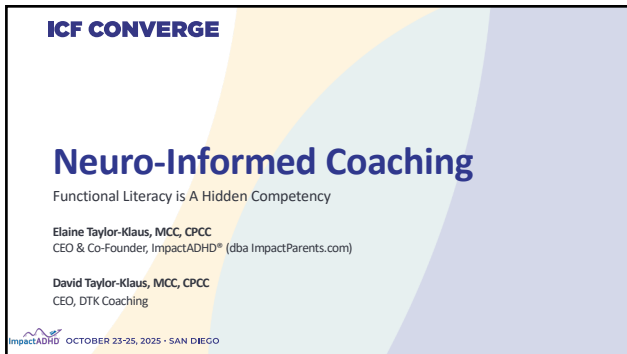




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"I just don't think she's ready for coaching because she won't complete my intro-packet."

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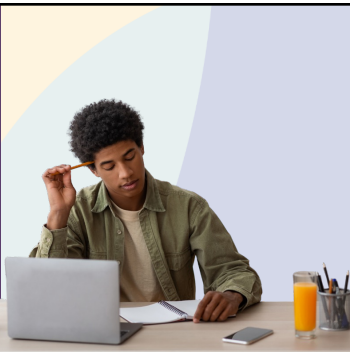


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"He was a definite yes for coaching, but then he disappeared and won't respond to my outreach."

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"She was making so much progress in coaching ... and then she ghosted me."

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"This client has really great sessions, but then never seems to do their homework."

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"She just doesn't seem to be motivated to follow through."

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"It takes more than half the session get to a topic, and then it could still change again."

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"My client seems to take everything personally and is quick to blame others. They resist attempts to look at their role."

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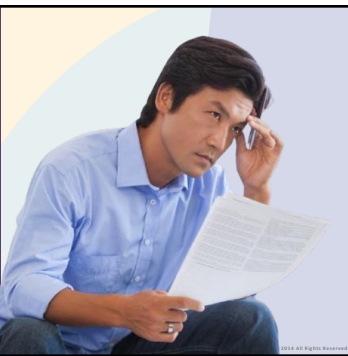


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"I can't put my finger on it, but something feels 'off' in this coaching engagement."

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"Should I fire this client? They're always late or re-scheduling; they text me at odd hours, but are not showing up for their sessions."

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Neuro-informed coaching competencies include (at least):

- Neurodiversity Fundamentals
- Recognizing Neurodiversity
- Importance of Neuro-Informed Coaching
- Risks when Coaching Isn't Neuro-Informed
- Benefits & When to Refer
- Brain Fundamentals (Rudimentary)
- Contexts for Understanding Neurodiversity
- Empowering Concepts for Coaching Neurodiversity
- Effective Tools & Techniques for Neurodiversity
- Communication Techniques for Neurodiversity
- Practice Processes & Procedures
- Ongoing Education

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Today we'll focus on these five:

- Neurodiversity Fundamentals
- Recognizing Neurodiversity
- Importance of Neuro-Informed Coaching
- Risks when Coaching Isn't Neuro-Informed
- Benefits & When to Refer
- Brain Fundamentals (Rudimentary)
- Contexts for Understanding Neurodiversity
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- Practice Processes & Procedures
- Ongoing Education

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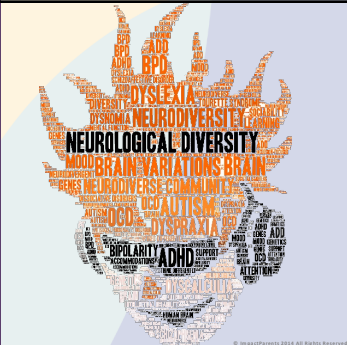
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What is Neurodiversity & Neurodivergence?

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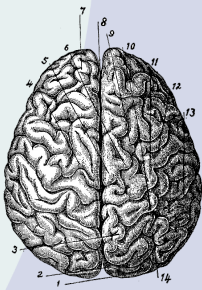
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"Neurodiversity is the idea that everyone experiences and interacts with the world around them in different ways based on differences in their brains. Variations are not failings or deficits; they're just... different."

Jeff Copper, PCC, Attention Talk Radio
ICF Neurodiversity Panel, May 2022

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The Brain Does Not Discriminate

Neurodiversity

- Coined to promote equality and inclusion of 'neurological minorities.'
- Idea that variations in human brain functions are normal, not deficits.
- Observable in all aspects of life (social, learning, attention, mood & self-directed regulation and action).
- Present in all racial, ethnic, gender, religious and/or socio-economic groups.

