain is moving at a faster pace, making it hard to hold back thoughts and responses.

So with everything else going on inside my brain I also have to focus on not interrupting because of ADHD which can be stressful.



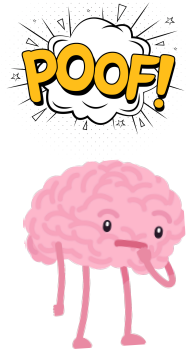
# Mental Health

Its like your brain hits a roadblock, even though I know the answer, my mind goes on pause when someone asks me a question. This experience can happen in situations where there's (Real or assumed) pressure to respond quickly or when you feel overwhelmed by the interaction. In the case of autism or ADHD, this blanking out might be linked to difficulties with processing information rapidly or managing the cognitive load of the conversation.

However when i am asked for my opinion my flight or fight response kicks in and i worry and get anxious just in case my thoughts are wrong.



# Executive Functioning



The shift in mindset from listening to fight or flight, can make it challenging for thoughts to flow smoothly. When your brain perceives a threat or stress and proceeds into fight or flight mode, it can impact your ability to recall information or formulate responses, leading to those moments where your mind draws a blank.

When it comes to autism, challenges with executive functioning can be quite common. Difficulties in areas like planning, organization, and shifting attention can contribute to moments of mental blankness or difficulty responding to questions promptly. These executive function challenges can make it harder to process information quickly, leading to moments where thoughts may seem to escape your mind when under pressure.

# Intrusive Thoughts

When these types of situations happen, intrusive thoughts can start barging in, making you feel embarrassed about not being able to recall what you wanted to say. It can be tough, especially in social situations where you want to express yourself clearly. The combination of blanking out, intrusive thoughts, and embarrassment can create a challenging experience, it can intensify emotions and make it harder to manage reactions effectively. This can lead to heightened stress and anxiety, affecting emotional regulation, which they already have struggles with



# Shame

START  
HERE

The shame and frustration individuals may experience when they struggle or make mistakes during conversations or discussions due to their neurodiversity are real and valid feelings. Forgetting what they wanted to say in a conversation can be particularly challenging and embarrassing, leading to feelings of inadequacy or self-criticism. The self-doubt that stems from this, can contribute to increased social isolation. When individuals experience shame or embarrassment due to their difficulties, they may start to doubt their abilities to interact socially, leading to feelings of insecurity and anxiety in social situations.

This self-doubt can create a cycle where individuals may avoid social interactions to prevent making mistakes or feeling judged, ultimately leading to increased isolation. The fear of not being able to keep up with conversations or feeling misunderstood can make socializing seem daunting and overwhelming.

This makes me less likely to be able to participate again or feel safe opening up and talking

So my voice goes unheard.





**So how do we put the  
engage in engagement?**

# Special Interests

When it comes to engaging in activities or conversations that don't pique the interests of neurodiverse individuals there may be struggle due to differences in brain activity. In these situations, the prefrontal cortex, responsible for focus and attention, may have difficulty maintaining engagement, leading to challenges in staying on task or participating actively.

Meaning, When these individuals engage in conversations or activities that don't capture their interest, it can be mentally taxing and challenging for their brains to stay motivated and focused. It's like asking your brain to work extra hard to find the willpower to participate in something that doesn't naturally engage you.

When delving into a fixation or special interest, the brain's reward centre, may light up fuelling excitement and motivation. This heightened activation can enhance focus, drive, and enjoyment, making it easier to immerse oneself fully in the topic or activity. When someone is deeply engrossed in a fixation or special interest, their brain can become hyper-focused on that particular subject, almost like entering a "hyperfocus mode." During this intense focus, they might tune out everything else around them, making it challenging to shift their attention to other things or keep track of time.

Disturbing them during this state can lead to a significant emotional reaction because their intense focus is suddenly disrupted, causing a jarring shift in their mental state. It can feel like a sudden interruption to their internal world, leading to frustration, irritability, or even emotional outbursts. 'We don't like change.'

When someone engages in a special interest, the brain releases dopamine, creating a sense of satisfaction and reward. This surge of dopamine can intensify their focus and enjoyment, making the activity even more compelling and absorbing. It's like their brain is rewarding them for diving deep into their passion. This strong dopamine response to their special interests can contribute to the intensity and fixation they experience, as the brain seeks more of that rewarding feeling.

# Scripting/ Echolalia

It can act as a coping mechanism to reduce anxiety in social situations or provide a sense of comfort and familiarity. By recognizing the context in which someone scripts, we can gain insights into their interests, emotions, and communication style.



If I want to express something that I don't have the words for I can find a similar experience on the TV that people can relate to and understand otherwise I might not know how to tell people if I have an issue or something to say



scripting can also be a way for individuals to express themselves, convey emotions, or communicate their needs indirectly. By paying attention to the content and context of the scripts, we can decipher underlying messages and meanings, thus enhancing our understanding of their language and communication.

By acknowledging and engaging with an individual's scripts in a respectful and supportive manner, we can establish a deeper connection, bridge communication gaps, and create a more inclusive and meaningful interaction. It's all about listening, observing, and interpreting their language beyond the literal words spoken.

# Pathological Demand Avoidance



Is a profile within the autism spectrum characterized by an extreme avoidance of everyday demands. It's a condition that can affect individuals' ability to manage and respond to demands, leading to high levels of anxiety and resistance.

# Pathological Demand Avoidance

1. **Be Clear and Concise**: Use simple and direct language to convey your message. Avoid using complex sentences or ambiguous phrases that might be confusing.
2. **Provide Choices**: Offer options rather than giving commands. This can help individuals feel more in control and reduce anxiety.
3. **Use Visual Aids**: Incorporate visual cues like pictures, diagrams, or schedules to support verbal communication. Visual aids can enhance understanding and clarity.
4. **Give Processing Time**: Allow individuals extra time to process information and respond. Avoid pressuring for an immediate answer.
5. **Recognize Nonverbal Cues**: Pay attention to nonverbal communication such as body language and facial expressions. These cues can provide valuable insights into how the individual is feeling.
6. **Respect Boundaries**: Understand and respect personal boundaries. Be mindful of personal space and individual preferences.
7. **Avoid Ambiguity**: Steer clear of sarcasm, metaphors, or figures of speech that might be misinterpreted. Be straightforward and literal in your communication.
8. **Practice Empathy**: Show empathy and understanding towards the individual's unique needs and challenges. Validate their feelings and experiences.

## **Conclusion**

- **Very blatantly state the reward factor of the engagement activity.**
- **Consider implications of literal thinking.**
- **Consider pathological demand avoidance. think about sentence structure and how the message will be received. Don't make participants feel as though they are being told to do something,**
- **Make sure there's some sort of universal dopamine factor.**
- **Consider how special interests can be of use. Ice breakers maybe.**
- **Consider what needs to be sent in advance to minimise anxiety.**
- **Consider the size of groups, if the neuro population is diverse ADHD impulsivity may take over meaning Autistic individuals don't always feel heard. Turn taking maybe. you can only talk with the item. autism likes rules.**
- **Think about the structure and time allocation to ensure your allowing people the time they need to fully open up.**
- **Consider how many levels a story has they may only feel safe to add a bit at a time.**
- **Consider execution of the engagement can it be done in organisational groups to add to the feeling of safety rather than an open invite.**

## **Continued.**

- **Whatever you want to hear from people allow them the option to email it in advance or after, in case the anxiety or the ability to physically speak is a barrier.**
- **Can people join online? the chat option has helped me in online chat. it can be easier to type then find the words to say (scripting)**