What changes when you finally know?

Neurodivergence, late self-diagnosis and early career life

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Positioning myself and my work

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Project lead for SENSE

Paid Student Partner facilitated peer community

For students who identify with neurodivergent experiences and/or experiences with mental health difficulties





Reflection on early workplace transition

- The power of reflection
- Finding where I fit
- Gaining more self understanding and acceptance
- Sharing my experiences to improve inclusive practice

Masking in context

- Starting my first job
- Struggling with socialising 9-5
- The 100% colleague
- Becoming the real me at work



From Internship to Full-Time Work

- I was given my own desk!
- Overcoming overwhelm
- Lunchtimes are sacred!
- Knowing my limits and how I work best
- Personalising my space







SENSE Project

- 35% of students at the University of Brighton have a declared disability
- Empowering students to feel understood, supported and have access to tools and advice to help them succeed
- Building community and enhancing student mattering
- 5 paid Student Partners
- Connecting with students through shared understanding and relatability

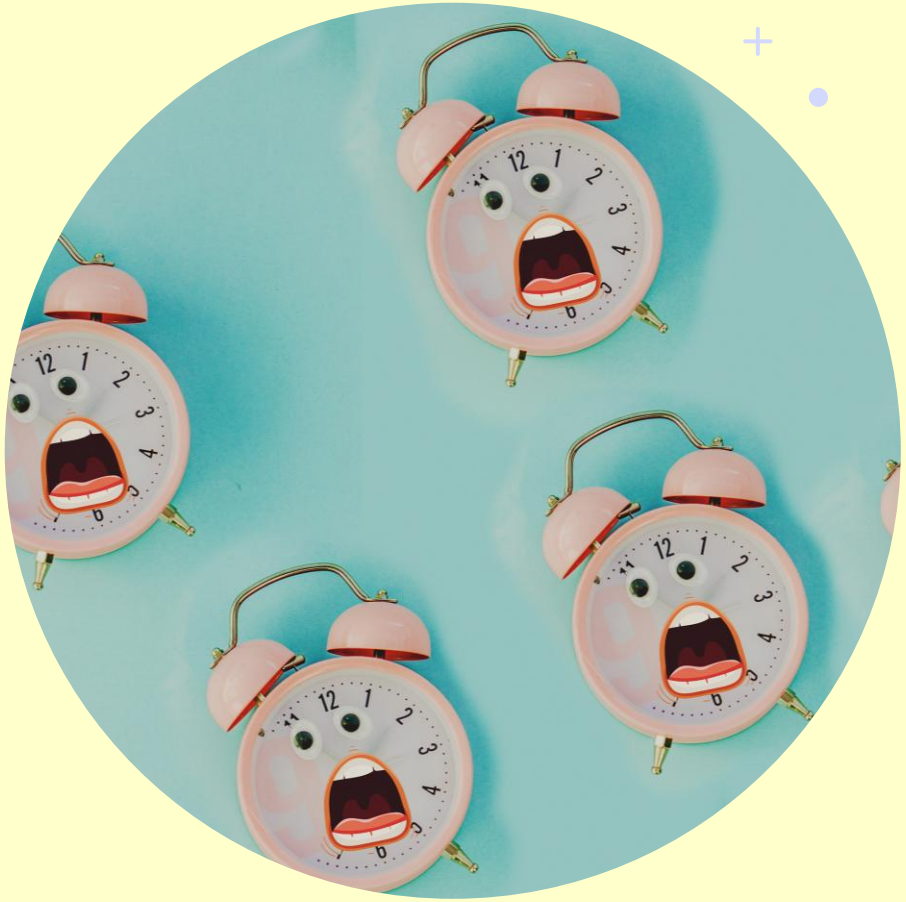


Unwritten expectations

- I ask a lot of questions!
- Sometimes I get things wrong
- The importance of work-life balance
- Setting boundaries to protect my time and wellbeing

