



**NEURODIVERSITY IN YOGA, MEDITATION & OTHER MOVEMENT MODALITIES  
TRAINING  
INFORMATION PACK COURSE OUTLINE (25 hours)  
WRITTEN & FACILITATED BY CAZ PRINGLE-BOWDEN**

Caz Pringle-Bowden is a dedicated trauma-informed and neuro-affirming yoga instructor, personal trainer, counsellor and neurodiversity advocate who has worked with neurodivergent, at-risk and marginalised children and adults since 2017. She is a mental health professional with a strong commitment to understanding the unique mental, emotional and physical needs of all people, no matter where they come from or how their brain works. Caz aims to educate and equip all students to self advocate and feel good in their practice and in themselves. She is known for her compassionate and humour based approach to teaching, and has created training programs for organisations and individuals alike that reflect her own lived experience as a neurodivergent woman, alongside her expertise as a counsellor for adults with ADHD and Autism.

For more information, visit her website at [www.cazpringlebowden.com.au](http://www.cazpringlebowden.com.au) or contact her directly at [hello@cazpringlebowden.com.au](mailto:hello@cazpringlebowden.com.au)

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***Are You Ready to Transform Your Practice?***

Imagine a world where every individual, regardless of their neurological makeup, feels welcomed and valued across a multitude of spaces within a society that not only understands but celebrates the unique ways each person experiences life. As awareness around neurodiversity increases, so does the need for movement practitioners to adapt their approaches to ensure inclusivity for all. This brand new 25-hour training hosted for the very first time at Australian Yoga Academy, is designed to equip you with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to create such inclusive environments across yoga, meditation and many other movement settings. Join us on this enlightening journey, where the art of mindful movement meets the science of neurodiversity, and discover how to create practices that resonate with every body and mind.



## **The balance between practical & theoretical**

The training has been designed to offer participants a good balance between learning the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of neurodiversity, with the experiential learning of the course content via practical movement sessions. This course is not a 'sit and listen' structure, as this would not be considered neuro-affirming; it is dynamic and allows for participants to embody what they are learning.

A typical face to face training day will start with a movement practice, followed by theory so we get the learning part done early in the session whilst brains are fresh. A second opportunity for practice will then be followed by reflection and discussion. As we are learning about neuro-affirming practice, the sessions will include many short breaks, multiple opportunities for movement, with face to face training days being no longer than 5.5 hours in total.

## **Why learning about Neurodiversity is important:**

In today's diverse society, understanding neurodiversity is essential. Neurodiverse individuals—those with conditions such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and more—may experience the world differently, leading to unique strengths and challenges. With 1 in 7 people identified as neurodivergent, this training is not just a trend—it's a vital step toward inclusivity. Yoga, meditation, and movement should be accessible to everyone, regardless of neurological differences.

By gaining insight into neurodiversity, you will be empowered to cultivate practices that promote psychological safety, grace, and understanding in your classes, expanding your community and enhancing the quality of life for all participants.

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## **Training Structure**

### **Section One: Neurodiversity Psychoeducation**

#### **Module 1: Key Terms and Language**

Understanding the language around neurodiversity is crucial. This module will cover essential terms and concepts, ensuring clarity and respect in communication.



## **Module 2: The Medical Model vs. The Neuro-Affirming Model**

In this module, participants will discover a significant shift from traditional medical approaches, which often emphasize deficits and impairments, to a neuroaffirming philosophy that celebrates and embraces individual differences. Traditional models tend to categorize neurodiverse individuals as “disordered” or “impaired,” focusing primarily on what they cannot do rather than recognizing their unique strengths and perspectives. In contrast, the neuroaffirming approach reframes this narrative by emphasizing the value of diversity in neurological functioning and promoting a more holistic understanding of individuals. This inclusive perspective encourages practitioners to view neurodiverse individuals not merely through the lens of their diagnoses but as whole people with distinct personalities, talents, and experiences. Through the insights gained in this module, participants will better understand how to implement neuroaffirming practices that honor the full spectrum of human experience, ultimately leading to richer, more inclusive environments in yoga, meditation, and other movement modalities.

## **Module 3: Neuro-Affirming Philosophy and the Person-Centered Approach**

Learn about the principles of neuro-affirming practices that prioritize the individual’s needs, fostering a more inclusive environment. Participants will explore the fundamental principles of a person-centered approach, originally developed by psychologist Carl Rogers, which emphasizes empathy, respect, and genuine care to create a supportive environment for growth. This module focuses on active listening and empathy, enabling instructors to connect with neurodivergent individuals and understand their unique experiences. Participants will learn to tailor yoga and movement practices to meet individual needs, fostering autonomy and self-determination by empowering students to make choices about their practice.

