



How to Find Your Neurodivergent Superpower

Understanding Your Strengths
Beneath the Masking,
Overwhelm & Survival Mode

Welcome

I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

For many neurodivergent women, life has not felt easy.

You may have spent years feeling:

- different
- misunderstood
- emotionally overwhelmed
- exhausted from masking
- frustrated with yourself
- inconsistent
- too sensitive
- scattered
- behind everyone else



You may have spent years trying to “fix” yourself.

Trying to become:

- more organised
- less emotional
- less forgetful
- less reactive
- more productive
- more socially acceptable
- easier for other people to understand

But what if the problem was never that you lacked strengths?

What if your strengths have simply been buried beneath years of stress, masking, shame and survival mode?

Many neurodivergent people don't discover their true strengths until later in life because so much energy has been spent simply trying to cope.

This workbook is not about pretending ADHD, autism or nervous system struggles are easy.

- It is not about toxic positivity.
- It is not about pretending your struggles are magically “gifts.”
- It is about understanding that alongside the challenges, many neurodivergent people also develop incredible abilities.

And often, those strengths emerge precisely because of what they have had to navigate.

This workbook will help you:

- identify hidden strengths
- understand your nervous system more deeply
- reconnect with your natural abilities
- explore environments where you thrive
- rebuild self trust
- uncover the parts of yourself that may have been

hidden beneath survival mode

You do not need to become someone else.

You may simply need to rediscover who you already are.



How to use this Workbook

This workbook is designed to be explored slowly.

Some sections may feel validating. Some may feel emotional. Some may challenge old beliefs you hold about yourself.

You do not need to complete everything perfectly.

You are encouraged to:

- journal honestly
- pause when overwhelmed
- revisit sections over time
- reflect on your own experiences
- notice what resonates
- move gently

This isn't a test.

It is an exploration.

This workbook can be printed and completed by hand, or used digitally alongside a journal or notes app.



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PART 1 - WHY YOUR STRENGTHS MAY BE HIDDEN

Survival Mode Can Hide Your Personality

WHEN SOMEONE SPENDS YEARS OVERWHELMED, ANXIOUS OR DYSREGULATED, SURVIVAL OFTEN BECOMES THE PRIORITY.

Instead of exploring who you are naturally, your energy may go toward:

- coping
- masking
- people pleasing
- staying organised enough to function
- avoiding criticism
- managing overwhelm
- trying not to fail

Over time, survival mode can disconnect you from your authentic personality. You may begin identifying more with your struggles than your strengths.

Many neurodivergent women reach adulthood without truly knowing:

- what they enjoy
- what energises them
- what they are naturally good at
- what environments help them thrive
- who they are beneath the masking



Who did you have to become in order to feel accepted?

High Masking Can Disconnect You From Yourself

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN BECOME EXPERTS AT MASKING.

Masking may involve:

- copying others socially
- suppressing emotional reactions
- forcing eye contact
- pretending to cope
- hiding overwhelm
- overexplaining
- constantly monitoring yourself

While masking can sometimes help people navigate unsafe environments, it can also become **exhausting**.

Over time, you may begin to lose connection with:

- your preferences
- your boundaries
- your natural communication style
- your nervous system needs
- your real personality



What parts of yourself feel most **hidden**?

You Were Probably Taught to Focus on Weaknesses

MOST NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE GROW UP HEARING CONSTANT FEEDBACK ABOUT WHAT THEY STRUGGLE WITH.

Examples may include:

- “You need to try harder.”
- “Why are you so emotional?”
- “You have so much potential.”
- “You just need more discipline.”
- “Why can’t you stay organised?”
- “You’re too sensitive.”

Over time, this can create a brain that scans constantly for **flaws**.

You may become hyper-aware of:

- mistakes
- forgetfulness
- emotional reactions
- inconsistency
- overwhelm

...while barely noticing your **strengths** at all!



What **strengths** were ignored because people focused mostly on your **struggles**?

PART 2: The Hidden Strengths of Neurodivergent Minds



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PART 2 – THE HIDDEN STRENGTHS OF NEURODIVERGENT MINDS

Why Strengths Are Often Hard to Recognise

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN STRUGGLE TO RECOGNISE THEIR STRENGTHS BECAUSE THEY HAVE SPENT YEARS FOCUSING ALMOST ENTIRELY ON SURVIVAL.

