

WIRED & WONDERFUL



From Lorna With Love...

Welcome to the first issue of Wired & Wonderful! I'm thrilled to launch this newsletter as a space where our community can come together, share experiences, and celebrate the unique perspectives and talents that make us who we are. Whether you're here as someone living with a neurodivergent condition - ADHD, autism, bipolar, or simply as an ally, this space is for you.

My hope is that this newsletter becomes a beacon of connection, offering insights, encouragement, and updates on the projects and initiatives we're creating together.

In this first issue, we'll dive into the heart of what makes our community special, with stories of resilience and creativity from members like you. We'll also share tips on navigating challenges, upcoming events, and resources designed to empower and inspire. To make it even more interactive, we've included a survey to hear directly from you—tell us what topics you'd like covered or how we can best support you in future issues..

Let's make Wired & Wonderful a reflection of our shared experiences and a celebration of what's possible when we come together.



DID YOU KNOW?

Albert Einstein is often thought to have had traits of autism.

While there's no formal diagnosis, many experts speculate that his intense focus on specific topics and his social challenges align with traits commonly seen in individuals on the autism spectrum.

Editor's Note

Spring has sprung as we celebrate the first issue of our community's newsletter! This is our collective gift to each other, and I'm thrilled to help bring it together. With your contributions, this space will become a hub for sharing, learning, and connecting. To kick things off, I wanted to share an outline of how we envision this newsletter shaping up. However, if you have any suggestions or would like to see specific topics included, DO INTERRUPT—your input is what will make this truly special! Here's a sneak peek at what's inside:

- **Community Patch:** Your go-to spot for all the latest happenings in and around Cheshire, tailored specifically for the neurodiverse community.
- **Toolkit:** A curated selection of practical tools, tips, and resources to support and empower you.
- **Mindful Insights:** A deeper dive into the science, research, and ideas shaping our understanding of neurodiversity.
- **Focus Features, Podcasts & Book Recommendations:** Handpicked content to inspire and inform.
- **Meet the Member:** A special spotlight on one of our community members—this month, we're delighted to introduce the lovely Jen (and her sidekick, Beau).

So, grab a cuppa and journey through our neurodiverse news. Whether you're celebrating the festive season or choosing to keep things low-key for any reason, I wish you warmth, safety, and good health. Let's make this newsletter a space to thrive, connect, and support one another.

Here's to many more editions to come! Best wishes, see you all in 2025,

Sheila

Community Patch by Di

Upcoming Events (May - July 2026))

Welcome to your go-to spot for all things happening in and around Cheshire, specifically for the neurodiverse community. Whether you're looking for events, support groups, or inspiring local stories, this section is designed to keep you connected to the resources and opportunities that matter most to you. As we journey through January to March, I'll highlight key events and initiatives that are not only relevant but empowering for individuals with ADHD, autism, bipolar, and their allies. I'll also be sharing community-driven updates, so if you have a story to share or an event to highlight, don't hesitate to reach out.

1. **Autism-Friendly Cinema Screenings (Cheshire Oaks)**
Dates: Monthly screenings throughout May to July 2026 at Vue Cheshire Oaks. These screenings are designed to be more sensory-friendly, with reduced sound, dimmed lighting, and a more relaxed environment where guests can move around if needed. Ideal for autistic filmgoers and families looking for a calmer cinema experience.
2. **CWP Adult Autism Hub Workshops (Winsford / West Cheshire / Virtual)**
Dates: 7 May, 19 May, 27 May, 3 June, 4 June, 23 June, 1 July, 7 July and 31 July 2026. Delivered by clinicians these autism-focused sessions cover topics including autistic burnout, emotions, communication. Some are virtual, while others are face to face. A strong option for autistic adults looking for practical support, understanding, and connection.
3. **Kaleidoscope Festival (Chester)**
Dates: Monday 6 July to Friday 10 July 2026. Held at Storyhouse, Exchange Square and across Chester, this week-long festival celebrates neurodiversity, inclusion, and the talents of people living with disabilities. The programme includes performances, workshops, activities, and the Chester Disability Pride Parade.

Nade's Thrive Guide



Welcome to Nade's Thrive Guide - a space for honest, practical ideas to make life a little easier, more accessible, and more enjoyable for our neurodivergent community.

In each issue I'll be sharing something from my coaching toolkit - the kind of thing I work through with the neurodivergent adults I support as we figure out how to work with their brain, rather than constantly battling against it. Some things will feel useful straight away; others just won't be your thing, and that's absolutely fine. Take what helps, leave what doesn't - the goal is just to give you something new to try.

