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Hello GRANN community,

As we step into another edition of our newsletter, we're holding space for growth, honesty, and the beautifully complex realities of our Autistic & Neurodivergent lives.

This season invites reflection—not the tidy, inspirational-poster kind, but the grounded sort that honours our lived truth: the pushes and pulls of access, the shifting seasons of our bodies, and the power of community-led momentum.

In this edition:

- *A Year In Bloom: From Conversation to Commitment*- Hidden Disabilities, Gentle Visibility, Personal Choice.
- *Regeneration & Reconnection*- Navigating Seasonal Affective Challenges Across Our Neurodivergent Year.
- *Disability (Justice) Action Week 2025*- Ripples and Waves: Building Momentum.
- *Book Spotlight*- When My Brain Is Messy & I've Always Had A Voice.

Coming next November edition:

- *Our Kind of November*- building conversations around mental health beyond the mainstream lens, with space for every story.
- *Looking Back to Move Forward*- Reflecting on Our Early Vision for a Stronger, More Inclusive Community Sector.
- *Lateral Ableism*- reflecting on harm within community spaces.

Thank you for being with us through every shift, every question, and every co-created moment.

We're grateful for your contributions, your presence, and the ripples and waves you help make.

In solidarity,
The Collaborators @ GRANN



A Year in Bloom: From Conversation to Commitment

This time last year, October 2024, GRANN had the privilege of hosting a meeting with the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower organisation.

We were joined by some familiar local faces, sharing real conversations about visibility, inclusion, and the quiet power of small symbols that say, “I might need a little extra understanding today”.

One year on, we’re proud to share that GRANN has officially taken the pledge and become a Sunflower member organisation.

It might seem like a small step, but to us, it’s a bloomin’ beautiful one.

Because visibility matters. Because small acts of recognition are still acts of resistance.

And as Disability (Justice) Action Week and International Day of People with Disability (IDoPWD) approach, we hold space for both of the following truths:

There is so much beauty in community-led progress.

And there is still deep injustice in systems that continue to deliver no real accountability or equity for our community.

So, we’ll keep doing what we do- growing what’s good, naming what’s not, and blooming loudly in the face of it all.



Hidden Disabilities Sunflower: Gentle Visibility, Personal Choice

**Disclosure is personal, and it should always be your choice.
The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program helps make that process
a little gentler for many in our community.**

**By wearing the sunflower, people can quietly signal that they may
need a bit more time, understanding, or support, without needing to
explain everything.**

**It's not about labelling; it's about creating safer, kinder spaces where
needs are recognised without question.**

**When workplaces, schools, and communities are on board,
disclosure becomes less about justifying and more about belonging.**

Learn more and help grow more understanding communities.



Regeneration & Reconnection: Navigating seasonal affective challenges Across Our Neurodivergent Year

**As we move toward the start of our Australian summer, many people are talking
about “longer days”, “more sunshine”, and “feeling energised”.**

But for many Neurodivergent, Disabled, Autistic, and otherwise sensitive nervous systems, the change of season doesn't always land the way the world assumes it should.

At GRANN, we know that *every* season holds different textures — sensory, emotional, energetic — and that seasonal shifts can shape our wellbeing in ways rarely spoken about.

So this month, we're opening a gentle space to reflect on **Regeneration & Reconnection:**

how we navigate seasonal affective challenges, how our bodies respond to the world around us, and how we reconnect to ourselves with honesty and compassion.

This isn't about forcing "positive vibes"; surface level mantras that leave us feeling empty are not our aim.

This is about honouring our lived experience, our nervous systems, and our rhythms — in all their complexity.

Winter: The Season of Deep Roots

For many of us, winter is a time when our bodies pull inward — not out of avoidance, but as a form of wisdom.

Some Autistic and Neurodivergent people describe winter as a time when their inner world becomes clearer:

the quiet, the cool air, the dimmed sensory landscape offering a kind of relief. For others, winter presses in too heavily — the darkness unsteady, the cold exhausting, the world feeling further away than usual.

But winter has always been a season of roots — of things happening beneath the surface that nobody else can see.

Sometimes our growth is underground.

Sometimes our healing is quiet.

And sometimes survival itself is the story.

Winter asks nothing of us except honesty.

