ARA POUTAMA AOTEAROA
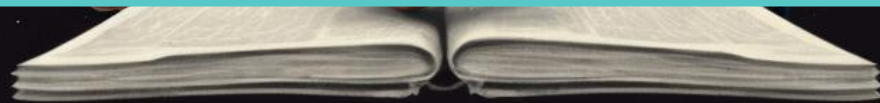DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Neuroinclusive Practice

What we are covering
- What is Neurodiversity?
- Prevalence
- Ableism
- Neuroinclusive Practice
- Being Trait Responsive
- Continue Learning
- Questions and Reflections

What is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity

Neurotypical

Neurodivergent/ Neurodiverse

Neurodivergent/Neurodiverse

Mental Health
Irlen Syndrome
Dysgraphia
OCD
Dyspraxia
ADHD
Tourette Syndrome
Dyslexia
TBI
Intellectual Disabilities
Sensory Processing Disorders
FASD
Williams Syndrome
Dyscalculia
Prada-Willi Syndrome
Autism
Downs Syndrome
Epilepsy

Barriers to Diagnosis

- Existing research
- Lower professional awareness
- Societal awareness
- Accessibility
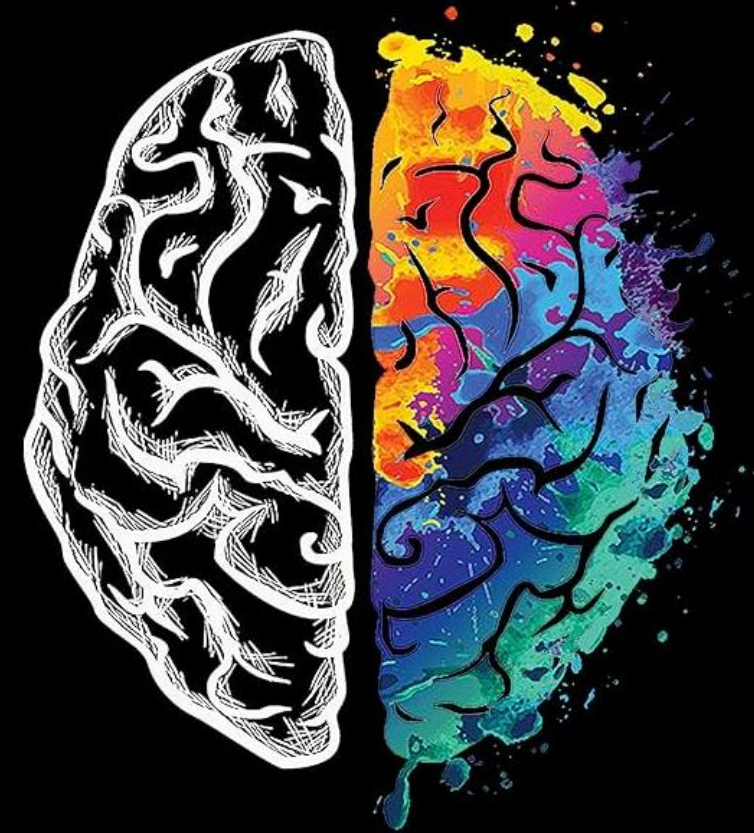- Diagnosis is a personal choice

Prevalence

Formal statistics of diagnosed people sit around 20-25%.

Research suggests 30-40% of the general population.

