

# ASA Neurodiversity Awareness Training



The background of the slide is a colorful Aboriginal-style artwork. It features concentric circles in blue and white on a red background, a winding river in blue and green, a large hand in white and black, and a lizard in orange and brown. The artwork is composed of various geometric shapes and patterns, including dots, lines, and spirals.

# Acknowledgement of Country

Australian Spatial Analytics would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners across the lands on which we meet.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

# Neurodiversity

The diverse ways we **think, move, act, process** and **interact** with the world around us.

Put simply, it's a way of stating that there are infinite variations in minds across humankind.







**Why are we  
talking about  
Neurodiversity?**

**1 in 5  
Australians are  
neurodivergent**

**10% of  
Australians are  
dyslexic**

**80% of ASA's  
workforce is  
neurodivergent**

**86% at ASA  
have a long-  
term illness,  
condition or  
disability**

**1 in 20  
Australians are  
ADHDers**

**1 in 70  
Australians are  
autistic**



**Our aim is for young  
neurodivergent people to  
have rewarding careers in  
a secure and prosperous  
digital economy**

# What do we do?



## Digital Asset Management

Building trust in your asset information, enabling data driven decision making for asset management



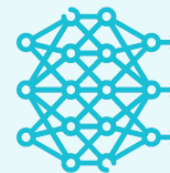
## Digital Engineering

Supporting infrastructure design, construction and As-built with CAD, BIM & GIS solutions



## Digital Mapping

Generating, enhancing and maintaining land, environmental and social records



## Data Solutions

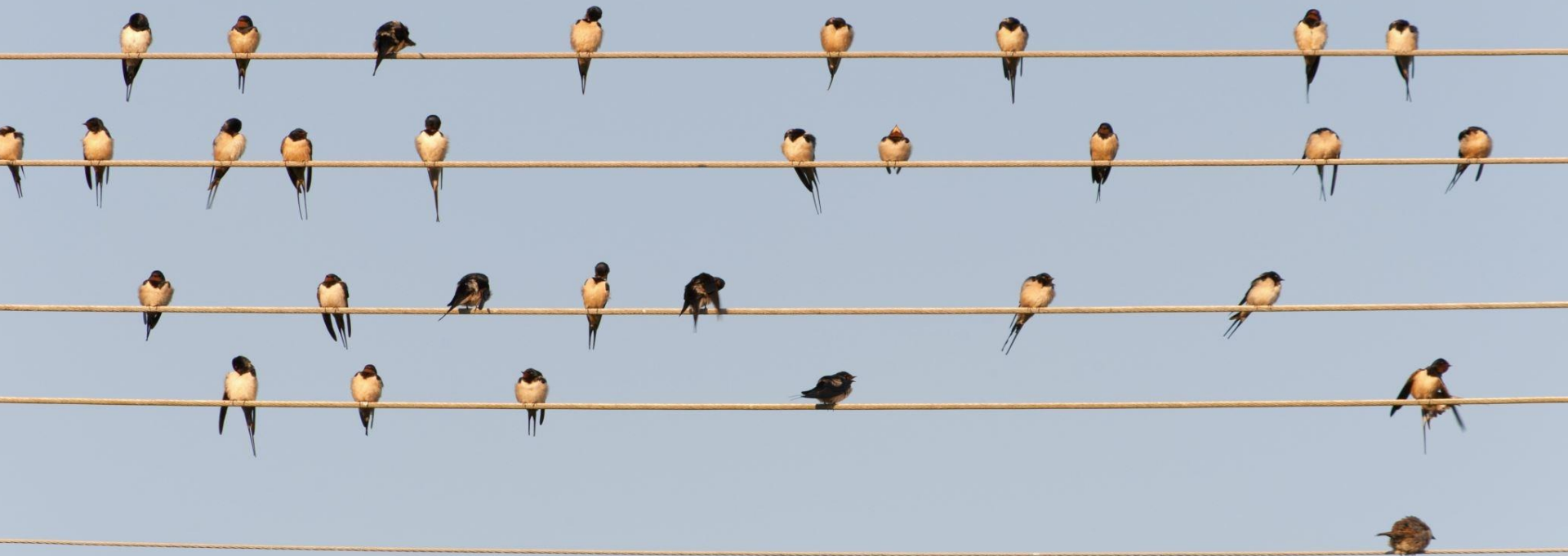
Supporting annotation, classification and quality control for multiple data

# What we'll cover

- A brief exploration of neurodiversity and some neurodivergent experiences.
- The impact workplaces can have on neurodiversity.
- How neuroinclusion works well at workplaces.



