

Welcome!

Dear **ND&D Readers**,

We're delighted to welcome you back to another jam-packed issue of the ND&D Nexus! It may feel as though **summer has been with us for weeks** already thanks to the recent heatwaves, but this is officially **our Summer Edition**. Whether you're counting down to a holiday, enjoying some well-earned annual leave, or simply looking for ways to stay cool during the working day, we hope there's something in this issue for everyone.

This issue has a **thread of creativity** running throughout it, a theme discussed at June's QA Neurodiversity Network. Creativity is often a strength within the neurodivergent community, but even if you don't consider yourself particularly creative or artistic, it's important to remember that **creativity takes many forms**. Whether you're painting a canvas, building a website, knitting a shawl, refining AI prompts for digital art, or finding innovative solutions to everyday challenges, creativity is a natural expression of being human.

We hope you **enjoy this issue** and the articles featured within it. As always, we look forward to supporting you throughout your apprenticeship journey and across the remainder of the summer months.

from the Learning Support Team



In this edition you can look forward to:

- Karla's book review of **The Let Them Theory** on [pg. 6](#)
- Read about Kayleigh's experience of **Rejection Sensitivity Dysphoria** on [pg. 10](#)
- A review of the **Apprenticeships Neurodiversity Network** from June, on [pg. 9](#)
- **Creativity Corner** has a display of AuDHD Care Bears on [pg. 5](#)
- On [pg. 12](#) we explore **synaesthesia**
- Stacey shares about **Chari Malformation Type 1** in **ND&D in Focus** on [pg. 11](#)
- We share some **online content** with creative ideas on **levelling up** the everyday, and overcoming ND challenges on [pg. 7](#)
- **Event Calendar**: Upcoming events and opportunities to connect on [pg. 13](#)

Your feedback truly is invaluable; so please do share it [here](#).



Team News – We've Grown Again!



We're delighted to introduce our **newest member** of the QAA Learning Support Team who joins us in July!

'Hi my name is Andrea and I live in Gloucester, I have 1 dog called Tess and 2 cats. I have 2 sons aged 23 and 14. I love learning and have recently completed my Masters Degree in Autism from Birmingham University.

I have worked with neurodiverse adults and young people for over 30 years, most recently as a remote neurodiversity coach.'

Andrea brings a **wealth of experience and knowledge** to the Team, and we're so excited to have her join us!



In other news we continue to enjoy supporting our Apprenticeships across all programmes! We're gearing up for our usual **bigger intake in September**, with some new exciting sessions being launched in autumn!

Kayleigh and her fiancé Iain completed a charity walk in June (see [pg. 4](#)) around the Wirral Coast to raise money for Ehlers-Danlos support and research. They **walked an incredible 20km raising over £600** – well done!

In early July some of the Team attended the **Autism and ADHD show** in Liverpool – a review and some articles will be available in the next issue of the Nexus, but it was a great day of networking and learning!



Alan Skelton

Apprenticeships
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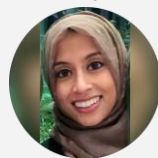
Ray



Lisa



Kayleigh



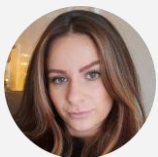
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Express Your Health: Creativity, Wellbeing and Neurodivergence

Finding the **right words** to describe how we are feeling is not always easy. That is the idea behind [Express Your Health](#), a global campaign encouraging people to **use creativity to explore** and share their health experiences.

Through **artwork, storytelling, photography, crafts and other creative outlets**, participants have shown how creativity can help people open up about their wellbeing in ways that feel natural and meaningful. The campaign is supported by **neuroscience research** showing that many people believe creativity benefits both mental and physical health, helping them process emotions, reduce stress and feel more connected to others. For neurodivergent individuals, this message may feel especially relevant.

Many autistic people, individuals with ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia and other neurodivergences can find it **easier to express thoughts, emotions or experiences through creative outlets** rather than conversation alone. Art, music, writing, photography, crafting and digital creation can provide **alternative ways to communicate**, reflect and make sense of the world.

30-45 minutes of art-making can significantly lower cortisol levels.

