



MDT Working: Building your community

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Independent Occupational Therapist and Author

Care Connect Conference

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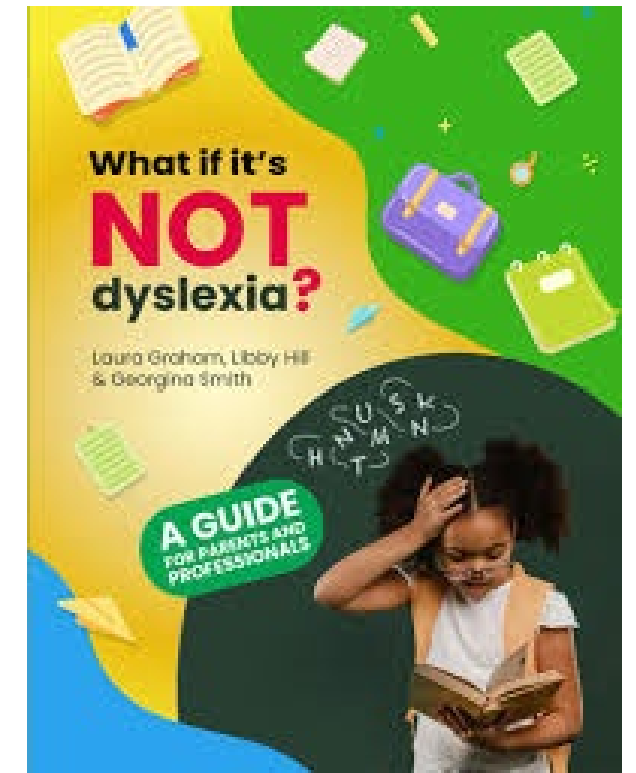
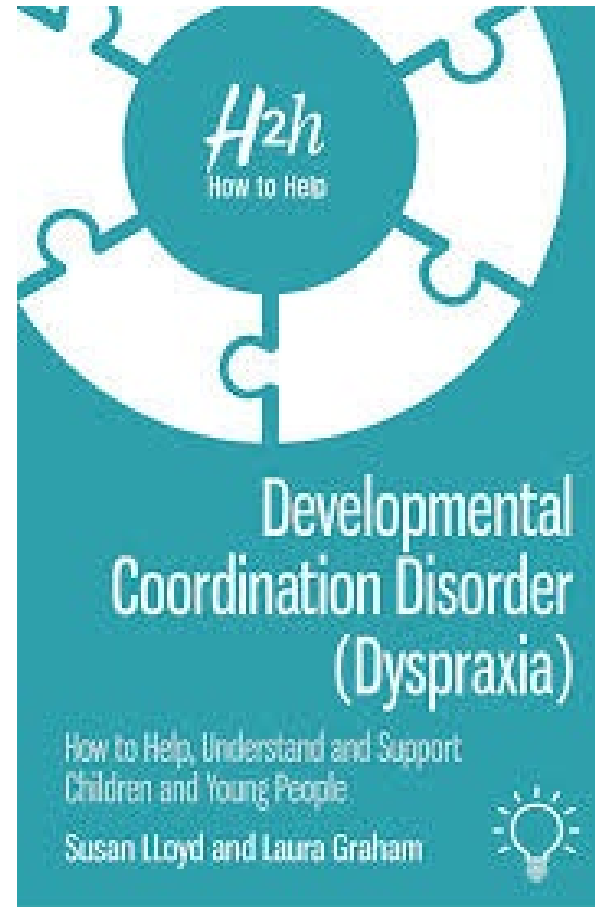


