Neurodiverse community/ neurodivergent students: starting out effectively

This was our advert…

Whether starting out or continuing your student journey, being a neurodivergent learner can present both challenges and opportunities. In this special workshop we will detail and share strategies for effective learning to help you embrace and capitalise on differences. You will receive practical advice and suggestions from tutors and students.

What are SHL workshops?

- Studenthublive is non modular and focuses on study skills relevant to higher education

- This means sessions are skills based and are not subject based.

- SHL workshops do not take the place of subject and skill related tutorials provided by your modules

- All events are always advertised on our website along with studenthome news, social media channels and careers sources

- All events are bookable; workshops do fill up as they are popular

SHL is lively!

- These sessions are large scale

- They are often busy with lots of interaction

- They are not the same as other module based tutorials

- You can maximise slides on your own screen by clicking the icon

- You can return to the recording after the event to revisit if needed

Online workshop basics

- Polls are anonymous to other participants but the chat box will have your logged in name associated with your comments during the live session.

- All online sessions are recorded and available to view on catch up on a public facing website.

- Slides are available to download during the live session and from http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/.

Please

- Do NOT share any personal information in the chat pod during the session

- On the recording names will be anonymised to user number

- However if you type anyone's full name or any other personal information in the chat pod it can be seen by everybody and it would also show up on the recording so we would not be able to make the recording available

Today's workshop

- This is going to be a structured workshop to help you to start considering some of the study related issues that students who are neurodivergent may experience and suggest things to consider

- We will not tell you what to do, nor what will definitely happen. We will suggest things based on experience and you can decide which aspects work for you

ND community events

- This workshop is the first in the new suite of events to support the Open University neurodiverse community

- Each event will focus on a specific aspect of study and has been developed with the support and input of current OU students and OU staff who identify as neurodivergent or who have a diagnosis of autism, ADHD, dyslexia or dyspraxia or an interest in these areas

- If you would like to be involved with future events then please contact us at studenthub@open.ac.uk

Introducing the session format

- Each of these sessions will talk to a guest about their experiences of studying

- This will include relevant questions about how neurodivergence impacts them and their study

- There will be experience led suggestions for how to manage specific situations

- Today's session is about starting out effectively (although if you have been studying a while you are equally welcome)

Today's student guest

- Lou Robinson is our student guest today. Isabella will be talking to Lou about various aspects of study and OU life and there will be regular points where we will then ask questions for you to consider in terms of your own experiences
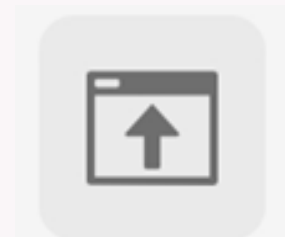
What do you want to learn?

Using the short answer poll provided please say what you are hoping to learn from today's session

(If you are on a mobile app remember you need to tap into the polling option)
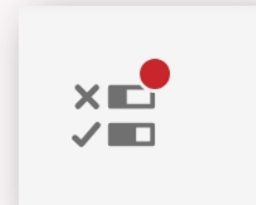
To come back to these slides after completing a poll click on the share pod slides icon

Terminology - 1

- Terminology today has been taken from the University's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Inclusive Language & Image Guide.

- This states that "Neurodiversity relates to the fact that no two brains are exactly alike" and "Neurodivergent/neurodivergence: this term is used for people whose brains function differently from what is considered standard or typical, and this can be in one or more ways."

Terminology - 2

- It is important to note that everyone is an individual and how one person identifies may / not be how another does. Please be respectful of each individual's choice