## **Module 4: Intentionality, Ahimsa, and Neuro-Affirming Practice**

Participants will explore the concept of Ahimsa, “non-harming” or “non-violence,” a foundational principle in yoga philosophy. Ahimsa urges practitioners to approach themselves and others with compassion and understanding, extending beyond physical actions to encompass intentions and words. This principle aligns seamlessly with neuroaffirming practice, promoting an environment that respects and celebrates individual differences.

## **Module 5: ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)**

Explore the characteristics, challenges, and strengths associated with ADHD. Understand how this condition affects focus, impulse control, and executive functioning, and learn strategies for creating supportive environments that encourage engagement and learning for neurodivergent individuals. We will also explore individual differences between male and female presentations of ADHD.



### **Module 6: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

Delve into the nuances of Autism Spectrum Disorder, including sensory processing differences, communication styles, and social interaction challenges. This module will provide insights into developing inclusive practices that honour the diverse experiences of neurodivergent individuals with ASD.

### **Module 7: Bipolar Disorder**

Examine bipolar disorder, which is characterized by extreme mood fluctuations, including manic and depressive episodes. Participants will learn how to recognize signs and accommodate varying energy levels and emotional states in yoga and movement settings for neurodivergent individuals.

### **Module 8: Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

Understand OCD, characterized by obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviors, and explore its impact on daily functioning for neurodivergent individuals. This module will cover strategies to create safe environments for those experiencing OCD symptoms, promoting collaboration and understanding.

### **Module 9: Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD) and Trauma-Informed Practice**

Learn about C-PTSD and its symptomatology, including emotional dysregulation and relational difficulties. This module will emphasize trauma-informed practices, allowing practitioners to create safe and supportive spaces for healing and growth for neurodivergent individuals.

### **Module 10: Epilepsy and Intellectual Disabilities**

Explore epilepsy, a neurological condition characterized by recurrent seizures, alongside intellectual disabilities. Participants will discuss adaptations to ensure physical safety and promote inclusion for neurodivergent individuals with these conditions in movement practices.

### **Module 11: Tourette Syndrome and Anxiety Disorders**

Gain insights into Tourette Syndrome, which involves involuntary motor and vocal tics, as well as anxiety disorders. This module will provide strategies for accommodating movements and ensuring a supportive, non-judgmental environment for neurodivergent individuals.

### **Module 12: Learning Disorders (Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dysgraphia)**

Examine various learning disorders such as dyslexia (reading difficulties), dyscalculia (math difficulties), and dysgraphia (writing difficulties). Participants will learn to recognize these challenges and implement teaching strategies that foster success and confidence in neurodivergent learners.



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## **Section Two: Practical Application of Neuro-Affirming Practices in Yoga & Meditation**

### **Module 13: Yoga**

This module focuses on integrating neuro-affirming practices into yoga instruction, emphasizing the need for sensitivity to neurodivergent individuals' unique challenges. Participants will explore various sensory challenges that neurodivergent individuals may face, including sensitivities to light, sound, and touch, and how these can impact their experience in a yoga class. Cognitive challenges, such as difficulties with following multi-step instructions, will be addressed through clear, simple cueing and the use of visual aids to reinforce learning.

Environmental considerations will also be discussed, focusing on establishing a calming space where participants can engage without distraction. Physical challenges may require modification in asanas or the structure of practice, allowing for varying levels of mobility and comfort among students. Recognizing the importance of social interactions, this module will cover how to manage peer dynamics and encourage positive socialization within the class. Participants will also learn how to handle student disclosures sensitively, ensuring that each individual feels supported and respected in sharing their needs. Finally, participants will be equipped with tools to create a neuro-affirming studio environment that highlights inclusion, acceptance, and community, making yoga accessible for everyone.

### **Module 14: Meditation**

In this module, participants will explore how neuro-affirming practices can enhance meditation experiences for neurodivergent individuals. The session will begin by addressing common sensory challenges that may arise during meditation, such as heightened awareness of sounds or discomfort in certain postures. Participants will learn to offer a variety of meditation techniques, including seated, lying down, or moving meditations, to accommodate different preferences. Cognitive considerations will be discussed, particularly for individuals who may struggle with sustained focus or quieting the mind. To support this, instructors will develop guiding scripts that incorporate imagery, mindfulness techniques, and gentle, repetitive phrases to help anchor their practice.

