What is a Manual of Me?

A Manual of Me is a manual for how you work best and worst. It's a simple document of information you think is valuable to share that won't normally come up in conversation. The Manual of Me is a tool created by Matthew Knight.

General

My name is Mariska Mulder (maa-ris-kaa, mul-der)
and my pronouns are she/her

I am 25 years old, living in The Netherlands and studying photography at the Willem de Kooning Academy in Rotterdam

What are the hidden/surprising things that people should know about you?

People usually get to know me as a calm person who tends to listen and observe more than talk but what people don't really know is that given the opportunity to talk about my interests (such as pop culture, fandom, and stories) I can talk off people's ears. I'm passionate about the things I love and take an interest to.

What exists outside work, that influences your work?

My ADD can sometimes function as a roadblock and at other times it works as a creative hub. I'm currently learning how to best work with my shifting of attention by creating space and condition around me that cause me to flourish in a workplace rather than space out. I work best when I get stimulated by variation of the same type of work (e.g., brainstorming three different things in a row).

What are your communication preferences?

I benefit from clear communication. I like to know what it is that another person expects from me. Vagueness tends to confuse me. I communicate best one on one because that way I have an easier time channelling my focus. That's not to say that I can't work in a group. I can, it just takes me some time to warm up socially and once I have, I actually tend to lift off on other people's enthusiasm.

What are your current interests when you enjoy your time off?

I'm currently obsessed with the Netflix show 'Young Royals', the fantasy novel 'Crooked Kingdom' and the EP 'Licht en Donker' by Froukje. I like to read. A lot. I am a slow reader when it comes to guides and theoretical texts because they demand more time to sink in and, actually become of use. I like to simultaneously read fantasy and adventurous stories on the side to switch it up. These I tend to consume

lightning fast, but I can assure you there's always a pile of unread pretty books in my room somewhere…

How do you communicate your boundaries?
I am currently trying to get more aware of when I feel uncomfortable or anxious about something so that I can hit pause and say for instance that I need some time to think about whatever is asked. This way I can consider the bigger picture and make more informed decisions. I would then rediscuss the question by raising it again and asking about the things I might have started questioning in the meantime.

What about when things go wrong? How do you want to be supported/approached then?
When something goes wrong, I feel most comfortable talking with somebody about it when it's one on one. I have the best probability of shaking off a bad mood or a feeling of failure through words of affirmation. Chances are, if something didn't go as planned by my mistake, I've already run through all the critics in my head, so I need to hear what I did right in order to move on and, try again on a new slate. Being verbally reassured and praised is how I feel appreciated and included in the clearest sense.

(Covid special)
What's happening at home? What does support look like for you?
Working from home proves harder for me as there is no clear distinction between work and home. I currently live with my parents and have transformed my bedroom over these few months to have it function as a bedroom, workspace and 'living room'. I try to study at my friend's house once a week to do concentrated work (and that thankfully works well).

What things need to change in how you're currently working?
Regulation and responsibility. I feel I take things more seriously when I'm responsible for someone else which also helps with motivation but it's harder to achieve when it's just for me. Regulation is crucial but also a fine line. I need it to function well, but it must be challenging enough so that it doesn't become boring and repetitive.