

PINC:
Celebrating Neurodiversity
Week

Trinity College
March 20, 2025



Tonight's Session

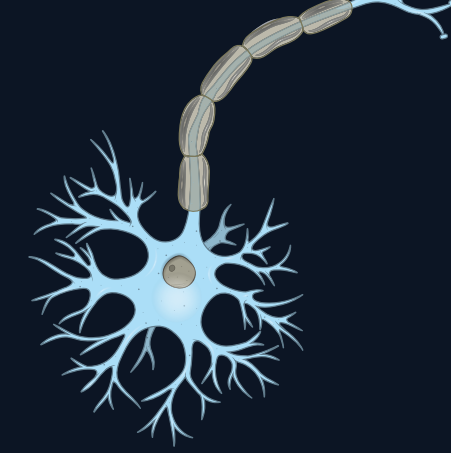
6.00 - 6.30 - Welcome drink, nibbles & networking.

6.30 - 7.45 - Formal proceedings:

- Leah Rogers - Welcome & Acknowledgement
- Sabrina Hughes- Prayer & Opening
- Natalee Calegari - Introductions
- Natalee Blakemore- Keynote speaker

7.45 - 8.00 - Networking, cake & coffee.

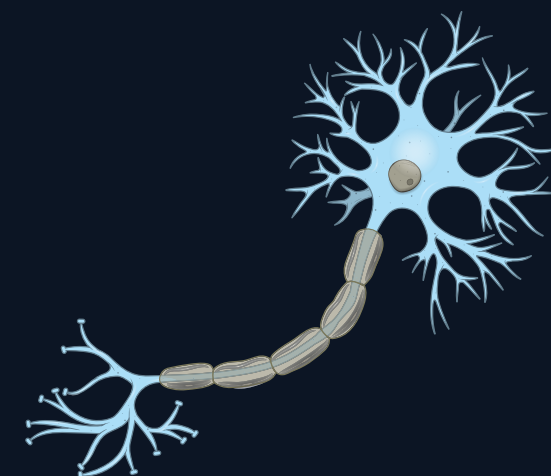
8.00 - Event conclusion





LEAH ROGERS

HEAD OF LEARNING SUPPORT






ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Kaya Wanju (Hello and Welcome)

I would like to acknowledge and pay my respects to Nyungar Elders, past and present, recognising their journey and their history allows us to maintain traditional Aboriginal culture and language on country today.

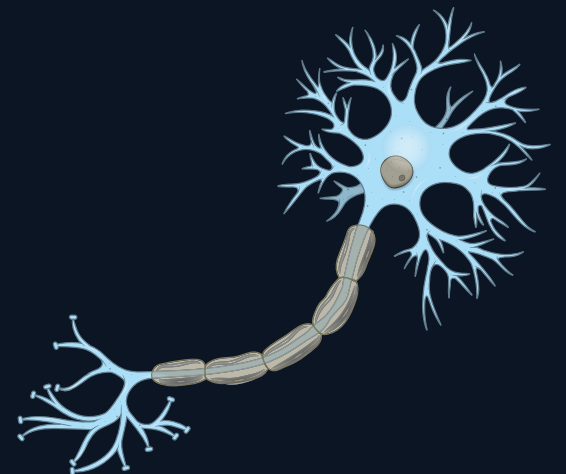
It is now a part of Trinity College tradition to do an Acknowledgement or Welcome to Country to recognise the traditional custodians of this area, the Whadjuk Nyungar people. One of the 14 language groups within Nyungar country.





SABRINA HUGHES

VICE PRINCIPAL



PRAYER FOR DIVERSITY

Dear Lord,

In a world where differences seem to divide us, I humbly come before you and ask for your strength and guidance in seeking to cultivate tolerance and patience within myself and among all people.

Grant me the wisdom to see beyond the surface, to recognise that every individual carries a unique story, experiences, and beliefs.

Help me embrace diversity with an open heart and mind, celebrating the beauty in our differences rather than allowing them to create barriers.

