

UNMASKING IN THERAPY: MAKING YOUR OWN RULES



A guide for ADHD therapists & clients who are tired of neurotypical standards

FOR THERAPISTS: REDEFINING “PROFESSIONAL”

Notice the pressure points

Where do you feel you're performing “professionalism”? Is it polished notes, rigid scheduling, or acting more “together” than you feel?

Practice micro unmasking

Try saying things out loud:

- “I’m a little foggy today, but I’m here with you”
- “My ADHD brain is making me pause, give me a sec to collect my thought”

Clients often feel relieved when you model this.

Shift the definition of professional

Forget perfect polish. Make “professional” about persistence, repair, and honesty. Those are the traits that actually build trust.

Drop one neurotypical rule

Choose one area where you've been squeezing yourself into the box, like rigid time structuring or hiding your energy dips and give yourself permission to rewrite it.

FOR CLIENTS: THERAPY THAT FITS YOUR BRAIN

Notice if you're masking

Do you find yourself hiding ADHD traits, people pleasing, or downplaying struggles so your therapist sees you as “together”?

Name what you need

You're allowed to say: “I want therapy to feel safe for my ADHD brain, even when I'm scattered or inconsistent”

Ask the right questions

Try: “how do you make space for neurodivergent brains here?”

The answer tells you a lot about whether the therapist can actually meet you.

Redefine progress

Progress isn't about consistency. It's about persistence, repair, and showing up imperfectly.

