Supporting Neurodiversity in the classroom

By Catrina Lowri

Who?

Catrina Lowri; experienced SENCO, qualified SEND teacher and founder of Neuroteachers. I am neurodivergent myself; dyslexic and bipolar.

What?

We will begin with introduction to Neurodiversity. Discuss how this affects behaviour in the classroom and how the educators can support this.

A Neuroteachers Perspective

We will talk about the

This will include:

•Your ‘learner in mind’
*What is neurodiversity?
*Co-occuring conditions and the fruit salad analogy
*How divergent is neurodivergent?
*Ages and stages
*Intersectionality
*How to support this in setting
*What this means for your ‘learner in mind’
*Celebrating ND
*Your questions answered

What we will cover today

Your ‘learner in mind’

What is Neurodiversity?

The term neurodiversity comes from the words ‘neurology’ and ‘diversity’ and refers to the variety of different minds and brains across the human genome.

It is a social construct rather than a diagnosis.

Neurodivergence originally referred to only autism and ADHD but has been expanded to include all types of neuro difference that are not neurotypical.

The term first came into popular usage in the late 1990s in various online forums for autistic and ADHD adults.

Neurodivergence

This includes

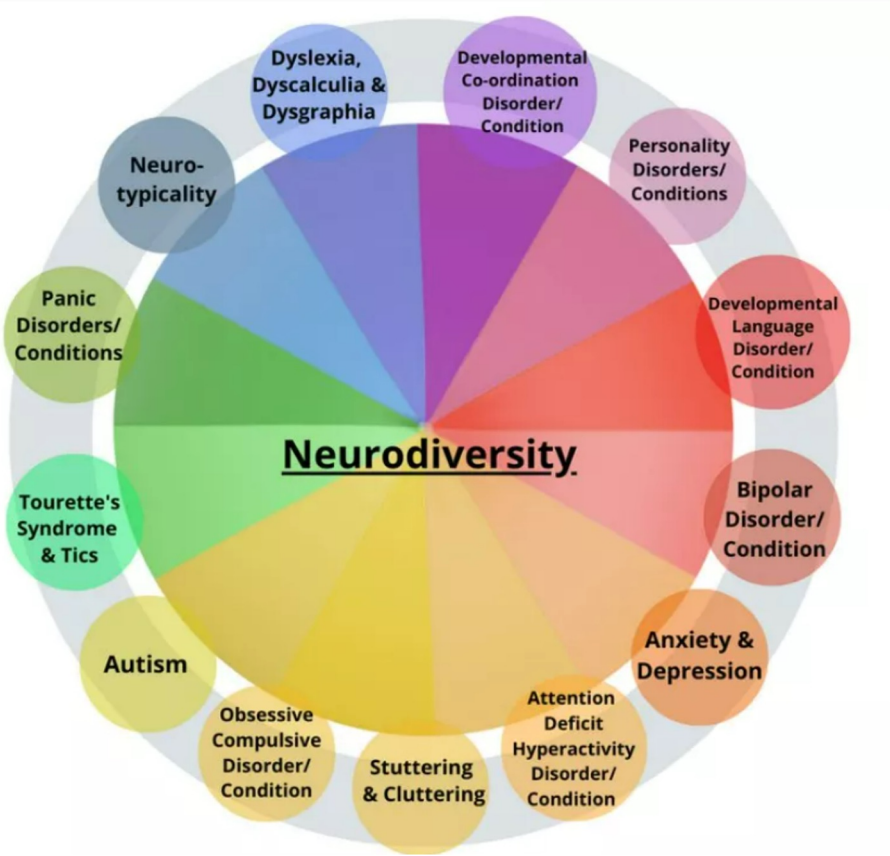
*All hereditary conditions which cause a difference in neurology

*All hereditary mental health conditions

*All acquired neurological difference such as those caused by injury

Co-occurring Neurodivergent Conditions

These include common conditions such as Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia (DCD), Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