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Neurodivergence

- Some individuals' brains diverge from what is considered typical or 'neuro-normative'
- Can be acquired or genetic
- Not intrinsically positive or negative, desirable or undesirable

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Neurodiversity numbers:
variable & higher than expected

- ~2 out of 5 adults showed symptoms of anxiety or depression in 2021¹⁾
- > 20% of students have learning &/or attention issues²⁾
- “Between 30% and 40% of the population are thought to be neurodivergent. The remaining majority are neurotypical.”³⁾
- Estimate: 1 in 36 (2.8%) 8-year-olds Dx with ASD; 2.21% of adults (U.S.) Dx with ASD. (CDC)

1) Centers for Disease Control, 2021
2) National Centers for Learning Disabilities, 2014
3) ADHDSource.org.uk



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Poll:
What's Your Exposure to Neurodiversity?

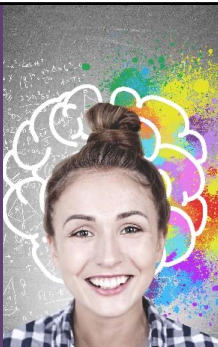
- Friends &/or Family
- School/Work &/or Community
- Personal Experience

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Differences in 'Brain Wiring' Can Be Genetic or Acquired ...

- Genetics and/or Brain-based Conditions
(ADHD, anxiety, autism, depression, etc.)
- Giftedness
(2e = Twice exceptional)
- Trauma/PTSD, trauma
(life experiences, whether treated or untreated)
- Processing Differences
(language, dyslexia, sensory sensitivities, etc.)
- Brain Injury, Side Effects & Hormones
(consequences of many health conditions & incidents)
- VCUA Environment
(volatile, uncertain, complex, & ambiguous + stress responses)



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Neurodiversity Manifests in Both Gifts & Challenges

- Outside the Box Thinking
- Processing Style Differences
- Pattern Recognition
- Excitabilities & Sensitivities
- Empathy
- Creativity
- Resilience
- Innovation
- Visionary



- Disorganization
- Impulsivity (and/or Hyperactivity)
- Memory Challenges
- Attention Regulation
- Emotional Regulation
- Physical Self-Regulation
- Sensory Differences
- Excitabilities & Sensitivities

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Discussion:

Where Have You Witnessed Neurodiversity in Your Life or Work?

- Mental health/brain-related diagnosis
- Physical and/or psychological trauma
- Twice exceptional (2e)
- Midlife “crisis”/menopausal human
- VUCA (stress/uncertainty)
- Other

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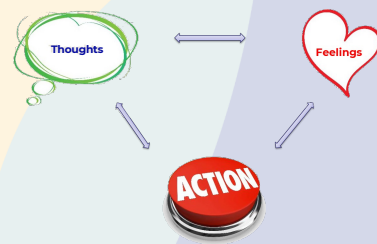
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Neuroscience of Coaching Teaches ...

