

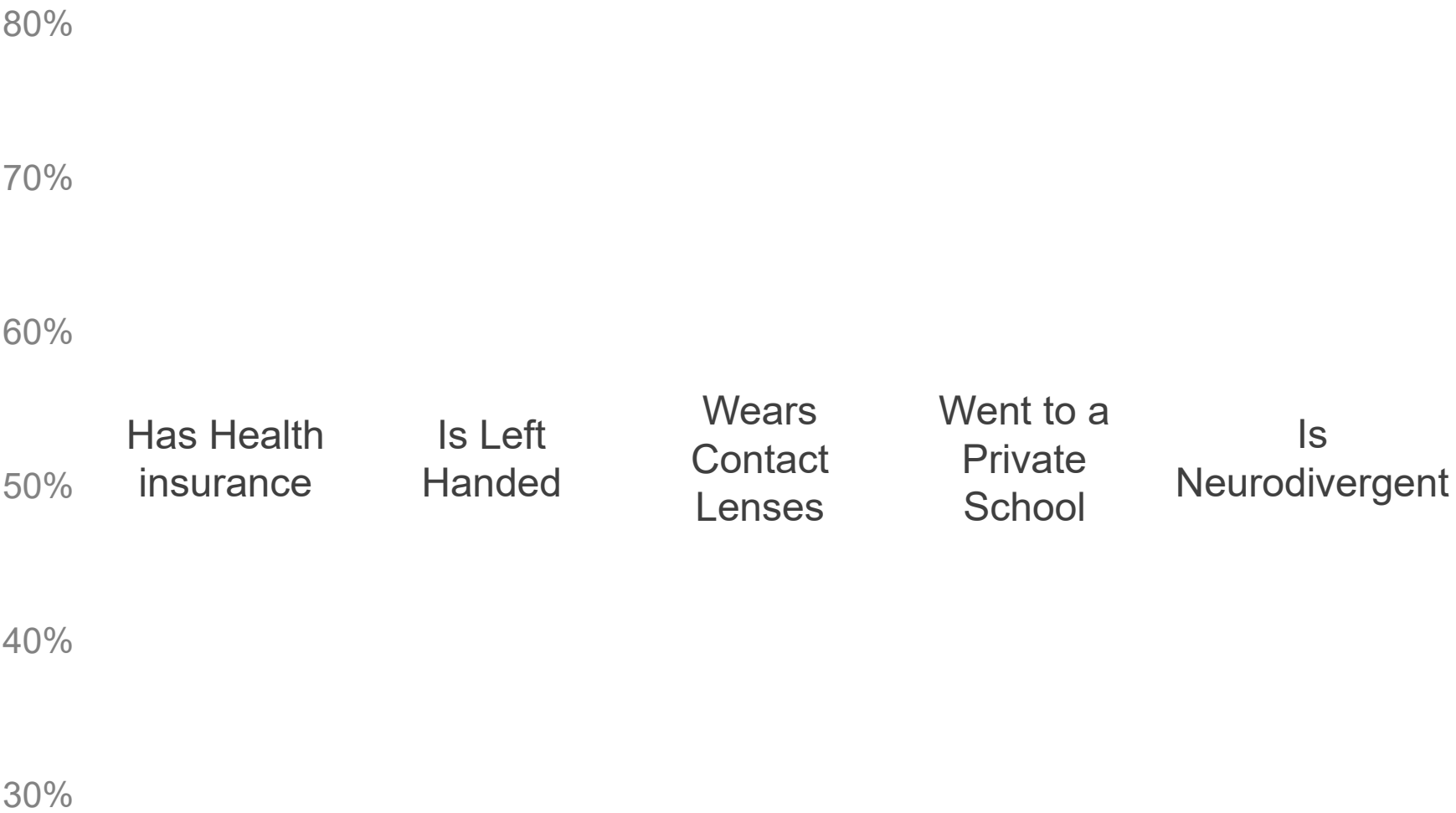


Institute  
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# IFoA Life Conference

Embracing Neurodiversity (B4)

If you met 10 random UK adults each independent from the last.  
What is the probability that at least one:



Sources: <https://www.theactuary.com/news/2025/05/29/14-uk-adults-now-have-private-health-insurance> <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/life-sciences/news/2018/what-makes-us-left-or-right-handed.aspx#:~:text=New%20study%20rules%20out%20strong,here%20for%20the%20full%20story.> <https://tutorful.co.uk/blog/private-school-statistics-uk-independent-schools> <https://www.aop.org.uk/ot/news/2024/04/18/uk-contact-lens-market-sees-growth> <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/autism-and/>



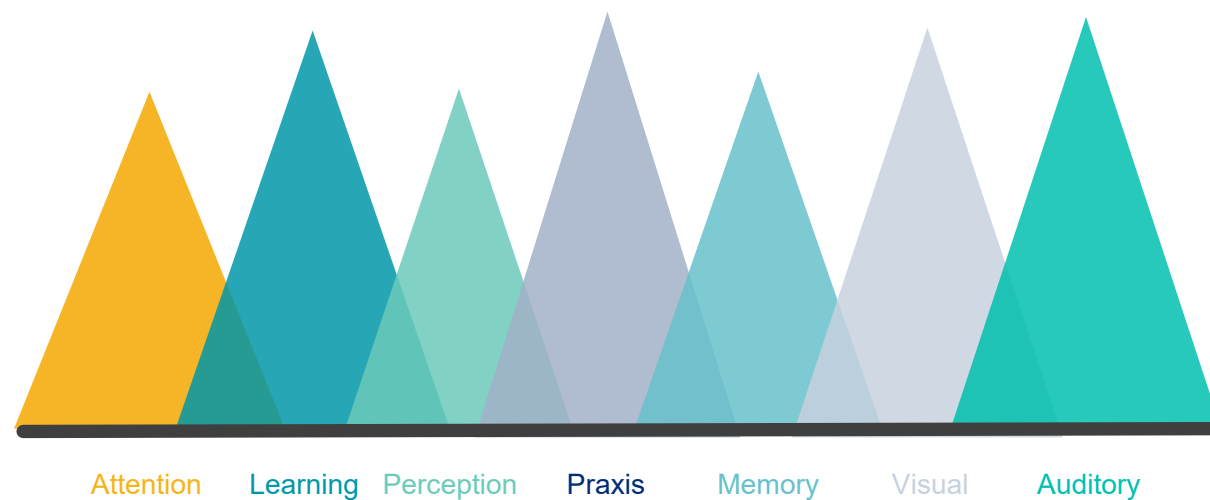
# What is Neurodiversity

“Neurodiversity is a term used to describe a variation in normal human evolution which means some people think differently to others”  
Oxford Health NHS foundation

