

What is Neurodiversity? Plain Text and Image Descriptions

Each slide has a teal background with a light blue repeating pattern made up of alternating vertical and horizontal lines. The LUNA logo is in the bottom right hand corner. The text for each slide is in a white text box. The majority of the content is written in black with selected phrases from the body of text in dark blue.

Slide 1

A LUNA Project resource on... Neurodiversity

Delving into what it is, why it matters and an insight into what it's like to be neurodivergent from Bee.

Image Description

The title 'Neurodiversity' is in the centre of the slide in large font. There is a body of text in the top left corner that says "A LUNA Project resource on..." and another body of text in the bottom 1/3 of the slide, aligned to the left that says "Delving into what it is, why it matters and an insight into what it's like to be neurodivergent from Bee." In the top right hand corner is a side profile line drawing of the head and neck, illustrating parts of the brain and the start of the spinal cord.

Slide 2

First, some Key Definitions...

- **Neurodiversity**- the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population.
- **Neurodivergent**- differing in mental or neurological function from what is considered typical or normal.
- **Neurotypical**- individuals who do not have a diagnosis of any intellectual or developmental disability. Who think, behave and perceive in ways that are deemed to be "normal" by society.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. The key words "neurodiversity, neurodivergent and neurotypical" are in a dark blue font, the rest of the text is in black.

Slide 3

What is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity refers to the idea that brains and neurocognitive abilities (i.e learning, attention, sociability and mood) differ from person to person as a form of natural variation. It helps us to understand that everyone has different experiences based on how their brains work.

The term was coined in the late 1990s by Australian sociologist Judy Singer, who is autistic herself.

It is thought that approximately 20% of the world population are neurodivergent, but many of these people, for one reason or another go undiagnosed.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. Next to the title is a line drawing of the brain from a bird's eye view. The majority of the body text is written in black with a couple of key phrases in dark blue.

Slide 4

What 'counts' as neurodiverse

The term "neurodiversity" referred originally to autism but this then expanded to include, but not limited to people who have:

- Autism
- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- ADHD
- OCD
- Tourette's Syndrome
- Dyspraxia
- Dysgraphia
- Epilepsy

Most recently neurodiversity is used to refer to all neurotypes both neurotypical and divergent. There is no one "official" list of conditions that qualify as neurodivergent so different organisational bodies will include different conditions within this category.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. Underneath the title is a body of black text. In the middle third of the slide are 9 different neurodivergent conditions, these are arranged in a 3 by 3 grid. On each row and column 1 word is in teal, one in dark blue and one in purple. Underneath this in the bottom third of the slide is another body of black text

Slide 5

History of the Term

Neurodiversity as a concept originated from the Autistic Rights Movement in the 1990s. With the term being coined by Judy Singer.

Singer noticed that there was something different about her mother, and saw the same traits in herself and her daughter - this later turned out to be autism, but she had to do a lot of research to find this out as it was not common knowledge.

As such, she wanted to create a movement for all people who were made to feel like outsiders - Autistic people, those with ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, etc

The phrase quickly picked up traction, both in autism groups and then in wider circles.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. Most of the text is in black font, with specific key sentences in dark blue. Above the LUNA logo on the right hand side is a headshot of Judy Singer. She is standing in front of a brick wall. She has dusky blonde bobbed hair, is looking directly into the lens, wearing glasses and a black and white striped T-shirt. .

Slide 6

Why is the word neurodiversity important?

- It gives people vocabulary to express how their brains work differently. This has led to wider social acceptance of neurodivergent people
- It does not rank people as better or worse, only different. This attitude shift has gradually trickled down into wider society - people increasingly believe that neurodivergency is just a difference, and does not make someone inherently inferior

We asked the LUNA community what the word neurodiversity meant to them, they said...

- Refers to entire groups of all neurotypes not a description for individuals.
- Running on a different system to everyone else.
- My brain works rather differently than others'. I experience the world uniquely.
- It sort of depends who I'm talking to. As different people consider different things to fall in this category.
- All the various neurotypes.
- My brain works differently to a neurotypical's. But that doesn't make it any less wonderful.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. Most of the text is in black font, with specific key sentences in dark blue. Underneath the title are 2 bullet points.

Underneath this, centrally aligned is the subheading "We asked the LUNA community what the word neurodiversity meant to them, they said...". Underneath this subheading in the bottom third of the slide are 6 short quotes. 2 of these are in purple, 2 in teal and 2 in dark blue.

Slide 7

Neurodiversity & The Social Model of Disability

Neurodiversity has its roots in the social model of disability.

The social model of disability suggests that a person is disabled by societal attitudes and infrastructure that fails to respect their autonomy or access requirements, not their condition or impairment.

It rejects the notion that an individual must be "normal" to enjoy the full range of human experience, arguing that a disability or long term health condition should not constitute a barrier to inclusion or access.

Rather, it means that society needs to work to support and accommodate those with disabilities and access requirements.

Neurodiversity applies the same logic to people with different brains.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. Most of the text is in black font, with specific key sentences in dark blue.

Slide 8

Example: Applying the Social Model to Autism

It is well known that autistic people are often disproportionately affected by their external sensory environments, such as light, sound and touch. This can lead them to become overwhelmed to the point of meltdown. Anxiety is also a factor. However, because their difficulties are not easily recognised by most people, their distress is frequently misinterpreted as “challenging behaviour”.

Neurodiversity advocates would consider these to be accessibility needs that are not currently being met- something that society should adapt to meet, rather than the individual altering a stress response that they have no control over.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. All of the text is in black font. Underneath the text are 3 evenly spaced digital drawings. On the left hand side is a simple drawing of an eye, it has a black pupil, white iris and teal outer eye. In the centre is a simple, black line drawing of a right ear. On the right hand side are 2 drawings of hands reaching towards one another. One hand is white skinned and the other is dark brown.

Slide 9

Bee's Experience of being Neurodivergent

My neurodiversity isn't a bad thing, and if given the opportunity to get rid of it I don't think I would. It's really hard sometimes, but that's more due to the world we live in not being accessible than it is my own faults. I have an alternate perspective on the world, which in my opinion is a strength as it means I can contribute things to discussions that most people haven't thought about. I'm learning to love my neurodiversity, because different ≠ bad (despite what our inaccessible world may lead us to believe) and I'm not lesser due to something I can't control.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the body of text is aligned to the left. Most of the text is in black font, with specific key sentences in dark blue.

Slide 10

Resources to Find Out More

- University of Glasgow Neurodiversity Network

- Achieve Ability- user led charity committed to working with adults who are neurodivergent.
- Neurodiversity Hub- Supporting students, employers and educational institutions to cater for neurodiversity.

Image Description

The title is aligned centrally and the text is aligned to the left. Most of the text is in black font, with the organisation names in dark blue. The names of the organisations are in a vertical column on the left hand side. With the corresponding organisation logo on the right hand side.

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