In this issue, we're talking about Sleep (or the lack of it...)

You've spent the day exhausted just getting through the bare minimum, you finally get into bed and your brain decides it's the perfect time to replay every awkward conversation you've had since you were 18.

Sound familiar?

For many of us neurodivergent folk, sleep is something we can really struggle with – whether you are out like a light, but then wake up ruminating at 3am, or you just can't switch off and fall asleep in the first place. ADHD brains are often wired to seek stimulation making switching off genuinely difficult and not a willpower issue, and many ADHDers experience delayed sleep phase, meaning your body clock is naturally shifted later (hello night owls!). Many of those with ASD can experience heightened sensory sensitivity as the day starts to wind down – textures, sounds and light are suddenly LOUD which makes “just relax” pretty laughable.

Whether you have difficulty getting to sleep, staying asleep or just waking up still feeling exhausted, here are three things worth experimenting with:

- Wind-down without screens, but make it realistic. Yes, no phone an hour before bed is ideal, but start small – 20 minutes of phone-free time is still a win ____
- Wake up at the same time, every day (including weekends). A consistent wake time helps regulate your body clock more than what time you go to sleep
- .Make your bedroom boring. Keep your bedroom for bedroom activities. A cool, quiet and dark room removes the sensory triggers that can keep a sensitive nervous system on high-alert

None of these are ground-breaking or miracle cures, but one small change, attempted consistently, is worth more than the perfect routine you never actually stick to.



Laughter Lab

Where neurodivergence meets humour because sometimes the best way to navigate a neurodiverse world is with a big laugh!

Why did the neurodivergent person bring a ladder to the meeting?

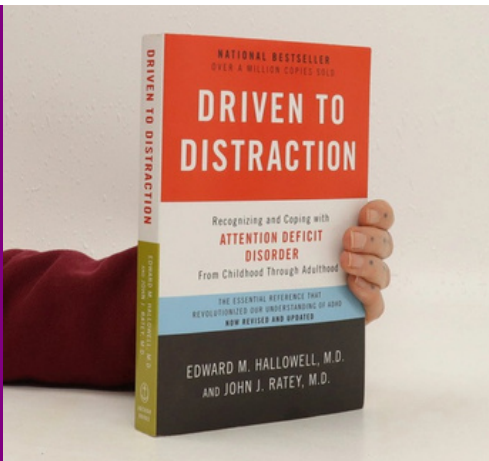
Because they were ready to take their ideas to the next level

Disclaimer:

The content shared in Laughter Lab and throughout this newsletter is meant to foster connection, positivity, and humour within the neurodiverse community. We strive to create an inclusive, respectful space where everyone can enjoy and relate to the content. Please note that nothing shared here is intended to offend, discriminate, or marginalize any individual or group. We embrace diversity and encourage laughter as a way to celebrate our unique experiences.

Books and Podcasts

Whether you're diving into a book for some in-depth knowledge or tuning into a podcast on the go, this section is all about exploring new ways to learn and connect with the neurodiverse community. We've curated a selection of insightful books and podcasts that speak to the experiences of those with ADHD, autism, and other neurodiverse conditions. These resources are perfect for sparking curiosity, providing fresh perspectives, and offering practical advice on everything from coping strategies to inspiring stories. Ready to explore? Let's set sail into some new learning adventures!



Driven to Distraction by Edward M. Hallowell and John J. Ratey

This book is one of the definitive guides to understanding ADHD, written by two experts who also have ADHD themselves. It includes personal anecdotes, scientific research, and practical strategies for managing ADHD symptoms in both children and adults.

Why it's good: It's informative yet approachable, offering a combination of clinical knowledge and real-world advice, making it valuable for both neurodivergent individuals and caregivers.

The Reason I Jump by Naoki Higashida

Best for individuals on the autism spectrum, families, and allies.

Written by a 13-year-old boy with autism, this memoir provides deep insight into the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of a non-verbal autistic individual. It's a poignant, eye-opening read that allows a glimpse into a unique worldview, helping others understand the behaviours and challenges of autism.

Why it's good: It provides a personal and introspective look into life with autism, making it accessible for both neurodivergent individuals and those seeking to better understand the autism spectrum.

The Autism Helper Podcast

Best for parents, caregivers, and educators of individuals with autism.