Time management and overwhelm prevention strategies

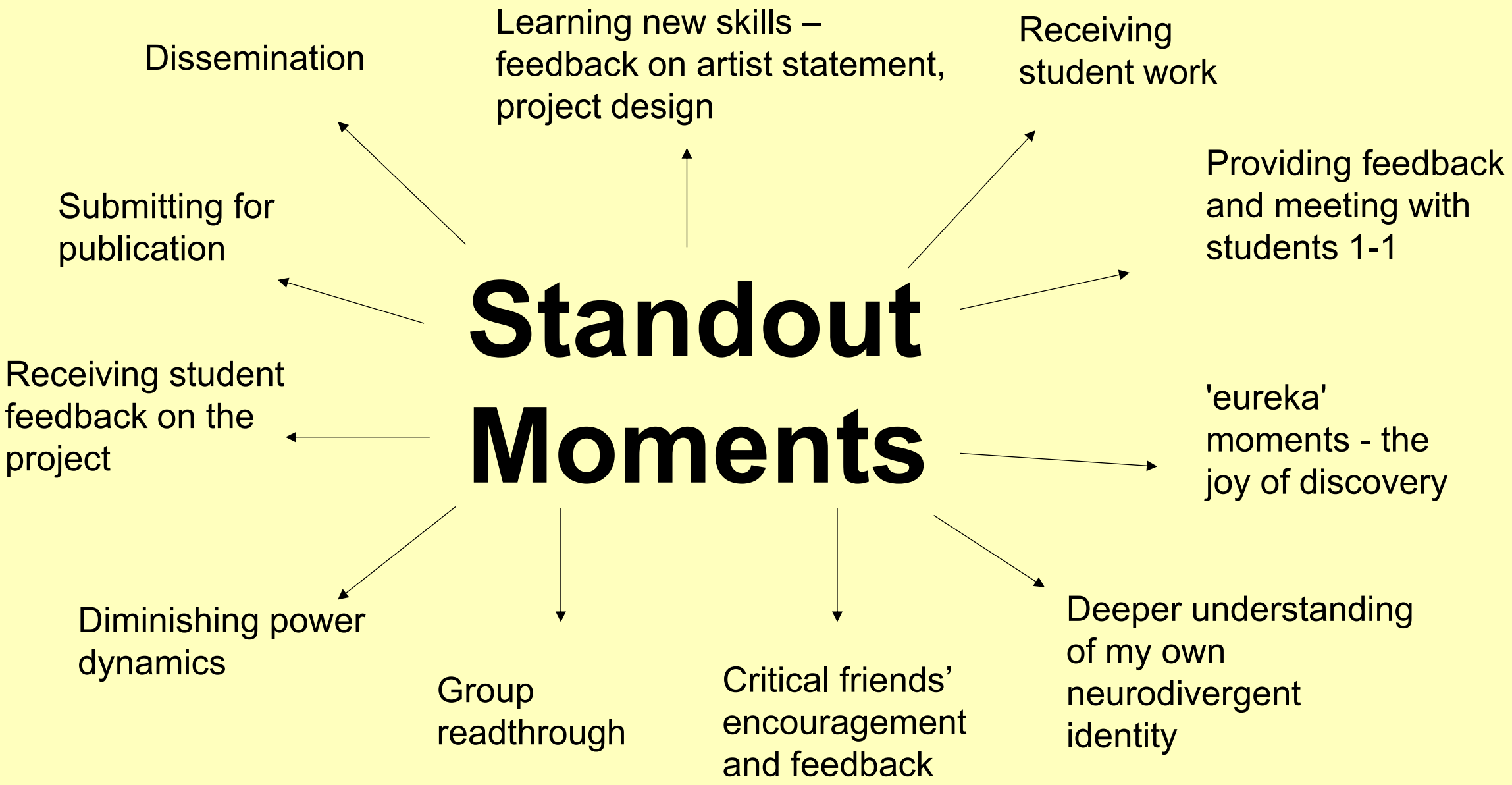
- Using my outlook calendar to block out time
- Considering my energy levels
- Protecting my time, especially when working from home