Teach me to listen attentively, to hear the perspectives of others without judgment or prejudice.

May I learn to respond with kindness and compassion, even when faced with disagreement or misunderstanding.

Grant me the ability to empathize and understand, so that I may foster unity and build bridges of understanding.

In moments of frustration or impatience, grant me the serenity to pause, take a deep breath, and find clarity within myself.

Help me to remember that every person is on their own journey, and their pace may differ from my own.

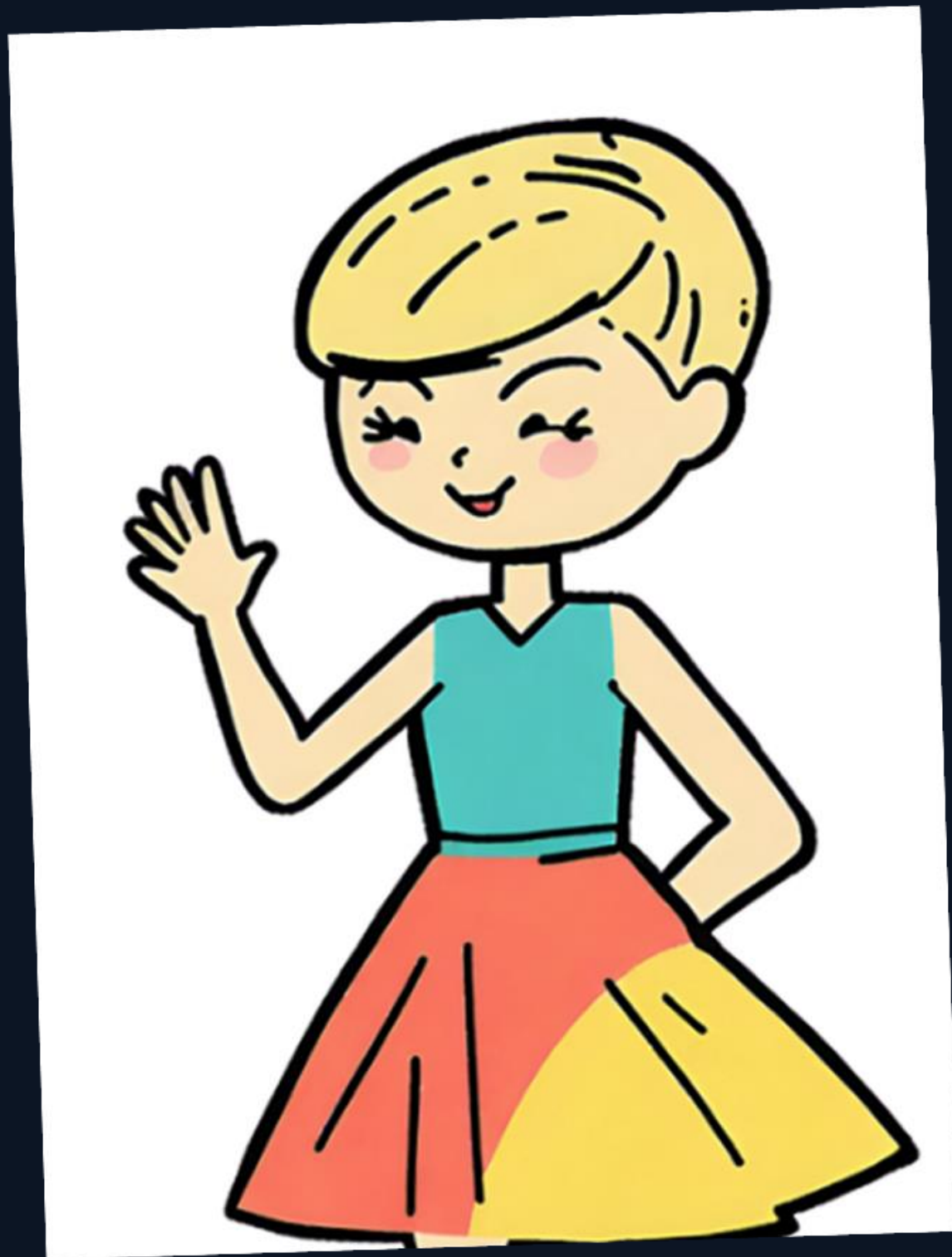
May I be patient and gentle, allowing time for growth and transformation to unfold.