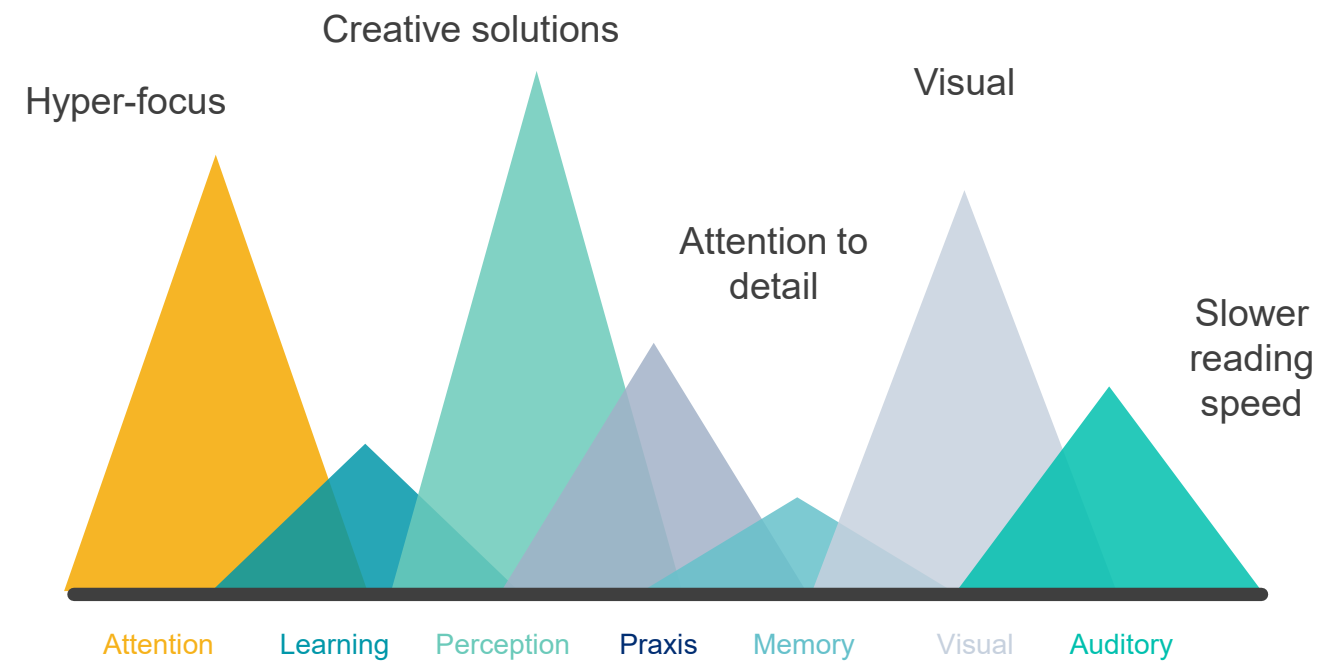
## Spikey Profiles

One way to show characteristic features of neurodiversity is the spiky profile. Neurodivergent individuals will be very good at some things compared to others. People who are not neurodiverse (i.e. neurotypical) tend to have flatter profiles – individuals will have a unique profile