When your nervous system is constantly managing:

- overwhelm
- anxiety
- masking
- emotional exhaustion
- sensory overload
- burnout

...it becomes difficult to notice what you are **naturally good at**.

You may become so focused on your perceived weaknesses that your strengths feel **invisible**.

This can create a painful cycle:

1. You struggle in environments that do not support your nervous system.
2. You internalise shame and self criticism.
3. You focus more heavily on your difficulties.
4. Your confidence decreases.
5. Your strengths become harder to access.

But strengths do not disappear simply because they are unsupported. Sometimes they are waiting **underneath exhaustion**.



What **strengths** might exist underneath the version of you that is constantly **overwhelmed**?

Your Brain May Be Wired for Depth, Not Superficiality

MANY NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE PROCESS INFORMATION DEEPLY.

This can sometimes make everyday life feel harder because your nervous system may notice more:

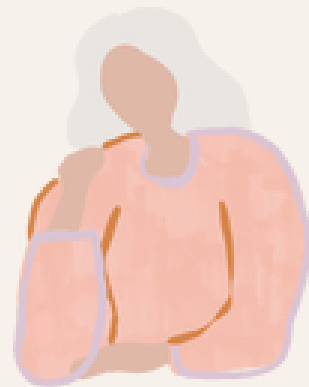
- emotional information
- sensory input
- inconsistencies
- social tension
- details
- patterns
- potential risks

While this depth can become overwhelming in unsupported environments, it can also create **remarkable insight**.

Some neurodivergent women become:

- exceptional listeners
- thoughtful communicators
- deep thinkers
- intuitive leaders
- emotionally intelligent mentors
- highly creative problem solvers

Your brain may not thrive through **speed**.
It may thrive through **depth**.



Deep Pattern Recognition

MANY NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE BECOME EXCEPTIONAL PATTERN RECOGNISERS.

Because your brain constantly scans the environment for information, you may naturally notice:

- emotional patterns
- behavioural patterns
- inconsistencies
- social dynamics
- system flaws
- connections others miss
- future risks
- creative solutions

This ability can become a **major strength** in:

- leadership
- strategy
- creative work
- systems thinking
- counselling
- business
- writing
- design
- problem solving



What patterns do you **notice** that other people often **miss**?

Problem Solving Through Adaptation

MANY NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE BECOME STRONG PROBLEM SOLVERS BECAUSE THEY SPEND MUCH OF THEIR LIVES TRYING TO NAVIGATE SYSTEMS THAT DO NOT NATURALLY FIT THEM.

You may have developed:

- creative thinking
- adaptability
- unconventional solutions
- persistence
- resilience
- strategic thinking

When you constantly need to **adapt**, your brain often becomes highly **resourceful**.

Some neurodivergent people become excellent at:

- troubleshooting
- improving systems
- finding shortcuts
- simplifying processes
- seeing inefficiencies



What challenges forced you to become more resourceful?

Emotional Depth & Empathy

SENSITIVITY IS OFTEN FRAMED NEGATIVELY.

But sensitivity can also create incredible emotional intelligence.

Many neurodivergent women deeply feel:

- emotions
- injustice
- energy shifts
- emotional tension
- other people's pain
- environmental stress

This can become a strength when combined with healthy boundaries and nervous system support.

Empathy can support:

- coaching
- teaching
- parenting
- creative work
- leadership
- healing professions
- relationship building



How has your **sensitivity** helped others?

Creativity & Divergent Thinking

NEURODIVERGENT BRAINS OFTEN THINK NON-LINEARLY.

This can lead to:

- creative ideas
- innovation
- unique perspectives
- original thinking
- imaginative problem solving
- connecting unrelated concepts

Many neurodivergent people struggle in rigid systems while thriving in creative environments.

Your brain may not function “normally.”

But normal is not necessarily where innovation comes from.



What ideas or **solutions** do you see that others often **overlook**?

Hyperfocus & Deep Interest

MANY NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE EXPERIENCE PERIODS OF INTENSE FOCUS AROUND MEANINGFUL INTERESTS.

When something captures your curiosity, you may:

- lose track of time
- absorb large amounts of information
- develop deep expertise
- notice details others miss
- become highly skilled in specific areas
- experience strong motivation and engagement

Many neurodivergent people struggle in rigid systems while thriving in creative environments.