# Exploring Neurodiversity





# Neurodivergence\*



Autism

Bipolar

Dyslexia

Schizophrenia

Epilepsy

TIC  
Disorders

OCD

Dyspraxia

Sensory  
Processing

Dyscalculia

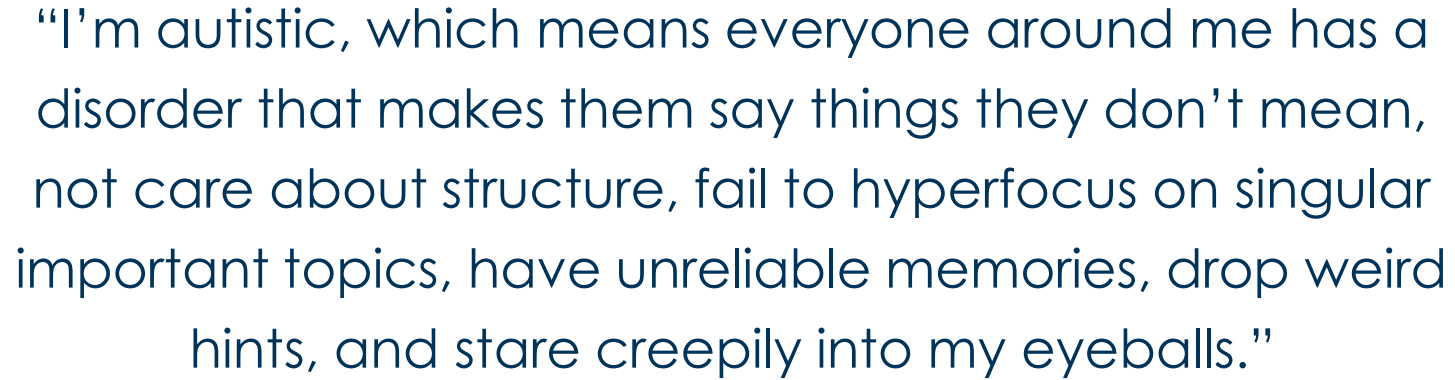
Misophonia

Dysgraphia

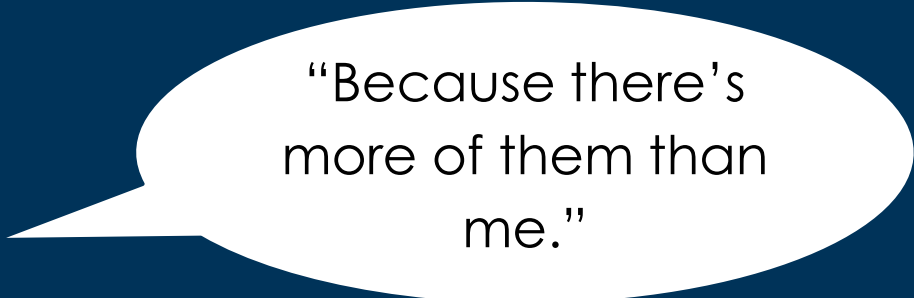
ADHD

Synesthesia


\*Non-exhaustive list...



“I’m autistic, which means everyone around me has a disorder that makes them say things they don’t mean, not care about structure, fail to hyperfocus on singular important topics, have unreliable memories, drop weird hints, and stare creepily into my eyeballs.”



“Because there’s more of them than me.”



