

A NEW DAY PEDIATRIC PSYCHOLOGY

Healing the hurt. Educating the mind. Inspiring the soul.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD): THE STRONGEST & THE BRAVEST



BY ASHLEY MOHESKY
FEATURED WRITER

A New Day Pediatric Psychology, PLLC falls under the vision of Dr. Ann-Louise T. Lockhart, Pediatric Psychologist and Board Certified in Child and Adolescent Psychology.

A New Day specializes in evidence-based behavioral health treatment, interventions, and psychological evaluations for children, adolescents, and adults with known or suspected behavioral health and/or medical conditions affecting all aspects of development and functioning.



Autism Spectrum Disorder is a condition that prevents individuals from developing appropriate social skills. Other aspects of autism are repetitive behavior and limited speech. The early signs of autism that may develop in a child include: lack of eye contact, inability to pick up on social cues, difficulty developing and maintaining relationships, insistence on sameness or sticking to a strict routine, high or low reactivity to sensory input, not meeting developmental milestones, and highly fixated and restricted interests. Although, most children show the signs as young as early childhood, there have been some cases in which people are not diagnosed with autism until adolescence or adulthood. It is important to know the common signs, but to also recognize that not everyone will have the same symptoms. This is why it is called a “spectrum” disorder. Therefore, it is recommended to consult with a mental health professional about diagnostic testing for autism.



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The Positive Side of Autism:

By Dr. Ann-Louise Lockhart

There is a lot of talk about the challenges of autism and the struggles people have. However there is also good news. It is so important to highlight and encourage these positive attributes.

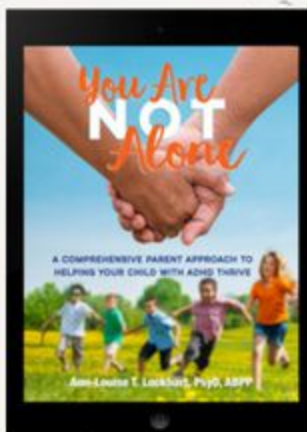
In the media, society is exposed to people who are on the higher end of the spectrum and have been successful despite their challenges, such as Temple Grandin and Kerry Magro. Even though it is great to see these individuals doing well in life, society forgets that there is another side of autism. People who are on the lower end of the spectrum will often have developmental delays, meltdowns, aggression, and difficulty with basic life skills. When the media only discusses the successes of autism, it marginalizes those who have many struggles that are severe. Once society begins to learn how to accept people with different types of autism, advances in treatment can be made.

People with Autism often have many good qualities:

- Ability to spot errors
- Directness in dealing with people
- Honesty
- Interesting viewpoints
- Few areas of specialized expertise
- Reliable on routine tasks
- Punctual and Conscientious
- Will finish a job on time rather than wasting time around with chatter

Raising children with autism can be physically and emotionally challenging, but there are ways to combat the obstacles. Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) therapy has been known to help children make great improvements in their lives. Speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are also other early interventions that are key to helping a child with autism thrive. For example, kids who are nonverbal will sometimes start to speak because of intensive therapy that ABA and speech therapy provide. Also, psychological services from a psychologist or counselor can help with the struggles parents and families face. Autism does not diminish the beautiful qualities that a person has. It is hard to focus on the positive aspects of the disorder when a child is suffering every day. However, by viewing the child as more than a diagnosis, it can help to alleviate the stressors that parents endure.

Does every day with your child feel like a struggle? You are not alone!



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STAY TUNED

This newsletter is issued every first and third week of each month.

The purpose of this newsletter is to educate, inspire, and bring healing and awareness by discussing a variety of behavioral health and medical conditions.



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