Many neurodivergent people build careers, businesses, hobbies and passions around interests that naturally hold their attention.

Rather than asking yourself: "What should I be interested in?"

Try asking: "What already captures my attention effortlessly?"



FOLLOW THE ENERGY

What activities make you:

- lose track of time?
- become completely absorbed?
- research for fun?
- feel energised rather than drained

What strengths might these interests reveal ?

Intuition & Environmental Awareness

SOME NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN BECOME HIGHLY AWARE OF SUBTLE EMOTIONAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL CUES.

You may notice:

- tone changes
- emotional tension
- facial expressions
- group dynamics
- sensory discomfort
- subtle changes in peoples mood or behaviour

Sometimes this develops through heightened sensitivity. Sometimes through hypervigilance. Sometimes both.

While this sensitivity can become overwhelming, it can also create strong intuition and insight.



What do people regularly come to you for help with?

Strength Mapping Exercise

As you've worked through this workbook, you may have started to notice strengths that have been present all along.

Remember, this is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

The goal is simply to identify patterns and recognise abilities that may have been overlooked, dismissed or hidden beneath survival mode.

Looking back over the workbook so far, rate yourself from 1–5:

StrengthRating

Pattern Recognition	---
Creativity	---
Emotional Insight	---
Problem Solving	---
Adaptability	---
Intuition	---
Communication	---
Systems Thinking	---
Leadership	---

Which strengths appear most often?



PART 3: What Happens When You Are Regulated



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PART 3 – WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU ARE REGULATED

You May Not Actually Be Lazy

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN SECRETLY CARRY ENORMOUS SHAME AROUND PRODUCTIVITY.

You may have spent years believing you are:

- lazy
- inconsistent
- undisciplined
- unreliable
- unmotivated

But often, what appears to be laziness is actually:

- nervous system exhaustion
- burnout
- overwhelm
- executive dysfunction
- emotional flooding
- sensory overload
- survival mode

There is a huge difference between someone who does not care and someone whose nervous system is overloaded.

Many women are trying incredibly hard internally while appearing “fine” externally.



REFRAMING THE STORY

What if your struggles are not a moral failure, but a nervous system issue?
Complete the table below.

Struggle I Criticise Myself For	What Might Actually Be Happening?

Examples:

- "Lazy" → Burnout
- "Unmotivated" → Overwhelmed
- "Too emotional" → Nervous system activation

Your Environment Impacts Your Capacity

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN BLAME THEMSELVES FOR STRUGGLING IN ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE FUNDAMENTALLY DYSREGULATING.

Examples may include:

- high pressure workplaces
- chaotic homes
- overstimulating environments
- emotionally unsafe relationships
- constant multitasking
- unpredictable schedules
- excessive social demands

Some nervous systems simply require more:

- predictability
- rest
- autonomy
- sensory safety
- emotional safety
- flexibility

This does not make you weak.
It makes you human.



ENVIRONMENTS & REGULATION

Most regulated when I am:

Most overwhelmed when I am:

Most creative when I am:

Most exhausted when I am:

Rest Is Part of the Process

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN STRUGGLE TO REST BECAUSE THEY ASSOCIATE REST WITH FAILURE.

You may feel guilty slowing down.

You may feel pressure to constantly:

- improve
- perform
- produce
- achieve
- stay busy

But nervous system healing requires recovery.

Your strengths often become more accessible when your body feels safer.

Rest is not the opposite of growth.

Rest supports growth.



Your Strengths Often Emerge When You Feel Safe

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN DO NOT EXPERIENCE THEIR STRENGTHS CONSISTENTLY BECAUSE THEIR NERVOUS SYSTEM IS OVERWHELMED.

When the body is stuck in:

- chronic stress
- burnout
- sensory overload
- survival mode

...it becomes harder to access:

- creativity
- motivation
- focus
- emotional regulation
- confidence
- curiosity

This does not mean your strengths disappeared.

It may mean your nervous system needs more support.



MY BEST SELF CONDITIONS

Think about a time when you felt calm, capable and genuinely yourself.

Where were you?

What were you doing?

What was different about that environment?

Burnout Can Make You Forget Who You Are

Neurodivergent burnout can feel like::

- exhaustion
- emotional numbness
- loss of motivation
- shutdown
- irritability
- brain fog
- hopelessness

Many women blame themselves during burnout.