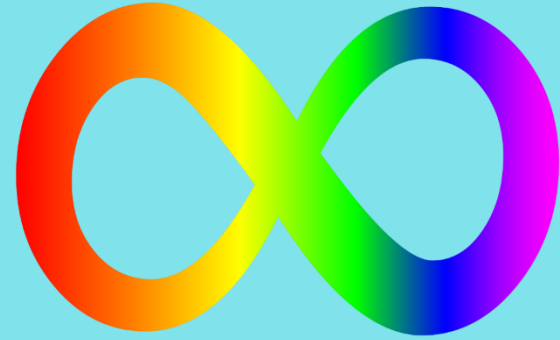
“So why do people say you’re the weird one??”



# **Autism: Who I am**

# An autistic person might:

- Have a strong preference for routine, sameness, or certainty.
- Experience sensory differences.
- Enjoy focused, more intense interests.
- Communicate and connect differently to non-autistic people.
- Stim to manage and express emotions.



# Autism

## What makes me unique?

- I'm detail-oriented
- The way I visualise and analyse
- My honesty and candour
- Out-of-the-box thinking





# Autism

## What do I want you to know?

- I prefer details
- My sensory sensitivity
- Too much talking can be too much
- Give me one topic at a time





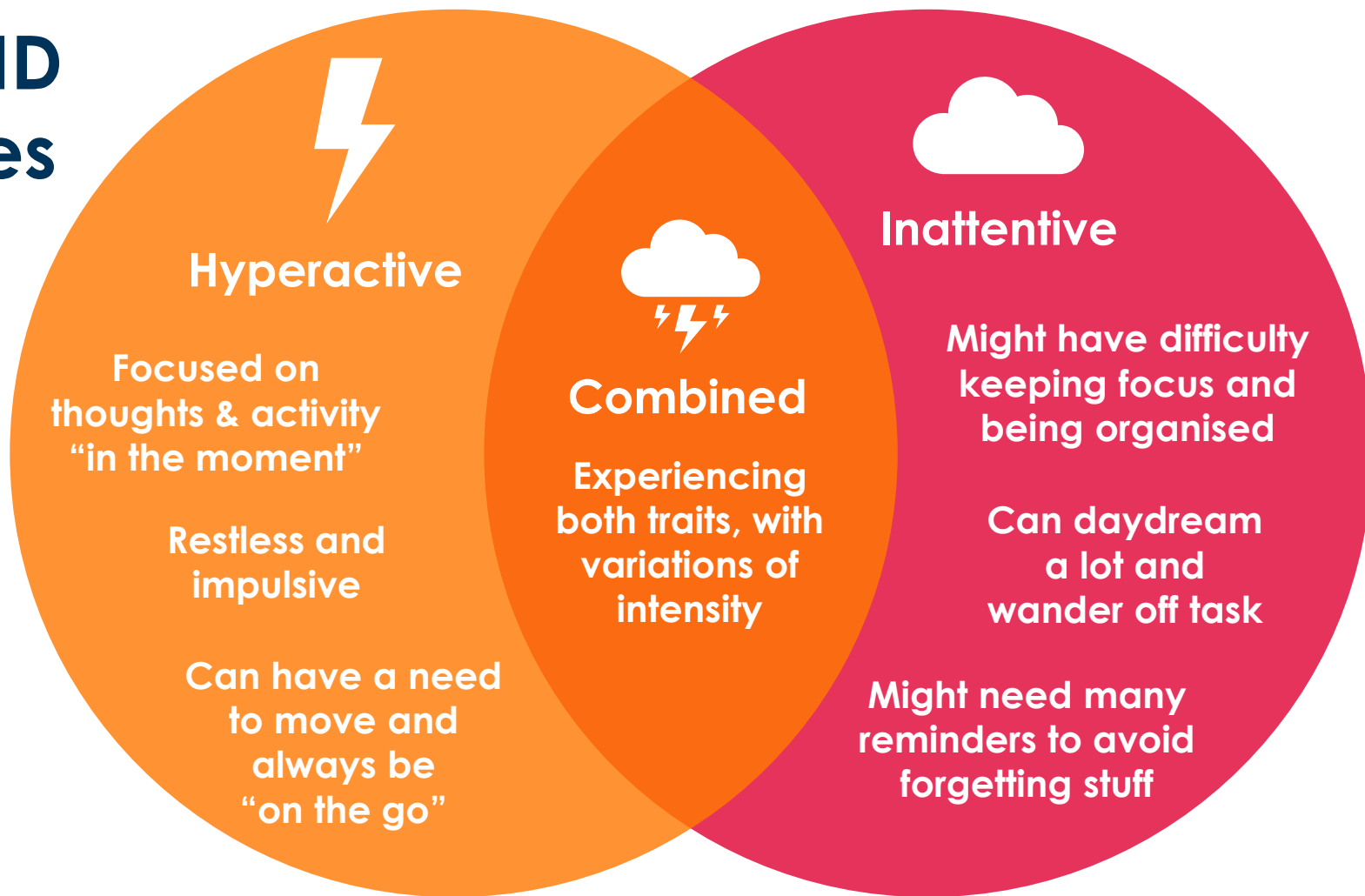
# **ADHD: Who I am**

# An ADHDeR might:

- Be easily distracted by noise and visual stimuli.
- Prefer not to sit still and pay attention.
- Often be “on the go”.
- Talk a lot and blurt out answers.



# ADHD Types



# ADHD

## What makes me unique?

- I can be hyper-focused
- My creativity
- I thrive on novelty
- I'm always curious





# ADHD

## What do I want you to know?

- Let me move around
- Keep me focused
- Let me play
- Help me stay organised





# **Dyslexia: Who I am**

# A dyslexic person might:

- Prefer to focus on problem solving, rather than correct spelling.
- Have difficulty connecting letters on a page with the sounds they make.
- Utilise a “multisensory” approach to decoding written language.
- Find it hard to read countless pages of text in a procedure.



## **Dyslexia: some data**

**At least 1 in 10  
employees are  
dyslexic; you may  
not know it and  
they might not  
know it either!**

**Over 43% don't feel  
psychologically  
safe to share their  
difficulties in the  
workplace**

**Dyslexics make  
up the largest  
percentage of the  
neurodivergent  
workforce**

**38% of  
dyslexics are  
underemployed**

**58% of those with  
dyslexia aren't  
diagnosed until  
adulthood**

# Dyslexia

## What makes me unique?

- My visual processing
- Narrative reasoning
- I'm a global & lateral thinker
- A strong empathiser