20 minutes of viewing art can reduce stress by up to 22%

"Sharing through art helps us feel less isolated, more connected and in the case of health, can help empower people to access the care they might need"

Katherine Templar Lewis
Neuroscientist



Neurodivergent minds often bring **unique strengths** to creative activities. **Pattern recognition, visual thinking, imagination, innovation and seeing connections** that others may miss can all contribute to creative expression. What might be viewed as "thinking differently" can often become a powerful creative advantage.



Creativity can also provide opportunities for **emotional regulation** and wellbeing. Whether it is sketching during a break, building in Minecraft, journalling, baking, knitting or creating digital art, creative activities can help reduce overwhelm and create moments of focus and calm.

Many people experience a **state of "flow"** when immersed in a creative task, allowing them to switch off from external pressures and concentrate fully on the activity in front of them. Perhaps the most important message from Express Your Health is that **creativity is for everyone**. The project also has some famous faces involved! See the promo video [here](#).

You **do not need formal training, artistic talent or expensive equipment**. A doodle on a notepad, a poem typed into your phone, a photo taken on a walk or a craft project at the kitchen table can all be valuable forms of self-expression. Your **perspective is unique**, your **experiences matter**, and sometimes creativity can help tell a story that words alone cannot.

Further Reading:

- [Bupa - Express Your Health Project](#)
- [Bupa - Express Your Health Gallery](#)



The Wirral Walk

by Kayleigh



Last issue we wrote that I was off to complete a full 20km of the **Wirral Coastal Walk** for the charity **EDS UK** ([Ehlers-Danlos Society](#))



The weather was extremely **windy** and we did get a little wet, but we were prepared (I was in the Girl Guides). Overall, it was a great day though my ankles, knees and thighs are very sore (as expected with a 20km walk & EDS) but it was **100% worth it**.



There were so many people out walking for a variety of causes, it was wonderful to see people banding together, it showed the true power of the **people** & that we really can **make a difference**.

My flabbers are gasted at the amount of money raised and I am completely **humbled by the generosity & support of people**. Thank you to anyone who donated, shared information, and/or researched EDS; awareness is crucial in supporting people with EDS to ensure they feel seen and heard which has a massive impact.



The
**Ehlers
Danlos
Society**

Read Kayleigh's article about her personal experience of Ehlers-Danlos on page 13 of [Issue 05](#) of the ND&D Nexus.

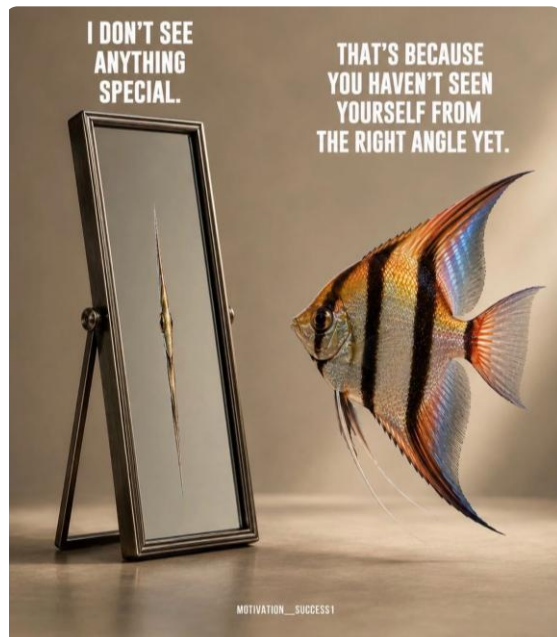


Image Credit

App Recommendation



How We Feel

The How We Feel Project inc.
£ free

How We Feel is a free app designed to help people **better understand and manage their emotions**. Users can check in throughout the day, track patterns in their mood, and **explore a wide range of emotions** beyond simply feeling "good" or "bad".

The app also includes breathing exercises, journaling prompts and practical wellbeing strategies. For those who **experience alexithymia**, the app can provide valuable support to develop emotional awareness and learn to put feelings into words.

Creativity Corner

A selected piece of inspiration!

A few of your LSSs are **loving the current Care Bear revival** and took great pleasure in seeing this post from [@deadbettysociety](https://www.instagram.com/deadbettysociety). Their favourite Bears were often remarkably accurate descriptions of themselves!