LAURA GRAHAM
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

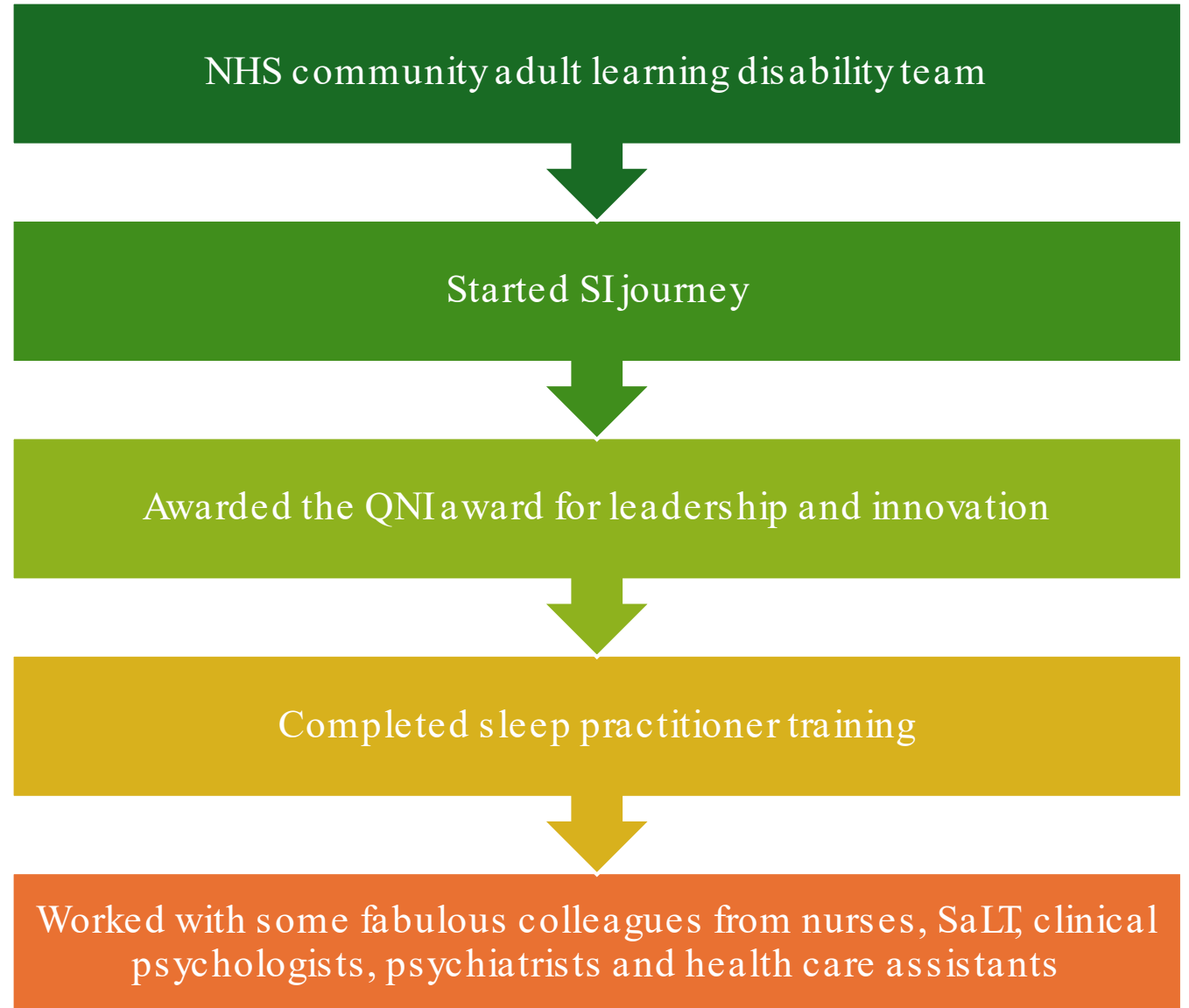


About me

- 23 years of experience
- Pg Dip in Sensory Integration
- Have my own independent practice
- Author of 2 books
- Open water swimmer
- Mother of 2



Before Independent Practice...



After Independent Practice



Started slowly



Took on associate work with an established independent practice



Worked within my skill set and sought supervision from mentor



Kept in touch with old colleagues, established collaborative approaches



Knew when to say no



But also did things outside of my comfort zone



Building a village



Why networks matter

- Referrals are the primary driver of caseload growth
- Schools and families choose people they trust
- Networking reduces isolation and increases clinical confidence
- Collaboration improves outcomes for children and young people

Three Pillars



Professional connections
(both statutory and
independent colleagues)



Community connections
(schools, parent groups,
charities)



Visibility connections
(online presence,
publications, talks)