# Dyslexia

## What do I want you to know?

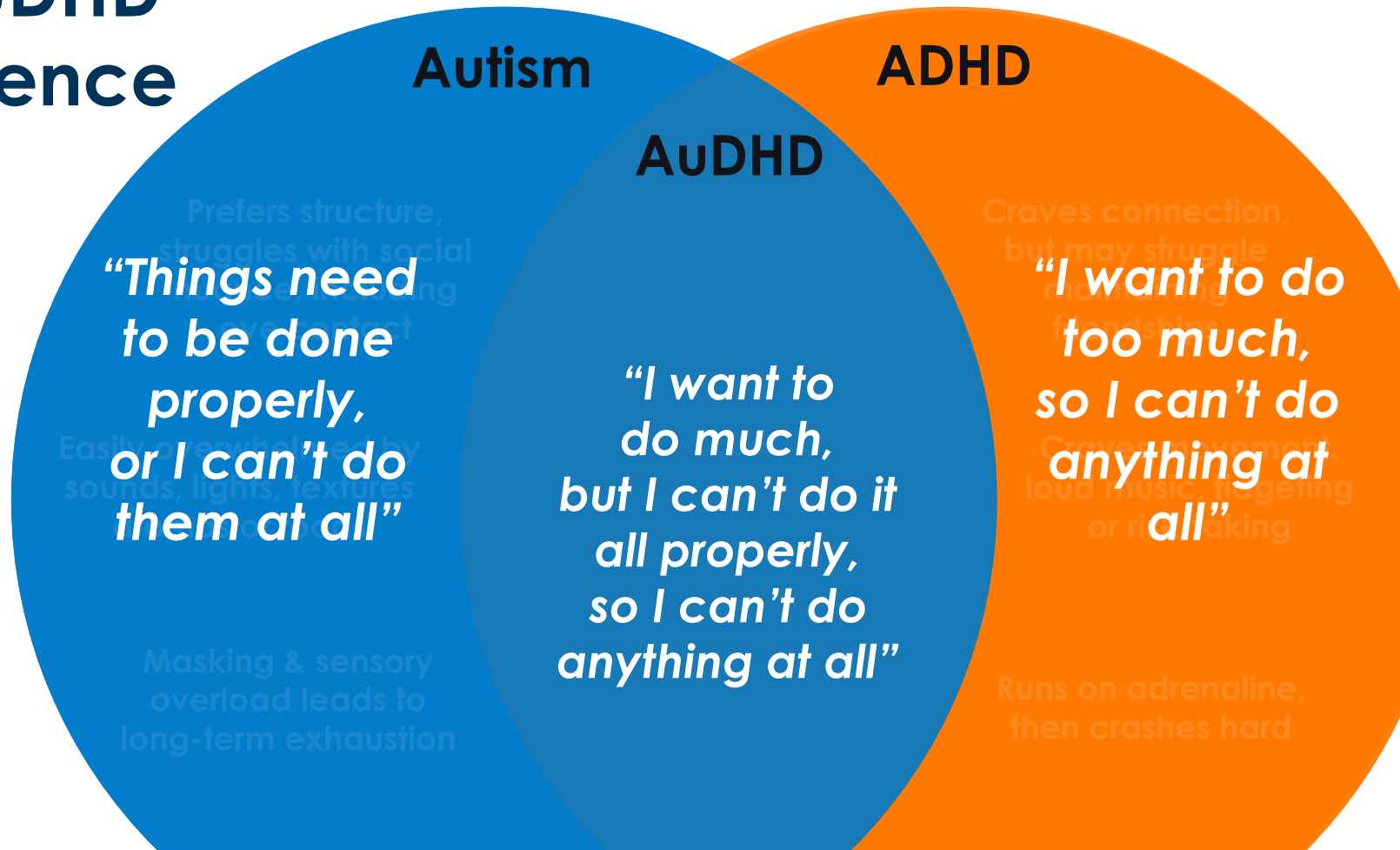
- Support me
- Limit text
- Give me time to process
- Show me, tell me





# **AuDHD: Who I am**

# The AuDHD experience

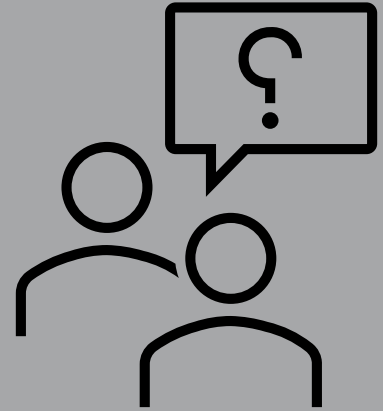




# Neurotypical: Who I am

# A neurotypical person might:

- Have a blunted sensory awareness.
- Be obsessed with eye contact.
- Often communicate using indirect or unclear language.
- Display overly rigid body movements, instead of effective self-soothing strategies.
- Value stoicism and following arbitrary social rules.





# Neurotypical

## What makes me unique?

- Paying attention
- Knowing the “unspoken” norms
- Juggling multiple things at once
- Being adaptable



# Neurotypical

## What do I want you to know?

- Vague on detail
- I assume, a lot
- I like normal
- Material things matter





# The neurodivergent experience at work





# Masking

The act of camouflaging, suppressing or hiding our true selves, to present a different look that's potentially more comforting to the outside world.

Neurodivergent people mask to fit in, to be accepted.

It's not a preference.