Grumpy Bear

AKA: Executive Function Bear

Wrote "send email" on the to-do list and then spent three hours scrolling TikTok instead.

Reorganised the list by colour, and now making a new list which is a list of lists.

Won't be told what to do, not even by yourself, so the email drafted last Thursday will go back on the list tomorrow.



Tenderheart Bear

AKA: RSD Bear

Sent a message four hours ago. Got read with no reply. You've reread it 12 times, concluded they hate you, Googled their full name to see if they died and considered moving country.

Reply arrives:
"Sorry was on the loo."



Daydream Bear

AKA: Timeblindness Bear

Arrived at the airport four hours before check-in for an airport mimosa or three to take the edge off.

Just popped into Accessorize to look around but you're now in a panic, sprinting towards the gate in flip flops you just bought, because it turns out they've been calling your name on the tannoy for the last 30 mins.



Cheer Bear

AKA: 'I'm Fine' Bear

Lost your voice and haven't really slept in a fortnight so now you're one meltdown away from filing for redundancy from your own life.

Ask how you are and you'll deliver a GREAT THANKS HOW ARE YOU with a smile wide enough to crack a window.



Care Bears: AuDHD Edition

Which one are you today?



Wish Bear

AKA: 'I'll Deffo Do It Tomorrow' Bear

Currently planning your empire from bed. Just bought the web domain (adding to the seven bought for previous biz ideas), created the IG account, built a launch playlist, and written a founder bio for a podcast you've not been booked on.

You've been this close since 2019.



Share Bear

AKA: Overshare Bear

Met someone at the school gate and within four minutes you've told them about your recent AuDHD diagnosis, your post-divorce dating life, that you read the complete works of Shakespeare for fun at age 10, and the time you peed your pants laughing in Yr 9.

All they did was ask your name.



Friend Bear

AKA: Social Battery Bear

Held the karaoke mic hostage, talked to everyone in the room, and booed when the music stopped and they called time at the bar.

You've since taken to your bed in a dark room like a Brontë heroine who can only communicate in faint sighs, and occasionally raise an arm to hit play on the next episode of Grey's Anatomy.



Bedtime Bear

AKA: Can't Fall Asleep Bear

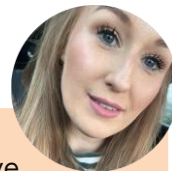
Got into bed at 10pm telling yourself you NEED an early night. By midnight you've redesigned your entire business model, replayed the time you called your Science teacher Dad instead of Mr Jones, and decided to learn Mandarin.

All night, The Puerto Rico song is on a loop in your head like a deranged lullaby.



A Good Read – The Let Them Theory

by Karla



Recently, I listened to the audiobook *The Let Them Theory*. While not every example resonated with me, the core message really stood out. It's a simple but **powerful concept** that I've started applying regularly in my own life, and I wanted to share it in the hope that it might help others too.

Written by Mel Robbins, *The Let Them Theory* has been described as "**a life-changing tool that millions of people can't stop talking about.**" At its heart are two simple statements: **Let them. Let me.** The theory is based on the idea that we cannot control other people's emotions, reactions, behaviours, or opinions. Instead of trying to manage how others think or feel, we simply **let them**..

When we stop investing energy in things outside of our control, we create space to focus on what we can control; our own actions, mindset, and responses. This is where **let me** comes in.

Let me is about bringing the focus back to ourselves. It encourages us to protect our boundaries, manage our energy, and choose how we respond, even when others behave in ways we don't like or understand. That might sound a little abstract, so here are a few examples that apprentices may relate to. The same principles can easily be applied to situations outside of work and learning too.

Example Situation 1: You're attending a live learning session and hesitate to ask a question because you don't want to sound "silly" in front of the rest of the group. Eventually, you ask it, but the answer makes the solution seem obvious afterwards. You start worrying that everyone now thinks you know less than they do, and as a result, you disengage from the session.

Let them:

Think whatever they want. You can't control other people's thoughts or opinions.

Let me:

Remember - I'm here to learn and develop.

Every learner has different experiences - asking questions is part of learning, not something to be embarrassed about.