I offer this prayer with a humble and open heart, trusting in your infinite wisdom and love.

We ask this prayer through Christ, our Lord;

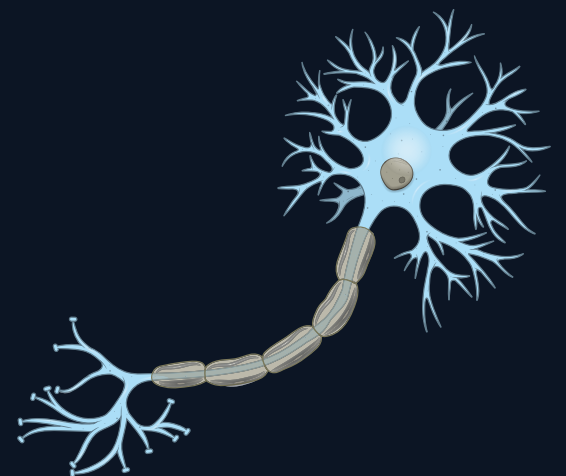
Amen

Live Jesus in our Hearts;
Forever



NATALEE CALEGARI

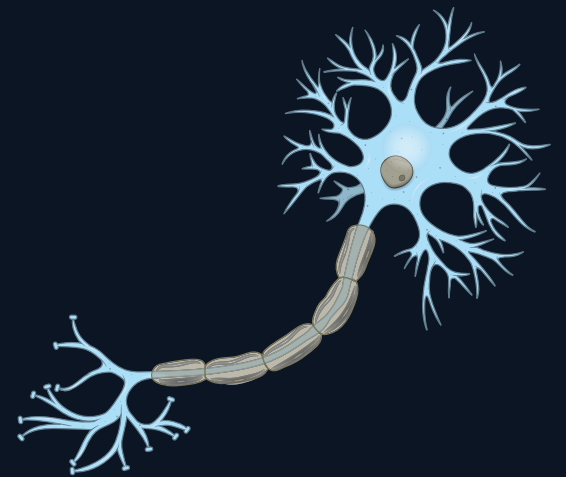
LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHER





NATALEE BLAKEMORE

MENTAL HEALTH OT

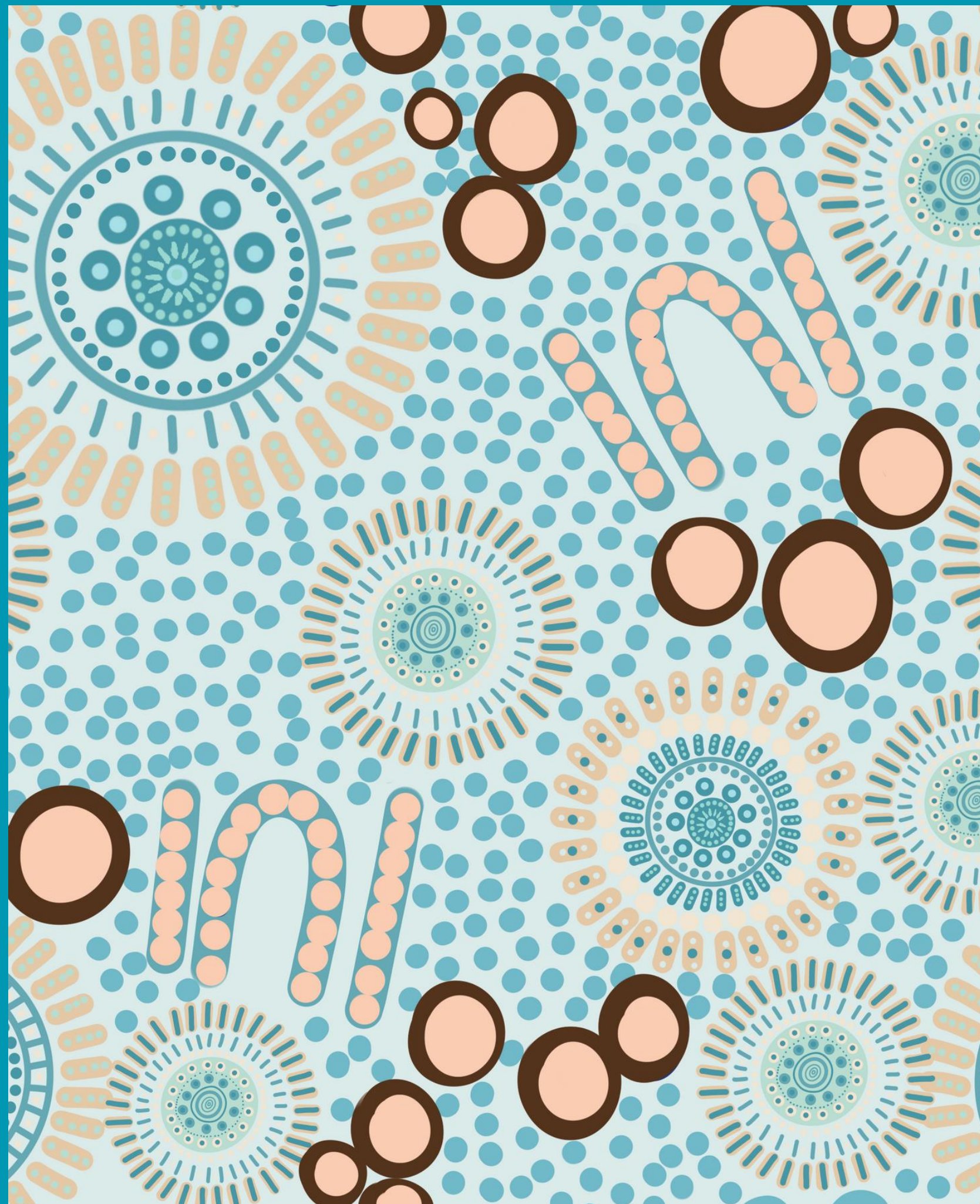




Natalee Blakemore

Director & Endorsed Mental Health
Occupational Therapist





Acknowledgement to Country

I would like to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the Whadjuk Noongar land on which we meet today. I would like to pay my respects to Elders past, present, and emerging. I would like to take the time to consider those with lived experiences that can be challenging and the resiliency they bring, to the diversity of minds, culture, and people groups, may we be curious to learn, love and respect all people.

Family dynamics: Different needs for different people

Is it possible to **thrive** not
just **survive**???



First of all, who is Natalee??

Quirky Creative, who is passionate about food, electronic dance music, nature and animals

I have been a chef, a remedial massage therapist, a beauty therapist, and allied health assistant

I have travelled and had many adventures overseas.



Didn't really start to read and write until I was 13yrs, and then left high school after year 11.

I have been working in mental health in various contexts over the last 25years

Married to a high school STEAM teacher, and a mum of two 'kidults' and a teenager

I am autistic, dyslexic, & an ADHDer

Parents/caregivers each have their own set of values & expectations they bring to their parenting role:



These all impact your expectations within the caregiver/ child relationship

Remember, your way is not the only way to do things – different does not equate to wrong.