### Neurotypical Example



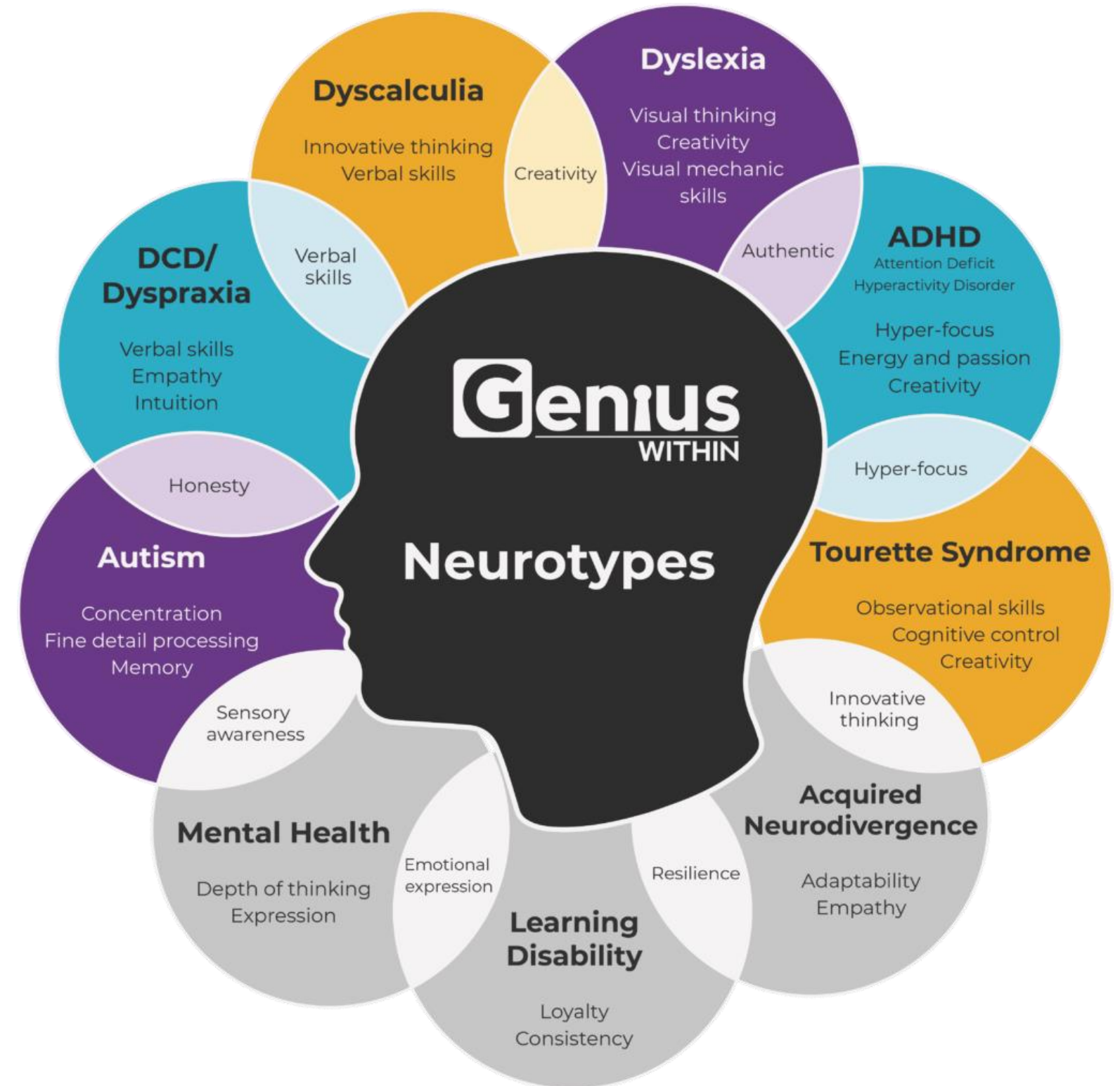
### Neurodivergent Example





# Types of Neurodivergence

These are the most commonly used labels. Neurodivergent traits vary greatly, including by gender, even between those with the same diagnosis on paper. Some individuals may have two or more Neurotype.



# My Journey

Everyone's journey is unique and the decision to seek a diagnoses can vary at different ages



This is how I would experience reading with **Dyslexia**:

Dyxseila is chtrizaerecad by ditfcuifly with laneirng to read fletnluy and with auctarce ciheoosprmnen dpietse nromal itlgcnneliee. This iludcnes dltfificuy with pochalniogol aewnraess, pincoolaghol dicdoneg, peirnsosg seepd, oairgphthorc cdniog, adtriouy short-trem moremy, laaungge sillks/varebl corpmineoshen, and/or ripad ninmag.

# My Journey

ADHD can be split into 3 groups:

## Inattention

Difficulty paying attention, staying on task, or being organized

## Hyperactivity

Excessive activity or restlessness, even at inappropriate times, and difficulty engaging in quiet activities

## Impulsivity

Acting without thinking or having trouble with self-control

ADHD traits can cluster and combine the three groups

Motivation can vary person to person.

## Common Neurotypical Motivations

- Importance
- Consequence
- Reward

## My ADHD Motivation

- Interest/Passion
- Challenge
- Urgency
- Novelty

# Types of Neurodiversity

	Dyslexia ≈10% of UK population	ADHD ≈5% of UK population	Autism ≈1-2% of UK population	Dyspraxia ≈5% of UK population
Examples of Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• People skills</li> <li>• Spatial thinking</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processing speed</li> <li>• Results-oriented</li> <li>• Hyperfocus</li> <li>• Enthusiasm</li> <li>• Public speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process structuring</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Attention to detail</li> <li>• Loyalty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Verbal skills</li> <li>• People skills</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> </ul>
Examples of Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working memory</li> <li>• Planning and organizing</li> <li>• Processing speed</li> <li>• Literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working memory</li> <li>• Planning and organizing</li> <li>• Routine tasks</li> <li>• Sensory issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Struggles with changes and uncertainty</li> <li>• Sensory issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motor skills</li> <li>• Sense of direction</li> <li>• Working memory</li> <li>• Planning and organizing</li> <li>• Processing speed</li> </ul>

Neurodivergent traits vary greatly, even between those with the same diagnosis on paper.  
Strengths and relative challenges and their degree of effect can also vary greatly, above gives a sample.