Example Situation 2: You're in a breakout room with a learner who doesn't explain things clearly, is seeming impatient appearing to connect better with others; they don't seem to "get" you. You begin to overanalyse their behaviour, feel excluded, becoming increasingly self-conscious, making it harder to engage in the session.

Let them:

Misunderstand you. Be unclear in their explanations. Have their own communication style and preferences. That's okay.

Let me:

Remember - I'm here for my own growth and progression, not to be liked by everyone. Other people's opinions do not define my value or potential.

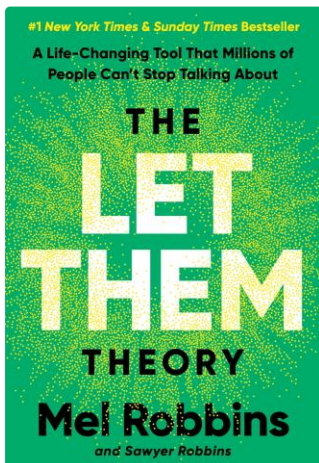
Ask clarifying questions if something isn't clear, which not only helps your own understanding but may benefit others in the group too. If someone seems impatient, remember that their behaviour may have nothing to do with you at all; they could simply be having a difficult day.



Final Thoughts:

The Let Them Theory reminds us to stop taking responsibility for things we cannot control and instead focus on our own actions, growth, and wellbeing. By practising "let them" and "let me", we can spend less time worrying about others and more time investing in ourselves.

[Book Link](#)



Level Up Your Everyday

Creative ideas to overcome Autism challenges: comments from a post by [@jordunmasked](#)

fraenergy

Sometimes a shower is the last thing I want to do because it's a sensory nightmare. So I made it more sensory friendly! I got a rainfall shower head with a handheld attachment, one of those ocean lights, a speaker, shower aromatherapy bombs, and a stool. It's helped so so so much!



samrobinette

When I'm overstimulated at work, I do what I call my "autism break" where I sit outside, set a timer for 7-15 minutes (depending on how long I need to reset) and just close my eyes and pretend like I'm a plant.



vtstickermimic

If I'm having a hard time doing chores, I'll turn on the soft lights and play tavern music/tavern ambience and pretend I'm closing my lil tavern at the end of a busy night 🥰🍷



mouldy_mourning

STOP WEARING A BRA FOREVER!!!



tash.lilliman

When I feel overpeopled, I'll just say to my friends "I feel visited enough, I'm sending you home now." Which I was raised to believe is SO RUDE but all of my friends have been cool about it and some of them have even started telling me to leave THEIR homes when they've had enough. It's been very freeing.



c0syb0nes

I think of myself like I'm my own little pet; if my pet was scared I would talk to it kindly and gently, so I try to treat myself that way when I'm upset. It's easier to feel like taking care of my needs is worthwhile and good when I remember that I'm also a mammal who needs to do mammal things like get enrichment and spend lots of time resting and having suitable socialisation and being fed the right food.

leo_flamingo

I play the Sims 2 soundtrack when I need to do boring or difficult tasks, I pretend I'm a sim and I'm giving myself little tasks and activities to fill my needs bar.



rnbmeyer

I find I'm most regulated when I follow the cycle of nature and weather. I try to rest and produce with the seasons, instead of capitalist society. If the weather is poor, I stay home. If it's nice, I'm outside or productive. Mother nature ebbs and flows, and so does every other living creature, especially humans.



figuring_out_hazel

I pretend I'm a fairy doing human tasks. Of course grocery shopping is going to be hard for me, I'm a fairy not a human! And then I put earbuds in and listen to classical whimsical music and pretend other people can't see me because I'm a fairy.



c4rro_c4rrot

I phrase regular chores and tasks as "main quests and side quests", such as grocery shopping or making a phone call. Daunting life events that will likely bring huge changes are phrased as "building lore" to make it easier for me to accept it.



thefoxscrutable

I started treating my basic needs cues like hunger, sleep, thirst, stress, emotional states, etc. as if they were being communicated to me by my child. Because as a parent I prioritize her needs. But as a self I delay them and forget. I also started looking at my to do list as "I would like accomplish this" instead of "I need to do this" because my demand avoidance kicks up. "I want to eat breakfast" instead of "I need to get up." "I want a clean space" instead of "I need to clean this". Shifting my approach to my inner monologue has helped a lot. Or when I really don't want to do something I look at the outcome and go "ok I don't WANT TO do this process but I REALLY WANT the outcome" and I focus on that and it's helped me a ton.



