

Spiky Profiles

A spiky profile can be a useful, more positive way to recognise and understand the skill sets of those who are neurodivergent. It provides a positive strengths-based approach that promotes understanding of a person's holistic profile.

Generally speaking those of us who are neurodivergent will have a spikier profile meaning that the gaps between strengths and weaknesses is more pronounced. For example an individual may excel in tasks that require logical reasoning but find social interactions incredibly difficult. Another individual may be very creative but find reading and writing a huge challenge. People with a spiky profile may have heard phrases before like "how can you be so clever but have no common sense" They are also faced with assumptions that because they excel in one area, they should be able to excel in everything.

In contrast to neurodivergent people, neurotypical people tend to have a more even (or bumpy) profile, meaning that the balance of strengths and challenges are distributed more evenly. This profile may be described as being a good all rounder.

Recognising and understanding spiky profiles is important because it enables focus on not only areas of challenges but the strengths while providing a lens to explore self identity and self awareness. It also creates implications for education and employment as once a profile is understood personalised support and adjustments can be put in place.

Example of a spiky profile

