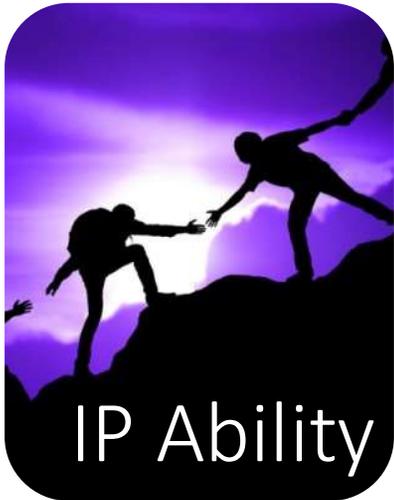




IPINCLUSIVE

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP



- School reports

My experience of late-diagnosis

Becky Campbell

IP Ability committee

18 November 2021

Background

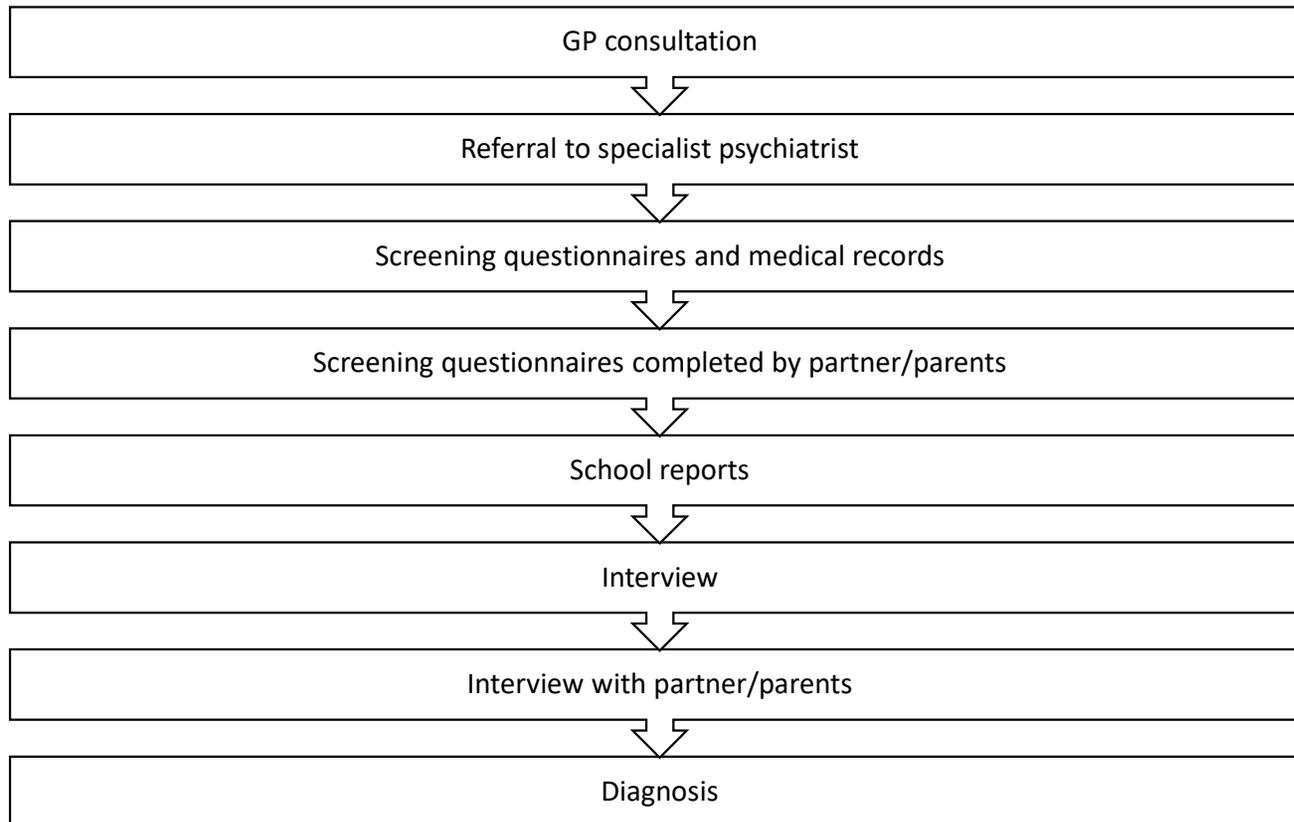
- Chartered Trade Mark Attorney at Mewburn Ellis
- School in Scotland – As and Bs
- Non-law degree at University of St Andrews followed by GDL & LPC
- Considered myself neurotypical for most of my life
- Never flagged at school or university – good academics and lots of extracurricular activities, closest hints were exhaustion after school
- Diagnosed as neurodivergent during the pandemic (early 30s)