Examples taken for Diversity Project Presentation “Neurodiversity - Diverse Minds at Work” 10/06/21



# Support



A 2024 GAIN (Group for Autism, Insurance, Investment & Neurodiversity) survey found that the top 3 most impactful changes their employer could make to ensure a neuro-inclusive environment;

1. **Coaching and training on neuroinclusive leadership** for line managers and leaders
2. **Flexibility** in working hours, location and schedule
3. **Access to one-on-one coaching** with a specialist who understand neurodiversity

There are a range of support and resources including from:

- Genius Within
- GAIN
- Exceptional Individuals





# Panel

## Speaker



Ben Purkis



## Panellists



Niraj Shah



Paul Stevenson



I TWITCH  
I CLICK  
I WHISTLE  
I SHOUT

A KIRK JONES FILM

BASED ON THE REMARKABLE TRUE STORY

I SWEAR





# Q&A

# Thank you



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Nicky Draper & Niki Park



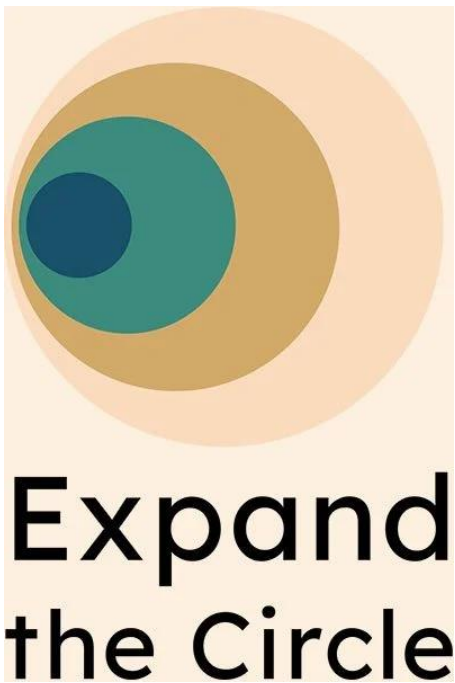
Kishan Patel



Sophie Sawyeres



Carla Henison & Tom McGruther-  
Johnson & IDE team



Alicja Nocon



Nat Hawley



Vic Mazonas



Jacqui Wallis, Royston  
Collins, Ella-Louise  
Fitzgerald & wider team

Thanks to  
everyone who  
supported making  
this possible

Brandon Horwitz







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# Thank you

Ben Purkis

[ben.purkis@kpmg.co.uk](mailto:ben.purkis@kpmg.co.uk)