Lou Q 1

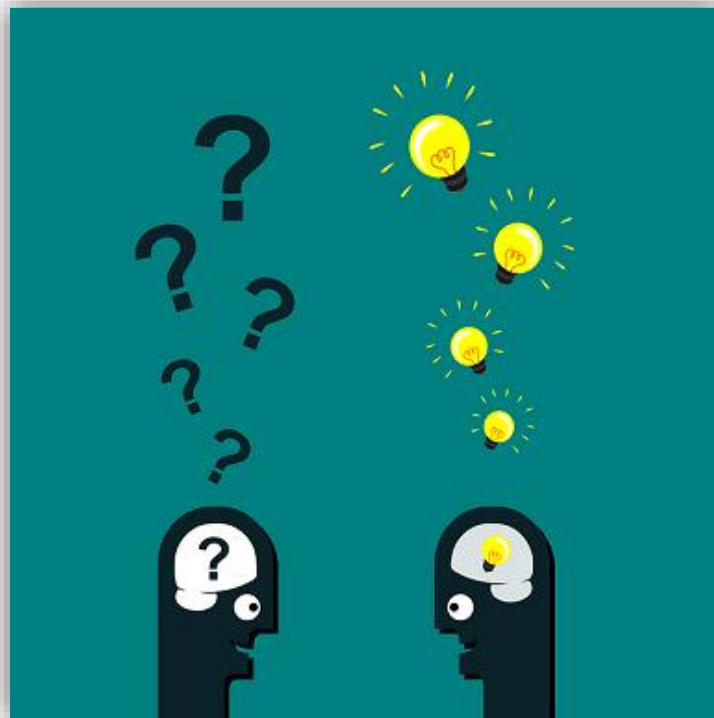- Lou – How do you use terminology to describe yourself?

Question for everyone - 1

- Using the short answer poll available please indicate what your preferred terminology is to identify yourself

- You can then look at what different people say, there may even be some new terms

Lou Q 2

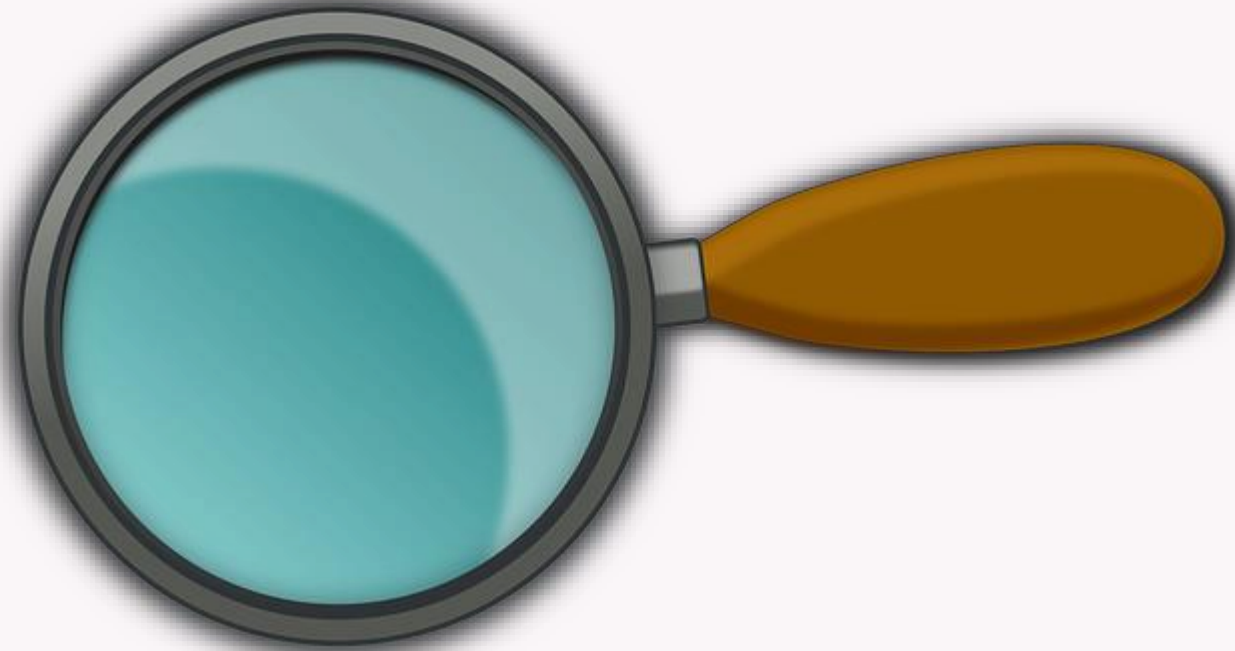- Lou – How does autism impact your student experience?

