

# Allyship: A Quick Start Guide

For neurodiversity and disability allies.

**P**

**Presume<sup>+</sup>**

**Presume positively e.g. competence and ability.**

This requires accepting that someone may think or do things differently or "incorrectly" according to convention, or require adjustments, ultimately achieving the same aim. What works for one person may not for another, and does not indicate anything about ability or competence.

**L**

**Listen**

**Listen to lived-experience.**

Professional expertise has its place but not to the exclusion of input from those with first-hand experience. Listening is critical to build understanding, trust, and empathy, and to preserve autonomy and dignity.

**E**

**Educate**

**Educate yourself - take responsibility for learning.**

Do not expect or rely on those with lived-experience to educate or inform you. Whilst many people are happy to help, be mindful of the burden and cost to them.

**A**

**Amplify**

**Amplify voices.**

Highlight, seek out, and provide a platform for the voices which ordinarily would not be heard or listened to.

**S**

**Speak up**

**Speak up.**

When something isn't right, say so. It can be difficult and risky for impacted individuals to raise issues. Bullying, harassment, and discrimination should never be tolerated. Importantly, this does not mean speaking for, or over, anyone.

**E**

**Enable**

**Enable through empowerment.**

This is an ongoing process which boils down to dismantling barriers, avoiding paternalism. It includes making adjustments, and considering accessibility and inclusion. It can be more informal too, e.g. moral support. Conversely, actions like micro-management are disempowering.

**D**

**De-centre**

**De-centre yourself.**

By de-centring the majority as the starting or reference point, we naturally consider other perspectives, and move away from accessibility and inclusion being an afterthought, towards being the baseline. De-centring also facilitates challenging social norms like neuronormativity.