There's room for everyone

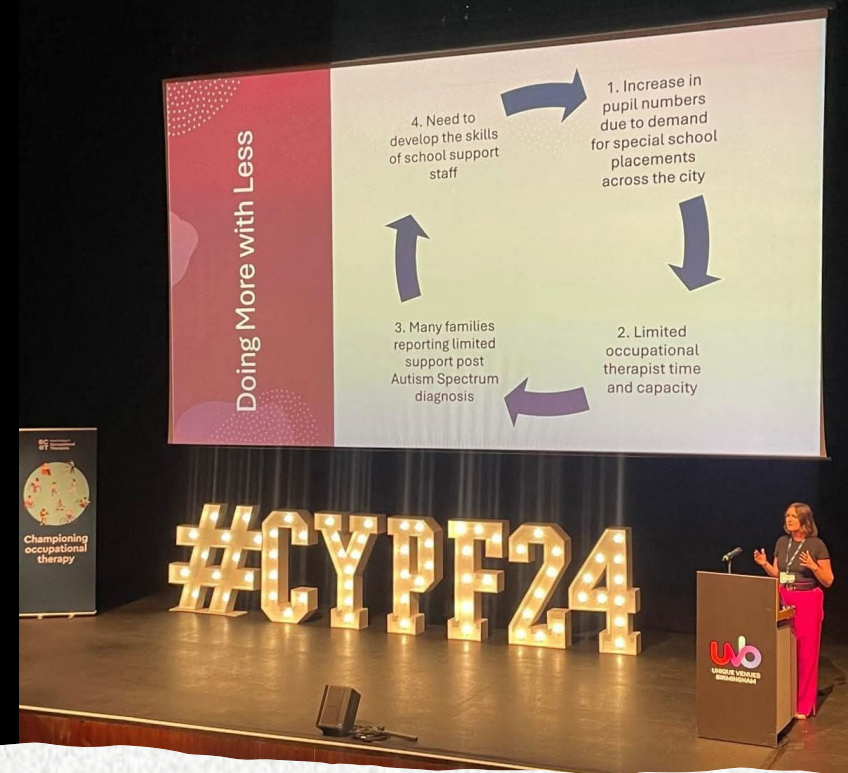
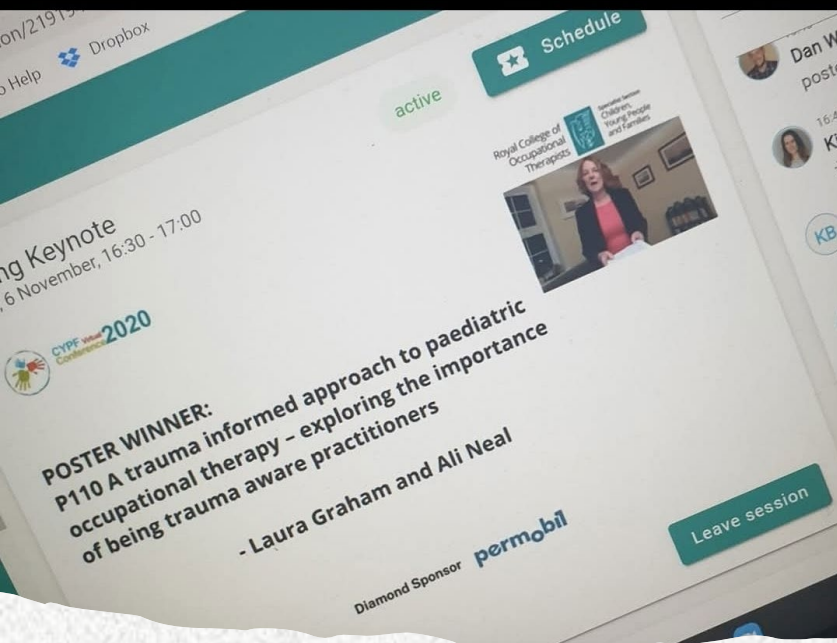
We don't have competitors - we have colleagues

Different therapists meet different needs

Collaboration strengthens the profession

Referring on is a sign of integrity, not weakness

Arising tide lifts all boats



Networking through contribution

- Present at local SEND events
- Share evidence-informed resources
- Write short LinkedIn posts or pieces for newsletters
- Host small online workshops / podcasts



Invest in yourself

Your clinical growth fuels your business growth

CPD keeps your practice evidence-informed and relevant

Training expands your network organically

High-quality CPD differentiates your service offer

Have a short, mid and long term plan



Think Big!

See OT- Think:

- Clinical detective: identifies root causes, not just symptoms
- Systems thinker: understands the child and the environment
- Functional analyst: breaks tasks down and rebuilds them accessibly
- Capacity builder: empowers staff, families, and settings
- Regulation specialist: supports readiness for learning
- Adaptation expert: modifies environments, routines, and expectations
- Bridge-builder: connects education, health, and home
- Evidence-informed practitioner: blends research with real-world context



Any questions?

Thank you for listening

