

Changing Minds in Psychiatry: *Why, who, how?*

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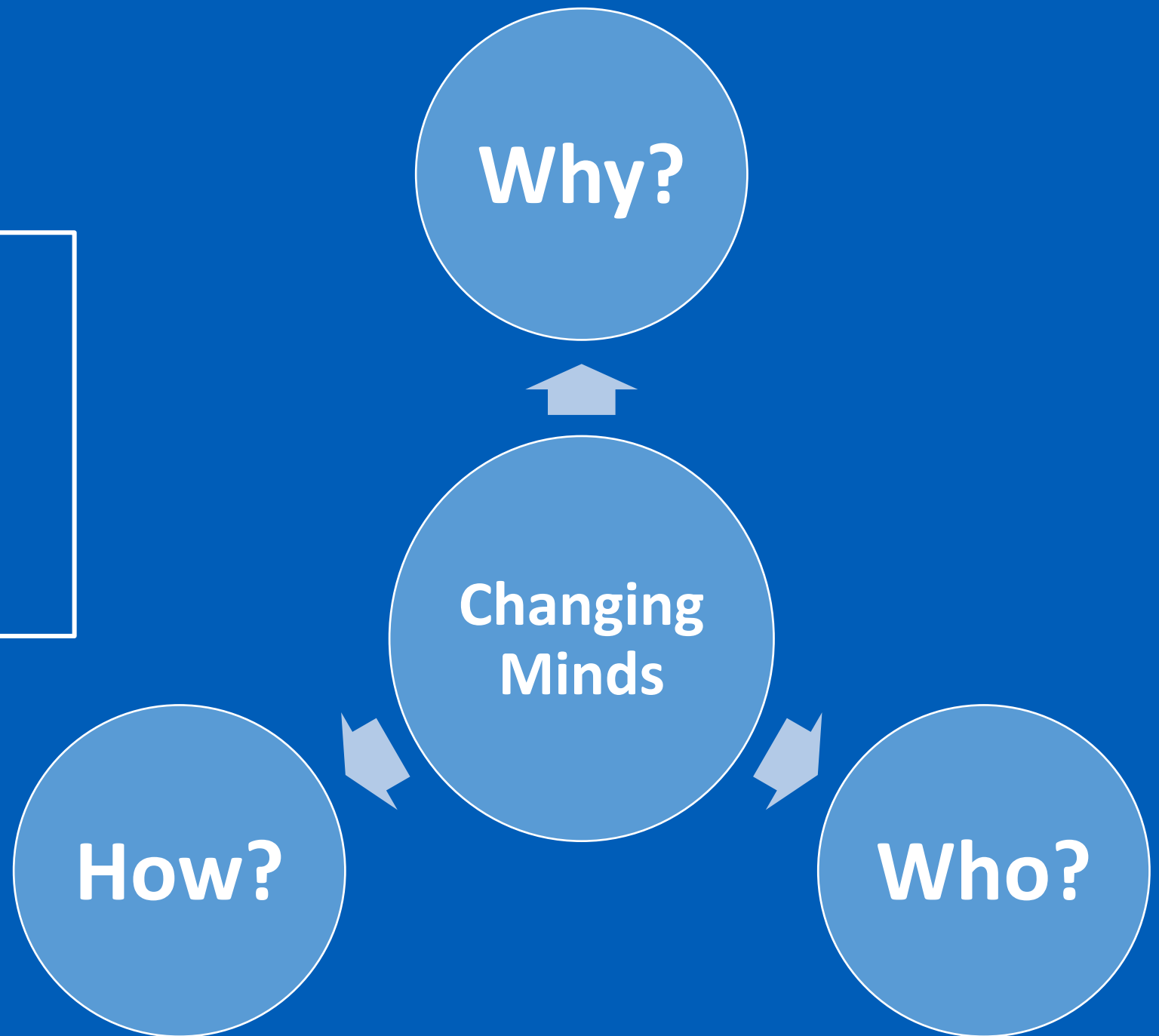


Why am I standing here?



- Parent/carer to neurodivergent children
- Late diagnosis Autism + ADHD (AuDHD)
 - A lifetime of self-criticism, not belonging, confused by life
- Multiple professional roles:
 - *Psychiatrist: Child & Adult / Autism Specialist (Essex Partnership University Trust)*
 - *Autism/ADHD assessor*
 - *Associate with AT-Autism*
 - *Psychiatry Lead at Autistic Doctors International*
 - *National Autism Trainer Programme trainer (NATP)*

Changing minds in Psychiatry



Why?