But often, burnout is the nervous system saying:

“I cannot continue functioning under these conditions.”

Recovery often requires:

- rest
- reduced pressure
- sensory support
- gentler expectations
- safety
- self compassion

Regulation Before Optimisation

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BECOME A PRODUCTIVITY MACHINE.

You do not need to become a productivity machine.

Your goal is not to force yourself into constant performance.

Instead of asking: “How do I push harder?”

Try asking: “How do I support my nervous system so my strengths can emerge more naturally?”

This shift changes everything.

Supportive Environments Matter

Many neurodivergent people thrive in environments that are:

- flexible
- low shame
- creative
- calm
- sensory supportive
- psychologically safe
- autonomy supportive

You are not meant to thrive in every environment.

Sometimes the issue is not your ability.

Sometimes the environment itself is deeply incompatible with your nervous system.



STRENGTH-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

Tick anything that helps you thrive:

- ☐ Quiet spaces
- ☐ Predictable routines
- ☐ Creative freedom
- ☐ Working alone
- ☐ Working with trusted people
- ☐ Flexible schedules
- ☐ Clear expectations
- ☐ Deep-focus work
- ☐ Time outdoors
- ☐ Movement throughout the day
- ☐ Low social pressure
- ☐ Sensory-friendly environments

What else helps your nervous system feel safe?

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The Difference Between Survival & Authenticity

MANY WOMEN SPEND SO MANY YEARS ADAPTING TO SURVIVE THAT AUTHENTICITY BEGINS TO FEEL UNFAMILIAR.

You may become highly skilled at:

- reading other people
- adjusting your personality
- anticipating reactions
- avoiding rejection
- suppressing needs

Over time, this can make it difficult to know:

- what you genuinely enjoy
- what you actually want
- what your body needs
- what feels aligned
- who you are without performance

Healing often involves slowly separating who you truly are from who you learned you had to become.

This process can feel uncomfortable, but it can also feel deeply relieving.



UNMASKING YOURSELF

Complete the sentences:

When I don't feel judged, I naturally...

When I am completely comfortable, I tend to...

Parts of myself I hide from others are...

Your Strengths May Look Different Than Other People's

MANY NEURODIVERGENT STRENGTHS ARE NOT ALWAYS REWARDED IN TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS.

- emotional insight
- systems thinking
- noticing details
- creative problem solving
- pattern recognition
- intense curiosity
- deep empathy
- innovation
- intuition
- unconventional thinking

These strengths may not always appear through:

- traditional schooling
- rigid workplaces
- productivity culture

But that does not make them less valuable.

Some strengths emerge most clearly in the right environment.

You Are Allowed to Work Differently

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN EXHAUST THEMSELVES TRYING TO FUNCTION EXACTLY LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

But different nervous systems often require different approaches.

You may function better with:

- flexible schedules
- visual systems
- body doubling
- slower mornings
- reduced sensory input
- creative work
- movement breaks
- deep-focus sessions
- autonomy

The goal is not forcing yourself into systems that constantly dysregulate you.

The goal is creating systems that support the way your brain naturally functions.

Who Are You Beneath the Masking?

MANY NEURODIVERGENT STRENGTHS ARE NOT ALWAYS REWARDED IN TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS.

Many neurodivergent women spend years becoming who other people needed them to be.

Healing often involves slowly reconnecting with:

- your preferences
- your values
- your interests
- your natural rhythms
- your sensory needs
- your communication style

This process can feel uncomfortable at first.

Especially if you are used to adapting constantly.

But authenticity often creates nervous system relief.

What Comes Naturally to You?

OFTEN, OUR STRENGTHS FEEL “TOO EASY” TO NOTICE.

You may dismiss abilities that actually come very naturally to you.

Examples might include

- reading people quickly
- seeing emotional patterns
- creativity
- problem solving
- deep empathy
- strategic thinking
- intuition
- communication
- visual thinking
- learning rapidly
- connecting ideas



CLUES TO MY STRENGTHS

What do other people regularly come to you for help with?

People often ask me for help with:

People often compliment me on:

Things that feel easy to me but difficult for others:

Your Nervous System May Need Different Things

MANY NEURODIVERGENT STRENGTHS ARE NOT ALWAYS REWARDED IN TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS.