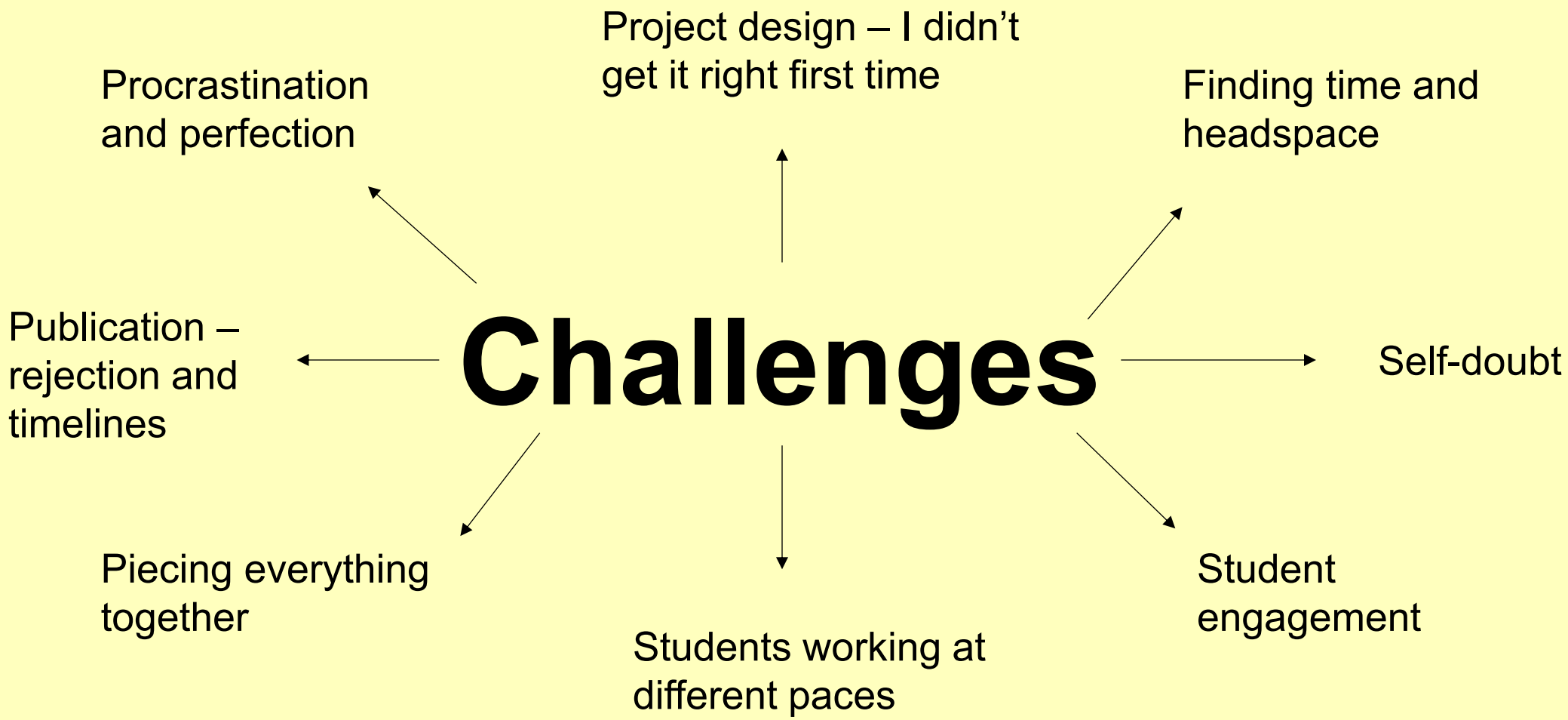


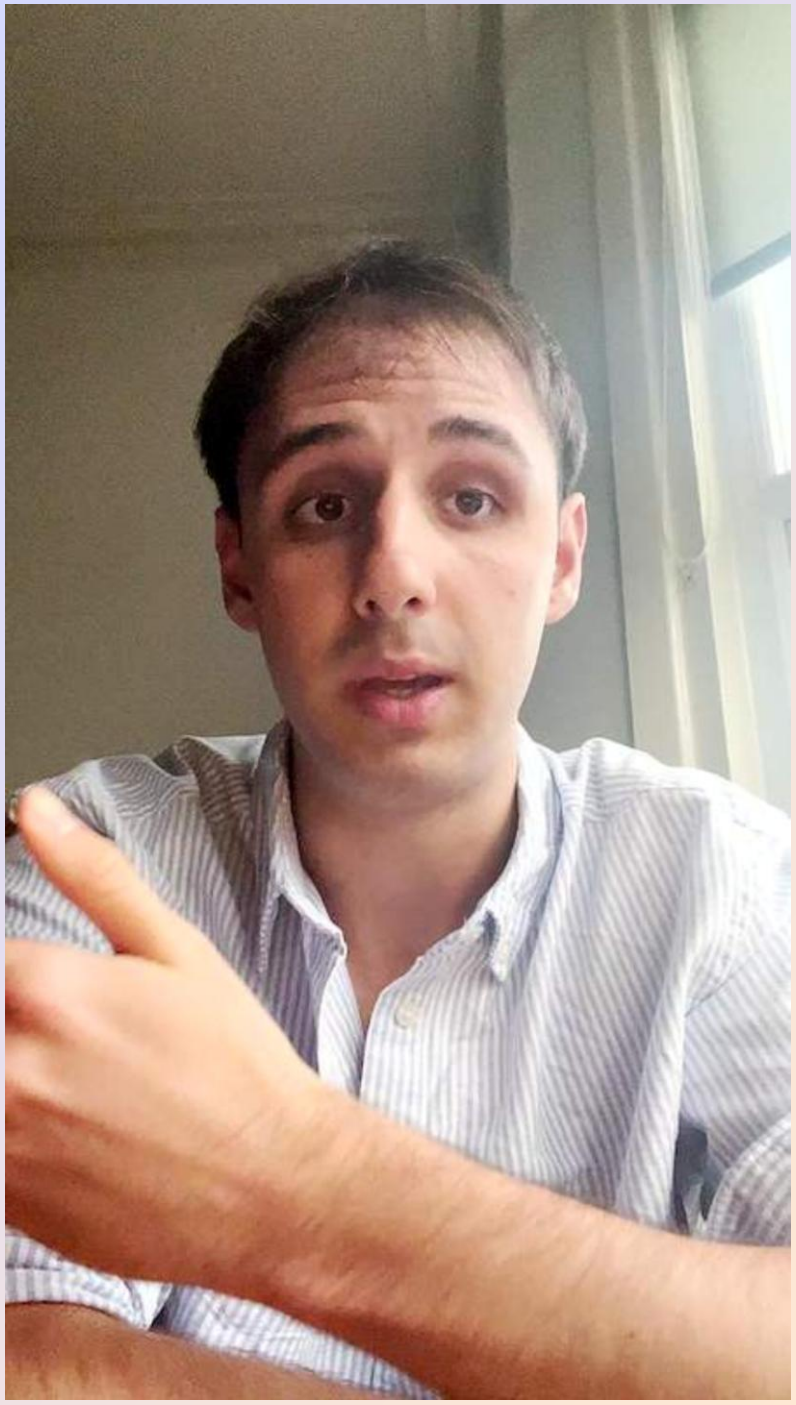
The Co-author Project



- End goal: producing a collaborative reflective essay for publication
- Key objective: To explore your experiences of coming to university and finding a sense of belonging as neurodivergent students from diverse backgrounds and disciplines
- 3 paid SENSE Student Partners, 9 hours each over 7 weeks
- Choice of 2 questions:
- 1. What were you looking forward to and what were your concerns about coming to university as a neurodivergent student?
- 2. How did you go about finding your community once at uni? What made you feel a sense of belonging?

