

# Neurodiversity At Work

## When All Minds Thrive



**Geertruyt Stokes**

Leadership team coach  
Neurodiversity speaker and trainer



“For heaven’s sake;  
send some  
dyslexics to  
Schiphol.”

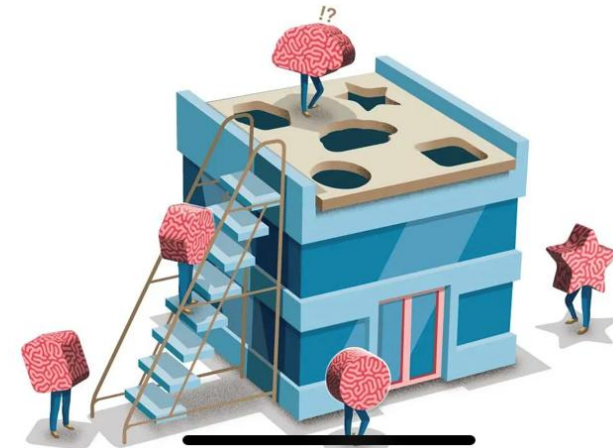
**nrc** >

## De toekomst is aan neurodivergente mensen. ‘Stuur in godsnaam een paar dyslectici naar Schiphol’

**Neurodivergent brein** Mondjesmaat hebben steeds meer bedrijven een beleid gericht op mensen wier brein anders werkt dan gemiddeld. Ook wel neurodiversiteit genoemd. Terecht, zeggen deskundigen, want de toekomst is neurodivers.

✍ Maartje Laterveer 🕒 16 juni 2022

🕒 Leestijd 8 minuten



# Natural variation



# What is neurodiversity?

Diversity in thinking, feeling, processing information and stimuli, energy, communicating.

**Neurotypical:**  
common brain



80%



20%

**Neurodivergent:**  
less common brain

# Less common can take many forms...

Dyslexia  
10%

Autism  
2-3%

Gifted  
2-3%

High sensitive  
20%



Dyscalculia  
2-3%

Bipolar  
3%

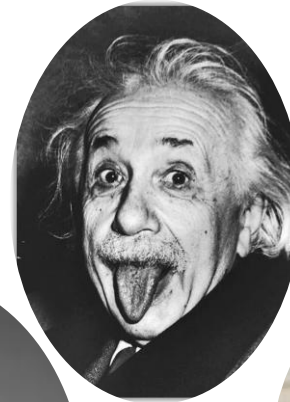
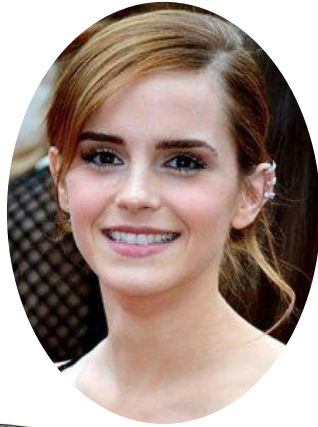
AD(H)D  
2-3%

Synesthesia  
5%

Wired  
differently...



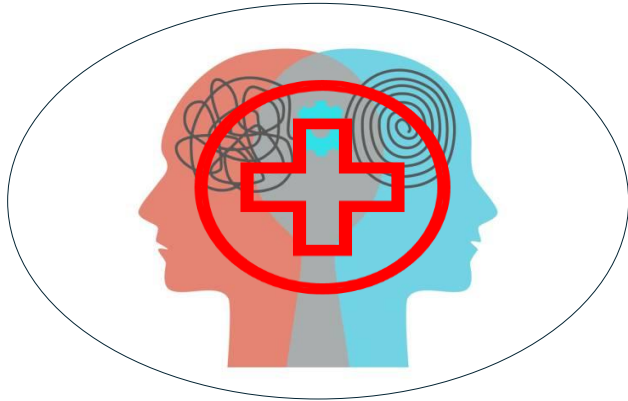
# These brains are wired differently



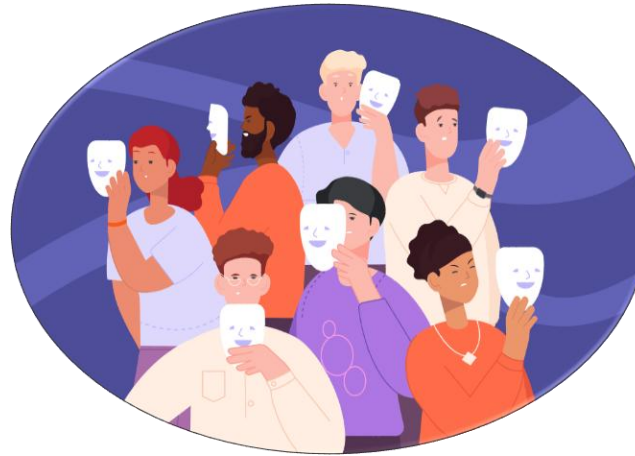
**Neurodiversity =  
collective intelligence**