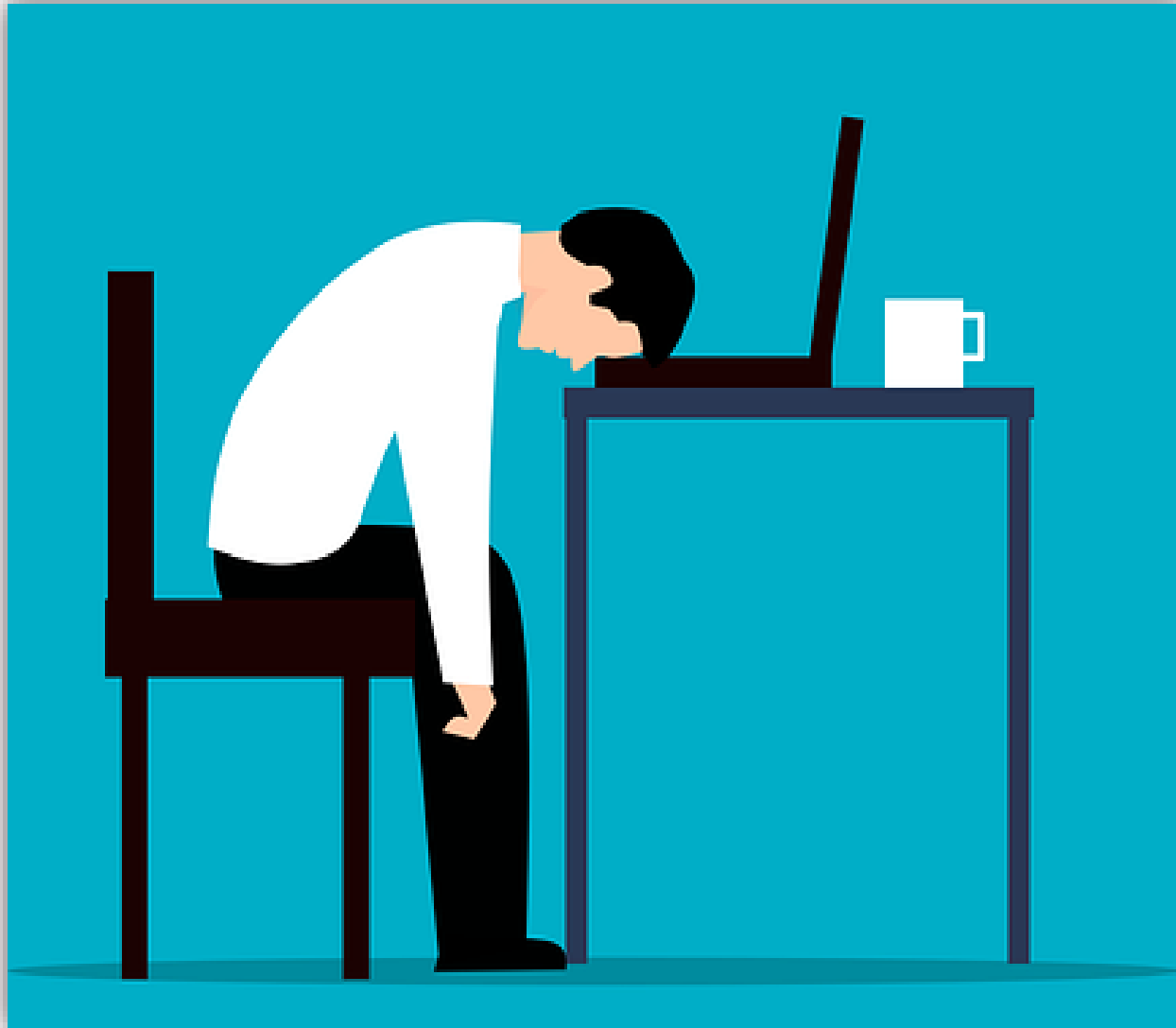# Procrastination

Hard to start

Hard to stop

Hyperfocus

Challenging social interactions

Gets drained

Achieving a balance

Spinning those plates!