Plastic-free July: Rethink, Reduce, Reuse



by Kayleigh

PLASTIC FREE JULY®

Making a Plastic Free Pledge



1

Using what we have



2

Bringing reusable bags



3



4

Refilling water bottles



5

Choosing reusable cups



6

Buying unwrapped produce



7

Bringing reusable cutlery



8

Skippping plastic straws



9

Doing a waste audit



10

Making plastic free lunches



11

BYO takeaway containers



12

Refusing plastic wrap



13

Avoiding plastic wipes



14

Switching to shampoo bars



15

Making household cleaners



16

Avoiding plastic bin liners



17

Wearing natural fibres



18

Choosing laundry sheets or powder



19

Switching to reusable razors



20

Choosing plastic free snacks



21

Skippping plastic party favours



22

Starting a mug library



23

Borrowing what we need



24

Avoiding plastic decorations



25

Plastic free picnic



26

Choosing reusable period products



27

Storing food without plastic



28

Choosing to dine in



29

Sharing with others



30

Creating a plastic free future



31

Join millions of people worldwide choosing to refuse single-use plastic.



I've been watching some documentaries recently and have reminded myself of **the dangers of plastic** for all lives. Our beloved seabirds face as high as a 90% mortality rate after eating only a few pieces smaller than a pea - that's a gut-wrenching statistic!

Currently the UK recycles 44.6% and aims to have a 65% recycling rate by 2035. We're doing great, lets keep it going.

This nifty little calendar from the campaign [Plastic Free July](https://plasticfreejuly.org) shows **31 different ways** you can continue to get involved - try to reduce your single-use plastic usage, teach others and help our future and the future of our fellow planet inhabitants.

Small changes can make a big difference! What **small step** could you take today?



Further reading: • [Plastic Free July](https://plasticfreejuly.org) • [Tips to reduce your plastic waste](#) • [From seabirds to sea turtles](#)



Image Credit

Review - QA Apprenticeship Neurodiversity Network

Our Network sessions are open to all QA staff and Apprentices! Book [here](#) and join us on upcoming sessions!

June's ND Network explored the theme of **Creativity**, with attendees splitting into breakout rooms to discuss the topic through different neurodivergent lenses. Each room quickly became a place of **vibrant discussion** filled with stories, shared experiences and plenty of "that's exactly me!" moments.

One of the most interesting themes to emerge was the idea that **neurodivergence and creativity are often closely linked**. While creativity is commonly associated with artistic pursuits, the discussion highlighted how it can also be found in **curiosity, innovation, problem-solving, pattern recognition** and the ability to **see connections** that others may miss. Participants shared interests ranging from creative writing, crafting and music to AI, coding, gaming, tattoo design and 3D printing, demonstrating that creativity comes in many forms.



A recurring thread throughout the session was the **tendency for neurodivergent minds to question, explore and seek deeper understanding**. Several conversations centred around wanting to know not just what works, but why it works. This drive to investigate, challenge assumptions and explore ideas from different angles often sits at the heart of innovation and creative thinking.

The discussion also explored how **creativity can support wellbeing**. Many participants described creative activities as more than hobbies; they were ways to **regulate emotions, reduce overwhelm, process difficult experiences and create moments of focus**. Whether through making something by hand, building, designing, writing or learning, **creativity was often described as something essential rather than optional**.



A key takeaway was that **creativity is often a natural strength of neurodivergent thinking**. Whether through hyperfocus, problem-solving, innovation or exploring ideas in new ways, the discussion celebrated the originality and **unique perspectives that can emerge from thinking differently**.



When Rejection Feels Bigger: Exploring RSD



by Kayleigh



Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria – RSD. It is beginning to be discussed but what is it? RSD is commonly associated with ADHD. RSD is **feeling extreme emotions** when feeling you have been rejected, criticised, or failing to meet expectations.