This podcast provides practical advice, tips, and strategies for supporting individuals with autism in various settings, from school to home. Hosted by Sasha Long, an experienced behaviour analyst, it discusses various aspects of autism, including behaviour management, communication strategies, and social skills development.

Why it's good: It offers practical, actionable advice for those supporting neurodivergent individuals and is a valuable resource for anyone looking to understand how to work with and empower individuals on the autism spectrum.

ADHD Rewired

Aimed at individuals with ADHD, as well as professionals who work with them. The show features interviews with experts, along with tips and strategies for managing ADHD in various aspects of life, including work, relationships, and organisation. Why it's good: It's designed to be a supportive, empowering space for people with ADHD, offering practical advice and promoting self-compassion and understanding.



Different Voices. One Song

Different Voices. One Song is a one-off neurodivergent choir project created by Sheila Manzano, a late-diagnosed ADHD woman, to bring people together through shared voice, visibility and inclusion. Running from May to August 2026 in the Sandbach and Crewe area, the project will involve a limited series of rehearsals leading up to a full-day studio recording, with the finished track planned for release around World Mental Health Day in October 2026. The choir is open to people with a wide range of neurodivergent profiles, and no professional singing experience is needed.



At its heart, the project is about far more than music. It has been designed to create a safe, welcoming space where neurodivergent people who may have spent years feeling misunderstood, judged or unheard can come together and be part of something meaningful. Rehearsals will take place from late May through to August, but participants are not expected to attend every session, with around 50 per cent attendance encouraged. The key date is the full-day studio recording in mid-August, when the track will be recorded ahead of its planned release for World Mental Health Day in October.

With the emphasis firmly on the power of the collective voice, 'Different Voices. One Song' aims to challenge stigma, celebrate unity and show how creativity and connection can help people feel seen, supported and heard

Wired Differently - The Neurodiverse Hour 107.9FM

Recognise these two?

Yes it's Sheila and Diane, who along with being on our committee, are the voices behind Wired Differently: The Neurodiverse Hour on The Cat 107.9FM.

This is the show where neurodiversity gets talked about openly, honestly and without judgement. Expect real conversation, lived experience, plenty of personality, Listen in at 10am each Thursday!



Survey Results

In March, we carried out a survey to better understand your needs, views and experiences, and to help shape what matters most to our community.

You can read the results on our website here - <https://cheshireneurodivergentcommunity.org/newsletter>

Mindful Insights

Focus Features

Here's the latest news and updates impacting the ADHD, autism, and broader neurodiverse communities:

On 31 March 2026, the government published its interim review into mental health conditions, ADHD and autism, setting out progress on its work around prevalence, rising demand and the support people need. For neurodivergent communities, this is an important development because the final recommendations could influence future policy, public services and the wider national conversation around diagnosis and support.



The government's SEND reform consultation remains a major issue for families, schools and young people, as it proposes changes intended to improve outcomes and create earlier, fairer support across the system. This matters to many neurodivergent children and their families because any reforms could affect how support is identified, planned and delivered in nurseries, schools and colleges.

Welcome to Mindful Insights, where we take a deeper dive into the science, research, and expert perspectives surrounding neurodiversity. In this section, we explore the latest findings, professional advice, and evidence-based strategies to help you better understand and navigate life with ADHD, autism, and other neurodivergent conditions. Whether you're seeking practical tips, exploring new research, or simply curious about the neurodivergent experience, we aim to provide valuable insights that empower and inform our community.

1. Managing ADHD: Practical Tips from an ADHD Coach - Top Strategies for Managing ADHD in Daily Life

Recent studies have shown that individuals with ADHD benefit from structured environments and using external prompts to stay on task.

For example, a study published in *The Journal of Attention Disorders* found that using tools like reminders, visual task boards, and setting strict time limits improves executive function in individuals with ADHD. One such strategy recommended by ADHD coaches is the Pomodoro Technique, which uses short, timed intervals of focused work followed by breaks.

2. Understanding Autism: The Neuroscience Behind Sensory Processing - Why Sensory Sensitivities Matter in Autism

Research from The National Autistic Society has shown that sensory processing issues are one of the most common challenges for individuals on the autism spectrum.

A recent study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* found that sensory sensitivities can impact 90% of individuals with autism, leading to heightened stress responses in overwhelming environments. The study suggests that interventions like sensory breaks and environmental modifications can significantly improve emotional regulation.

“You don't have to be perfect to be amazing” Anonymous