# Troubling reality of neurodivergence



Medical label



Masking



Micro-aggression



Mismatch



Diversity paradox

# Too often systems don't suit the neurodivergent

“I have to **collaborate quite a lot in project groups**, at a pace, dynamic, and working style (and with stimuli) that don't always suit me well. It's taking a toll on my mental health.”

“I tend to **overanalyze my choices**, and when there are few guidelines in the assignment instructions, I struggle to take action. It then seems as if I don't understand it or am very slow - but what I'm really missing is context.”

“The **communication is often unclear**. There's a general lack of structure (and every teacher works differently), which makes it hard for me to get an overview and to find a balance between schoolwork and free time. The schedule also changes frequently, so I can't build a routine.”

# Obstacles at work...

Inconsistency

Too little context

Hidden agenda's and political behavior

Procedures and work processes

(Too) many meetings

Team events

Office lay out and work space

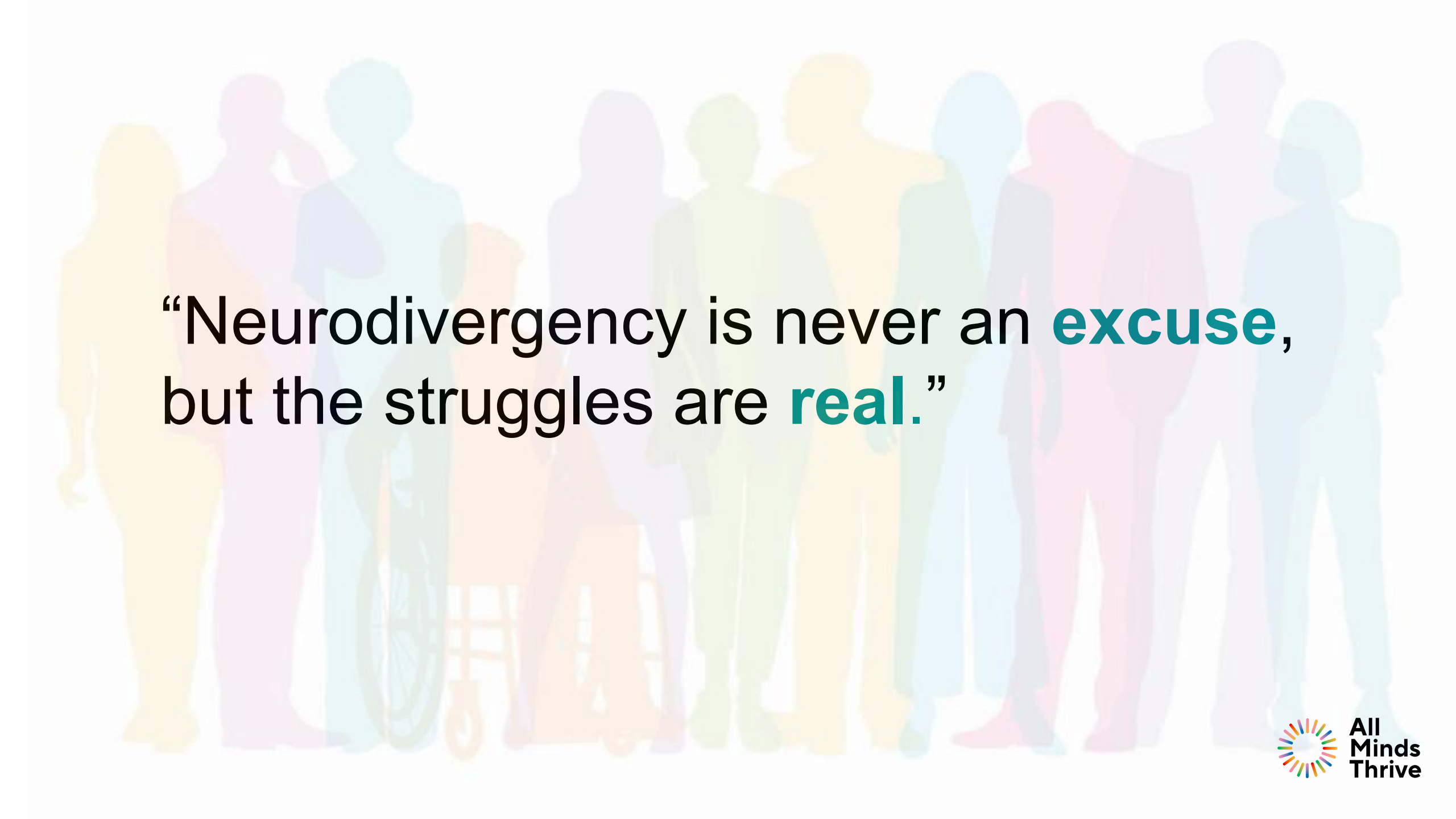




50% of working neurodivergents suffer from mental pressure and burnout symptoms

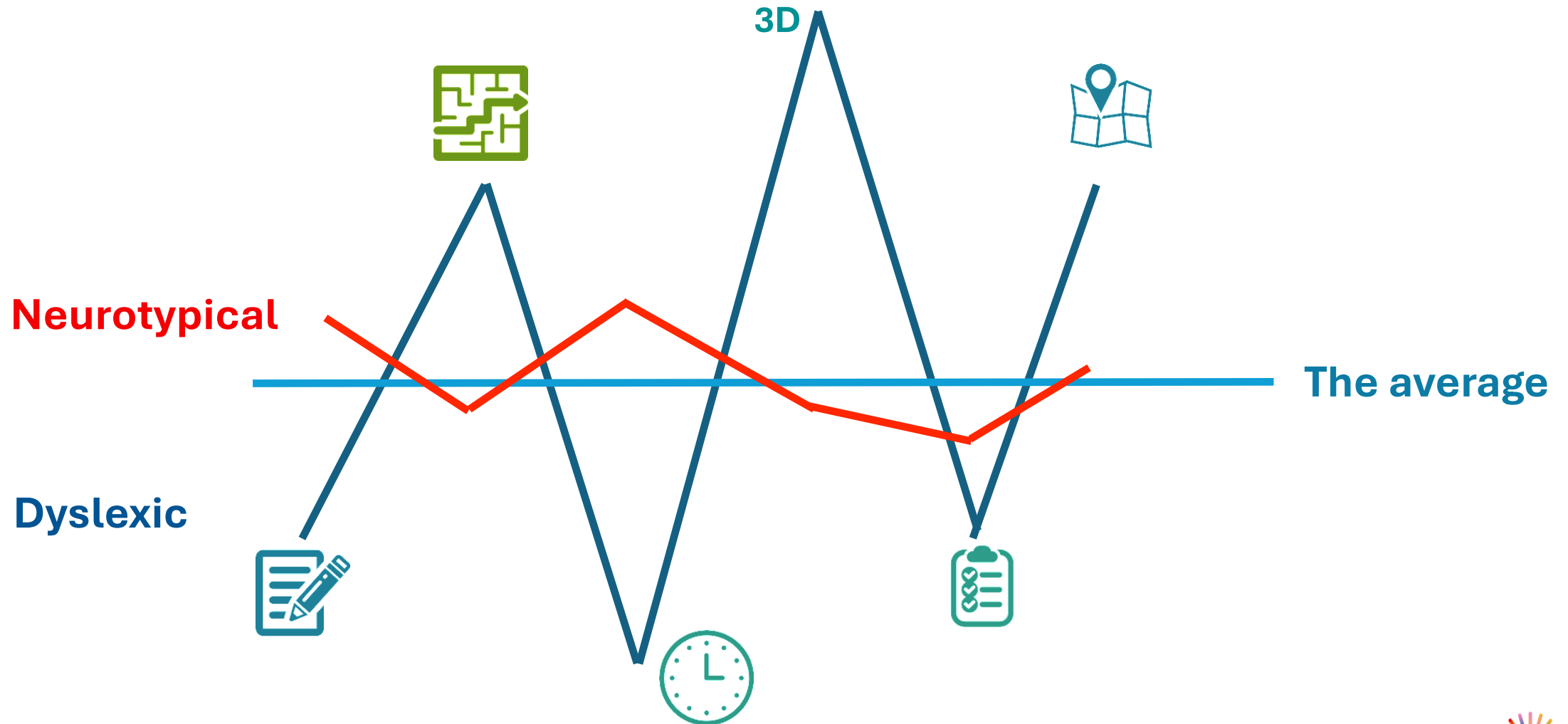


“Tell me more, how does this work for you?”