Personal story



As a kid, I specifically remember my (horrible) Year 4 teacher telling me; “you make mountains out of molehills Kayleigh” - and throughout my life I have always been told similar. It’s **difficult to describe** how just one tiny thing that someone has (or hasn’t) said can so dramatically affect how you feel.

When given what I perceive as a negative comment, action, interaction or incident, my **brain starts to overthink**; hyper-focusing on that one thing, no matter how many positives may have also happened in the same day. Due to this focus I **begin to spiral**, thinking about all the terrible things I think I’ve done in my life, and I begin to reflect and believe “I’m not good enough” - shout out to Riley in ‘Inside Out 2’, a movie which resonated with me so much.



What helps me:

- Sandwiching **positive and improvement** feedback
- Consistent **praise** (despite feeling awkward!)
- Asking a **trusted loved one** for their opinion who I know can be objective and empathetic
- Knowing my **reaction is valid**, it is ok to feel (don’t bottle it up)
- Being **kind to myself**, what would I say to a friend?
- Body, environment, mind **reset** (take a walk)
- Having a “**calm**” list of things I can do
- **Processing** the incident afterwards, step by step



Further Reading:

[ADHD and Rejection – Think ADHD](#)
[Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria - Additude](#)



Example:



“Kayleigh, I’m not sure that colour suits you” - now logically I know that not all colours suit everyone but **my emotional side** jumps to “omg they think I’m ugly, nothing suits me, I’m too fat. I’m a fraud trying to wear a different colour. I’m also a fraud at work and I’ve been a rubbish friend recently. I need to message all these people back. I am just a terrible person, what is the point of me”. And needless to say, I’ll never wear that top again.

I’d like to think given my life experience I am getting better and understanding how to handle my RSD, and I try to communicate what is happening so that people can understand that **this is real**; I’m not just being dramatic

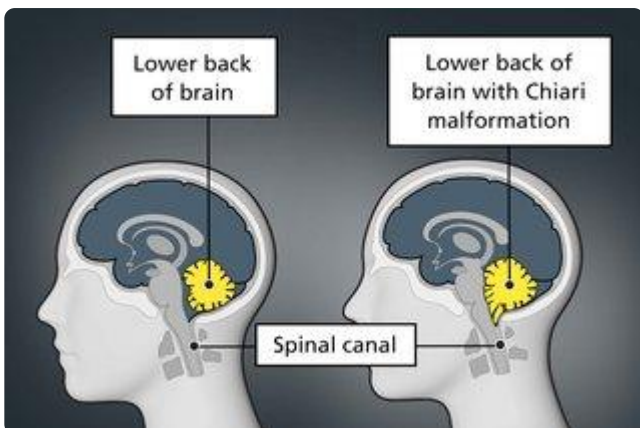
What not to say - “pay it no mind”, “don’t worry about it”, “ah well”, “sticks & stones”, “you just can’t take criticism” – always remember that words matter!

ND&D In Focus: Chiari Malformation I



by Stacey

When I started struggling with things I never had before and had the **worst "headache"** I had ever experienced, I decided to get a check-up. I had never heard of Chiari, but after spending 7 thinking it was all in my head, it turned out it was... and partially in my neck.



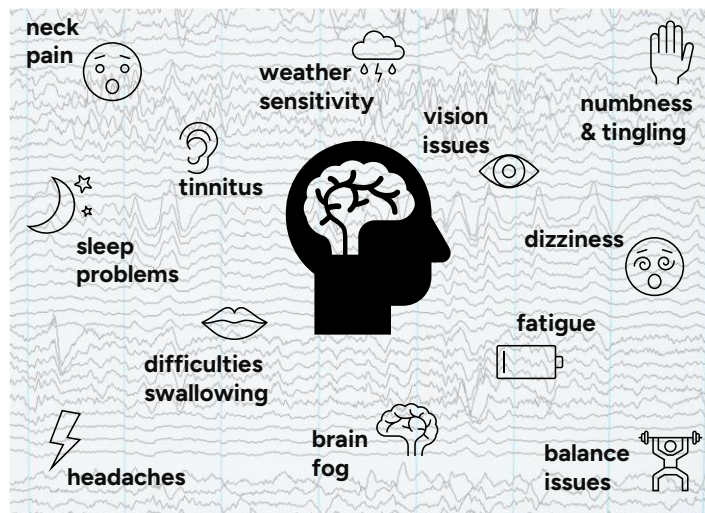
There are **two main forms of Chiari malformation**: type I and type II. Type I most commonly presents in adolescence or adulthood, although it can exist from birth. Type II is typically diagnosed in children and is often associated with spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