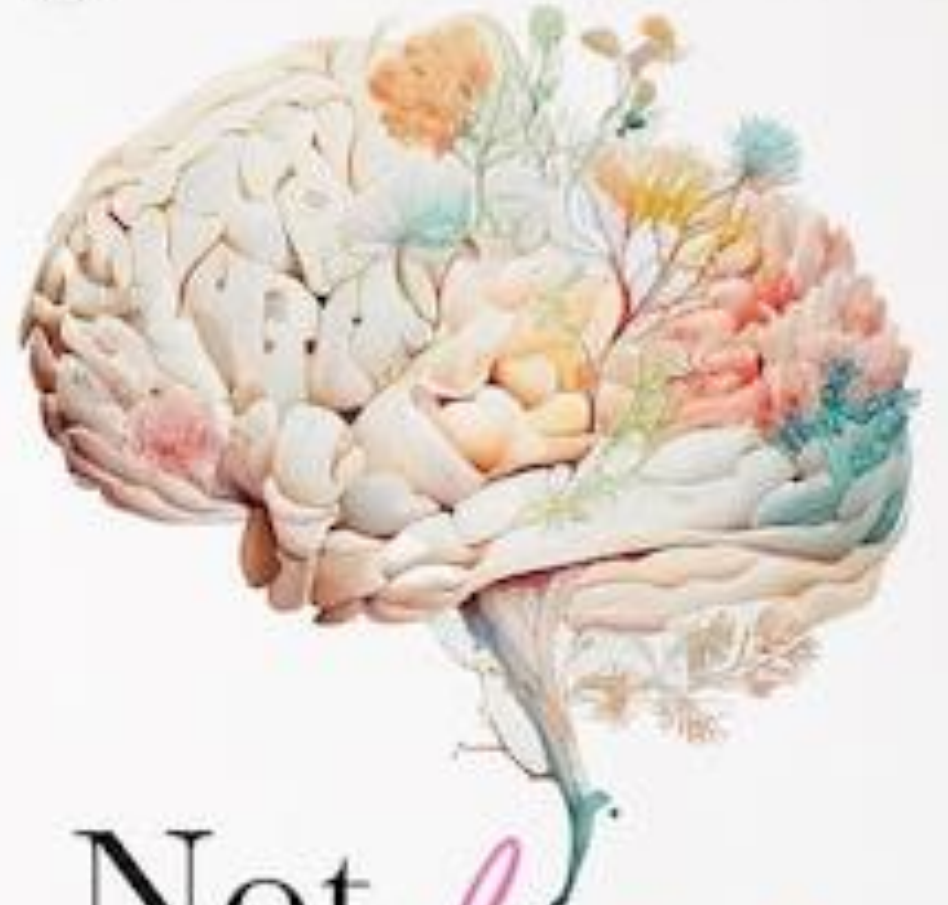There is likely an **over-representation of neurodivergent people** accessing social services.

- Access to education
- Bias within our systems
- Substance use
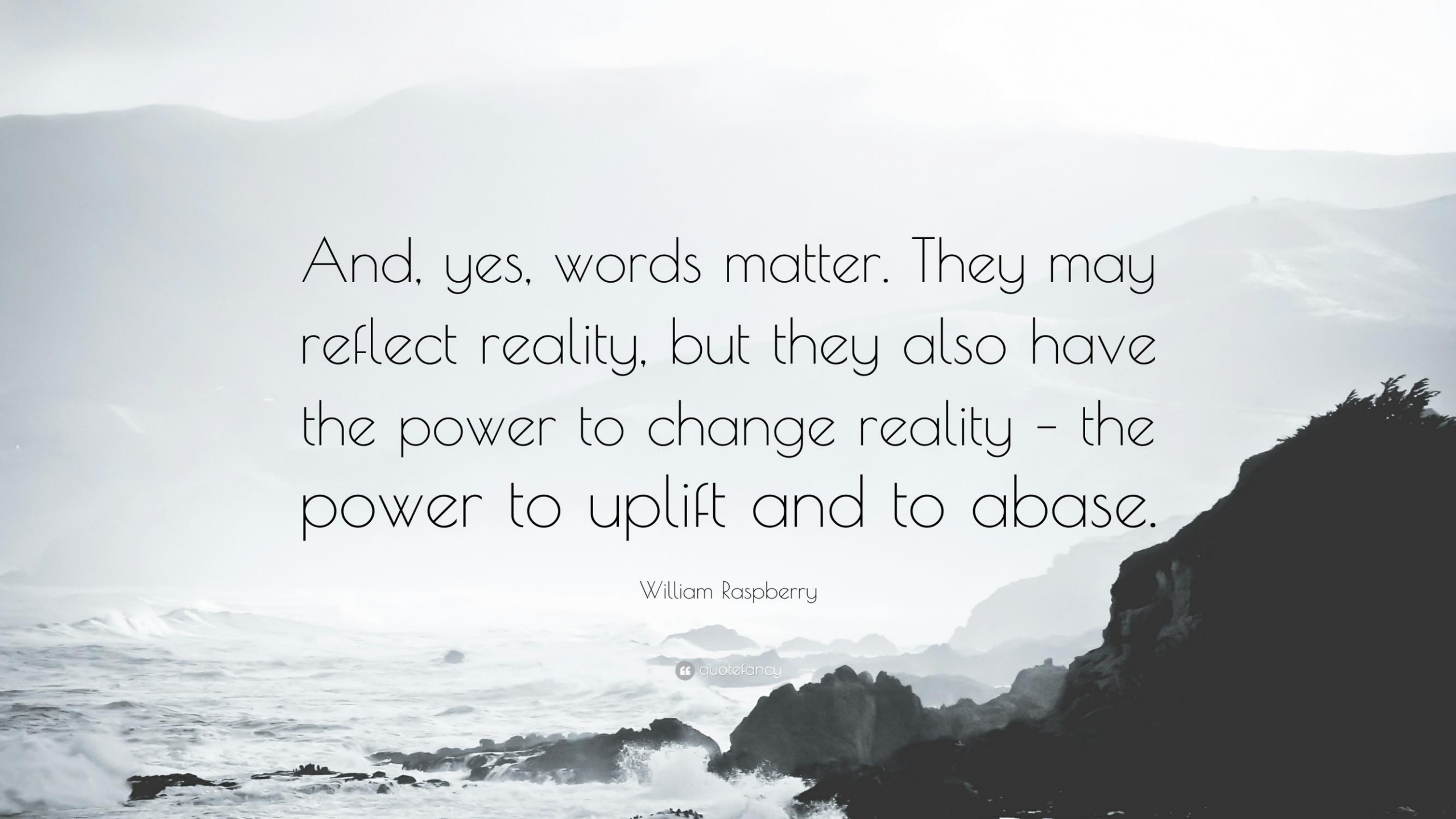- Co-existing conditions

