

# SATURDAY 18TH NOV 2023

*With Lavinia Dowling*

## WHAT DOES THE 'M' STAND FOR?

People often ask me what the 'M' stands for - it feels like a triangle with 'Mental' Health support at the top for all, with key interests at either point around 'Menopause' and 'Military' with the triangle looking a bit like an A encompassing Autism. This was not thought about on a 5 minute whim, but rather a good decade when Emotional Problem Solving was first launched in 2006. Of course, our canine Ambassador is 'M' for 'Monty' - we did not choose his name, as he came to us as a rescue in September 2019.



## CHILDREN IN NEED

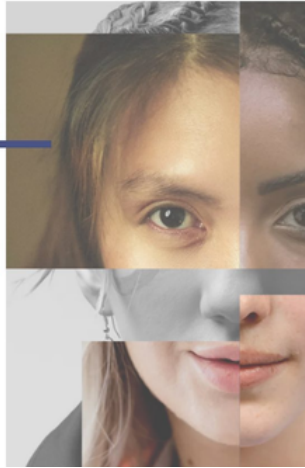
In the news yesterday was Children in Need identifying Autism charities they support, and recognizing that women struggling with the menopause should be offered talking therapy as part of their treatment. There is clearly growing awareness of the need to recognize traits and symptoms, but also be offered support. TMW has been going for 3 years now, and has been supporting families and young people with their mental health and neuro-diverse presentation. However, we are also trying to support women who are going through the menopause with their mental health. Part of the reason for this is because when the female body is wearing down, Autistic and ADHD traits become more evident. The menopause can be overwhelming at times as it is not just about the 'hot flushes', the 'mood swings', or the 'brain fog'.

Many women are of that age where school simply did not recognize neuro-diversity, especially when it was deemed more boys. There was an assertion some years ago that girls masked better, and blended in more so despite being on the periphery of their social groups, or just avoided conflict at all levels and worked harder at just surviving. However, we have been monitoring the data from all our assessments and there is clear evidence to support that boys are just as capable of masking as the girls.

DID YOU KNOW

# MENO PAUSE

Can exacerbate the  
traits of Autism  
and/or ADHD



There are some prolific maskers that is detrimental to their mental health as schools do not see the anxiety because of their ability to be outgoing and achieving academically. Sometimes, even parents are fooled into thinking their children are coping because of the young person's determination to not convey high levels of distress because they are convinced they will 'let their parents down' and 'should' be coping with the demands from school around academic pressures and social etiquette.

Women going through the peri-menopause and the menopause often feel they lose their female identity, and are losing their mind with being so forgetful and easily distracted. With the increasing demand that this be recognized and supported, the NHS is now under added pressure to offer Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) to support. Whilst this is commendable, it is all about treating anxiety and low mood with one tool that is not suitable for many, and certainly not for those with a neuro-diverse presentation. I have worked with many women who have come to me for additional support, and who have had suspicions that they may be Autistic themselves. This has come about because their child has been identified as being neuro-diverse. Unless your child was adopted or you had a surrogate Mum, then there is a minimum of 50% certainty you as a Mum are also neuro-diverse. I did an assessment a couple of weeks ago with another family member of a large dynasty where it is evident even the Great Grandparents are now questioning their Autistic presentation. This is just so interesting, and something that I am hopeful I can investigate further through one of my pod cast sessions.

INCOMING BIRTHDAY!

Next Saturday is Ron's Birthday! Ron is one of our four Non Executive Directors (affectionately known as the NEDs), and was our very first NED to come on board. Ron has recently semi-retired (again), but is actually busier with all his volunteer commitments than when he was working full time in the British Army- most recently spending a few days fundraising with the Poppy appeal. We would like you to join us in wishing Ron a "Very Happy Birthday" and enjoy celebrating his special day with his wife, Teresa, children and grandchildren.



So, have a lovely weekend, everyone!

*Lavinia*



TO Be Myself Wellness Journal £10.50  
 To get your own copy email us at [info@the-m-wordcic.co.uk](mailto:info@the-m-wordcic.co.uk)

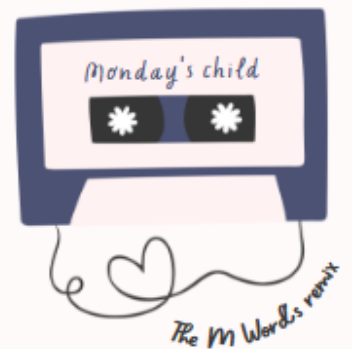
*Unveiling the Mask*  
 NOT JUST SUPER HEROES WEAR A MASK - PLENTY OF WOMEN DO TOO.

#AUTISMINWOMEN #ADHDINWOMEN

MANY WOMEN HAVE TO PUT ON THEIR MASKS TO BE THE WARRIOR, THE ADVOCATOR, THE PROTECTOR. BUT THEY ALSO PROVIDE THE SAFE SPACE, COMFORT ZONE, PUNCH BAG. DO YOU CONSIDER THAT, WITHOUT THE MASK, YOU DISPLAY TRAITS OF AUTISM AND/OR ADHD?

TICKETS COST 7.50 PER SESSION. STARTS 20:15 TO 21:45 FORTNIGHTLY ON THURSDAY THE 16TH OF FEBRUARY. PLEASE PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS THROUGH [INFO@THE-M-WORDCIC.CO.UK](mailto:INFO@THE-M-WORDCIC.CO.UK)

Children's Mental Health Week  
 6-12 February 2023



Children's Mental Health Awareness week.  
 Keep an eye out for The M Word's remix of 'Monday's Child'

£7.50 per session from 20:15-21:45 starting Feb 16th