

What are our Executive Functioning Skills?

Executive Function skills are essentially organizational processes which help guide information in and out of our brain, like an air traffic controller.

Amongst Neurodivergent humans, EF skills can present differently from Neurotypical humans, **so these present as challenges for those of us living in societies where standards for Executive Functioning are based on Neurotypical norms.**

While every human is different, ADHDers can have more challenges related to working memory, and sustaining attention; while Autistics may experience more challenges related to flexibility (e.g., often because having advance knowledge of a situation allows us sensory safety)

All humans are impacted by Executive Function skills and these can vary from time to time, depending on internal and external stressors.

- while grieving, completing tasks may be especially challenging
- sending emails while angry is ill-advised
- procrastination can happen when something is really challenging or boring
- feeling calm or stressed impacts work, relationships and self-regulation

It is important to understand our own Executive Functions so we can:

- develop strategies that work for ourselves AND
- reflect on how we perceive the EF of others
- foster supporting work and learning environments where everyone's differences are accepted and better understood so all can be their best

Instead of labelling someone as procrastinating or lazy, could there be another reason (internal or external stressor) impacting them?

Might another strategy or support be helpful?