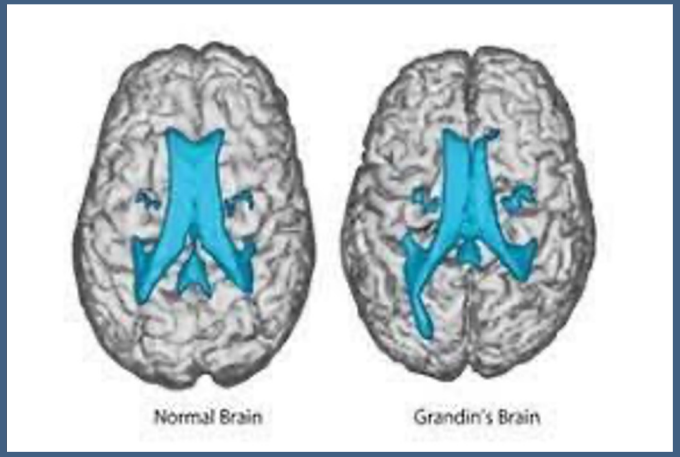


The Fruit Salad Approach

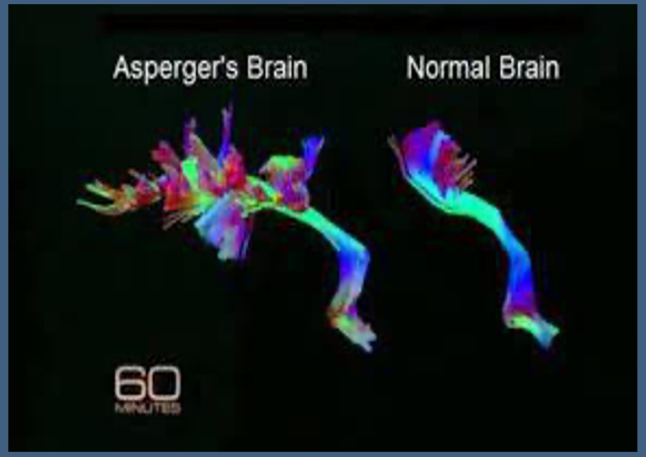
How divergent is Neurodivergent ?

How diverse is Neurodiverse?