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## **Section Three: Application in Other Movement Modalities**

### **Module 15: Pilates**

This module examines how neuro-affirming practices can be applied in Pilates classes to make them accessible for neurodivergent individuals. Participants will learn to identify sensory challenges, such as discomfort with equipment sounds or physical contact, and how to create a distraction-free environment. This may involve adjusting the use of props or modifying equipment to ensure safety and comfort. Cognitive challenges will be addressed by simplifying instructions and utilizing visual demonstrations to enhance understanding.

### **Module 16: Fitness Classes and Gym Settings**

Focuses on creating inclusive environments for neurodivergent individuals by addressing specific sensory and social challenges they may encounter. Sensory overload from overwhelming noise, bright lights, and visual clutter can significantly impact participation in busy gym settings. Participants will learn to implement strategies such as designating quieter areas for workouts, utilizing noise-canceling headphones, and modifying lighting to create a calming atmosphere conducive to focus and engagement. Additionally, clear and concise instruction, along with visual demonstrations, will be emphasized to accommodate cognitive challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals.

Social dynamics in fitness classes can also pose challenges for neurodivergent individuals, who may feel overwhelmed by large groups or struggle with interpersonal interactions. This module will guide participants in fostering a supportive community by promoting positive peer interactions, setting respectful communication expectations, and encouraging inclusive group activities.

### **Module 17: Martial Arts**

Participants will explore the sensory challenges unique to martial arts training, such as the intensity of noise from equipment, rapid movements, and potentially overwhelming physical contact during sparring or drills. To address these sensitivities, strategies will include allowing sensory breaks, providing options for protective gear that can help reduce anxiety, and establishing a calm warm-up period to ease participants into the training environment.

In addition to sensory considerations, this module will focus on the instructional challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals, including difficulties with following complex sequences or understanding verbal cues during fast-paced classes. Participants will learn to simplify instructions, use clear, consistent language, and incorporate visual demonstrations to enhance understanding.



## **Module 18: PE in Schools**

The final movement module focuses on understanding the unique challenges faced by neurodivergent students within educational settings, particularly in PE classes. Co-created with experts in the education field, this module provides valuable insights into the barriers neurodivergent students encounter, including cognitive challenges that affect their ability to follow instructions and process information swiftly, which can impact their participation and confidence in physical activities. The module also addresses social challenges such as anxiety in group settings, difficulties with communication, and navigating peer relationships in team sports. Additionally, physical challenges related to coordination issues and sensory sensitivities—like discomfort with specific equipment or busy environments—are examined. Participants will engage in discussions about creating early intervention pathways that support neurodivergent students throughout their educational journeys, emphasizing the importance of tailoring PE programs to foster inclusivity and build confidence. By implementing neuro-affirming practices, educators can cultivate environments in which neurodivergent students feel valued, safe, and empowered to participate fully in physical activities, ultimately supporting their growth into adulthood.

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## **Section Four: Further Education and Resources**

### **Teachers & Facilitators Toolkit**

The Teachers & Facilitators Toolkit is a comprehensive resource designed to provide educators with practical tools and strategies for implementing neuro-affirming practices. This toolkit includes lesson plans, adaptable class structures, communication strategies, tailored to meet the diverse needs of neurodivergent students. By equipping educators with these resources, the toolkit aims to promote effective teaching practices that foster inclusivity and support.

### **Mental Health Support Services List**

This resource will provide various mental health support services available for neurodivergent individuals, including counseling, therapy, and support groups.

### **Podcasts and Course Research Interviews**

A curated list of podcasts and interviews featuring experts in neurodiversity, education, and movement practices offers valuable insights and firsthand experiences. Participants of this course will gain exclusive access to interviews with the experts who were consulted during the research and design of this training, providing valuable insights and perspectives that enrich the learning experience. These interviews will



deepen participants' understanding of neurodiversity and its application within movement modalities and educational settings.

### **Glossary**

The glossary provides definitions and explanations of key terms and concepts related to neurodiversity, yoga, and movement modalities. This resource serves as a quick reference for participants, helping them familiarise themselves with the terminology used throughout the training.

### **References**

This section offers a comprehensive list of references, including academic articles, books, and research studies that support the training content. Participants are encouraged to explore these resources to deepen their understanding of neurodiversity and its implications within educational and movement contexts.

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### **Join Us to Make a Difference**

By enrolling in the “Neurodiversity in Yoga, Meditation & Other Movement Modalities” training, you are not just enhancing your skills—you are actively contributing to a more inclusive society.

Please visit the Australian Yoga Academy [website](#) for course dates and contact details.