

How My Neurodiversity Affects Me

Neurodiversity or being neurodiverse affects many people with more and more people being diagnosed as adults and even more recognising that is something that affects them and others. There is an increased awareness around it.

Being neurodiverse is not something that affects anyone's moral compass, it is not a personality disorder nor does it make anyone a greater risk anywhere including workplaces. People who are neurodiverse occupy often very responsible positions. I personally know autistic people who have doctorates, have written extensive theses, dissertations, scientific and other academic achievements.

Being neurodiverse is positive, the negatives from my experience arise from a lack of understanding others and being able to access support.

My autism, formerly known as Aspergers, (however this term is very dated now), was not diagnosed till 2018, for me the diagnosis helped me understand a lot more about past difficulties and experiences.

People who are autistic often have co-existing conditions and in my case I experienced childhood trauma, bullying and abuse while at school. Being diagnosed later in life helped me to understand why this happened, and also why at the time it was difficult to speak about and seek help. The diagnosis helped me deal with this effectively as an adult, as it did with workplace bullying.

My being neurodiverse results in having a vivid imagination, which I had as both a child and adult, as a child I used to create magical and mythical characters and worlds to cope with school life. I found it difficult to fit in with a social group as a child, now I know why that was.

This also explained why the resulting need to please and fit in with others lead me to be involved in two abusive relationships, neurodiverse people may often find it difficult to pick up on social clues and also often like to please others, often being very attuned to the feelings of others, the opposite of say narcissists.

In my work I was often given and charged with the responsibility for ensuring records and health and safety checks were kept up to date. My own attention to meticulous attention were skills that were very much needed in my job roles. I was told that I always got things done and could be relied upon.

These skills and abilities were used very effectively and also having a clear and vivid memory helped me when it came to winning my tribunal case. I could recount all the events and disprove the employers false statements and expose the malpractice.

My neurodiversity, like with many others made me very focussed and determined to do the right thing. This has undoubtedly been an asset in my voluntary, non for profit and campaign work. It helps in my passion to see justice done and wrongdoings put right.

In recent times I have met many other people who are neurodiverse and autistic including well known people and people from history, and also known characters from fiction.

I want to also add that being neurodiverse has had a huge impact in my writing and story telling, the imagination, clear and vivid characterisation are all part of my project as an author.

Workplaces and environments that are inclusive and autism friendly and disability friendly are without a doubt more supportive for all staff, and better performing and more successful as businesses or service provision.