A fact sheet about

Understanding your neurotype

UnderstandingZoe

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Understanding your neurotype



A starter guide for newly identified neurodivergent adults. The words that can help, and looking after your energy.

Recognising yourself as neurodivergent in adulthood can be a lot to take in. It works less like a change and more like a key. It helps you understand patterns you have lived with for years. There is more clarity in it, and less self-blame. This guide gathers words that can help, and practical ways to protect your energy.

Make sense of it

Neurodivergent is a wide word. It covers Autistic and ADHD people, dyslexia, dyspraxia, PDA and sensory processing differences. Being both Autistic and ADHD is called AuDHD. No list names everyone, and you belong here even if yours is missing.

Finding out later is common. Plenty of people are identified as adults. Early on, many learn to blend in. Old checklists also pictured a narrow stereotype. They often missed women, gender-diverse people and children who were not white.

Knowing yourself counts. You can arrive at this through your own experience. The stories of people like you help too. It holds whether or not you have had a formal assessment.

Find helpful words

Naming what you feel can make it easier to understand, and easier to explain. These are a few words you might find useful along the way.

Words that can help

Neurodivergence

Minds that do not fit the neuronorm. The neuronorm is the standard way of thinking the world is built around. It does not make one kind of mind better than another. Kassiane Asasumasu coined the word in the 1990s, from inside the community. One person is neurodivergent. A group of people is neurodiverse.

Neurotype

The pattern of how your brain works. It shapes how you think, focus, feel and take in the world. Everyone has one, including neurotypical people. None is better than another.

Masking

Covering or holding back how you naturally are, so you seem to fit in. It often happens without deciding to, and it wears you down. Some call it adaptive morphing, because it is a survival response rather than a deception.

Unmasking

Easing off masking, bit by bit, where it feels safe enough. It is not safe or possible for everyone. That is not a failing on your part.

Autistic burnout

A deep, whole-body depletion that builds when demands outstrip support for a long time. Recovery usually takes months rather than days. It comes from lowering demands and getting support, not just rest.

Spoons

A way of picturing energy as a limited daily budget. The idea comes from spoon theory in the chronic illness and disability community. Tasks, socialising and sensory input all spend from it.

You do not have to use any of these words. They are here for the days when they help.

Look after your energy

Looking after your energy is less about pushing harder. It is more about shaping a life that fits how your brain and body work. Small daily habits do a lot. A real break away from your screen helps. So does saying no to one draining task, or a few minutes of stimming. Over time, honouring your needs is what keeps your energy and focus going.

NOTICE THIS

Signs of burnout

- Deep exhaustion in body, mind and feelings
- Brain fog, and easy skills slipping for a while
- Everyday tasks feeling much harder than before
- A pull to withdraw from people and demands
- More sensory sensitivity than usual

TRY THIS

Ways to recharge

- Lower your demands where you can, even a little
- Unmask in the places that feel safe
- Protect rest, and treat it as essential
- Make time for your interests, movement or stimming
- Seek out calm, low-sensory spaces to top up

You do not have to change everything at once.
Protecting one need, on one day, is worth doing.

Give it time

Different feelings can coexist. Relief that things finally make sense often sits next to sadness about earlier years. Both belong.

Asking for support is a strength. Working out what you need, and asking for it, is a skill worth having.

There is no rush. Working out what this means for you can take months, or years.

Understanding Zoe is the first neuroaffirming AI-powered app that turns every report, observation and moment into an actionable next step, supporting neurodivergent people and those who care about them to thrive.

for more information, you can contact

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