The ~~three~~ four Cs of inclusive practice: compassion, creativity, cultural-sensitivity, and clarity

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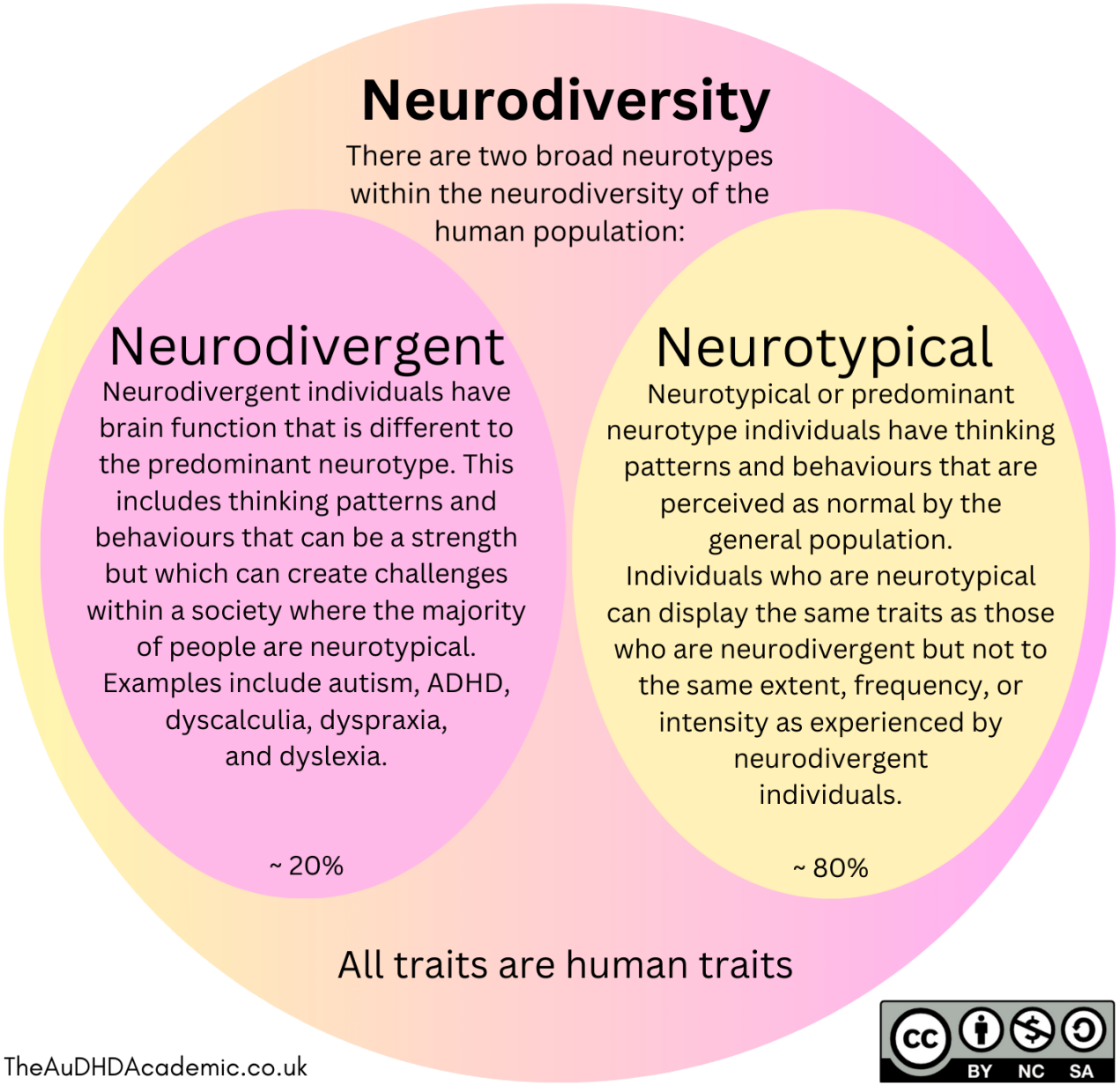
Knowledge Applied

Visual generated by Microsoft Copilot "compassion, creativity, clarity in learning"

The neurodivergent experience as a lens

- The neurodivergent student experience – re-position as strengths and unique and valuable contributions.
- Examine how we create learning environments that enable and value diversity of thought, skill and behaviour.
- Creating learning spaces that set the right conditions.
- Creative pedagogies can provide a more inclusive and equitable basis for connection

Visual generated by Microsoft Copilot "compassion, creativity, clarity in learning, make it abstract and colourful"



Neurodivergency

- Neurodiversity, neurodivergency, neurodiverse, neurodivergent.
- The rates of diagnosis for differences and disabilities under the umbrella term of ‘neurodivergent’ conditions is increasing and more individuals seek diagnosis or self-diagnose (Clouder et al. 2020, Lang, 2024).
- High numbers of individuals are unaware of their neurodivergent characteristics remain.
- Concept of need without awareness should drive our classroom inclusive practices. Relieve any burden of self-advocacy.
- Take an appreciative stance.
- Social model of disability and difference.