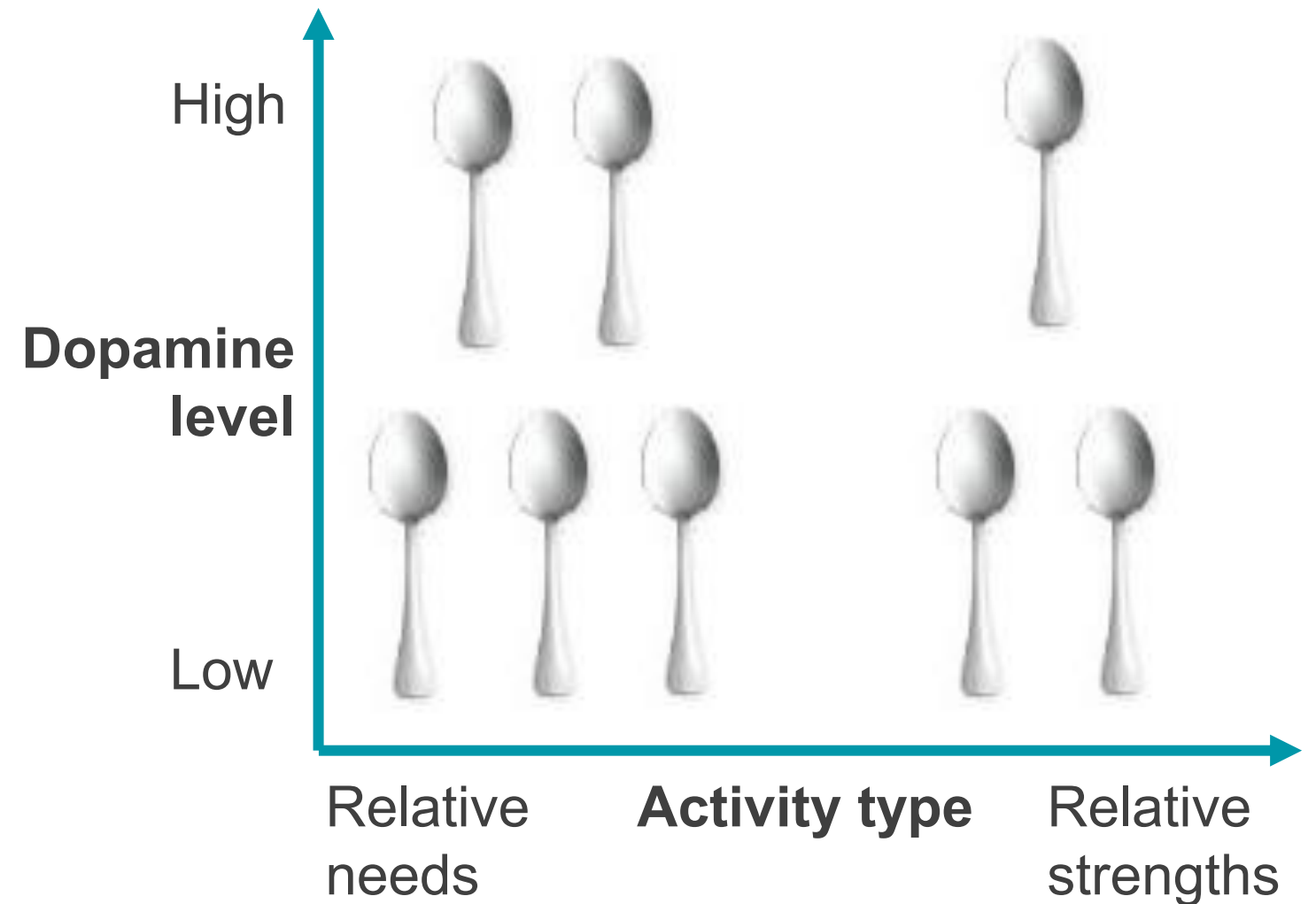
# ADHD & Dopamine

Research suggests that ADHD and low dopamine levels are often linked.

Dopamine is a chemical messenger in the brain, and it plays a key role in motivation, mood, memory, attention, and emotional regulation.

To help others understand my energy levels throughout the day, I use “Spoon Theory”.

Spoon Theory is a framework which uses the metaphor of having a limited amount of energy a day and different tasks consumer different amount on energy depend on the person strength and enjoyment of the activity.



# IFoA Bio for talk

## **Synopsis – Please let me know if there are any changes as this will be the version published on the website**

How often do we consider that 1 in 7 people are neurodivergent, and what untapped potential does this represent for the industry? What unique strengths do neurodivergent individuals bring to the table? How can understanding these strengths help you become a more effective colleague or manager?

With an increasing number of adults being diagnosed with neurodiverse conditions, it's crucial for professionals to understand the unique challenges and strengths these individuals bring to the workplace.

In our 45-minute presentation and panel discussion, we'll delve into the complexities of neurodiversity, focusing on dyslexia, ASD, ADHD and other conditions. You'll gain valuable insights into how neurodivergent employees can thrive in an actuarial environment and discover potential strategies for supporting them effectively.

## **Key Discussion Points:**

What are the common challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals in the workplace?

How can colleagues and managers create an inclusive and supportive workplace for neurodivergent employees?

What are the benefits of embracing neurodiversity within your team?

Join us to hear from a panel of actuaries sharing their experiences, and engage in thought-provoking conversations. Whether you're a manager of a neurodiverse team, or seeking to better understand neurodivergent colleagues, this session will offer insights from individuals who are navigating the actuarial profession as a neurodivergent person.