View from above



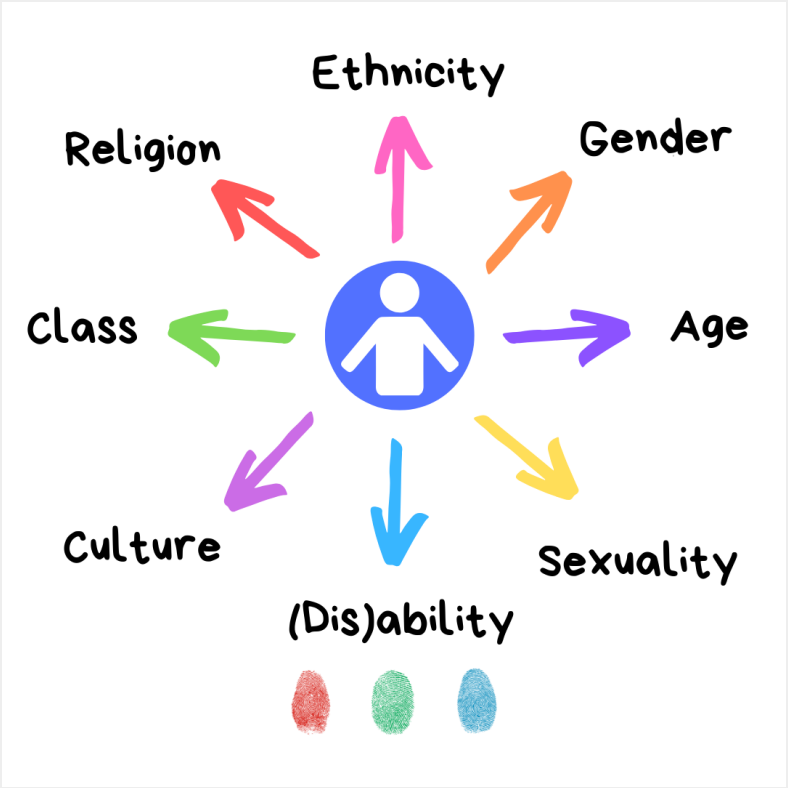
Speech centre



Ages and stages

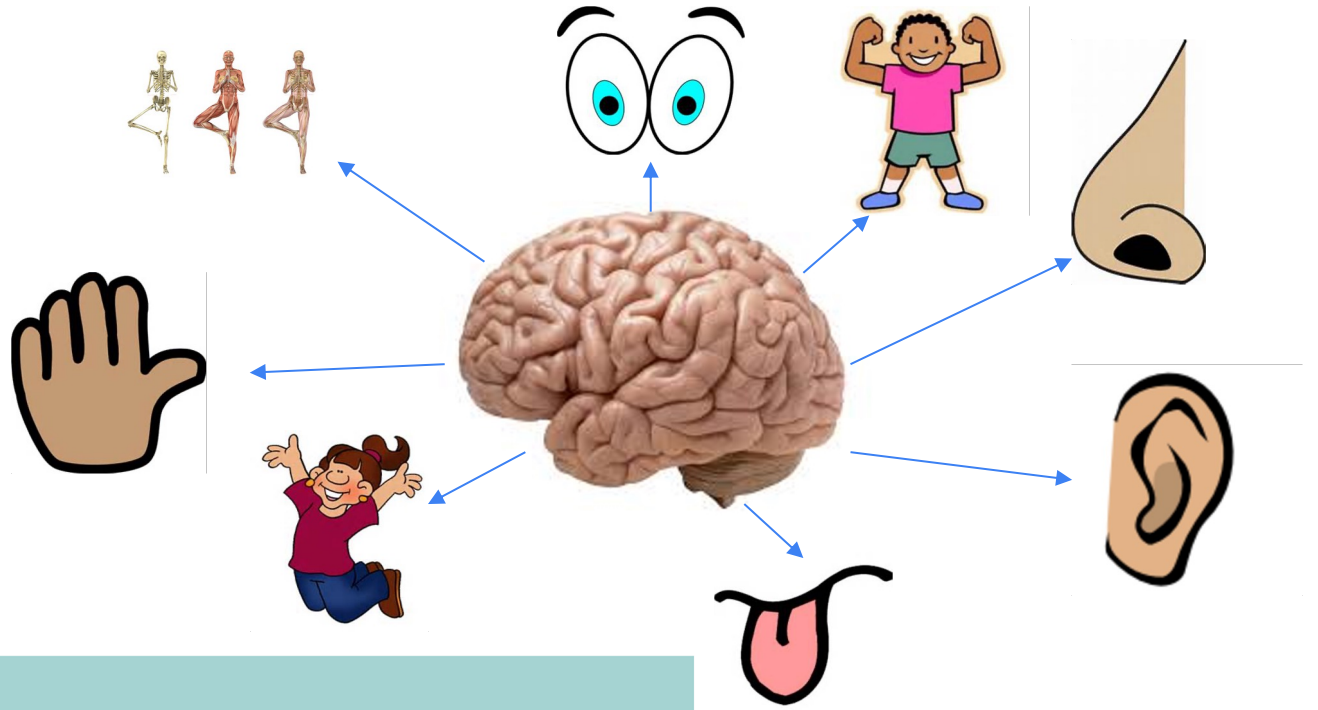
Intersectionality

And neurodivergence



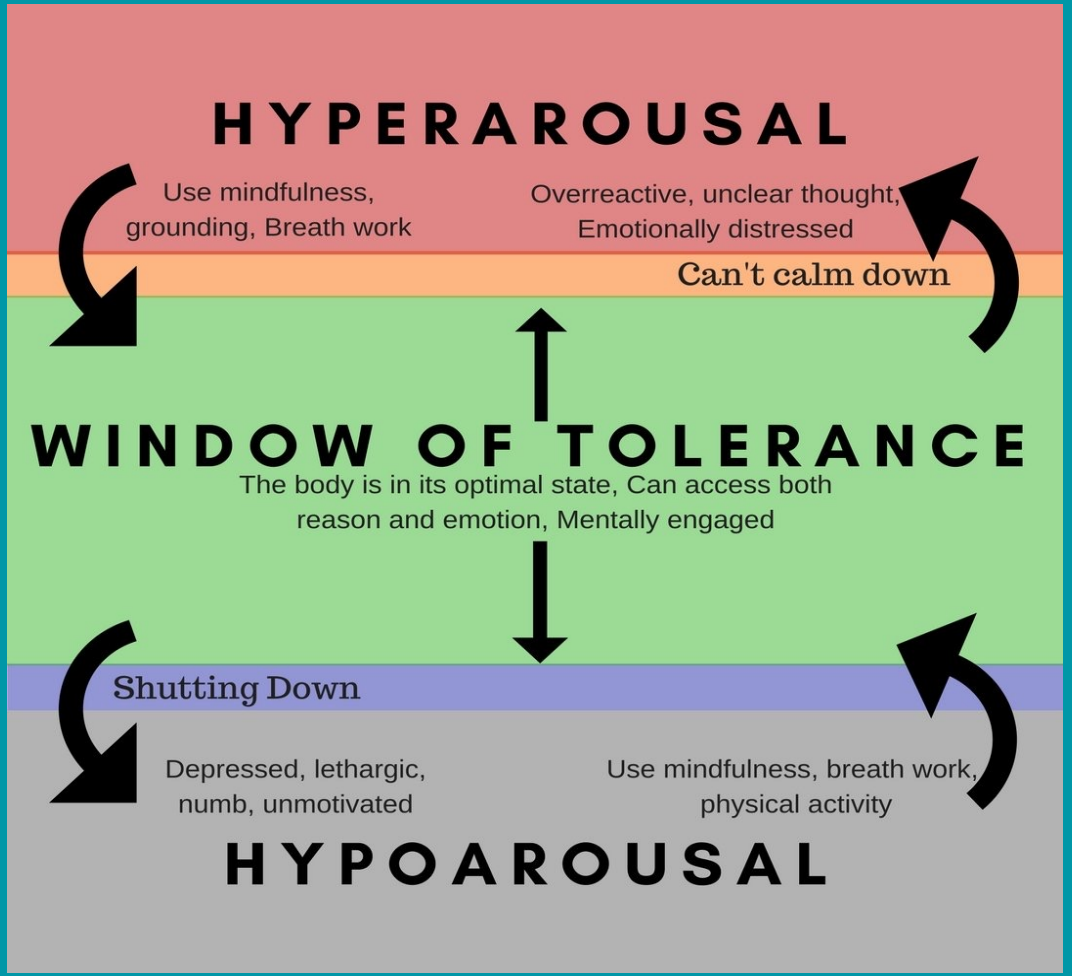
Processing

- Supporting ND in your setting- Processing Time



Sensory Differences

The window of tolerance



Executive Function

- **Organisational skills**
- **Impulse control**
- **Task Initiation**
- **Emotional Control**
- **Flexible thinking**
- **Planning and prioritising**
- **Self-motivation**
- **Working memory**

Social communication and Interaction

***Strategies to support some of the building blocks for social communication**

- **Joint Attention**
- **Language**
- **Perspective**

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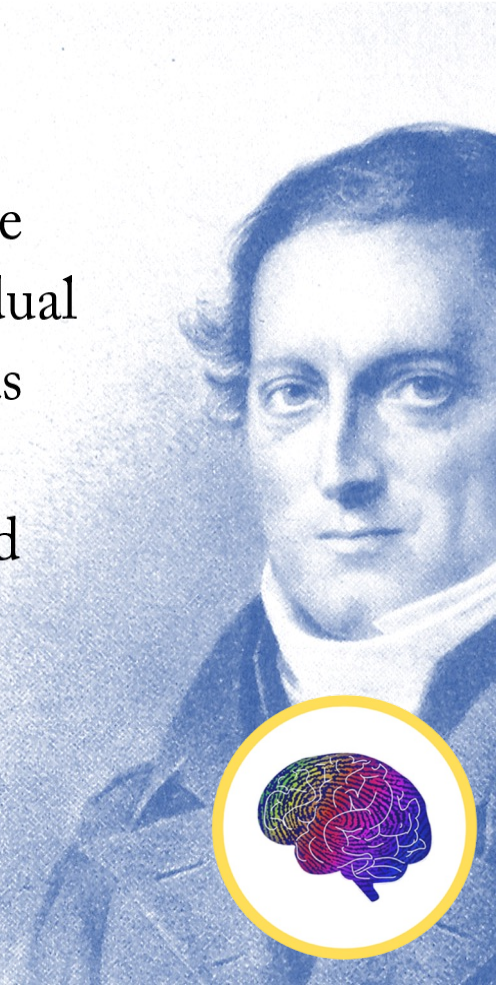
What does this mean for your ‘learner in mind’ ?

Herbart: Pedagogical Tact

"In other words, by reflection, reasoning, inquiry… the educator must prepare not his future action in individual cases so much as himself, his tone of mind, his head as well as his heart, for correctly receiving, apperceiving, feeling, and judging the phenomena awaiting him and the situation in which he may be placed. If he has, in anticipation, indulged in extensive plans, the practical circumstances will mock him." (1804)