It lets us retreat, regroup, and restore in ways that aren't always visible — but that matter deeply.

Spring: The Season of Unfurling (At Your Own Pace)

Spring comes with a cultural pressure to "emerge", "start fresh", or "be productive".

But in neuro-affirming spaces, we understand something different:

unfurling doesn't happen on a calendar.

Some of us feel a spark in the warmer breeze.

Some feel flooded by pollen, noise, the sudden brightness, the social expectation to feel "better".

Spring isn't a command — it's an invitation.
A gentle one.
A reminder that unfurling can be slow or soft.
It can be uneven.
It can be messy.
It can be choosing one new thing, or choosing nothing new at all.
Spring doesn't demand you bloom.
It simply holds space if you choose to.

Summer: The Season of Overwhelm & Overexposure

Here in Australia, summer arrives loudly — heat, humidity, dry winds, crowds, holidays, gatherings, fireworks, travel, disrupted routines, unpredictable sensory landscapes.

For many Autistic & Neurodivergent people, summer is not “energising.”

It's overstimulating.

Dysregulating.

Sometimes even frightening.

Bright light.

Burning sun.

Stickiness.

Noise.

The pressure to be social because “it's Christmas” or “it's time to celebrate.”

But summer also teaches us something profound:

boundaries are a form of reconnection.

Saying no to heat.

Saying no to gatherings that exhaust us.

Saying no to expectations. No reasons. No guilt.

Finding cool, quiet places.

Making our own traditions that feel safe, soothing, and real.

Summer reminds us that thriving — igniting — evolving — isn't about doing more.

It's about staying connected to ourselves, even when the world gets loud.

Autumn: The Season of Shedding and Reshaping

Autumn can often be the most comforting season for many Autistic & Neurodivergent nervous systems.

The temperatures settle.

The world softens.

The pace slows.

Autumn gives us permission to shed without shame.

To let go of routines we've outgrown, coping strategies that no longer serve us,

masking that has become too heavy.
It's a season of clarity —
of reshaping our lives gently, intentionally,
and in ways that honour the person we are becoming.
Autumn reminds us that change doesn't have to be a rupture.
Sometimes it's a leaf releasing itself calmly into the wind.

Across All Seasons: The Nervous System Keeps the Score

The way we respond to seasons is not a personal failure or success.
It's not about resilience or attitude.
It's not something to "fix".
It is ***biology, neurology, trauma history, sensory processing,
identity, and lived reality*** interacting with environment.
Seasonal affective challenges exist across the entire Autistic & Neurodivergent
community — not just as "winter depression", but as summer overstimulation,
spring anxiety, autumn nostalgia, seasonal burnout, or transitions that throw us
off centre.
The seasons don't just change the weather.
They change the world around us — the light, the noise, the demands, the
energy, the expectations — and therefore, they change how our bodies navigate
that world.
There is nothing wrong with you for feeling seasons intensely.
It means you are responsive, sensitive, alive.
It means your body is listening.
It means your needs matter.

Regeneration & Reconnection: Our Path Forward

As we move toward summer, GRANN invites you to reconnect in whatever ways
feel right for your nervous system:

-  Seek out sensory spaces that feel safe for you and your mindbody
-  Honour boundaries, especially during holiday pressures and expectations
-  Adjust routines to match energy, not expectation, for yourself and your
household — remember, "NO" is a complete sentence.
 -  Let yourself rest — without explanation
 -  Create micro-moments of coolness, quiet, and comfort
 -  Allow joy to arrive in unexpected forms
-  Reach out for community when connection feels possible
-  Withdraw when solitude is what your mind or body needs
-  Remember that all feelings about seasonal change are valid

Regeneration doesn't have to be dramatic.
Sometimes it's a single steady breath.
Sometimes it's a soft re-entry into the world.
Sometimes it's permission to stop.
Sometimes it's the small spark of a glimmer after a long season of survival.
And reconnection doesn't always look like reaching outward —
often, it begins with reconnecting inward.

🌻 ***You Are Not Navigating the Seasons Alone***

Whether you greet summer with joy, dread, overstimulation, relief, or confusion,

we want you to know:

Your experience is real.

Your needs are valid.

Your body's rhythms are trustworthy.

And your humanity — in every season — is sacred.

At GRANN, we hold all seasons with you.

