

by Sinothando Ngubane

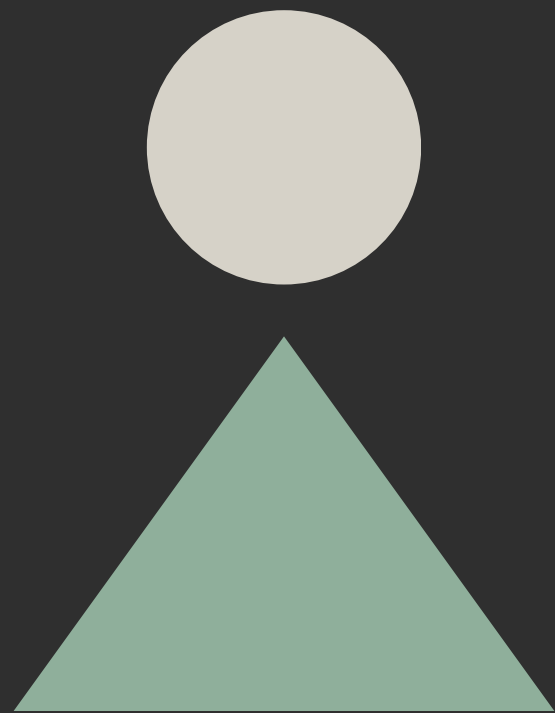


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From Awareness to Allyship

*Practical Steps for a
Neuro-Inclusive
Workplace*





Introduction

This introduction sets the stage for learning how small, mindful choices can make a big difference. We'll walk through real examples of allyship in action and ways we can all help shape a kinder, more inclusive workplace.



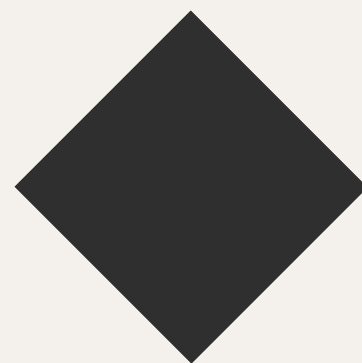
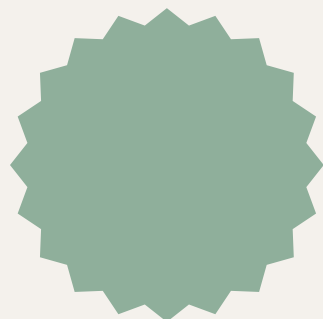


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Opportunity

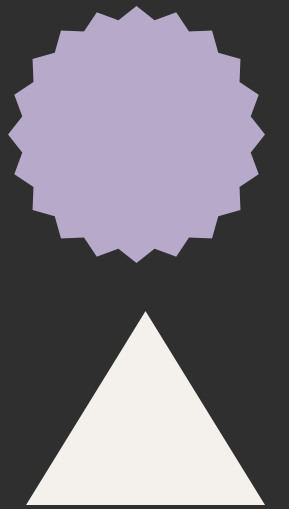
- **Innovation:** Diverse brains see different patterns and solve different problems.
- **Problem-Solving:** Fresh perspectives break cognitive 'groupthink.'
- **Retention & Well-being:** When all staff feel understood and supported, job satisfaction increases. Inclusive environments allow everyone to bring their full cognitive ability to the task at hand.

"Neuro-Inclusivity is not a CSR project; it is a competitive advantage in the 21st-century economy."





Practical Allyship Toolkit



ENVIRONMENT: CHECK YOUR SOCIAL & VISUAL ASSUMPTIONS.

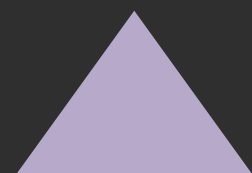
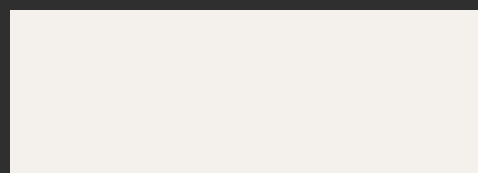
Action: Rethink 'compulsory fun.' Don't assume everyone enjoys or thrives in large, chaotic, unstructured networking sessions or social lunches. Allow for quiet alternatives. When scheduling meetings, consider: 'Does this meeting need to be an hour long?' Or: 'Do all participants need their cameras on?' (Minimize visual clutter and input for sensitive processing.)

Why: Many social spaces are profoundly ableist without intending to be. The burden of conformity is exhausting.

COMMUNICATION: SIMPLIFY AND BE SPECIFIC.

Action: When delegating a task or giving feedback, skip the passive corporate speak. Be explicit. What is the precise deadline? What is the expected format? (e.g., instead of 'Keep me updated,' try 'Please send a quick email status check every Friday at 3:00 PM.')

Why: For many neurodivergent individuals, ambiguity causes high anxiety and filters out clear instructions. This benefits everyone.





Practical Allyship Toolkit

FEEDBACK: *Focus on the Work, Not the Person.*

Action: Give feedback directly, clearly, and in a neutral tone. Feedback should always focus on the outcome of the work and the desired behavior, not perceived personality traits. (e.g., instead of 'You seem distracted in meetings,' try 'I noticed you missed point B in our last meeting; I need you to double-check the minutes for accuracy.')

Why: This helps avoid unintentional bias or ableist interpretation of processing differences.



MEETINGS: *Structure is your Ally.*

Action: Send an agenda before the meeting. (A mandatory allyship habit.) If you expect input, give participants time to prepare. Provide options for contribution: some people process best by speaking, some by writing/typing.

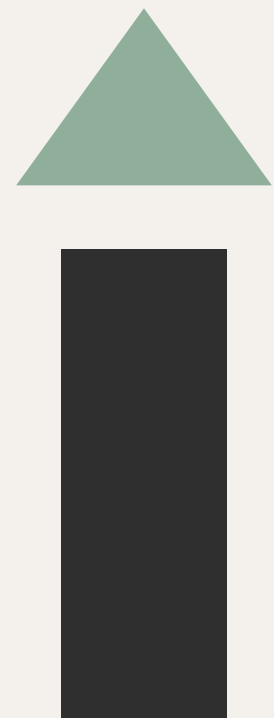
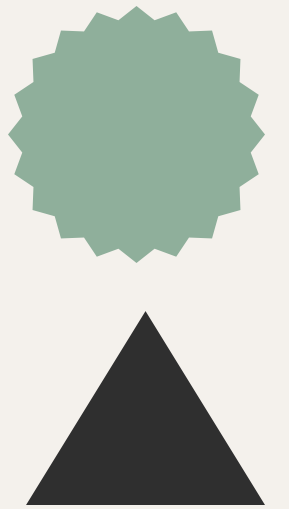
Why: This directly addresses 'cognitive lag' or differences in processing time. Structure creates predictability, which reduces anxiety.





Conclusion

Allyship is not complex. It doesn't require a certificate. It requires consistency. In your toolkit today, we have identified simple shifts in **Communication**, **Environment**, **Meetings**, and **Feedback**. These are the 'practical steps' we must master to turn the key of 'comprehensive understanding.'



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Thank You

