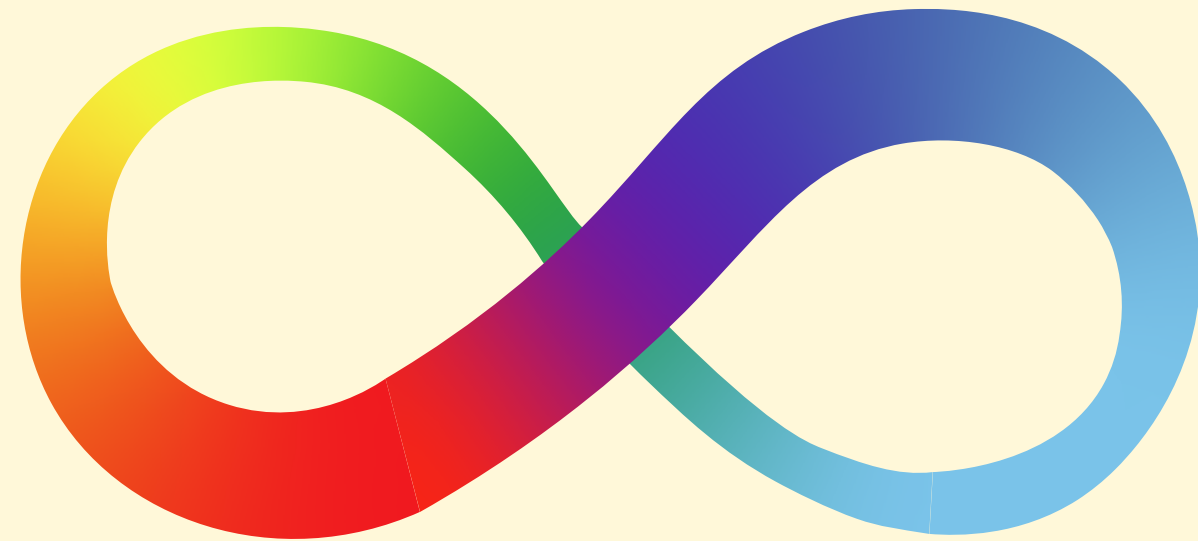
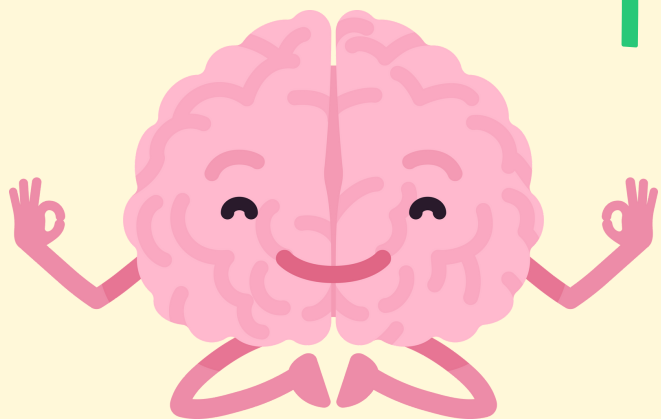


An introduction to



NEURODIVERSITY



What is neurodiversity?

“A social ideal based on a biological fact...**every brain is different**....Instead of separating people into normal and abnormal, **neurodiversity asks us to accept variation**. To us, it means that autism, ADHD, and learning disabilities are valuable forms of humanity that enrich culture. New ideas, insights, and unique ways of viewing the world come from diverse minds. **This is a strength.**”

Definition of Neurodiversity
from the Center for
Neurodiversity at Landmark
College

<[https://www.landmark.edu/
center-for-neurodiversity](https://www.landmark.edu/center-for-neurodiversity)>
About neurodiversity



Neurodiversity includes:

Autism

Anxiety

ADHD

Dyslexia

OCD

Dyscalculia

PTSD

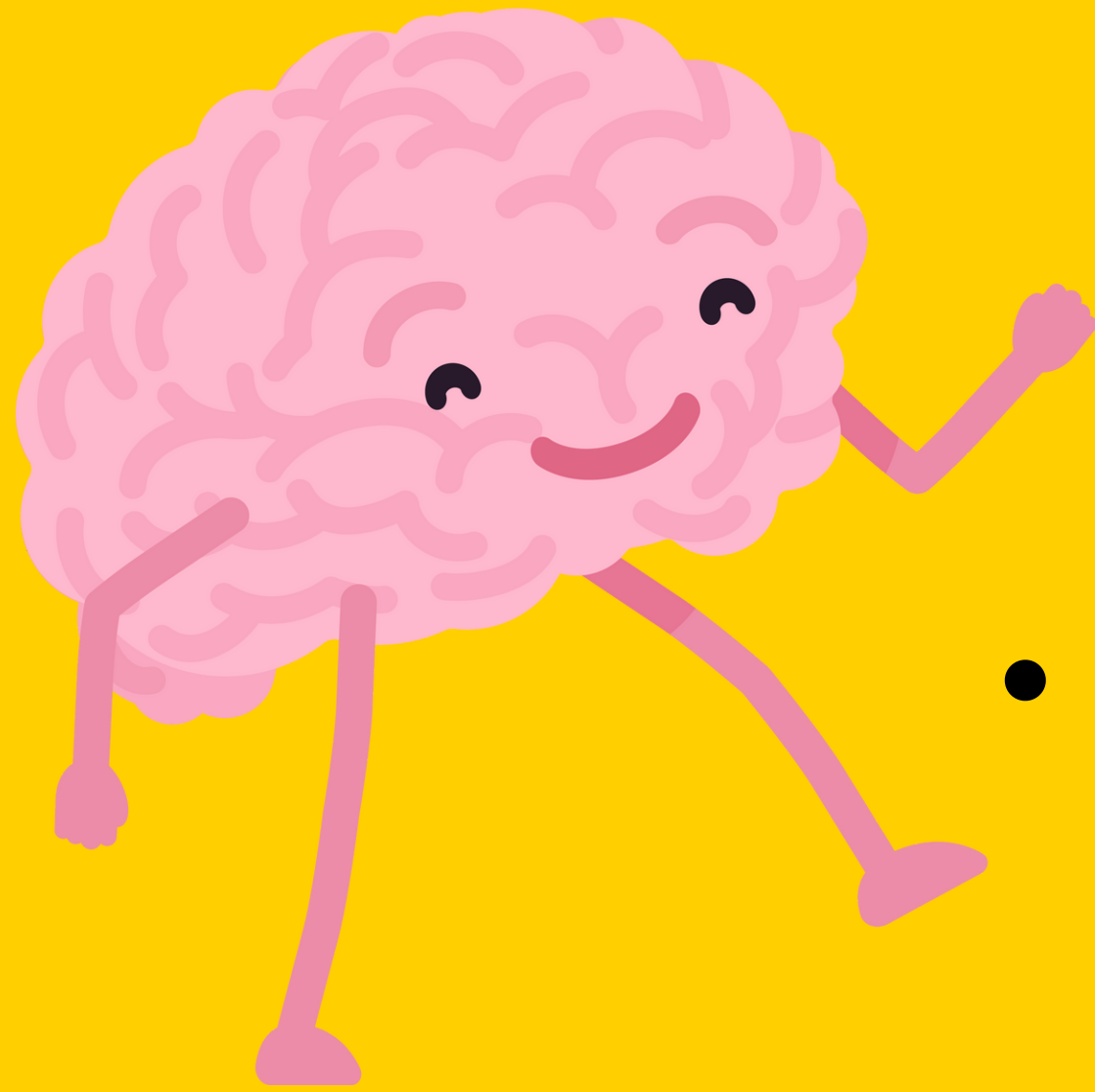
**Acquired neurodivergence
(like traumatic brain injuries)**

Tourette's

And more!