Here's to a summer guided not by societal expectation,
but by ***self-knowledge, sensory honesty, and grounded neuro-
affirming care.***

Here's to regeneration.

Here's to reconnection.

Here's to meeting the seasons on your own terms —
and letting them meet you with compassion.



✨ ***Sensory Approach to a Seasonal Wellbeing Checklist***

(Designed for Autistic & otherwise Neurodivergent bodies, brains, and nervous systems)



All-Year Foundations

☐ Notice your sensory “weather” before the physical weather

- ☐ Build small, predictable routines that anchor your day
- ☐ Allow rest without guilt or justification — especially during transitions
 - ☐ Communicate your access needs early (even to yourself)
 - ☐ Prepare for sensory unpredictability: allergies, winds, noise

Summer (Heat, Light, High Stim)

- ☐ Sunglasses, hats, UV clothing or shade-finding strategies
- ☐ Cooling tools: spray bottle, cold cloth, frozen fruit, ice packs
 - ☐ Adjust plans around peak heat for sensory regulation
 - ☐ Hydration reminders (apps, alarms, visual cues)
 - ☐ Avoid bright, crowded spaces if and when possible
- ☐ Choose breathable textures + fabrics when possible (*we acknowledge this is a financial privilege*)

Autumn (Routine Shifts, Temperature Changes)

- ☐ Slowly adjust routines rather than sudden changes
- ☐ Notice texture changes in clothing & swap gradually (*we acknowledge this is a financial privilege*)
 - ☐ Keep weighted or grounding items nearby
 - ☐ Re-evaluate energy levels as daylight shifts
 - ☐ Create a cosy, sensory-safe inside space

Winter (Cold, Low Light, Low Energy)

- ☐ Soft, warm textures that feel good on *your* skin
 - ☐ Warm drinks or heat packs for regulation
 - ☐ Light sources that mimic daylight (if needed)
- ☐ Lower your expectations (and the expectations of those around us)— winter naturally slows many of us
- ☐ Move gently: stretching, rocking, slow walks, or stimming for warmth

Spring (High Pollen, High Change, Social Pressure)

- ☐ Prepare for sensory unpredictability: allergies, winds, noise
 - ☐ Keep comfort items in your bag or car
- ☐ Limit social commitments if change feels overwhelming
- ☐ Use grounding sensory input: deep pressure, scent anchors, fidgets
- ☐ Celebrate the return of longer days & sunlight, **only if it feels good for you**

Sensory & Emotional Reconnection

- ☐ Ask: *What does my mind & body need today — not what the season expects of me?*
- ☐ Offer yourself softness around transitions
- ☐ Track patterns (energy, sleep, sensory load) without judgment or expectations of yourself — *not all of us find this exercise beneficial or doable*
- ☐ Let every season be a chance to rewrite your rhythms



Ripples and Waves:

Building Momentum from Disability (Justice) Action Week & IDoPWD

In 2025, GRANN is transforming Disability (Justice) Action Week into something alive, grounded, community led — and lasts beyond Government slogans and funded campaigns.

This year, we're celebrating the **Ripples and Waves** — because every act of honesty, creativity, resistance, and connection sends out ripples... and together, those ripples become waves of change.

This is our commitment to neuro-affirming practice — to building a world that becomes our NeuroKind Circle — a movement that builds, ripples out, and ends in a wave of belonging.

Ripples Begin: Reclaiming the Week

This Is A Community Action Week — Our Week

We begin by renaming and reframing the week through a justice lens. Systems can host “weeks” — but our communities live the action every single day.

Our first ripple is truth-telling:

We reclaim this space as **Disability Justice Week**, grounded in lived experience, solidarity, and self-advocacy; not tokenistic celebration.

Because we are the action — in our advocacy, our survival, our rest, our creativity, our refusal to disappear, and every day, in the ways we show up for each other.

This Is Me reminds us: our identity and existence *are already a form of action*.

Ripples of Story: Platforming Community Voices

Nothing About Us Without Us

Our stories — Autistic, Disabled, ADHD, Dyspraxic, Traumatized, Deaf, Blind, Chronically Ill, Neurodivergent — are the ripples that shift culture.

We amplify community voices, art, poems, thinkers, educators, parents, lived-experience reflections, and grassroots wisdom.

We honour every story told without apology, masking, or translation.