“Neurodivergency is never an **excuse**,  
but the struggles are **real**.”

# Neurodivergents have a 'spiky profile' in competencies

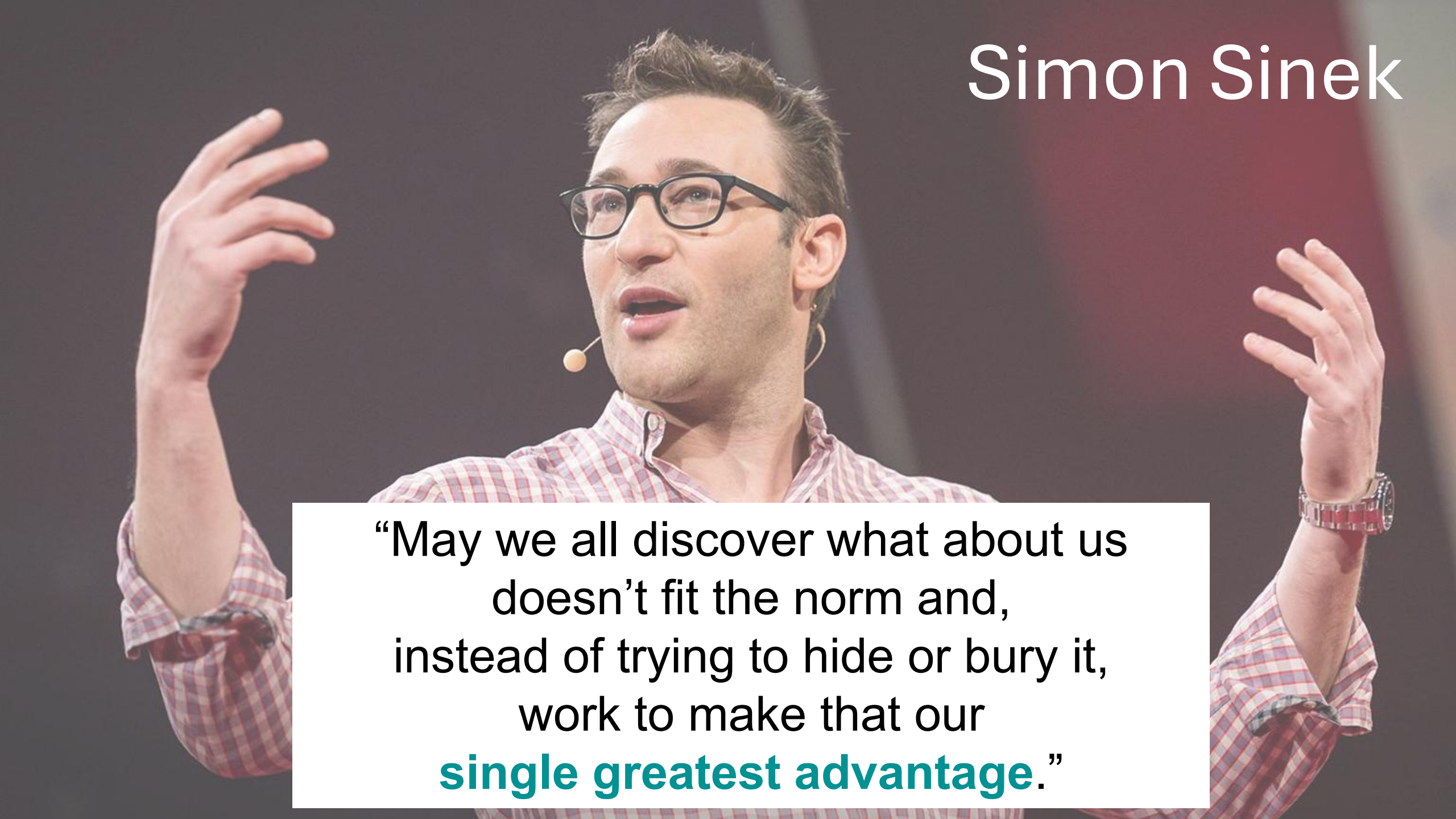


Don't look for  
boxes.

