

About me / Introduction

My name is William Patch and I have Autism, my hobbies include Chess, Football, Table Tennis and Writing Stories. I am writing about Autism, which is so interesting and I have learnt a little about it through my writing. I do quite a bit of volunteer work at MADM in the town centre and the climbing centre on ST Peter's Street. I am 32 years old and live in supported accommodation, which is leading to my long term goal, which is living independently in the community. I have challenges such as colour-blindness and Anxiety but I do my best to make sure they don't interfere with my daily life. I don't consider myself a genius all I want in life is to be happy.



Autistic Awareness

Can we teach Autism in schools?

Why do autistic people have to fit in to our world? Is there a quicker way to get the message across to tell the world? Autism must be explained to young children in schools, how do we teach them about autism. Well diagrams and cartoons can come in to play. Surely we can use the given technology to our advantage or demonstrate Autism, there must be a way to teach this vitally important information. If we can teach things like sex education in schools why can't we teach Autism. In my eyes I feel Autism is far more important and needs to be understood by all. Autism is not a choice and needs to be understood at an early age. I feel the cartoons will be not only be beneficial but also a fun way to learn because young children will be able to visualize it. Its very important to get the message out very early so that the knowledge and understanding of it becomes easier in the future.

Signs of Autism

- 1. Carrying objects for a excessive amount of time*
- 2. Difficulty keeping eye – contact*
- 3. Understanding of common gestures*
- 4. An unusual approach to playing with toys*
- 5. Strange tone of voice*
- 6. Hiding objects*
- 7. Understanding of emotions*
- 8. Showing minimum facial expressions*
- 9. Difficulty in settling down*
- 10. Repetitive behaviour and routines*





Potential Autistic Traits or links to Autism



- *Pacing up and down*
- *Locking themselves in a room*
- *Order / Routine*
- *Loud noises / crowds*
- *Structure*
- *Lengthy processing of information*
- *Stimming / fidgeting*
- *Caring / Kindness / Consideration*
- *Logical thinking / meticulous*
- *Taking notes*
- *Plan of action*
- *Colour-blindness / Anxiety*
- *Schedules*
- *Methods: doing something in a very specific way*
- *Habits*
- *Masking*
- *Repetitive behaviour*
- *Interested in their interests*
- *Quiet*
- *Understanding the concept of emotions*
- *Photographic memory within their interests*
- *Focuses on one topic*
- *Attention to detail*
- *Sensory processing*



CUT CUT ←
Cut Cut
Cut Cut



BEWARE

HAMLET
WORD WORD WORD
WORD WORD WORD



P CIFIC



A



Why I chose the National Autistic Society?



I chose the National Autistic Society because I have Autism myself and most of my friends have it. It hurts me to see the challenges they are facing, I hope the money raised will help them succeed and go far in life, I will rest easier when I know they will be okay. One of my friends struggles a lot with schizophrenia and such a dishearten reality makes me feel sad. They have such an amazing and generous heart, I remind them most days that everything will be alright and encourage them to keep their head up. This is just one example of Autism and as we know there are many forms, that is why every degree of Autism creates a new challenge to both the person and their support worker. Another friend who like me, has mild Asperger's Syndrome, their understanding of certain situations is much more different from mine. An example: If someone on a bike (Usually a teenager trying to show off) is racing up and down doing stunts my friend gets so angry and might shout at them. I have learnt that the best thing to do in that situation is to stay calm and carry on walking because shouting or violence will lead to trouble. That is something they may never learn, but with the right training and teaching provided we can show them the way. All the people I know who have Autism are good people and deserve a lot of praise and respect, not just for the things they achieve but for who they are. If we are going to fight a disease, lets fight one of the most frightening diseases of all (Indifference). You see with the information lodged in the brain we can help prevent a lot of challenges. I've noticed that a lot of people with Autism are gifted in a very specific area but sometimes struggle with tasks like shopping or do not understand the concept of money. Where I am most of the support workers help me with financial purchases and tasks like cooking and shopping, they also help with simple tasks such as changing my bed or laundry washing. It could just be that we go out for a walk and eat lunch somewhere, but in this time we are talking about the week or discussing short / long term goals. Sometimes this could also be emotional support, it might mean that I've had a stressful day and just need someone to chat to. The care plan provided to all support workers helps us understand the tenants individual needs and should provide us with the right information about their goals. If we have access to the care plan then why is some support better than others, this is something I find hard to understand. Autism is incurable and we can't change that, however we can change the way we think about, this could also be something support workers can help with.



The World Around Me

It makes me feel sad when I see people with autism struggling because they don't deserve bad news. When I was living at home with my parents, if I ever got stressed or anxious I would walk to Boxley Church and listen to the soothing music of the Beatles because it gave me a sense of freedom. When in the church yard I often prayed for my friends asking God to help them cope with this strange world. I have met a lot of autistic people through my journey of volunteer work and their stories have inspired me and brought the biggest smile to my face. I hope we can get the important message about autism across to doctors and many others around the world because its vital information, it hurts inside that some hospitals provide accessories for people with autism and some don't. These important pieces of equipment are not even that expensive, if it is based on money (which it usual is) why is it such a problem. Autism can sometimes be very challenging but by working together as a community we can definitely improve the system. I feel now that after hearing the tragic Oliver McGowen story it's time to come together as a team and fix this important project. I am so pleased I was born with Aspergers Syndrome because autism helps me think in different ways and has taught me to be strong. I believe God gave me one of the best gifts of all time and that is why I am happy. My family and friends mean everything to me, and I do everything I can to help and protect them. No matter how hard the situation, we must always stay strong and positive as I know this is one of the hardest things to do but we must try. Several of my friends are struggling emotionally and I feel their pain and understand that this is challenging for everyone. I know there is a long road ahead but I also know the good times will be back. We will shake hands again, we will be together again, we will overpower again.