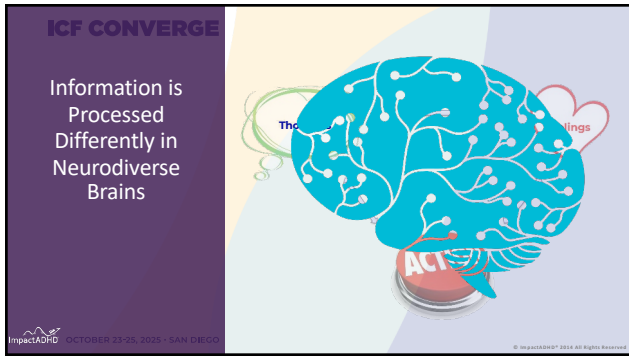


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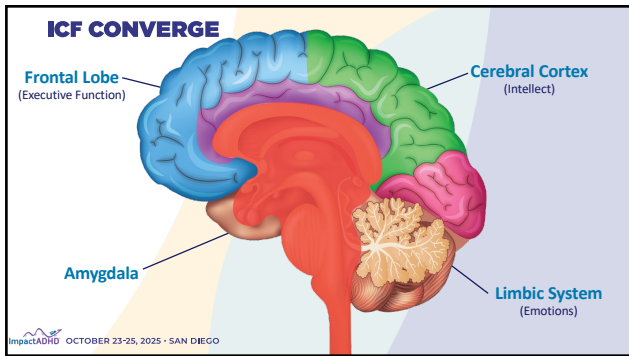
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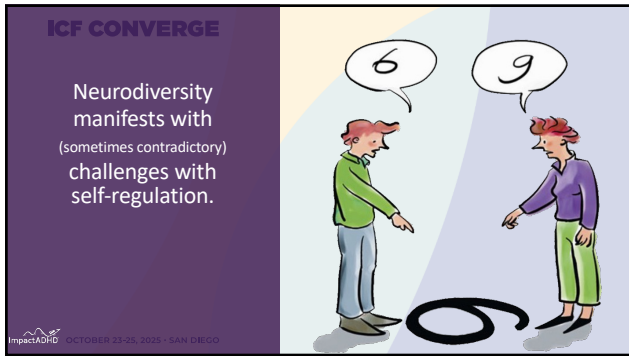
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Neurodiversity Impacts Feelings (Self Concept)

- Shame, saboteurs, limiting beliefs & diminished self-esteem
- Defensiveness, masking, magical thinking & inflated self-concept
- Feelings can lead to SODA behaviors (shut down, offense, defense, avoid)

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Neurodiversity Impacts Performance (Organizing Self)

- Work avoidance, perfectionism, procrastination, low energy
- Workaholism, over-committing, task and time management, high energy

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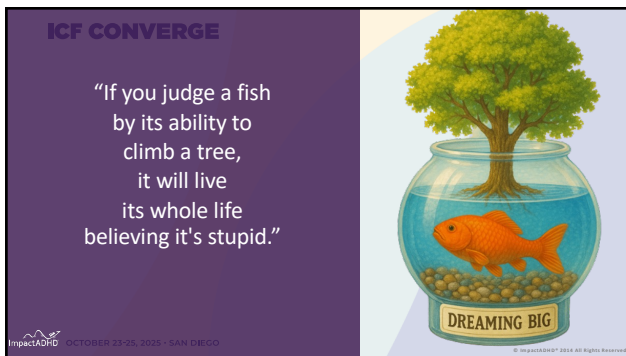
Neurodiversity Impacts Relationships (Emotions & Human Dynamics)

- Anger, emotional reactivity, highly sensitive, creates conflict, socially awkward
- Impulsive, trouble with follow-through, obsessive thinking or behaviors, avoids conflict

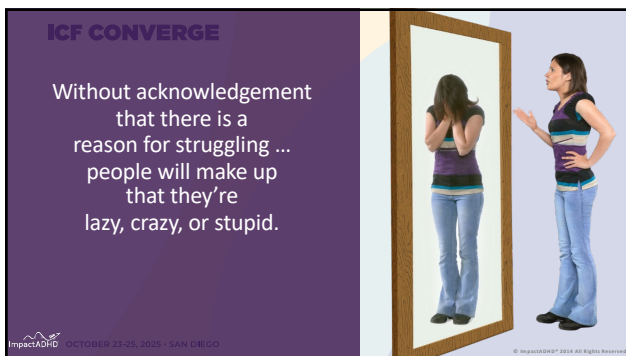
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Masking Behavior:
*acting neurotypically
to avoid negativity*

Masking can lead to
anxiety,
depression,
burnout,
shutdown,
overwhelm,
and a disconnection
from one's authentic self.



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[illegible]

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When supports are not neuro-informed ...

“...an individual’s adaptations to their personality and how they display their emotions to fit with societal norms ... can have a large impact on their sense of self, and lead to exhaustion, burn-out, and poor mental health.”

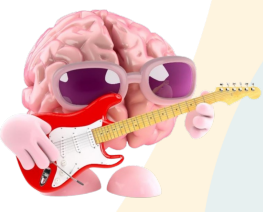
— Oxford Academic PMJ



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[illegible]

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Coaching is a particularly effective modality for neurodiversity ...
when it is neuro-informed.

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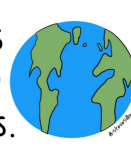
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"Words matter in neurodiversity.
Neurodiversity advocates encourage inclusive, nonjudgmental language."

Harvard Blog November 2021
"What is Neurodiversity"
Nicole Baumer MD, MEd & Julia Frueh, MD

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Words create worlds.