Look for **added  
value** and the **right  
context** to harvest  
that talent.



# Simon Sinek

A photograph of Simon Sinek, a man with glasses and a microphone, wearing a red and white checkered shirt. He is gesturing with both hands raised, palms facing forward, as if speaking or presenting. The background is dark and out of focus.

“May we all discover what about us  
doesn’t fit the norm and,  
instead of trying to hide or bury it,  
work to make that our  
**single greatest advantage.**”

# What makes the biggest difference at work?

Attitude of others

54%

Space and workplace

26%

Assistent tech

11%

Other...

9%

# Reality of neurodivergence at work



Employment hurdles



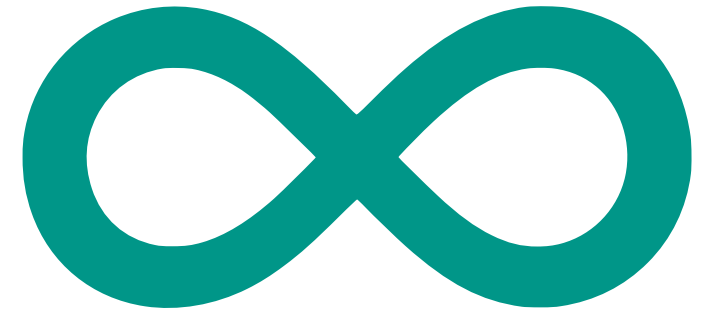
Strategic disclosure



Unseen strengths

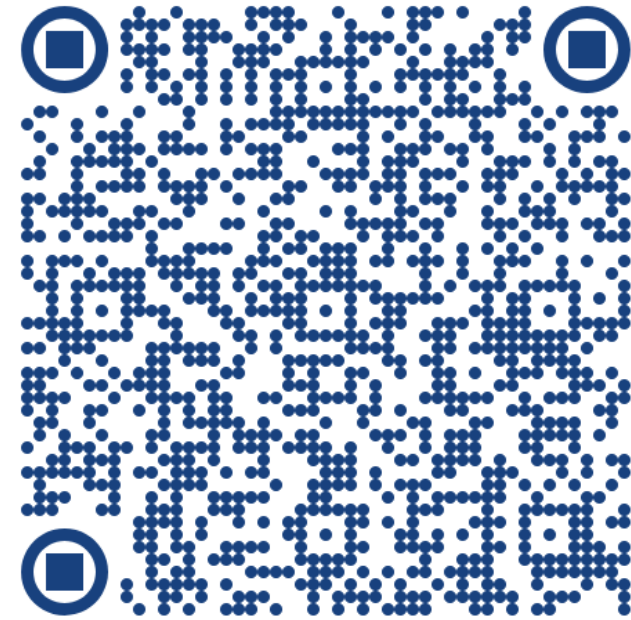


Unawareness of needs



Disclosure dilemma

# Sharing or not sharing is a personal decision



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light-colored cardigan over a white shirt and a dark tie, is sitting on a wooden staircase. He is looking off to the side. The staircase has a metal railing with a chain-link mesh. The background is slightly blurred.

TERENCE LESTER

“Everyone is welcome” is drastically different from “**we built this with you in mind**”. People don’t want to go where they are merely tolerated, they want to go where they are **included**.

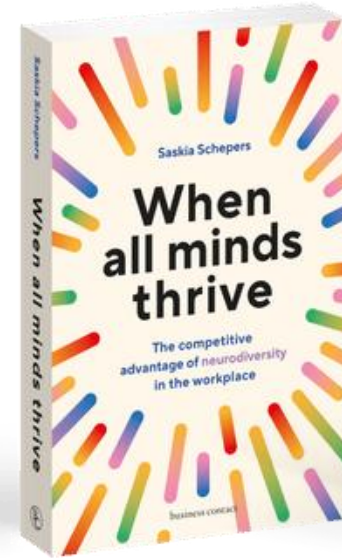
**Don't try to fit in when you are born to stand out**



# Let's connect!



## All Minds Thrive



Neurodiversity  
Network  
The Netherlands