Cultural Sensitivity and Responsivity

- Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is a key example of compassionate practice, where tutors actively adopt inclusive practices and recognise the diverse backgrounds of students (Sanger, 2020).
- Humanising teaching in online environments is even more important for any marginalised student. i.e. minoritised students of colour are systematically disadvantaged, evidenced by the degree awarding gap (Pacansky-Brock et al, 2020).
- The social model of understanding of difference is critical to avoid assumptions and ableism.

Essential Inclusive Practices

Creative and compassionate approaches are essential in the inclusive classroom.

Encouraging curiosity, expressing compassion, demonstrably valuing diversity.

Creative pedagogies are heutagogical (self-determined learning) in nature

Heutagogy strongly aligns to cognitive strengths

Taxonomy of creative pedagogies

Type	Description
Agency	Students can see that their actions result in learning and their contributions are valued. Autonomy and agency are closely linked as students take control and ownership of their learning, their agency and impact of learning will also increase.
Autonomy	Students take ownership of their learning and can self-direct their own learning journey.
Exploration	Activities that focus on generating and exploring ideas, allowing development of an explorer mindset where curiosity is valued.
Playfulness	Encouraging play, fun, and enjoyment in activities which create an environment for experiential and constructivist learning.
Problem-solving	Engaging students in real-world problems that necessitate entrepreneurship, enterprise, and creative thinking skills.
Risk-taking	Embracing failure by encouraging experimentation in a safe and supported environment.
Teacher-as-learner, collaborator and facilitator	The teacher is facilitator and co-learner, supporting students to have full agency and autonomy. The only potential transmission should be directing a group to value the contributions of all learners and empowering all to have creative freedom.

Taxonomy of neurodivergent strengths in cognitive skills

Type	Description
Attention to detail	The ability to see the detail and research or investigate a topic or concept thoroughly.
Creative thinking	Approaching problems in new ways and generating new ideas using creative approaches.
Entrepreneurialism	Ability to recognise and evaluate opportunities for innovation and growth.
Hyperfocus	Ability to focus intensely on a single topic of investigation and single interest without distraction. An attention to detail is usually combined with hyperfocus.
Hyperlexic and linguistic thinking	Enhanced reading, writing, and linguistic abilities with an aptitude to notice patterns and themes in written language.
Idea generation	Ability to generate novel ideas without constraint or preconceptions as barriers.
Logic and analysis	A systematic, analytical and logical approach can be valuable for problem-solving and recognising gaps or opportunities.
Originality	An interest in novelty and new can result in original ideas, new approaches, and innovations.
Pattern recognition	An ability to notice patterns in numbers, words, or visual information.
Systems thinking	A bottom-up approach building understanding of detail and connections are understood to then be able to generate a complete picture of the whole system.
Verbal comprehension	Advanced verbal comprehension, vocabulary, and creative use of language including an ability to notice patterns and themes in spoken language.
Visual interpretation and thinking	An enhanced ability to interpret and process visual information. This may be more rapid interpretation, a more detailed interpretation, or both.