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Coaching is a modality for change that invites hope, vision, and possibility to:

- Raise Self Awareness
- Forward Action

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Coaching is inherently empowering & strengths-based, assuming nothing is broken that needs to be fixed.

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Coaching focuses on motivation & intention.

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Coaching offers a process-oriented approach to achieving outcomes and celebrates incremental success.

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Coaches are able to offer appropriate referrals & consults without shame.

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But ... coaching's power is incomplete when it fails to create a sense of *belonging*.

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Neuro-informed Coaches Understand 5 Contexts (at a minimum) ...

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Emotional Regulation:
‘On Alert’

Coaching Tip:
Flooding and/or overwhelm can impact task initiation, performance or completion. Avoid problem-solving when someone’s brain is ‘triggered.’

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Executive Function:
‘Brain’s Orchestra Leader’

Coaching Tip:
Play to their strengths & outsource/externalize challenges.

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Activation Management

Action Management

Memory Management

Attention Management

Emotion Management

Effort Management

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Language & Information
Processing Differences
(can be visual, aural, verbal, kinesthetic or pace-related)

Coaching Tip:
Get curious about how they process information and how they feel they learn best.

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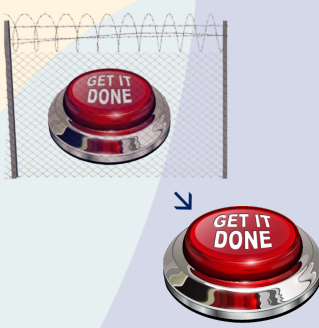


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Motivation & Intention
are essential.

Coaching Tip:
Identify motivators for every action,
large and small.



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**Identify Motivators
with
P.I.N.C.H.**

- Play (creativity & humor)
- Interest
- Novelty
- Competition/Connection
- Hurry-up (urgency)

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Effective Use of
Systems & Structures

Coaching Tip:
Create systems that are simple,
flexible and personalized.



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Group Inquiry:

Which of these 5 contexts are you drawn to learn more about to better support clients with neurodiversity?

1. Emotional Awareness & Regulation
2. Executive Function
3. Processing Differences
4. Motivation & Intention
5. Effective Use of Systems & Structures



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Relationship between Coaching & Therapy

- The bicycle analogy
- Therapeutic is not the same as therapy
- Approach similar challenges with different approaches
- Neurodivergent clients often work with both coaches and therapists
- Coaches may communicate with therapists &/or medical doctors





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Signs to Explore Underlying Neurodiversity or REFER out

- If same topic comes up again and again
- If you don't feel comfortable or that you're being effective as a provider
- If client discloses a diagnosis or questions that they might have a condition
- If in doubt: Get a mentor, get training, &/or make referral to a trained provider





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Today we overviewed:

- Neurodiversity Fundamentals
- Recognizing Neurodiversity
- Importance of Neuro-Informed Coaching
- Risks when Coaching Isn't Neuro-Informed
- Benefits & When to Refer
- Brain Fundamentals (Rudimentary)
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- Ongoing Education

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Ethically,
the future for
all coaches is
neuro-informed.



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Invitation: What's Next for You?

- **Get comfortable** talking about neurodiversity
- **Incorporate** neurodiversity into your initial coaching / engagement design
- **Transparently** share with clients that you're in the process of learning about neurodiversity
- **Ask permission** to share observations and raise awareness about neurodiversity, when relevant
- **Develop partnerships** with relevant specialists – therapists, coaches, et al. – for assessment, support, referral, and consult, when appropriate
- **Continue** your own neuro-informed education

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Neurodiverse people
are often
specialists
in a
generalists'
world.

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Wrap Up
(*Neurotypical*)

What are you taking away from today that you will use to improve your coaching, your assessments, your practices, or your life?



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Wrap Up
(*Neurodiverse*)

- What did I **focus** on or pay most attention to in this session?
- What's my **clarity** or take-away?
- What is a realistic **action** step for me to take?
- How can I set myself up for **success** with this action?



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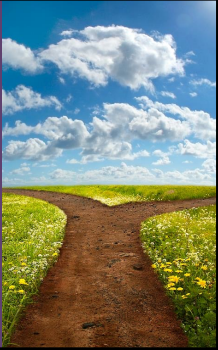
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Resources

- *Neurodiversity Guide for Coaches*
- *Understanding ADHD – A Guide for Providers*
- *The Essential Guide to Raising Complex Kids with ADHD, Anxiety & More (sample chapter)*

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