Our Newsletters and online spaces are **NeuroKind Circles**, holding these stories with respect, care, and truth.

“What does action mean to you?”

Ripples of Care: Community First

Action Is Our Community

Real action isn't a slogan — it's an opportunity for *practical action* — mutual aid, redistribution of resources, access, and solidarity.

We spotlight Autistic and Neurodivergent creators, small businesses, and practitioners.

We uplift community resources, share sensory tools, and offer support to one another.

Real action isn't a government campaign — it's the quiet ways we care for each other.

Every act of support is a ripple and a reminder that **we keep each other afloat.**

Support Autistic and Neurodivergent-led. Share their work. Pay them. This is what solidarity looks like.

Ripples Become Systemic Accountability

Awareness Without Action Is Empty

GRANN is dedicated to truth-telling and naming systems that harm; not bending the knee, not tokenism:

NDIS inequities, access barriers, ableism, algorithmic discrimination, lack of accountability, policy failures, and the ongoing erasure of our voices.

We release and will continue to produce accessible educational posts, explainers, infographics, and community statements calling for real reform.

We do not whisper.

We wave.

Because **rights-based care** means speaking truth to power — together.

“Disability Action” without accountability isn't action — it's performance.

We want justice, not slogans.

We want equity, not tokenism.

Ripples of Rest: Rest as Restorative, Reflective Resistance

Nothing New – Nothing Normal

Our bodies and brains deserve rest.

Because “action” doesn't always mean loud or public — sometimes it's saying *no*, unplugging, stim dancing, painting, napping, or daydreaming without guilt.

Rest is resistance. Rest is advocacy.

Our activism includes rest. Our care includes boundaries — saying *no* to burnout, overcommitment, and performative productivity.

Rest isn't lazy. Rest is *revolutionary*.

Rest is a moral right.

Rest is a disability justice principle.

Rest is a trauma-informed practice.

We highlight accessible rest, sensory safety, boundaries, pacing, co-regulation, and community care.

We practice what we advocate.

We refuse burnout-as-standard.

We honour our bodies, our energy, and our rhythms.

Because rest creates the conditions for everything that comes next.

✨ **Ripples of Hope: We Are The Glimmers**

Connection is our Strength

Centring joy, creativity, connection, and the small glimmers that get us through.

In our **NeuroKind Circles**, glimmers are how we map safety, belonging, and person-environment fit.

They remind us that our differences are not deficits — they are signals of our humanity.

We celebrate connection, joy, and survival.

We are the glimmers — in each other's courage, creativity, and community.

We ask community:

What's your glimmer right now?

The answers become a collective act of hope.

We remind each other that we are never alone.



☀️ **The Wave: Visibility, Dignity, and Belonging**

We highlight invisible disabilities, sensory needs, and access support — and reaffirm our pledge to champion environments where people don't have to “prove” their disability to be treated with respect.

We recognise Disability (*Justice*) Action Week and IDoPWD not as a performance, but as a moment of truth, solidarity, and community power. We celebrate connection, not compliance. We celebrate the beauty in our differences.

This is where every ripple becomes a wave.

From Ripples to Waves

We Are the Action

Our work doesn't end with one week or one campaign.

It lives on through our **NeuroKind Circles**, our advocacy, our education, our neuro-affirming practice, redistribution of resources, our community action, and lifting each other up — Our courage in saying **This Is Me**.

We commit to:

- ✨ person–environment fit
- ✨ person-centred, rights-based support
- ✨ neuro-affirming practice
- ✨ trauma-informed care
- ✨ community-led change
- ✨ visibility and dignity
- ✨ accessibility
- ✨ listening to and centring lived experience as a non-negotiable

Because one ripple can change a moment —
but many ripples together can reshape the world.

And together,

we are the waves.

 This year, GRANN is reclaiming Disability (*Justice*) Action Week to fit us. We're not celebrating systems that harm us — we're celebrating **us, community**: our strength, our joy, our care networks, and our refusal to be silenced.

Instead of tokenism, we're choosing truth-telling.

Instead of empty “awareness”, we're choosing community action.

Instead of burnout, we're choosing rest.

This is what Disability Action looks like to us. 

The ripples and the waves. ✨

✨ ***Book Spotlight: When My Brain Is Messy & I've Always Had A Voice*** ✨

We tried — truly — but we *could not* make our review any shorter!