How I realised I was neurodivergent

- Pandemic gave time to reflect – probably would never have been diagnosed if we hadn't experienced lockdown
- Increase in media articles about late diagnosis and celebrities speaking about experiences
- Twitter memes, webcomics and YouTube channel about neurodivergent women
- Opened up to friends and discovered other women in my social circles who had shared experiences
- After several months, pursued private diagnosis



Diagnosis process



School Reports: subtle signs and masking?

Name of Pupil: Rebecca Campbell Class: P2.

ACTIVITY	CLASSIFICATION*	EFFORT	
		Satis- factory	Unsatis- factory
LISTENING	rarely distracted <u>fairly</u> attentive easily distracted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: <u>Rebecca tries hard but still daydreams</u>			
SPOKEN ENGLISH	communicates fluently communicates satisfactorily has difficulty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Remarks: <u>Rebecca is a clear articulate speaker</u>			

ABILITY TO EXPRESS I	
painting, drawing and modelling	special ap <u>extremely</u>
movement	special ap
speech	special ap <u>quite</u>
	special ap

Primary: 3 Date: _____
Class Teacher: V. Smith

Education 5-14

READING: very
Remarks: Rebecca very enjoyable

NUMBER: quite
Remarks: Can on careless

LANGUAGE Strengths:
Talking: Contributes well to class
Reading: Has gained fluency comprehension of stories

Development Needs:
Listening: Often day-dreams needs to concentrate
Writing: Presentation can be untidy Rebecca needs to take care with her written work.