# What does it look like?

Mirroring others' body language & expressions

Hiding being overwhelmed

Socialising, when I don't want to

Pretending to be calm

Trying to pay attention

Being a perfectionist

Leaving early, to avoid a meltdown

Constantly monitoring myself

Hiding sensory discomfort

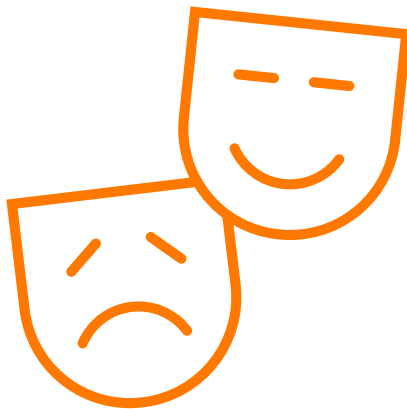
Practicing conversations and preparing scripts

Forcing myself to make eye contact

Trying to engage in small talk

Pretending to be interested in a topic

Suppressing stims in public





# The impacts of masking

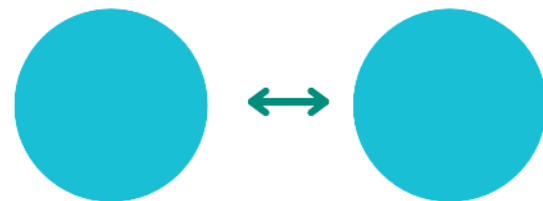
Masking takes up a lot of energy and can lead to:

- Increased stress & burnout
- Negative impact of self & identity
- Poor mental health
- Depression & anxiety



# Communication at work: The double empathy problem

**“Same gets Same”**



**“Different sees/feels different”**

- there's bound to be some miscommunication and misunderstanding...



Effective communication requires mutual accommodation.



# How can we support neurodiversity at work?

- Simply do the basics well
- Ask, rather than assume
- There may not always be clean resolutions
- Don't stress if you get things wrong