Many neurotypical systems are built around:

- constant stimulation
- strict schedules
- social performance
- multitasking
- productivity
- pressure

Your nervous system may function better with:

- flexibility
- quieter environments
- deeper focus
- slower pacing
- creativity
- autonomy
- predictable routines
- sensory support

Needing different support does not make you incapable.

Rebuilding Self Trust

Many neurodivergent women struggle with self trust after years of:

- criticism
- inconsistency
- burnout
- masking
- emotional overwhelm
- failure experiences

Healing often involves learning how to trust yourself again.

This can include:

- honouring your limits
- listening to your body
- recognising burnout earlier
- reducing shame
- creating realistic expectations
- noticing what genuinely helps you thrive



REBUILDING SELF-TRUST

What would change if you trusted yourself more?

If I trusted myself more, I would...

I would stop...

I would start..

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Stop Trying to Thrive Through Self Rejection

MANY PEOPLE SPEND YEARS TRYING TO SUCCEED BY FIGHTING THEMSELVES.

But long-term healing and growth usually require:

- self understanding
- nervous system support
- sustainable routines
- supportive environments
- realistic expectations
- compassion

You do not need to hate yourself into becoming successful.

Your Strengths Need Supportive Conditions

EVEN INCREDIBLE STRENGTHS STRUGGLE UNDER CHRONIC STRESS.

A plant cannot thrive without the right environment.
Neither can a nervous system.

Your strengths may grow more easily when you have:

- rest
- safety
- support
- flexibility
- emotional validation
- reduced sensory overload
- meaningful work
- self compassion

Success Does Not Need to Look Traditional

MANY NEURODIVERGENT WOMEN STRUGGLE BECAUSE THEY MEASURE THEMSELVES AGAINST SYSTEMS THAT WERE NEVER DESIGNED FOR THEM.

You may thrive more through:

- flexible work
- creative projects
- self-employment
- slower living
- purpose-driven work
- deep-focus environments
- meaningful relationships

There is no single correct way to build a successful life.

You Are Allowed to Build a Life That Fits You

YOU DO NOT NEED TO CONSTANTLY FORCE YOURSELF INTO ENVIRONMENTS THAT DAMAGE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM.

Healing may involve:

- changing routines
- changing environments
- changing expectations
- changing relationships
- redefining success
- reducing masking
- honouring your needs

You are allowed to create a life that feels safer, gentler and more aligned.

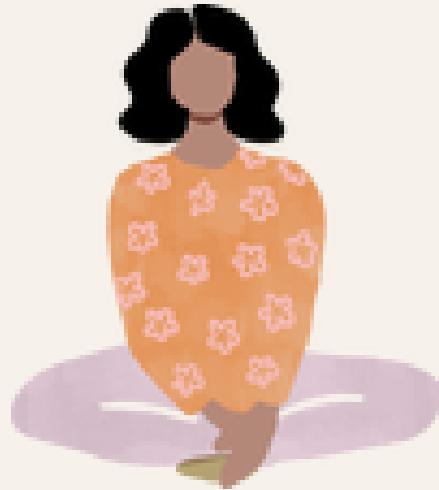
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Final Reflection

Maybe your **brain** was never **defective**.

Maybe it developed **differently**.

Maybe your **nervous system** adapted in ways that helped you **survive**.

Maybe your **sensitivity** created **insight**.

Maybe your **struggles** shaped **resilience**.

Maybe your **pattern recognition** became **intelligence**.

Maybe your **creativity** came from learning how to **adapt**.

And maybe your "**superpower**" is not one magical ability.

Maybe it is the **unique way** your mind experiences and understands the world.

Your goal is not becoming someone else.

Your goal is learning how to **support the person you already are**.





MY NEURODIVERGENT STRENGTH PROFILE

Looking back through this workbook:

Strengths I recognise in myself

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Pattern recognition | ☐ Systems thinking |
| ☐ Creativity | ☐ Adaptability |
| ☐ Empathy | ☐ Emotional insight |
| ☐ Intuition | ☐ Innovation |
| ☐ Deep focus | ☐ Persistence |
| ☐ Curiosity | |
| ☐ Problem solving | |

Other:

The environments where I thrive are:

The support my nervous system needs most is:

One thing I want to remember moving forward:

Stay Connected

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