**These are not illnesses,
but they do come with
challenges navigating
society. They are
considered disabilities
from a medical and legal
standpoint, which helps
get accommodations
when needed!**

Things to know



- **Neurodivergent vs. Neurotypical**
 - Neurodivergent (ND) describes someone who thinks and learns differently from the dominant population.
 - Neurotypical (NT) describes someone who is not neurodivergent.
- **Neurodiversity-affirming Language**
 - It's best to use the terms the ND community uses, such as identity-first language (autistic person) over person-first language (person with autism).
 - Reframe deficit thinking. For example: “symptoms” should be traits, “functioning” references can be replaced with support needs, and “obsessions” are just special interests. If you're not sure, ask!

Things to avoid

- **Outdated terminology and symbols**

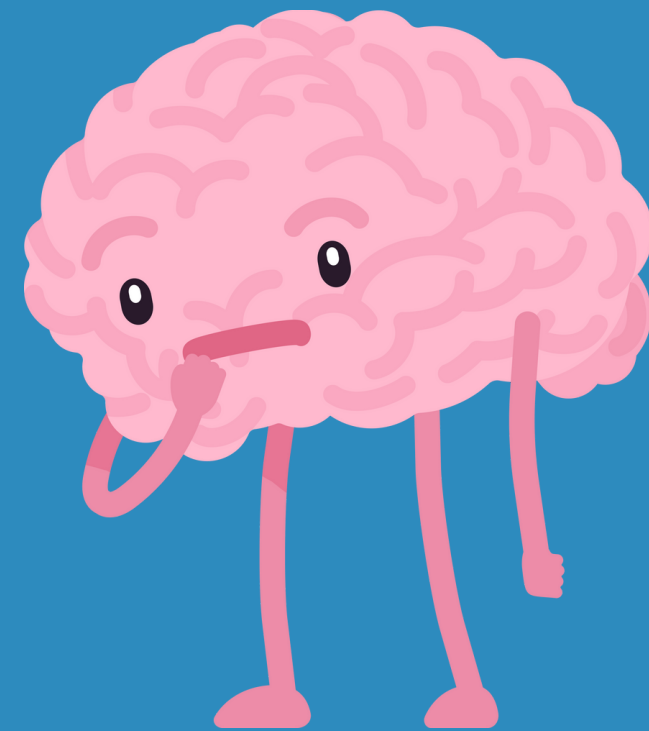
- Example: “Asperger’s Syndrome” is no longer a diagnosis.
- The puzzle piece was used without input from the autistic community.

- **Stereotypes**

- Example: Not all autistic kids love trains. OCD does not automatically equal extra tidy. ADHD is not just a boy diagnosis.
- We can’t assume all experiences will look the same. It’s diverse!

- **Harmful labels and language**

- Example: Functioning or severity labels can be ableist and discriminatory. Words like “disorder,” “disease” and attempts to “cure” a diverse brain are deficit language that implies something is wrong. Saying “I’m a little OCD” can trivialize the challenges of a ND experience. And please don’t say “normal” when you mean “neurotypical.”



Neurodivergence can look like...

Stimming or fidgeting:

Self-stimulating or regulating behavior (like repetitive movements or sounds) to maintain focus, calm down, or express joy.

High or low energy:

Having an especially active body/mind or having not much motivation to move/act.

Differences in focus:

Getting intensely absorbed in a task or special interest (hyperfocus) or having difficulties focusing.

Strong sensory needs:

Craving sensory input or being sensitive to sensory input to avoid being under- or over-stimulated.

Masking:

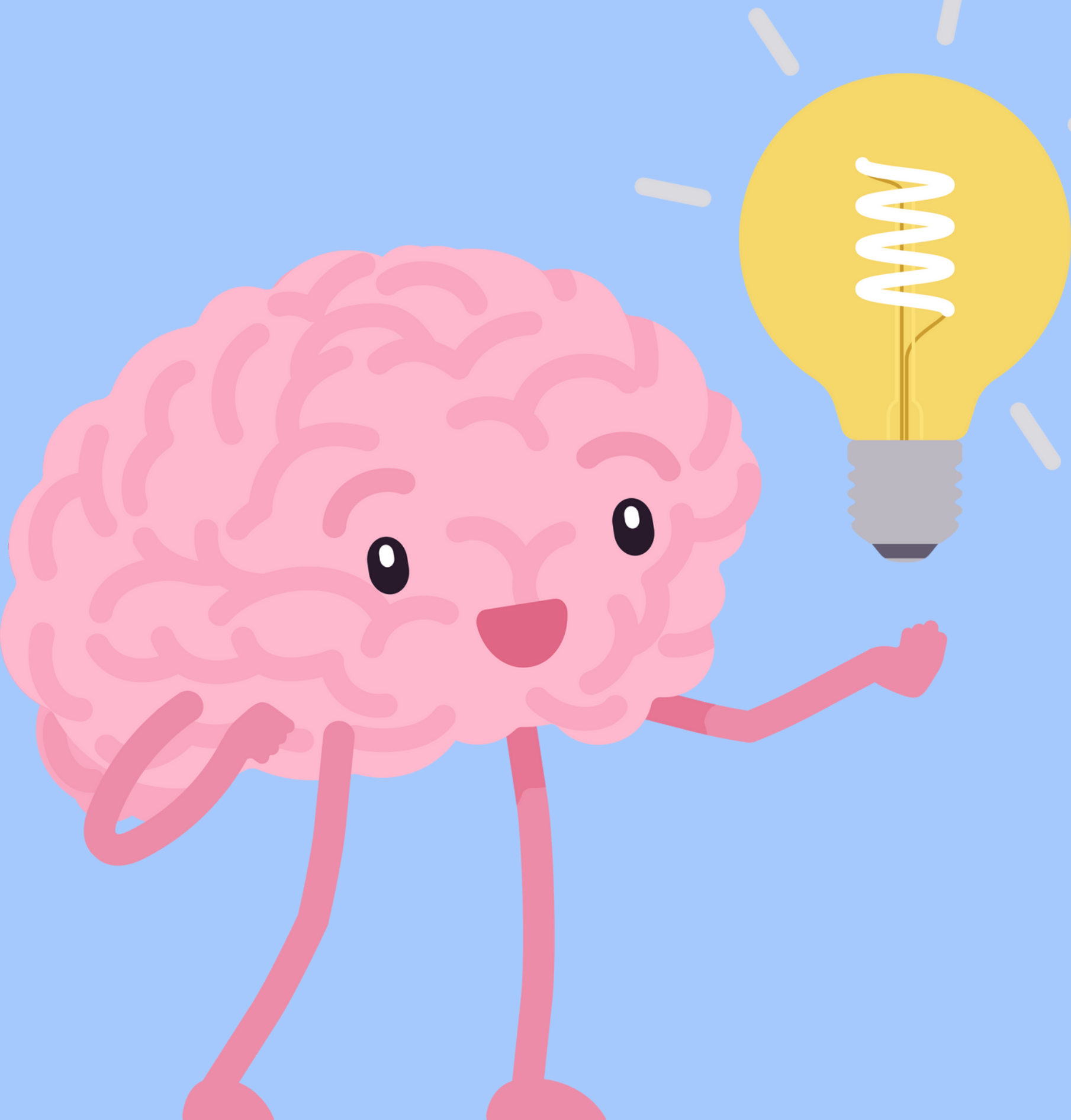
Using up energy to hide behaviors and traits in order to fit in or not get in trouble. Can lead to anxiety and burnout.

Differences in communication:

Talking a lot or a little, quoting favorite videos, using blunt language, preferring visuals over text.

and much more!

Be ND Friendly!



- **Teach and practice affirming language**
- **Normalize different speech and movement**
- **Have patience with different learners**
- **Listen to and learn from ND voices**

ND Friendly classes...

- ...have flexible seating
- ...incorporate movement breaks
- ...provide different sensory support (tactile activities, visual aids)
- ...offer different ways to communicate
- ...remove barriers that overstimulate
- ...never shame a student's speech, movement, comprehension, etc.
- ...teach about neurodiversity!



Learn More!

**For more details and resources,
visit our website!**

caslvcadencepto.com/25-26-neurodiversity-week