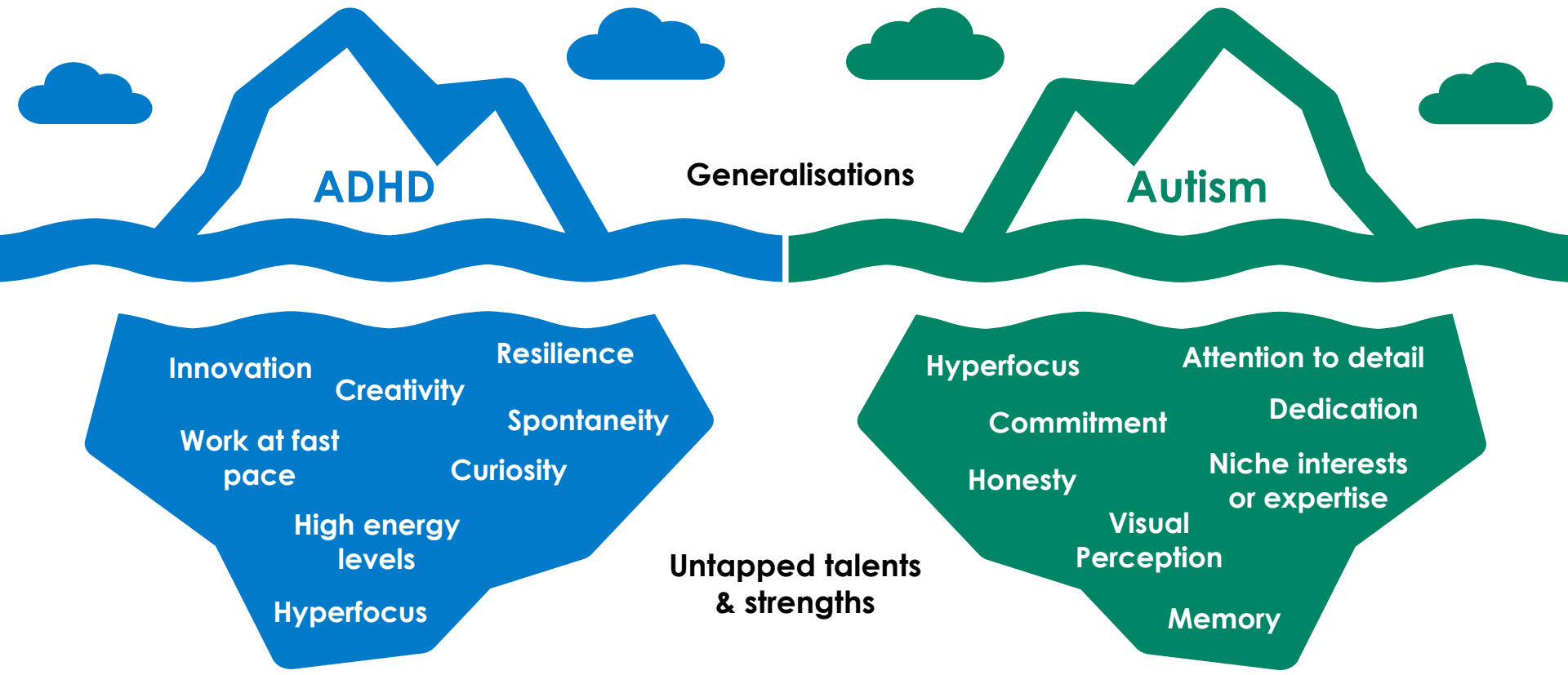
# Neuroinclusion

The practice of recognising, respecting and creating a level playing field for our diverse neurodistinct experiences.

It's about embedding difference as standard.



# A neuroinclusive perspective: what have you got to lose?