In Chiari malformation type I, the **lowest part of the brain** (the cerebellar tonsils) **extends through the large opening at the base of the skull into the upper spinal canal**. This can place pressure on the brainstem and spinal cord and, as in my case, may **obstruct** the normal flow of cerebrospinal fluid.

The exact cause of Chiari I malformations is not fully understood, but **many cases are congenital**, meaning individuals are born with the **structural abnormality**, often only being identified when symptoms develop or incidentally during MRI scanning.

Symptoms of the condition can vary but commonly include **headaches** originating at the back of the head near the base of the skull, often coming on suddenly and severely. Pressure on the brainstem can also result in a **wide range of neurological symptoms** due to its role in controlling vital bodily functions and serving as the main pathway for signals between the brain and body.

Treatment options for Chiari I malformation depend on symptom severity. **Pain management** strategies may help with chronic discomfort, although they are often ineffective for the long term. In more severe cases, **decompression surgery** (removing a small section of bone from the base of the skull) may be recommended, but this may not resolve all associated neurological effects.



For me, the **risks of surgery outweigh the benefits**. The decision to live with the symptoms has helped me find a better balance and understand what works for me. What helps me most at work is being able to **pace myself and listen to my body**.

Regular breaks, a supportive chair, and keeping my workstation set up to minimise neck strain make a real difference. Having **understanding colleagues** also helps, as it creates a supportive environment when my symptoms fluctuate.

Further Reading:

- [Chiari Malformation \(NHS\)](#)
- [Chiari Malformation \(NINDS\)](#)



When Words Have Colours



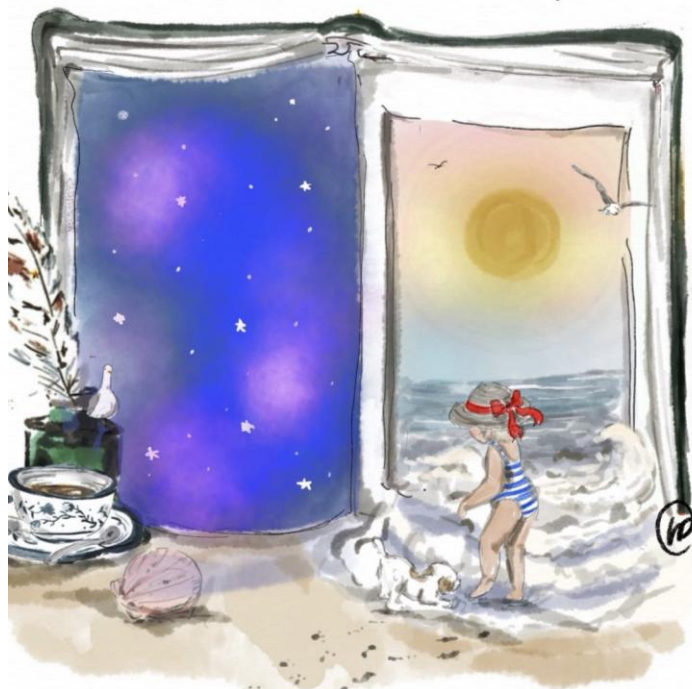
Imagine opening a book and discovering that **every word has a colour**. Perhaps **Tuesday has always been blue**, **the letter H is red**, and the **number seven has never been anything other than purple**. For people with synaesthesia, experiences like these are an everyday part of life.

Synaesthesia is a **neurological phenomenon** where stimulation of one sense automatically triggers another. Some people see colours when reading letters or words, while others may associate sounds, numbers or even names with colours, shapes or textures. These **sensory connections** are consistent and automatic, rather than something consciously imagined.