NEURODIVERSITY
Celebrate The Spectrum

When living in a neurotypical world it is often not your diagnosis that disables you, it is society and how it is structured.

Just Different

Not less

Ableism is **bias, prejudice, and discrimination towards disabled people.** It is based on the idea that disabled people are intrinsically less valuable than non-disabled people.
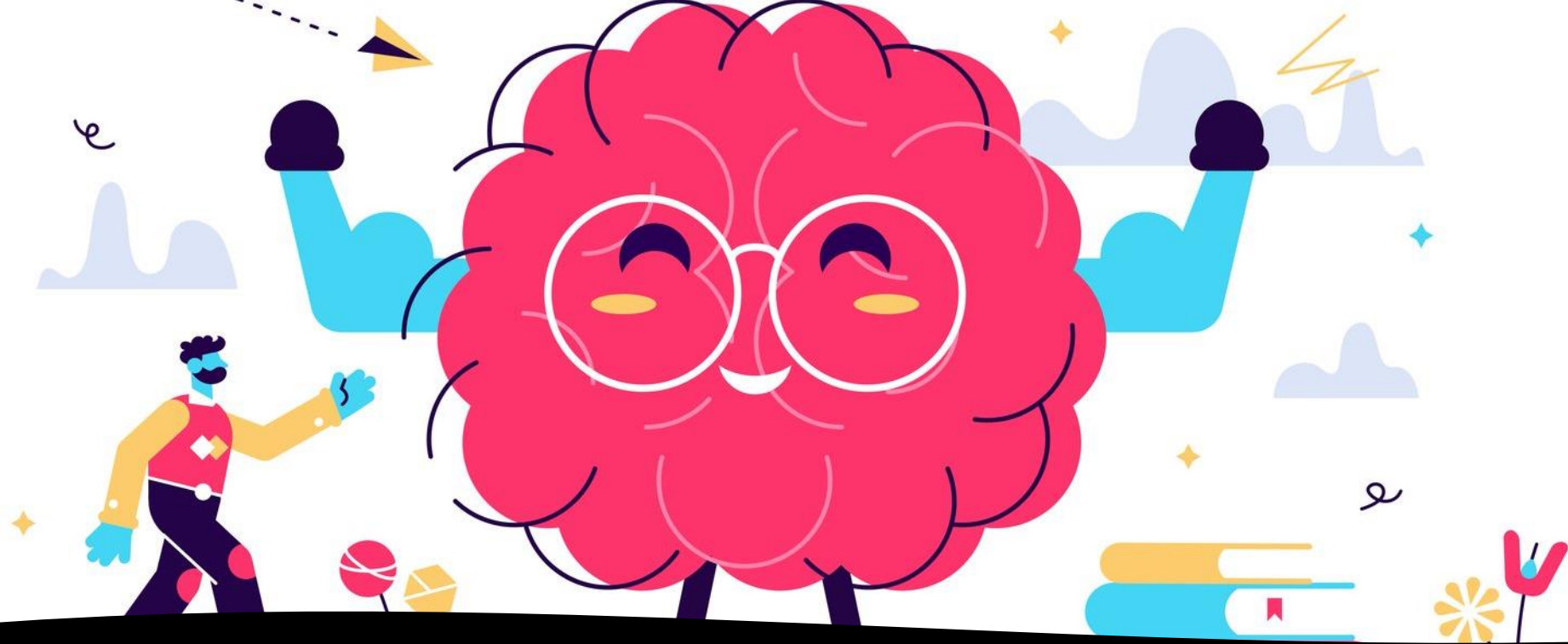
