

LINKS, HINTS & TIPS SHARED DURING THE WEBINAR

Produced by:

make a difference
workplace culture / mental health / wellbeing

In partnership with
 texthelp®



Thursday 29 February 2024, 10.00am - 11.00am



Sam Tuckey,
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Useful articles and reports on www.makeadifference.media

<https://makeadifference.media/mental/14-tips-to-get-the-best-out-of-your-neurodiverse-workforce/>

<https://makeadifference.media/design/designing-workplaces-with-neurodiversity-front-of-mind/>

<https://makeadifference.media/mental/neurodiversity-focus-conflict-burnout-perfectionism/>

<https://makeadifference.media/mental/so-you-think-youre-doing-neurodiversity-support-well-you-may-need-to-think-again/>

<https://makeadifference.media/mental/people-are-looking-to-workplaces-to-build-a-sense-of-community-ive-got-a-unique-responsibility/>

<https://makeadifference.media/mental/neurodiversity-and-mental-health/>

<https://makeadifference.media/reports/the-buckland-review-of-autism-employment/>

<https://makeadifference.media/reports/weaving-wellbeing-into-recruitment-and-retention-virtual-roundtable-report/>

On diagnosis

Everyone is neurodivergent in some form or other, like we all have mental health, like we are all on a spectrum – it's the human condition

Jacqui Wallis, Genius Within: Neurodiversity includes everyone, but not everyone is Neurodivergent. Neurodivergent individual divert (from the Neuro-typical profile) and - as Angelica says - they exhibit spiky profiles, so are much stronger in one area, and have challenges in other areas.

I ignore whether there is a scientific approach in the selection of neurominorities you describe. But I miss the gifted and highly gifted minds, who might feel quite different and isolated sometimes, poorly understood and compared to stereotypes

Cognitive issues stemming from menopause is something we are looking to recognise and support better at my work place.

Has covid 19 affected neurodivergent people adversely?

Jacqui Wallis, Genius Within: The Lancet published a report that long Covid did have a negative cognitive impact on our executive functions. We currently don't have enough research to know if this will be short or long term. This is the Lancet piece - scroll down to the 4th paragraph in the summary for an overview.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanwpc/article/PIIS2666-6065\(23\)00154-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanwpc/article/PIIS2666-6065(23)00154-2/fulltext)

On adjustments / accommodations

That approach (described by Angelica) to recruitment is excellent. As is questions in advance

Adjustments come in the form of training line managers to be open in managing different working styles within teams – and in management style also

Does the Equality Act 2010 apply to the UK only? No, it is a EU directive, so not just applied to the UK

Jacqui Wallis, Genius Within: There is also the United Nations Convention on the Right of People with Disability

Using the transcript on Teams and asking ChatGPT to summarise is a tool I use to follow up meetings.

Stammering is included in our organisation (after a personal push!)

Jacqui Wallis: If it causes a challenge at work, then it would be included in a need for reasonable adjustment if it has a negative impact on their work

Jacqui Wallis: Under the Equality Act under disability - if it has a long term, chronic impact on their ability to do their role -compared to others.

Questions before interview is so so beneficial. We do this as standard at Lloyds Bank Foundation.

Access to Work will cover the cost for all Coaching, but if you are a company of more than 50 people then you will be asked to contribute to a IT equipment: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

Can you use access to work if there isn't a confirmed diagnosis?

Jacqui Wallis: Yes, Access to Work does NOT require a diagnosis.

Jacqui Wallis: You (the individual) makes the application, but you now have to add your line manager in there, as your workplace have to support your application. Even if they don't have to fund any of the offered adjustments. In our experience, the Assessors find it helpful if you know what you want/ need.

Anyone else noticed a dumbing down/poorer quality/increased inaccuracies in ATW assessments since the pandemic?

'Professional people managers' - LOVE this

Wouldn't it be more helpful to treat everyone as neurodivergent so people don't feel weird or stand out? I think everyone has their own preferences in working styles and it would mean working better with everyone

I agree - I think that also makes a more inclusive environment for people who don't yet know they are neurodivergent!

Jacqui Wallis: Yes - that is what we advocate - work at the system level to provide adjustments for everyone to take as they need - as Angelica said, almost all the workforce will experience some level of cognitive change during their working life - and if we work systemically - we don't need to wait for an individual to break (or be at breaking point) before we offer support.

For me as a neurodivergent employee the three key elements that my line manager must have when managing me is help, guidance and support

I strongly disagree with that point, it's not about preferences as such, it's about the impact of needs not being met and how debilitating it can be for a ND individual.

Jacqui Wallis: We made a short 2 min video about why we believe in working at a system level
https://youtu.be/piD6cLwL0j8?si=UQlw1U__ZDja2Kmu

Equality and equity are two different things...

I have mixed feelings re equal support for everyone. Diagnostic labels don't always help, and can create unnecessary boundaries, however, it can make certain difficulties invisible without it.

Jacqui Wallis: Absolutely - we advocate support everyone at the level of their need. Some might need more, some less, and needs may change.

Jacqui Wallis: It is not about equal support, in my opinion, it is about support being available for everyone - and not waiting until they are struggling to acknowledge their need.

I agree Jacqui, we should be working towards equity/equitability rather than just equality.

Being open to different working styles and communication needs should be a given.

My 2 favourite quotes are: Dr Stephen Shore "once you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism" and Dr. William Osler "ask not what kind of illness the patient has, ask what kind of patient has the illness" -> both are so relevant to neurodiversity in that we are all individuals and have our own unique experiences of a 'condition'. The whole concept of ND is to move away from labels and focus on traits and I'd go as far as saying the ND movement is also advocating a move away from focusing on stereotypes and pushing a focus on individuals. This needs to be replicated in the workplace and through "Adjustments"

One final note is I recommend watching Dave Thompson's TedX talk - rebranding the brain. He says that workplace adjustments should be normal not formal and accommodations should be seen as success enablers 😊

Psychological safety is absolutely key to so much

Jacqui Wallis: We totally agree Matt, psychological safety is KEY - we just created some elearning for Managers who want to support their team, both neurodivergent or neurotypical. and we have a

whole section on psychological safety and some practical help to work towards that environment. It isn't easy or quick, but having a safe culture is so vital.

Higher numbers of neurodivergent people are LGBTQIA+

Thinking further about intersectionality: Evidence suggests that neurodivergent individuals, particularly those diagnosed with autism, are significantly more likely to identify as LGBTQIA+ than those who are neurotypical. <https://www.thebraincharity.org.uk/lgbtqia-neurodiversity-neurodivergent-lgbtq/#:~:text=Evidence%20suggests%20that%20neurodivergent%20individuals%2C%20particularly%20those%20diagnosed,identify%20as%20LGBTQIA%2B%20than%20those%20who%20are%20neurotypical.>

Jacqui Wallis: Dr Nancy Doyle just wrote about this in a recent Forbes blog - I'll share a link.

Definitely an area that needs more research:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/drnancydoyle/2024/02/14/intersectionality-trans-solidarity-as-a-feature-of-neuroinclusion/?sh=67eac4945b84>

Thanks for sharing. Really intrigued by the evidence of intersectionality between LGBTQIA+ and neurodivergence

Thank yous

Thank you for an interesting session!

This has all been so useful. Thank you

Thank you! Brilliant session.

Great session! Thank you

Thank you to all the speakers it was very interesting!

Thank you; fascinating!

Thank you, very interesting indeed!

V useful session, thanks!

Thank you very much - fantastic webinar - so useful, and brilliant inclusive messaging

Thank you! Very valuable!

Thanks all, really engaging and interesting session!