

BUILDINGENERGY BOSTON

The Curb-Cut Effect: Practical Tools for Engaging Neurodiverse Project Teams

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All Brains Belong VT

Neuroinclusive Healthcare & Community

Our model:
Healthcare is more than medical care.

Medical care

Social connection

Employment support

Education



Nonprofit 501(c)(3)

- Medical care
- Address social isolation
- Support for navigating work-related challenges
- Neurodiversity trainings for employers and thought leaders

Learn more at:
allbrainsbelong.org

What We'll Cover

- What is neurodiversity, and why is it relevant to project teams?
- Self-reflection on how your brain does its best work
- Practical strategies for neuroinclusive teams

Brain Science: What We Know

- **We all have different brains**
 - Sensing
 - Processing information
 - Learning
 - Thinking
 - Communicating
- **Unique patterns of strengths & challenges**
- **Universal design is best practice**

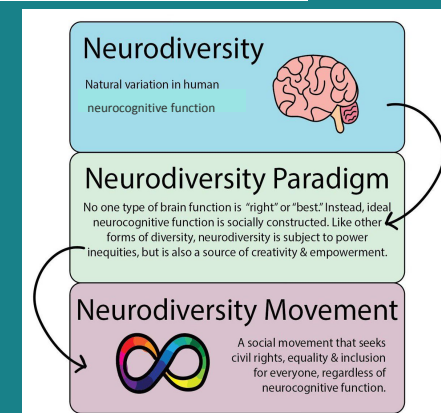
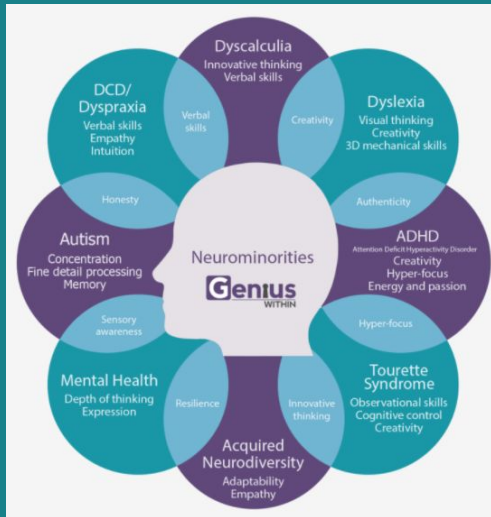


Image Credit: Dr. Nick Walker,
<https://neuroqueer.com/>



At least 1 in 5 brains learns, thinks, or communicates differently than the majority of brains.

Image credit: geniuswithin.org

The “Curb-Cut Effect”

- Small changes that help one group improve access for everyone
- Neuroinclusive teams = better retention, efficiency, innovation



Connections to your work

- A new lens to approach your team’s challenges
- Opportunity to build high-performing teams
- Economic impact of NOT having these conversations
 - Turnover
 - Burnout
 - Worsened health

Access Needs

- Anything required to meaningfully participate in one’s environment or community
- **EVERYONE** has access needs

What Drains Your Brain's Budget?

DEMANDS AT WORK

- **Sensory processing**
 - Enough input, not too much
- **Attention**
- **Executive functioning**
- **Sequencing / ordering**
- **Physical effort / motor coordination**
 - Moving your eyes
 - Spoken communication
 - Physical exertion
- **Interacting with other people**
 - Communicating
 - Perspective taking
 - Conflicting access needs
 - Pressure to mask



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Neuroinclusive Management

Breakdown → Probe for Unmet Access needs

Learn about ALL of your direct reports' access needs

What does EVERYONE need to do their best work?

From there, you can individualized / customize their employment experience

Do this proactively (not only when folks are struggling)



Questions to Ask ALL Employees

- How do you prefer to receive information?
- What is your preferred mode of communicating information to others?
- What can an organization do to make you feel safe, comfortable & fulfilled?
- What comes easily to you? What's hard?
- What drains / charges your battery?
- What type / format / style of supervision and feedback works best for you?

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Offer a Menu

People may not know what to ask for!

How do you prefer to receive information? (Please check all that apply. If you have selected multiple checkboxes, please describe in "Other" what kinds of info you prefer in which formats)

Fewer long/consolidated emails

Multiple short single-topic emails

Google Document collaboration

Spoken communication

Other...

What is your preferred mode of communicating information to others?

Text

Email

Phone Call

Other...

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Offer a Menu

People may not know what to ask for!

What kinds of work-related factors are stressful to you?

Example categories:

Cognitively

Interpersonally

Meetings

Feedback

Physical environment

Work assignments

Ill defined deadlines

Overscheduled meetings

Reading long blocks of text

Unclear feedback

Unclear work assignments

Other...

Note: Combining a menu with a space for free-text gives people flexibility while supporting brains that benefit from more structure

Need help?

All Brains Belong provides neurodiversity trainings for employers.

For information, visit allbrainsbelong.org/education

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Reflecting On Your Own Brain

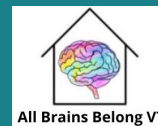
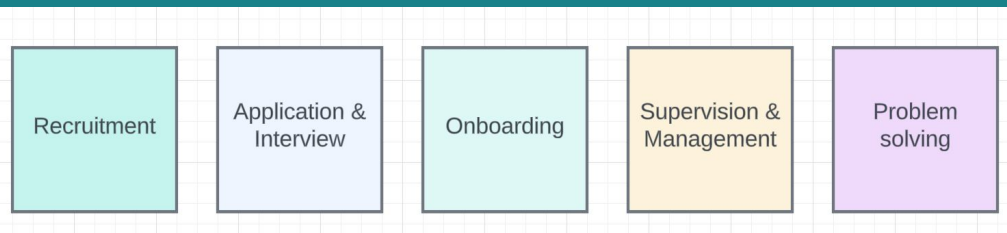
- If you don't understand your own access needs, it's hard to design inclusively for others
- Develop and model common language for your team

Conflicting Access Needs



Photo credit: NAMI

Neuroinclusive Employment: Opportunities for Future Learning



Get Connected

1. Reach out for a **neurodiversity training**
2. Access free resources
3. Attend **Brain Club®** (free, every Tues 6pm ET)



SCAN for Educational Resources