"And, yes, words matter. They may reflect reality, but they also have the power to change reality – the power to uplift and to abase.
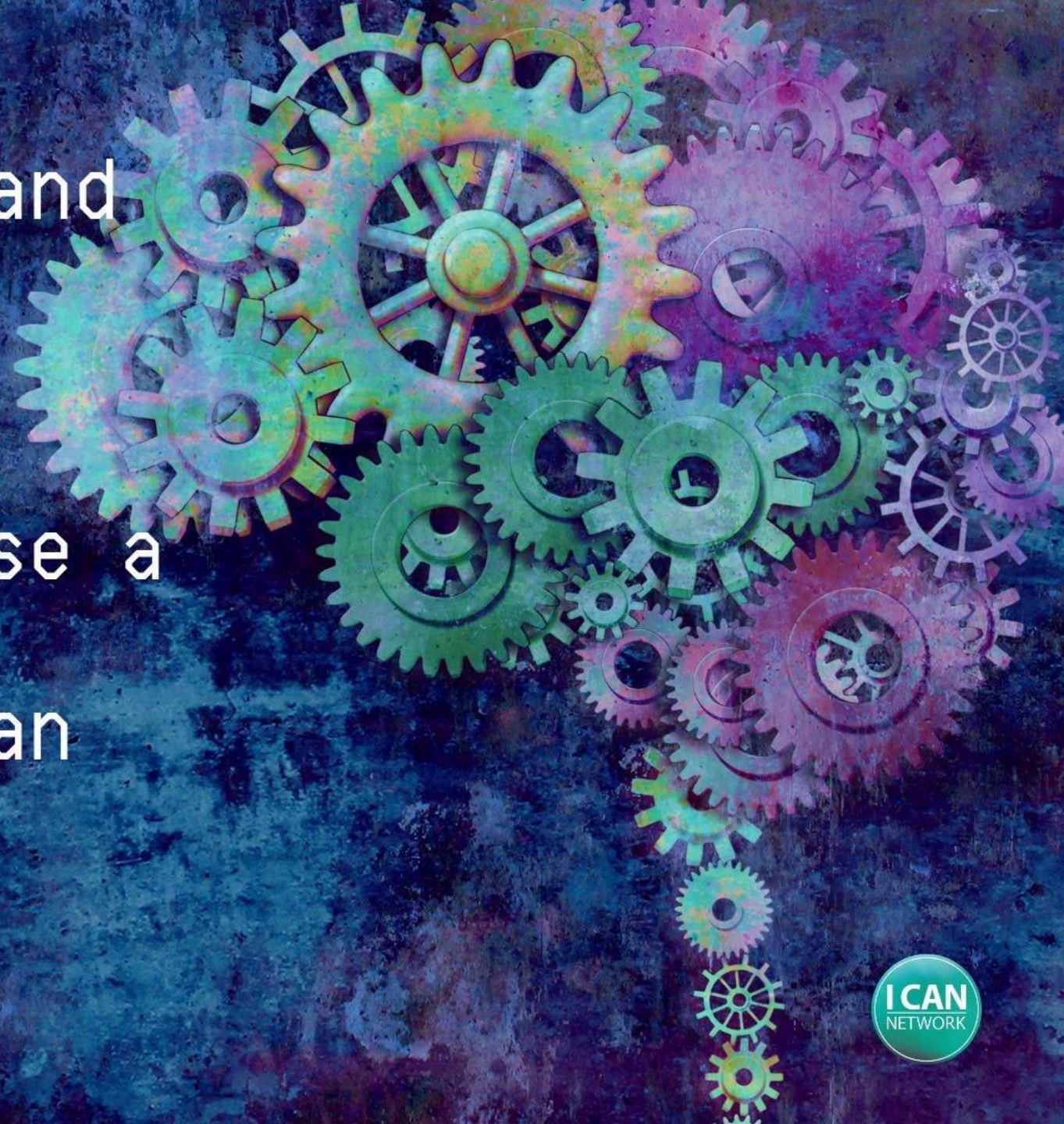
William Raspberry

Common Strengths

- Creativity
- Highly resilient
- Good problem-solving skills
- Observant and strong pattern recognition

One way to understand neurodiversity is to think in terms of human operating systems-just because a PC is not running Windows doesn't mean that it's broken.