Everyone at GRANN, along with the teachers, kids, students, and families we shared Tania Wieclaw's picture books with (aka ***When My Brain Is Messy***), absolutely *adore* them.

These stories have sparked meaningful conversations, supported emotional expression, and helped so many children feel seen and understood.

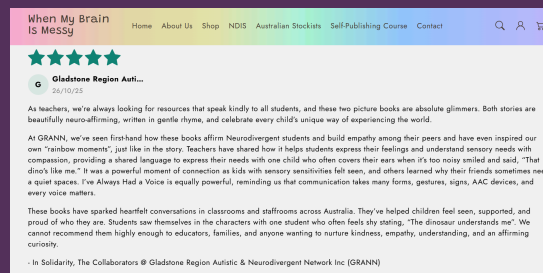
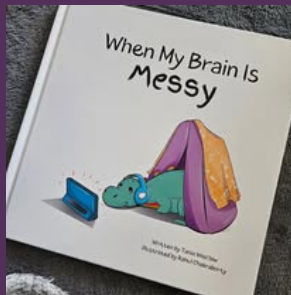
Rather than take our word for it, we encourage you to explore them for yourselves.

 **Check out the books**

 **Visit the *When My Brain Is Messy* Facebook page**

 **Browse their website to learn more about Tania's work and resources**

These books continue to shine in every space we bring them into — and we're excited for you to discover why.



Autistic & Neurodivergent-led Organisations, Supports, & Resources



Autistic & Neurodivergent Books and Authors

Looking for stories that reflect *you* or someone you love?
GRANN's carefully curated 2024 & 2025 Booklists includes powerful titles by and for Autistic and Neurodivergent people - spanning identity, advocacy, creativity, lived experience, children's stories, YA fiction, and more.

Whether you're seeking representation, learning, or just a good read that doesn't pathologise your existence, there's something here for you.

We apologise that our GRANN booklist hasn't been updated yet — thank you for your patience as we catch up and continue curating resources with care.



**Neuro-
Affirming
Reading List
2024**

**Neuro-
Affirming
Reading List
2025**

Want to Get Involved?

Volunteer with GRANN

GRANN is powered by community - and we're always grateful for kind, creative, Neurodivergent-led hands to help shape what we do. Whether you're looking to contribute your time, skills, ideas, or presence, we'd love to hear from you.

Volunteering with GRANN can look like:

- 💻 Helping behind the scenes with admin or website content
- 🎨 Co-creating accessible resources or artwork
- 📢 Supporting events, workshops, or advocacy campaigns
- 🧸 Offering lived experience wisdom or gentle peer support

Lived experience needed and a willingness to show up in your own way.

Flexible, affirming, and low-demand roles available.
We'll always work with your access needs and capacity.

Register below or visit our website www.grann.com.au
and click "Volunteer" in the menu

You can also ✉ Email us at: info@grann.com.au

🌈 Thank you for helping us build something meaningful, inclusive, and proudly Neurodivergent led.

📝 Register your interest to volunteer here:

**Volunteer
EOI Form**

Your Views Matters
We'd Love Your Feedback

✨ Share what's working. Tell us what's not. Suggest something new.

At GRANN, everything we do is shaped by *you*, our community.

Your experiences, insights, and ideas help us create spaces that feel safer, more supportive, and more *you-shaped*.

Whether you've joined one of our sessions, explored our website, or just want to share a thought or suggestion - we'd love to hear from you. Your feedback doesn't have to be formal or polished. Honest, imperfect, and heartfelt is welcome.

Access the Feedback Form below or visit us at www.grann.com.au and click "Contact" in the menu.

Prefer to send a message directly or use voice, pictures, or dot points instead of a form? That's okay too. Let us know how we can walk beside you.

 Email us at: info@grann.com.au

 Your views helps us build a place to belong, together.
Thank you for being part of it.

 **Access our feedback form here:**

Feedback Form



Gladstone Region Autistic & Neurodivergent Network Inc.

info@grann.com.au

You've received this email because you've subscribed to our newsletter.



GRANN acknowledges the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng and Taribelang Bunda people who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we reside and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

Always Was. Always Will Be.
Sovereignty Was Never Ceded.