Although synaesthesia is not in itself a neurodivergence, it is often discussed alongside neurodiversity because it highlights the **different ways brains can experience and interpret the world**. Many people who are ND also have synaesthesia.

July

If the first six months felt heavy



*I hope July is kind to you,
and lets you breathe a little easier*

Image Credit

July

sometimes we have to unplug



to begin to recharge.

Many people with synaesthesia describe their experiences as **enhancing memory, creativity and problem-solving**. It serves as a fascinating reminder that there is no single "normal" way to think, learn or perceive the world. Sometimes the most creative ideas come from connections that other people simply cannot see.

Experiences such as synaesthesia show that **diversity of thought** extends beyond learning and communication styles. Different ways of perceiving the world can inspire **creativity**, spark **curiosity** and offer **perspectives** that others may never experience.

**The synaesthesia colour examples in this article are real and were provided by Sarah's Dad who discovered he had the condition a few years ago, having previously thought everyone's brain just worked that way!*

Image Credit

Upcoming Events:

Check out all our upcoming events on the **Wellbeing Calendar**, and book onto all sessions [here](#).

- Join us for our **Introduction to Neurodiversity** sessions, aimed at those new to neurodiversity – **July 16st**
- We would love to see you at our next **QA Apprenticeship Neurodiversity Network** session on **19th August** for a Summer Skillshare. Our session last year was full of amazing hints, tips, apps, and strategies, so we're really looking forward to this session!



AoA Masterclass – Friday 7th August

Join the Association of Apprentices for this month's Masterclass of the Month: **Future You: Building Your Brand** — a thought-provoking and practical session designed to help you define your identity, understand your value and shape your future career with intention.

In this live, interactive 90-minute masterclass, you'll explore how to **build a personal brand** that reflects who you are, not just the role you currently hold. Using the concept of **Ikigai** - your "**reason for being**" - you'll gain a clearer sense of direction and learn how to align your strengths, interests and values with meaningful opportunities. You will also have the opportunity to **learn through practical activities, real-life examples, and discussions** with apprentices from across the UK.



Register for the session [here](#).

Feel you need ND&D Support?

- If you are currently a QA Apprentice **without** learning support in place and you have a formal diagnosis, disability, or think you may be neurodivergent, please complete a **self-referral form**
- You need to have a disability or learning difficulty in line with **The Equality Act 2010** to access support, but are not required to have a formal diagnostic report for us to put reasonable adjustments in place. For further information, watch our **Learning Support Team Video** [here](#)
- You may have a formal diagnosis, disability, long-term medical condition, long-term mental health difficulties, have adjustments in the workplace, have received support in the past, or just be exploring a potential neurodiversity – **please link in with us!**
- If you would like to discuss receiving learning support please complete the correct **self-referral form** for your Apprenticeship and we will be in touch

QAA Learning Support (Levels 3-6)

[Self Referral Form](#)

Email – Specialist.LearningTeam@qa.com

DA Learning Support (Levels 4-7)

[Self Referral Form](#)

Email – DASpecialist.LearningTeam@qa.com

Helpful Links:

Check out the [Apprentice learner's portal](#) for information and support around your Apprenticeship. Access information on **your wellbeing, your success, your experience, your future,** and **your programme** and engage with everything QA can offer you on your journey!

If you feel that you'd benefit from **pastoral** or **welfare** support, then check out our incredible **Safeguarding Team**; they provide all kinds of support from crisis intervention, regular check-ins, mental health support, and short or long-term mentoring support. Please complete a [Self-Referral Form](#), or if you have a concern about a peer use this [Referral Form](#).

QA has partnered with the **Association of Apprentices (AoA)**: a membership organisation that connects apprentices across the UK. In working with AoA, QA provide **access to social and professional networks**, learning, guidance, and support to enhance the apprenticeship journey. All QA apprentices are eligible for **free AoA membership**. Find out more [here](#)



DA Only:

The Academic Community of Excellence (ACE) team provide guidance for **Degree Apprentices** alongside regular classes on topics such as academic style, critical analysis, relating theory to practice, research skills, reflective writing, referencing, and much more - [ACE DA Learner Portal](#)