**A neuroinclusive  
workplace experience**



# Workplace accommodations

Accommodations aren't special treatment. They simply level the playing field so employees can do their best work.

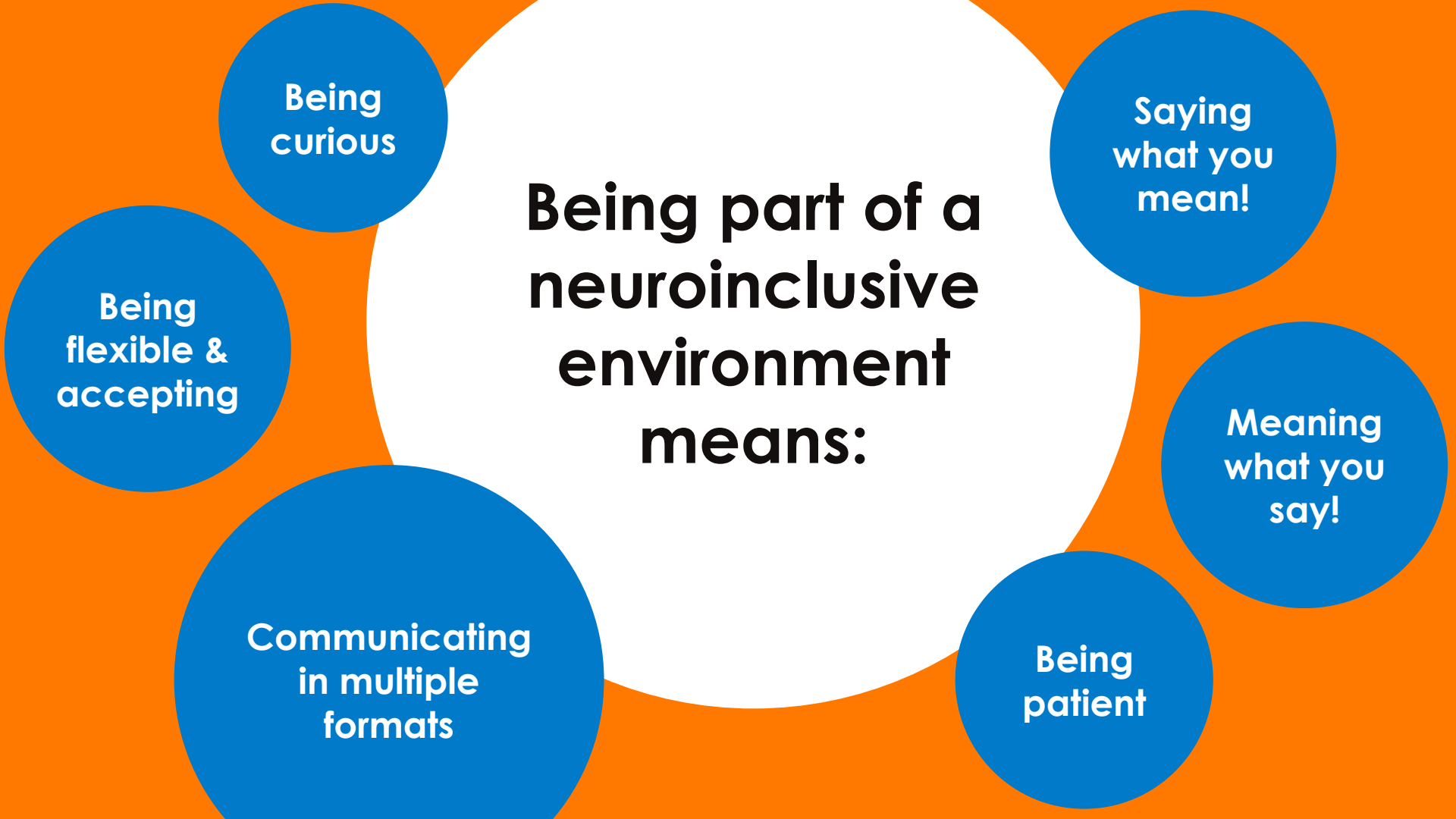
Plus, accommodations are generally cheap and easy to implement.