Remember to exercise

Question for everyone - 2

- Using the poll options available indicate whether any of the issues Lou mentioned are something that may impacting your study:
  - Procrastination
  - Hard to start
  - Hard to stop
  - Hyperfocus
  - Challenging social interactions
  - Gets drained

Recognising issues

- It is a good idea to recognise how you respond and what happens in different situations – this then allows you to work on identified issues

- We **can't** change you nor solve all issues

- We **can** suggest strategies that others have found useful to work with how they can be more effective as a student

Lou Q 3

- Lou – What would be your first tip to help other students?

Being an OU student

- https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education-development/being-ou-student/content-section-overview?active-tab=description-tab

Not liking to ask for help

Information available

Question for everyone - 3

- Using the poll option available please answer the question - before this had you heard of the Being an OU student course?
  - Yes
  - No

- Next poll question to answer - Have you looked at the Being an OU student course?
  - Yes
  - No

Question for everyone - 4

- Do you prefer to?
  - Ask for help
  - Find information yourself?

Question for everyone - 5

- Using the short answer poll available please say where would you prefer to find information if it is about something you don't know about?

Lou Q 4

- Lou – Can you tell us about another strategy you have been working on to that has helped in your study?

Use an ongoing list

Question for everyone - 6

- Using the short answer poll available please say any strategies you have to help manage perfectionism. Don't worry if you don't have any but do look through the suggestions to see if something might work for you

Boundaries and deadlines

- Boundaries include guidance about what to do and requirements more generally and can include time management for studying overall

- Deadlines are specific set dates by which a task has to be done

- We will deal with these separately as they do represent different things

Lou Q 5

- Lou – How do you respond to boundaries?

Rigidity is hard

Approach in a different way

Question for everyone - 7

- Using the short answer poll available please say how you respond to boundaries and whether you have any strategies like Lou's to help yourself

Lou Q 6

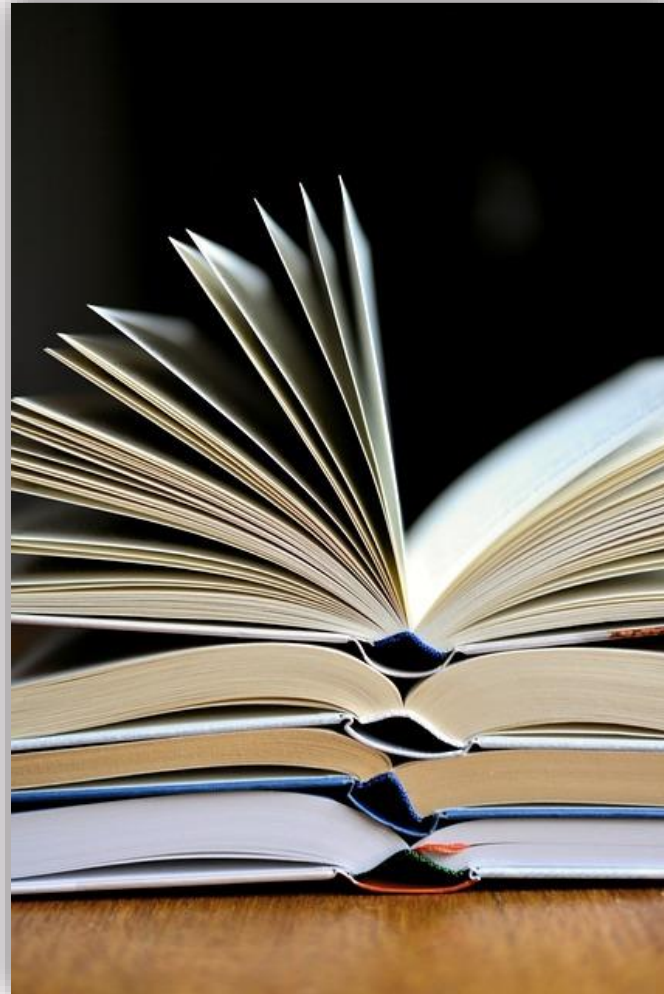- Lou – How do you manage assignment deadlines?