- Current mind-sets cause harm to Autistic people
 - Health, education/employment, social inequalities/injustice
 - Stigma, political agendas
 - In psychiatry:
 - Autism + serious mental illness, suicide
 - Mis- & missed diagnoses ☐ trauma
 - Diagnostic overshadowing
 - Unsuitable inpatient environments
 - Barriers to access to therapy & services
 - Etc...
- ☐ Poor / devastating outcomes

Everyone's a
bit autistic

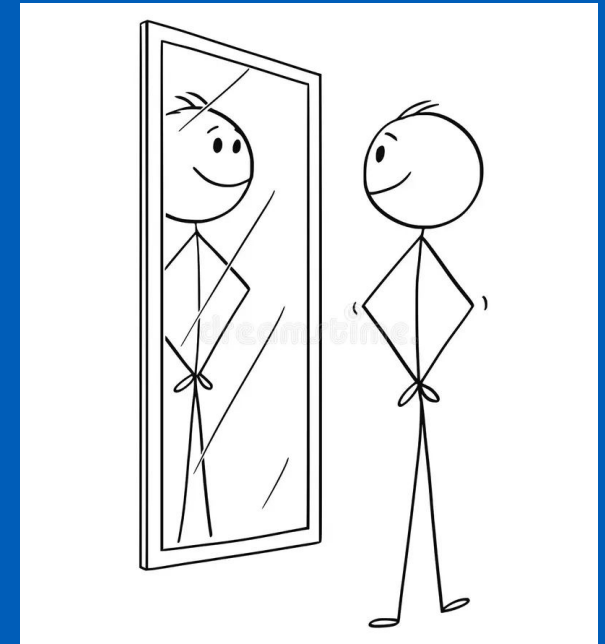
Did not engage –
discharge from
therapy

It's all
behavioural

She can't be
autistic – she has
friends & a job

Who?

- Me
 - *Importance of reflecting on own neurotype (M Doherty et al., 2024)*
 - *Pursuit of justice & correctness stronger than my rigid thinking!*
- Patients & their families/carers
- Colleagues / Trust employees
- The Board
- Beyond



M Doherty, N Chown, N Martin, S Shaw (2024), "Autistic psychiatrists' experiences of recognising themselves & others as autistic", *BJPsych Open* 10(6).

How?

•“Turning intention into action”

- Dr Georgia Pavlopoulou, 2024

- Education
 - Sustainable, accessible for all
 - **National Autism Trainer Programme (NATP)**
 - Co-production – *always*
- Research
 - Data to demonstrate need, support conversations
 - Audits, Datix, incidents □ measurable change
- Advocacy
 - For myself, patients, colleagues
 - Be a role model & recruit allies / champions

Ask me anything about
the National Autism
Trainer Programme
(NATP)

I am a certified trainer

#NATPmentalhealth

National Autism Trainer Programme



- Commissioned by NHS England (2022-2025)
- Co-created, co-produced, co-delivered
 - AT-Autism & Anna Freud Centre
 - Over 5000 delegates trained to co-deliver in own work setting
 - Neurodiversity-affirmative approach
- Truly transformative
 - Professionally
 - Personally

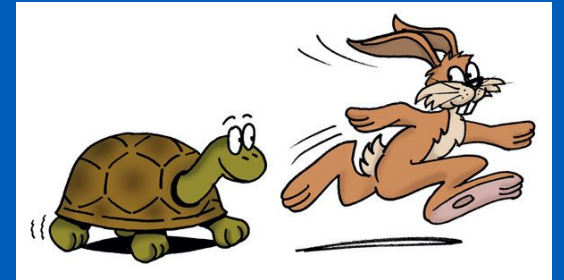
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The Change: A Cultural Shift

- **Slow and steady wins the race**
 - Transformative, not transactional
- **High level of Trust support**
 - Full time Neurodivergence Clinical Director role
 - Formal collaboration with Lived Experience Ambassador partner
- **“Working with Neurodivergence” governance steering group**
 - Priorities including:
 - Rolling out co-delivered NATP training, trust-wide
 - Supporting neurodivergent staff
- **Community of Practice of NATP trainers**
- **Partnership working with local county council to bridge health-social care gap**



Thank you

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Autistic Doctors International: <https://autisticdoctorsinternational.com/>