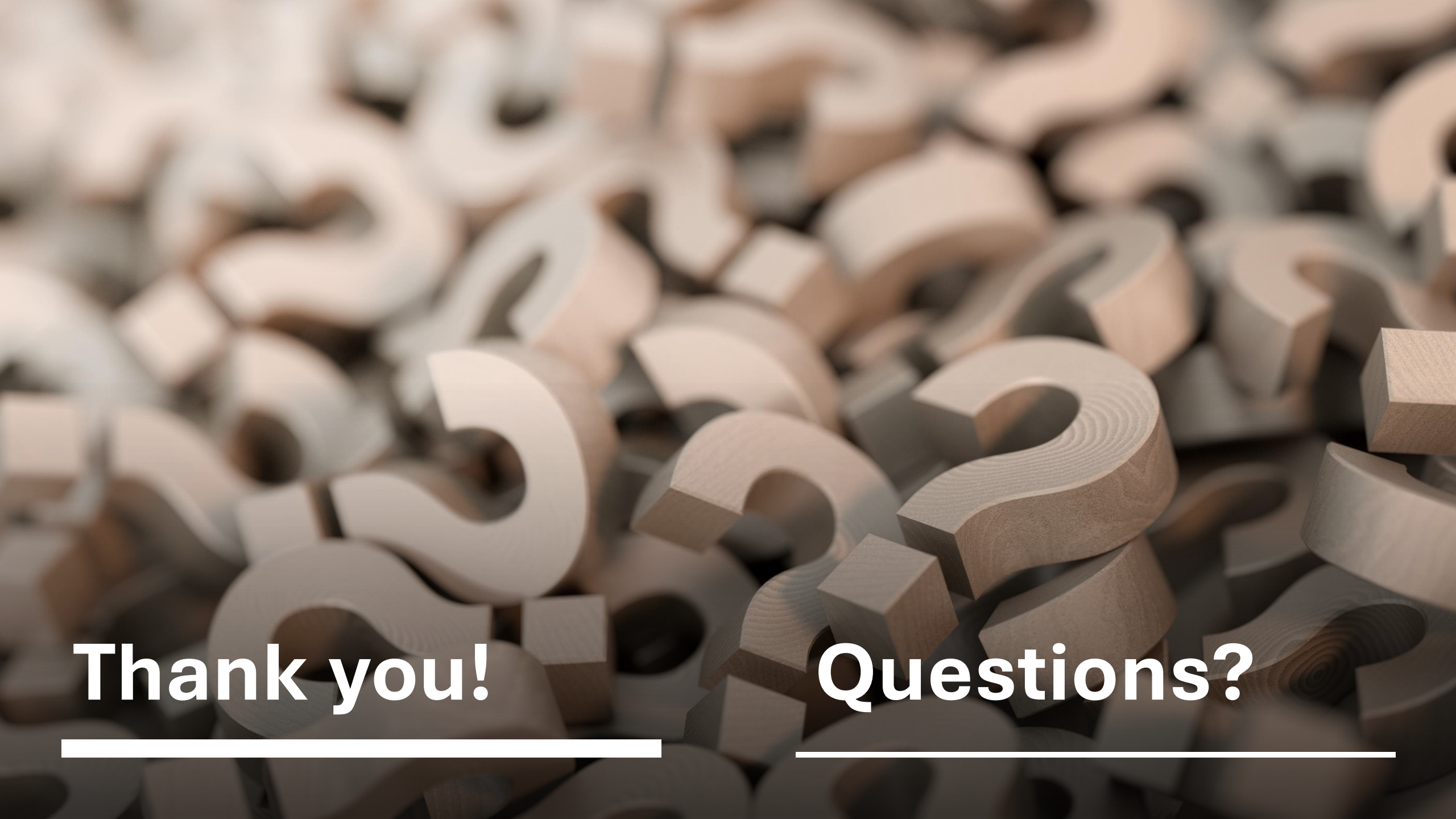
Taxonomy of creative heutagogical approaches

Type	Description
Choice-based	A variety of choices are available to the learners to select their preferred approach to a learning activity or goal.
Goal-oriented	A shared end-goal is agreed at the beginning of the session but the pathway, method, approach or activities to reach the goal are open.
Negotiated	Negotiation is undertaken for the curriculum content, choice of learning goal(s), or the how or what of an assessment task.
Scaffolded	A scaffold is provided to enable students to have a framework, but flexibility is encouraged. More scaffolding may be necessary earlier in the student journey as they move from a pedagogical basis, through an andragogical context, into a heutagogical environment.
Problem solving	A problem is presented, and learners are supported to find their own way to one or more solutions.
Idea generation	Like problem solving, learners are given creative space to generate new ideas and innovations.
Flipped learning	Learners are encouraged to do learning, research, and exploration before a session. The session is shaped by what is shared.
Collaborative	Learners work together to share their knowledge, experience, ideas, resources, and practice
Reflective	Learners reflect on their own learning, knowledge, experience, and engagement. By reflecting on their learning, they are more able to take agency and act with autonomy.
Action learning	Learners work together to solve real problems. An open questioning approach is taken to develop solutions.
Compassionate	A caring and compassionate approach to learning with the view of overcoming barriers, particularly for students who have been marginalised.

Recommendations

1. Demonstrably value difference and diversity; taking an appreciative and strengths-based approach.
2. Reaffirm that there is no single ‘correct’ approach to exploring a topic and learning new things.
3. Challenge stigmatising and outdated perceptions of disability and difference, and support learners to challenge their own assumptions.
4. Provide flexible learning opportunities where interest and self-efficacy can be leveraged.
5. Provide a loose structure and direction for a shared purpose and goal so that that the interests of learners can be explored.
6. Encourage variations on collaboration that are not dependent upon a single mode of interaction between students.
7. Challenge your own expectations and preconceptions of the what, how, and why of learning.

Image by Gerd Altmann from Pixabay


Thank you!
Questions?

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