They can also have a huge impact on overall employee performance and satisfaction.

# ASA's neuroinclusive workplace

- Providing clear expectations
- Well-structured work environment
- Adopting understood Ways of Working
- Conducting regular reviews
- Planning for change and supports for stress
- Using assistive technology





The infographic features a central white circle with a black border, containing the main title. Surrounding this central circle are six blue circles, each containing a specific component. The background is a solid orange color. The components are arranged in a circular pattern around the center.

# **Being part of a neuroinclusive environment means:**

**Being  
curious**

**Saying  
what you  
mean!**

**Being  
flexible &  
accepting**

**Meaning  
what you  
say!**

**Communicating  
in multiple  
formats**

**Being  
patient**



# The power of sharing and advocating

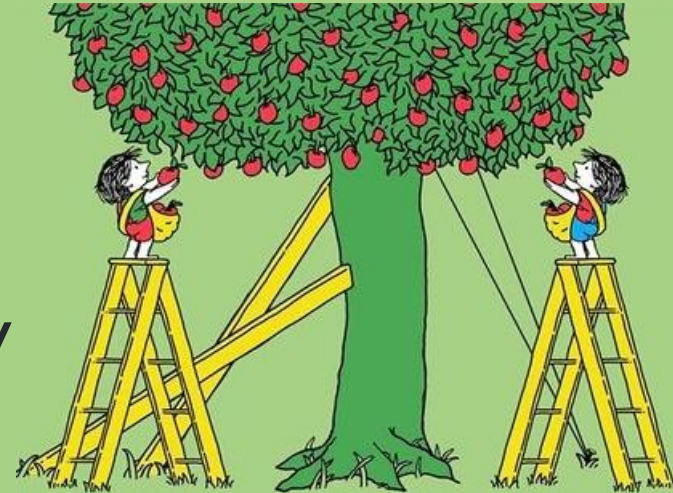
# Reasonable adjustments

- What does it mean?
- What are the benefits for the individual and workplace?
- How much can it cost?

**Equality?**



**Equity**





## **Some examples...**

**Sending  
interview  
questions  
beforehand**

**Removing  
vagueness  
(or “hard to do”  
requirements)  
from job ads**

**Designated  
quiet rooms  
and dimly-lit  
work areas**

**Using noise-  
cancelling  
headphones**

**Flexible  
working hours  
and regular  
breaks**

**Reducing/  
replacing  
instructional text  
with pictures &  
videos**



# Universal design

The idea that you design systems and practices that can benefit everyone without necessarily needing special design for just one person.



# **Universal design: Benefits for everyone**

**Sending  
interview  
questions  
beforehand**

**Providing  
meeting  
agendas and  
summaries**

**Starting with  
a personal  
question for  
a 1:1**

**Sticking to dot  
points in emails  
and other  
communication**

**Designated  
quiet rooms  
and dimly-lit  
work areas**

**Reducing/  
replacing  
instructional text  
with pictures &  
videos**

**Removing  
vagueness  
(or “hard to do”  
requirements)  
from job ads**



ASA  
Neurodiversity at  
Work Survey