STEVE SILBERMAN

Neuroinclusive Practice

Neuroinclusive practice is not just the right thing to do, it is **the smart thing to do**.
- Provides a sense of inclusion, safety, and trust
- Increases engagement
- More informed decision making
- Better outcomes

If someone shares their diagnosis with you, **learn** about that diagnosis and then **ask** the person how it presents for them and **what support they might need**.

We **do not need a diagnosis or label** to work better with others.

- Be mindful of the **language** we use and the environments our words create.
- Get to know people, **normalise individualised** ways of engaging with someone.
- Work to someone's **strengths**.
- Provide **feedback** when things go well.
- **Invite kōrero** about how you can best work together.
- Be responsive to the **traits or habits** you see.

Unfocused
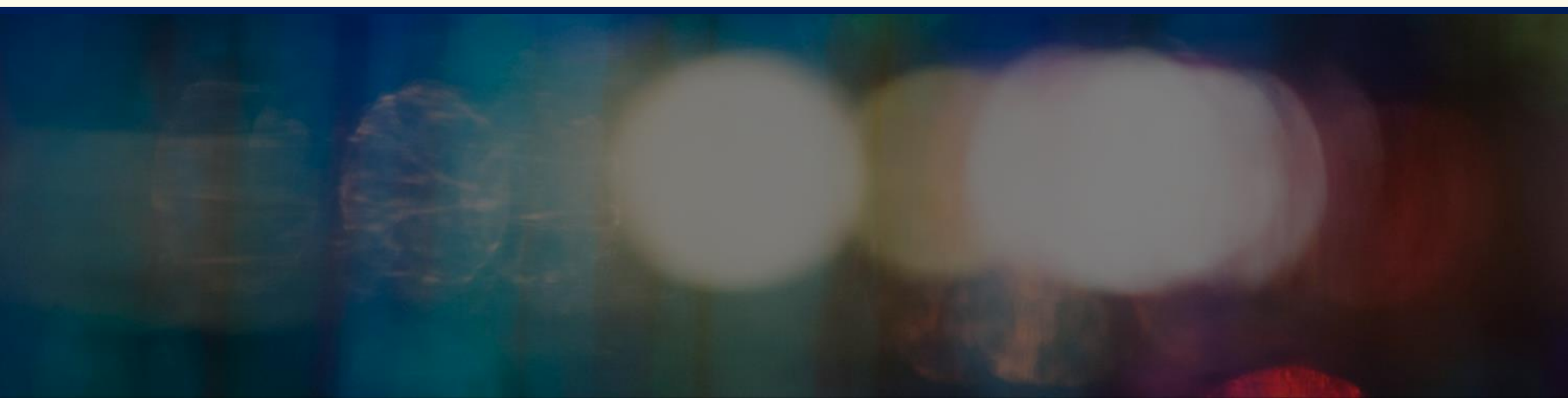
How to be Responsive
- Encourage and normalise fidgeting and movement within 1:1 and group settings.
- Think about the spaces we meet people.
- Be mindful of what and how we communicate.
- Take breaks.
- Allow time for people to pause and share.

Miscommunication

How to be Responsive
- Use simple, concise, accessible language.
- Be direct and literal.
- Be mindful of how long you are booking with someone.
- Move at their pace, don't rush kōrero.
- Summarise key points.
- Provide communication in more than one way – written and verbal.

Emotive Responses

How to be Responsive
- Communicate in a variety of ways.
- Let people know as soon as there is a change of routine and why.
- Allow people time to process change.
- Think about the spaces we meet people.
- Take time to explain processes.
- Check comprehension.

Difficulty with Written Documents

How to be Responsive - Fonts

• Use a san serif font such as Arial, Comic Sans, Verdana, or OpenDyslexic.

• Font size should be at least 12-14 pt.

• Dark colour text on a light background.

