






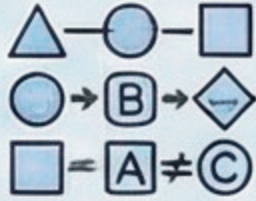







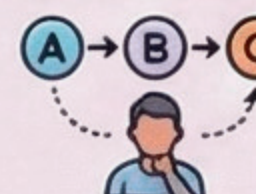




# THE NEURODIVERGENT LENS: Distinguishing Biases from Traits

For coaches working with Neurodivergent (Autistic/ADHD) clients, standard cognitive interventions may backfire if a neurological trait is mistaken for a cognitive distortion.

	Cognitive Bias (Standard Lens)	The Neurodivergent Trait (The Reframe)	The Distinction (The "Why")	The Coach's Pivot (The Action)	
				Do Not	Do
ACTION & MOTIVATION	 <b>Reactance</b> Doing the opposite of what is asked to preserve ego/status.	 <b>Drive for Autonomy (PDA)</b> Nervous system panic in response to a demand; a safety mechanism, not an ego trip.	Bias is about control. Trait is about safety and regulation.	Challenge the resistance.	<b>Drop the rope.</b> Use declarative language. "Here is the data; I trust you to decide when and how to engage with it."
	 <b>Sunk Cost Fallacy</b> Clinging to a project because of past investment.	 <b>Autistic Inertia / Monotropism</b> Difficulty switching tasks due to momentum; Newton's First Law applied to the brain.	Bias is emotional attachment to the past. Trait is friction against changing the present.	Ask "Is this worth it?"	<b>Help with the transition.</b> "What is the smallest physical step to pause this train without derailling it?"
	 <b>Procrastination</b> Avoiding work due to lack of discipline.	 <b>Executive Dysfunction</b> The brain knows 'what' to do but cannot initiate the 'how' due to dopamine shortage.	Bias implies a choice. Trait implies a mechanical failure in the ignition.	Focus on accountability.	<b>Focus on dopamine bridges.</b> "Let's do the first 2 minutes together right now."
LOGIC & PERCEPTION	 <b>Black-or-White Thinking</b> Oversimplifying complex issues into binary extremes.	 <b>Binary/Logical Consistency</b> A need for clear categorization; "If A=B, then A cannot be C".	Bias creates false dilemmas. Trait seeks factual clarity and integrity.	Push for "grey areas" immediately.	<b>Validate the logic first.</b> "Technically, you are correct. Now how do we navigate the human messy middle?"
	 <b>Just World Hypothesis</b> Ignoring injustice to feel comfortable.	 <b>Justice Sensitivity</b> Inability to filter out or ignore perceived unfairness; high distress when rules are broken.	Bias ignores the glitch. Trait fixates on the glitch until it is resolved.	Reframe it as "Not your problem."	<b>Channel the energy.</b> "The injustice is real. How can we impact it without burning down your own house?"
	 <b>Curse of Knowledge</b> Forgetting what it's like not to know.	 <b>Info-Dumping/Context Blindness</b> Sharing extensive detail as a 'love language' or to ensure precision.	Bias is an empathy gap. Trait is a communication style (seeking connection through data).	Interrupt with "Bottom line it."	<b>Signpost the need.</b> "I want to capture that detail later, but for this decision, what is the headline?"
SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL	 <b>Spotlight Effect</b> Overestimating how much people notice us.	 <b>Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD)</b> Physical pain response to perceived rejection; the brain amplifies the risk.	Bias is a mild error in probability. Trait is a severe emotional flash-flood.	Use logic ("No one cares").	<b>Focus on safety.</b> "I hear that feels dangerous. What evidence do we have that you are safe in this group?"
	 <b>Fundamental Attribution Error</b> Blaming character rather than context.	 <b>Pattern Recognition</b> Noticing a recurring behavior and predicting it will happen again based on data.	Bias ignores context. Trait analyzes historical data points.	Dismiss as "judgment."	<b>Verify the pattern.</b> "Is this a one-time situational error, or a reliable pattern you have tracked over time?"
	 <b>Confirmation Bias</b> Seeking only data that fits the view.	 <b>Bottom-Up Processing</b> Collecting ALL details before forming a big picture.	Bias filters data out. Trait builds the view brick-by-brick (hard to deconstruct).	Attack the conclusion.	<b>Introduce a new "brick."</b> "That is a solid structure you built. Where does this new piece of data fit into that wall?"

## HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

**The "Check Engine" Light:** When a standard coaching question falls flat or causes distress, check this list. You may be poking a trait, not a bias.

**Validation First:** If it is a trait, validate the function of it (Safety, Integrity, Logic) before asking for a behavioral change.

**The Goal:** We are not trying to "cure" the trait. We are trying to help the client manage the impact of the trait in a neurotypical world.