Read TMAs up front

Complete along the way

Dedicated notebooks

Use feedback

Use resources including tutorials

Lou Q 7

- Lou – What other practical tips do you have for those starting out?

Question for everyone - 8

- Using the short answer poll available please say how you respond to deadlines and whether you have any strategies like Lou's to help yourself

Be honest on disability record
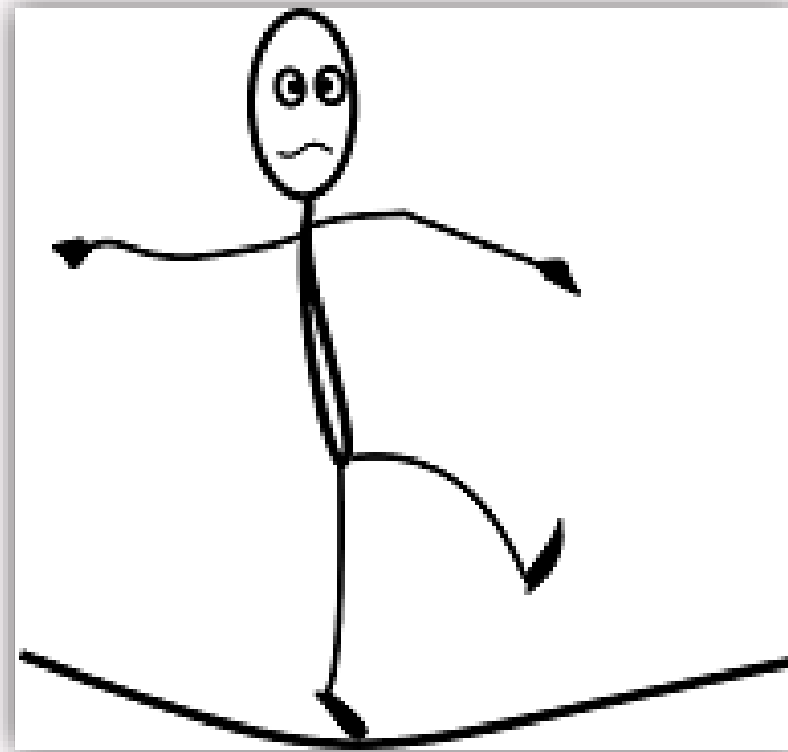
Get ahead if possible

Don't compare against others

Ask questions in time

Try things out

Make use of who is there

Final question for everyone

- Using the short answer poll available please say which of the tips we have discussed today you think is going to be most useful for you in your study

OU Students Association

- The Neurodivergent student network is at https://www.facebook.com/groups/OUNeurodiversity/

Lou's suggestions of helpful places

- Library workshops https://www.open.ac.uk/library/training-and-events

- SHL events https://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/

- Openlearn https://www.open.edu/openlearn/

(also specific Youtube / educational websites and recommended books)

Take home message

- Everyone is unique and has their own journey – one size does not fit all

- Be clear on how you identify and how it may impact your study journey

- There are some strategies that can help

- Be open to trying out different techniques

- Don't be afraid to ask questions

Feedback

Please complete the feedback form that is available at
https://forms.office.com/e/7EE2phHaRF

This is immensely valuable to provide information on how studenthublive is beneficial to students as well as to help us plan our future programme

Upcoming sessions

14 Sep 11am Resilience: planning for success
27 Sep 11am Improve your academic writing

19/20/21 Sep 11am Freshers live broadcasts

26 Sep 11am Tuition - making the most of your tutor and tutorials

28 Sep 11am Generative AI

Details and booking information from
http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/

Past student hub live online study skills sessions here
Visit us at http://studenthublive.open.ac.uk/ and subscribe for events as
they are announced. Send us feedback at studenthub@open.ac.uk

Study skills workshop

Live broadcast

ND sessions 👥

31 Jan 11am ND community - progressing effectively on your module
16 Apr 11am ND community - planning to complete your module with success
11Jul 11am ND community - reflecting and consolidating learning

21 Mar 11am Live broadcast for ND community

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👥 Study skills workshop

▶ Live broadcast