• Avoid green and pink/red colours.

How to be Responsive – Emphasis

- Do not use underlining and italics, use **bold** instead.

- Do not use BLOCK CAPITALS.

- Put borders around pages/text.

- Use visuals – images, charts, mind maps.

How to be Responsive – Page Layout

• Use left justified with a ragged right edge.

• Avoid columns.

• Line spacing of 1.5.

• Avoid starting a sentence at the end of a line.

• Use bullet points and numbering rather than large blocks of text.

How to be Responsive – Writing Style

- Use short, simple sentences.

- Give instructions clearly.

- Avoid long sentences.

- Avoid double negatives.

- Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.

- Be concise.

Continue Learning

- Local Neurodiversity Networks
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisers
- INDIGO – Including Neurodiversity in Government Organisations
- Follow neurodivergent advocates on LinkedIn or other social media
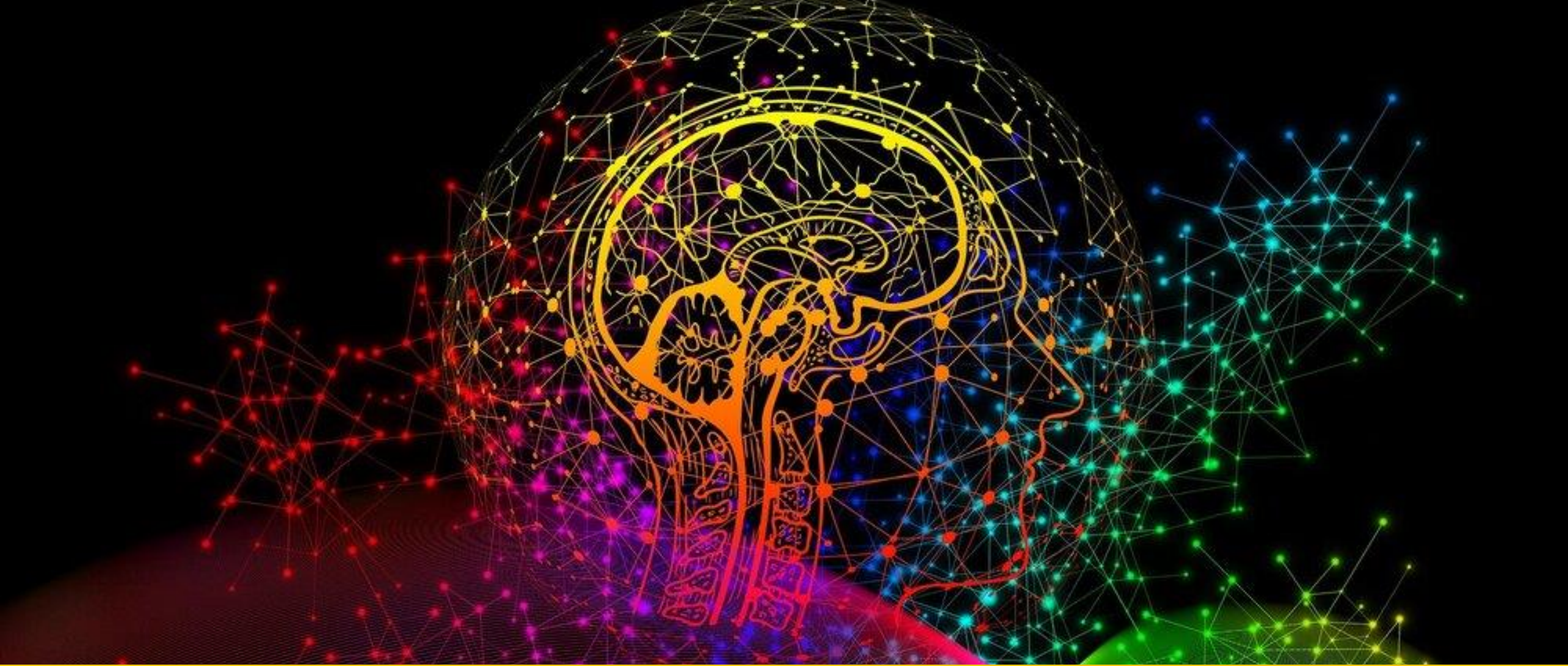
Questions, Thoughts, Reflections

Amber Rowe
Amber.Rowe@corrections.govt.nz
NeurodiversityNetwork@corrections.govt.nz