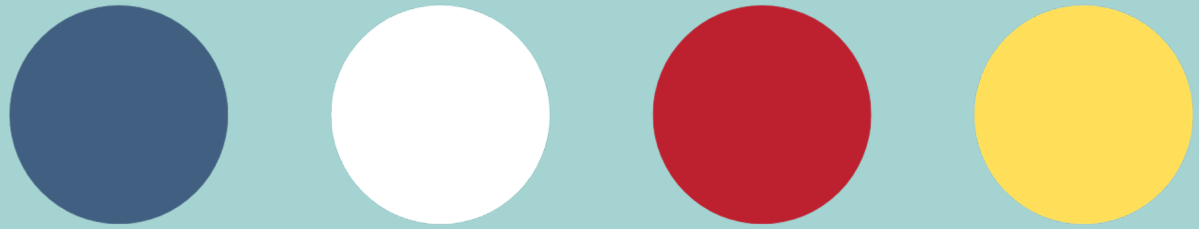


Differentiation strategies

Strategy	Description
Adjust rate	More time to process, to complete a task, to demonstrate knowledge
Adjust volume	Change amount of material to process or produce
Adjust complexity	Change number of details or complicated ideas to create or interpret
Staging of tasks	Tasks completed in logical steps or increments instead of all at once
Prioritisation	Certain task components are stressed or de-emphasised during a complex activity or task
Change presentation format	Information is presented in a way that pupil can process more effectively, e.g. more visual medium
Change production format	Pupil is allowed to demonstrate competency using a different medium
Change evaluation system	Performance is assessed differently for the pupil, e.g. P scales descriptors
Use of support or aids	Specific tools are used to facilitate learning or output e.g. laptop

Celebrating and embracing difference

Questions?



Neuroteachers

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