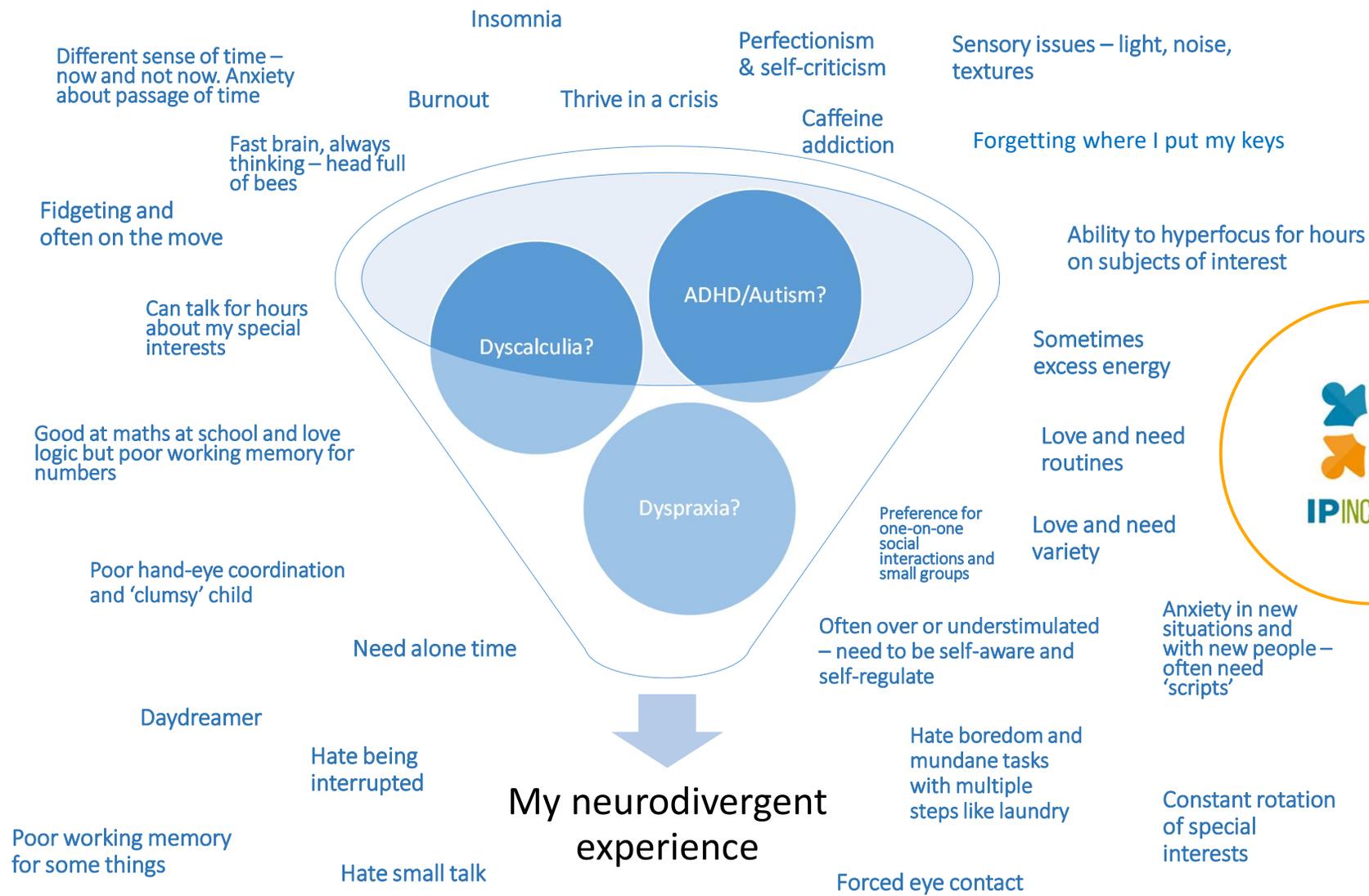
Overall levels of attainment:				
	Listening	Talking	Reading	Writing
Classwork	<u>A</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>A</u>

ATTENDANCE	3 absences out of 272
PUNCTUALITY	0 late arrivals
BEHAVIOUR RECORD	DEMERITS 0 <u>Well done.</u>
HOMEWORK RECORD	DEMERITS 0 <u>Well done.</u>

COMMENTS
This is an excellent report. Well done, Rebecca. Keep up the effort - and the high standards you have set for yourself as you go into S2. I'm sure you will do very well in L.H.S.

DATE 16/04/99 SIGNED V. Smith





Tips

- Do your research – lots of great online resources
- Consider strengths and weaknesses, but account for masking and coping mechanisms you may have developed since you were a child
- Experiment with your environment and aids like noise cancelling headphones, visual timers, etc
- Speak to other neurodivergent people in your circles – if you don't know any, reach out to networks such as IP Inclusive and any D&I groups in your firm

Benefits

- Reasonable adjustments – some friends/colleagues sought diagnosis before taking exams
- Insight into myself – can pursue career, relationships and environments that suit my needs and strengths/weaknesses
- Can be kinder to myself – even before I had the label of a diagnosis, I and others labelled me less kindly – 'blonde', 'ditzy', 'quirky', 'chatterbox'
- Easier to find other people like myself and share experiences – since being diagnosed, several friends and colleagues have confided that they are or suspect they are neurodivergent in some way, including one whose anxiety turned out to be autistic burnout

