NEUROTYPICAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Often structured (beginning, middle, end).
- Lots of nonverbal and subtle communciation (like facial expressions, changes in tone, or indirect language).
- Sarcasm used frequently.
- Questions used to continue the conversation.
- Enjoyment is in the social connection.
- Small talk is social lubricant. Asking how someone is doing often is a default greeting.
- Direct and honest communication is an attack/harmful. Politeness is expected.
- Greater comfort with greys, maybes, uncertainties.
- Eye contact demonstrates respect and is expected.
- May expect an immediate response to queries or problems.
- Often feels comfortable with a variety of communication channels. Prioritizes physical proximity when communicating.

NEURODIVERGENT COMMUNICATIONS

- Less structure (gets right to the point).
- Less nonverbal communication; more direct language.
- Sarcasm often not detected or misinterpreted.
- Questions used to elicit more information.
- Enjoyment is in the topic or shared interest.
- Little to no small talk. Asking how someone is doing is a sincere inquiry.
- Direct and honest communcation is kind. Politeness is not prioritized.
- Tendency to interpret things as black/white, yes/no, appropriate /not.
- Eye contact can be overwhelming and is not expected.
- Often needs time before responding.
- May have a strong preference for asynchronous or text–based communication. Does not always prioritize physical proximity when communicating.

NOTE: These are tendencies, not rules. Check in with others to determine their communication preferences/norms.

	Neurotypical communications	**Neurodivergent communications**
Structure	often structured: beginning, middle, and end	less structured: Gets right to the point
Verbal/nonverbal	lots of nonverbal communication	more direct language
Small talk	serves as social lubricant and considered polite	seen as unnecessary and stressful
Sarcasm	used often and generally understood well	often misinterpreted or missed entirely
Politeness	expected––it's rude to speak straightforwardly	a waste of time––speaking straightforwardly is kind
Role of questions	communicates interest and a desire to continue the conversation	expresses a need to gather more information
Tolerance for ambiguity	high	low to nonexistant
Time to respond	quick	slower

NOTE: These are <u>tendencies</u>, not rules. Check in with others to determine their communication preferences/norms.