Caregiver roles, approaches in child development

Caregiver uses a low demand approach: Supports the development of the young person’s internal motivation

Caregiver uses a directive compliant approach: Supports the young person’s reliance on external influence for motivation

Autonomy: to make age appropriate choices, supported with boundaries.	Micro managed: external influence directs all choices and tasks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavioral changes take longer to develop.• Leads to sustainable growth and skill development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Behavioral changes often occur quickly.• Compliance is expected by external influences.• Does not support sustainable internal motivation development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connection and safety in the relationship are established.• Child feels safe to succeed and fail while developing skills.• Child knows they have a secure relationship to rely on.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child often complies with requests due to uncertainty about external reactions.• May mask their needs, thoughts, and feelings.• Lacks empowerment to learn from successes and failures.• Emotional safety in the caregiver relationship may be harder to establish.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunities to learn from successes and failures.• Resilience is developed.• Supports self-empowerment and self-confidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child becomes reliant on external direction.• Fewer opportunities to learn from failures.• Resilience takes longer to develop.• Perfectionism may become a barrier.• Reduced self-confidence in decision-making and trying new things.

Compliance does **NOT** = Respect

Do what I say and
don't ask
questions

Rewards for good
behaviour

Only happy and
positive vibes
allowed



Respect **IS** = Being seen &
heard, space for
difference in opinion, and
connection in relationship

Don't talk too
loud, don't laugh
too loud, don't
play too loud

Do not fidget
when I am talking
to you

Look at me when I
am talking to you

Protective Behaviours

When we are provided with opportunities to ask questions about a request or an instruction, it is often about requiring more information, so that our brain can gain clarity about the intentions of the other person, formulating how we want to respond and the actions required to do so.

Safety in our relationships to explore how we will respond to a request or instruction is important at this stage in development as it signifies that **PAUSING** before **RESPONDING** is a helpful skill and self-management tool to have now as a young person, and also as an adult.

The way we think and respond to people will inherently be different, because they are a different person to **YOU!**

A neurodivergent person will also diverge in the way that they receive, process, communicate and respond to your requests and instructions.

Safety to disagree and challenge an idea or request is a skill that a child needs to develop so that if confronted with a person who has less than ideal intentions requests something from them, they have had opportunities to develop their internal compass that knows how to challenge something that does not sit well, and **ADVOCATE** for their **NEEDS** and **WANTS!**



Sensory
triggers +
expectations +
different
communication
styles =
Emotional
dysregulation



Emotional Regulation:

Emotional regulation is influenced by a person's neurotype differences and their ability to:

- Identify their triggers: trauma or stress responses, sensory sensitivities and preferences.
- Identify their feelings and emotions: many neurodivergent people have difficulty with identification of these and then how to respond or communicate to others about them. This is called ALEXITHYMIA.
- Identify their internal needs: INTEROCEPTION is mind body connection, and a skill in identifying and responding to our internal needs ie. pain, hunger, thirst, toileting needs, tiredness.
- Identify their energy requirements for a task or interaction: neurodivergent people live in a world that operates at a different level than them. There are often pressures to meet certain expectations socially, academically, culturally, & behaviourally. If adjustments are not afforded to neurodivergent people, they are often forced to attempt to keep up to typically expected standards of these things. They are often playing the catch-up game to achieve this. That reduces their energy and capacity very quickly over the course of the day.



Emotional dysregulation will occur when we become overwhelmed with input from the above areas and don't have the right support, have reduced skills in identifying these areas, and knowing how to communicate them to others.

Neurodivergent people will often TRY to communicate in a way they know how that they are not managing, but many times this can be missed.

This can be when frustration builds up, and result in emotional meltdown or shutdown, aggressive responses, direct communication, and reduced ability to engage in tasks and interactions.

Co-regulating to support emotional regulation through your responses and communication:

Never shaming a person for their response

Give them space to de-escalate

Support their sensory preferences

Support their capacity by reducing your demands on them

They will be tired after school, and may need to retreat

Respect their communication preferences

Supporting them with their executive functioning of home and school tasks

Spending time with your kids in their interests, and discussing their topics of interest

Model emotional regulation for yourself with your kids



Rupture &

Repair

When a misunderstanding between you and your child occurs, it is on you as the adult to seek the re-connection and repair.

It is not our children's responsibility to emotionally regulate us as adults.

Thank you

Do you have any questions?

Please also feel free to reach out to me via email if you would prefer to ask a question via email.

nat@diversumhealthgroup.com.au