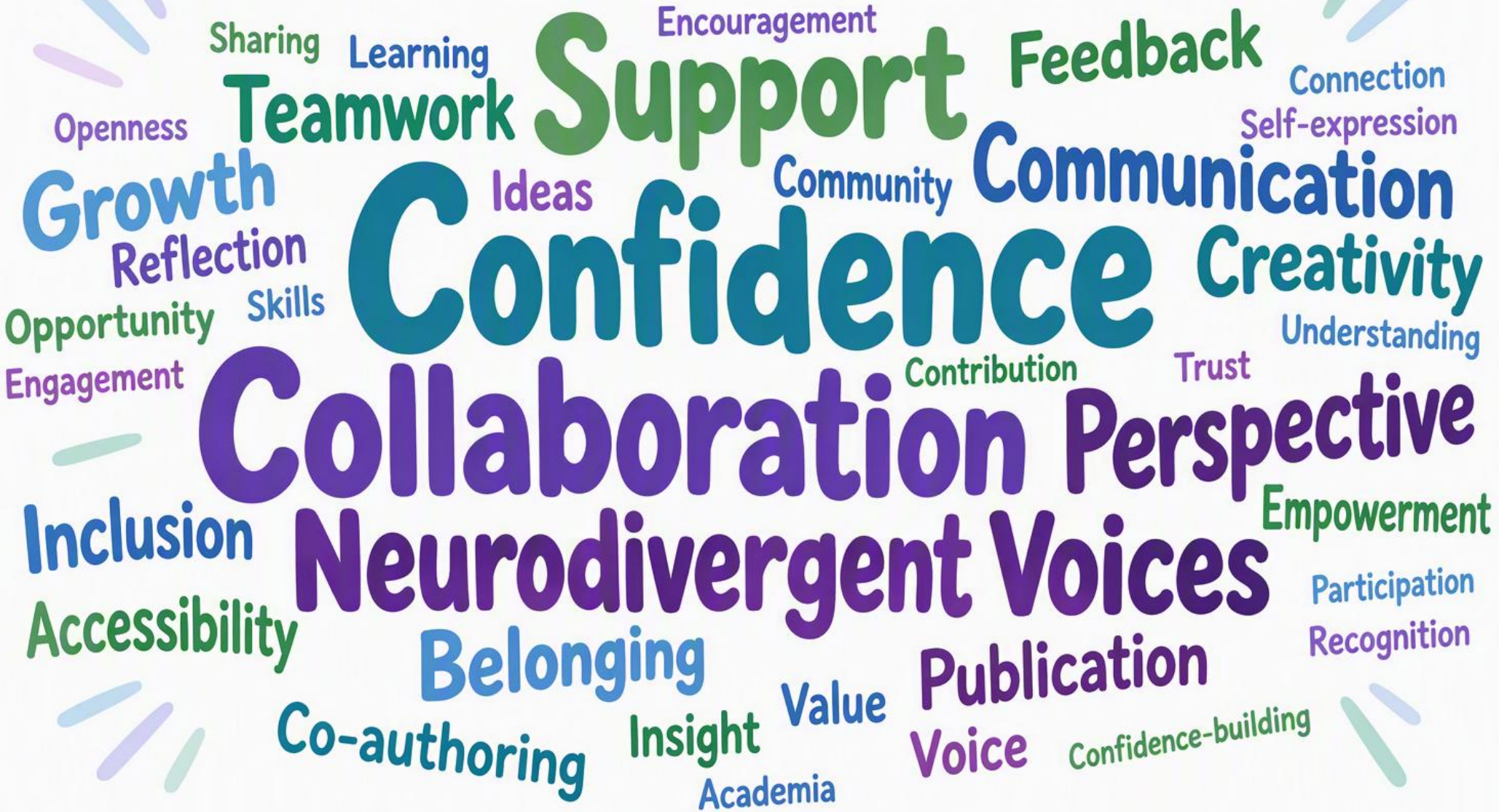

Standout Moments
Dissemination
Learning new skills – feedback on artist statement, project design
Receiving student work
Submitting for publication
Providing feedback and meeting with students 1-1
Receiving student feedback on the project
'eureka' moments - the joy of discovery
Diminishing power dynamics
Group readthrough
Critical friends' encouragement and feedback
Deeper understanding of my own neurodivergent identity


Challenges
Project design – I didn't get it right first time
Procrastination and perfection
Finding time and headspace
Publication – rejection and timelines
Self-doubt
Piecing everything together
Students working at different paces
Student engagement



Razvan's Video Reflection

Student Impact and Benefits of Neurodivergent Co-Authoring



The power of collaboration





Discussion prompts

1. What strategies do you use to self-regulate and decompress at work?

2. What else might be important for employers to consider when managing early career neurodiverse employees? Can you share any good practices?

3. What strategies do you use to manage your time or prevent overwhelm at work?