Will finds chess helps him to stay one move ahead

In the latest of our occasional series, reporter Nick Littleton speaks to Will Patch, who has autism

by Nick Littleton
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Learning to travel from A to B can sometimes be daunting for autistic Will Patch, but on the chess board he'll leave you streets behind.

He's amazed that he can even beat the computer, playing at stage 10, which is one of the highest levels.

Autism is a highly variable condition that affects about one in 100 people in the UK. It affects how they communicate with others and how they make sense of the world.

Some, like 20-year-old Will of Boxley Road, Maidstone, are gifted in certain areas such as memory and anticipation and can live independent lives, while others may struggle more with learning difficulties.

Chess has played a significant role in the everyday life of Will, who has represented Maidstone and Goodhead, winning games in tournaments.

"It's good for the brain," says Will. "Things start to make sense. Being able to think of all those moves ahead - it's so satisfying."

"Being chess, I wasn't organized and my time management was not good. It's helped me develop new skills in everyday situations.

"Before, if I was going to a certain place at a certain time, I'd have great difficulty learning how to get there and what time I needed to arrive. It's a great power to have."

Autism was highlighted in the film Rain Man, starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise, which scooped four Hollywood Oscars.

In the film, Hoffman plays autistic Raymond, who has an incredible ability to remember numbers and sequences.

Will, meanwhile, is highly personable and comes across as a gentle young man who spends a great deal of his time work for charities including Oxfam and helping people with learning difficulties.

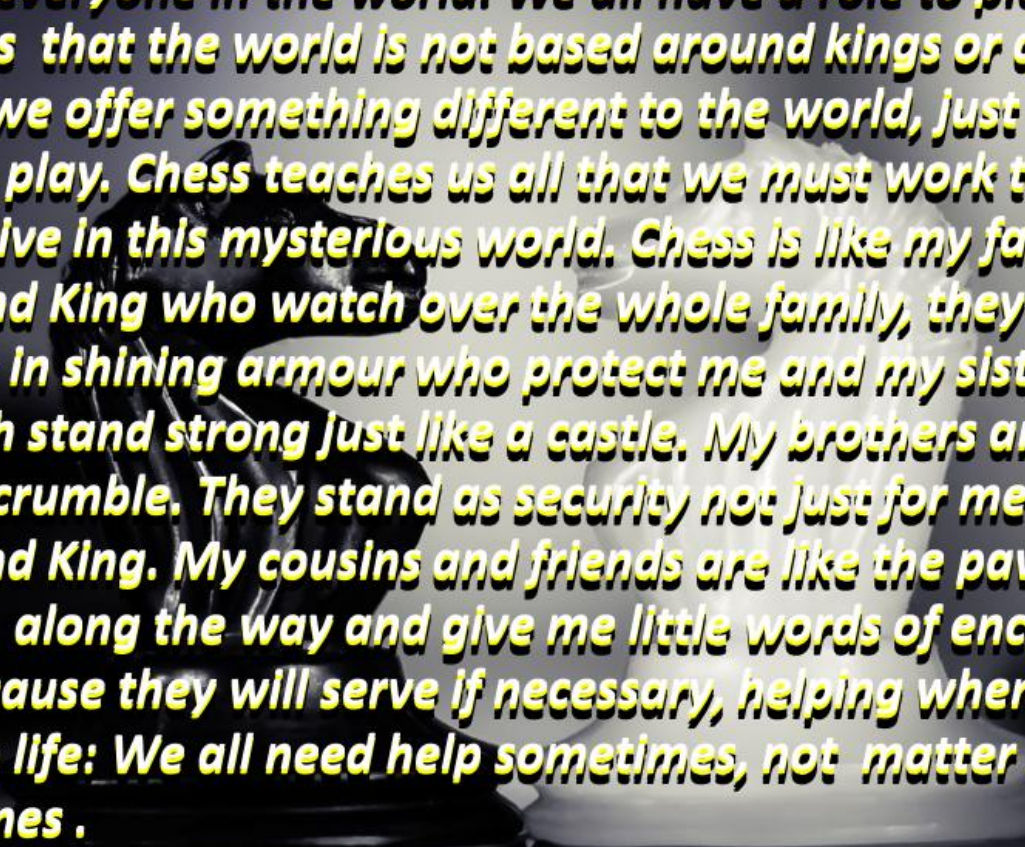
"It's better than staying at home watching the world go back for Maidstone United Raiders football club.

"Maybe there's a school out there who can offer me a paid job teaching chess to children."

Will Patch, right, with his brother Joe. Photo: Martin Apple PHOTOGRAPHY

Dustin Hoffman played an autistic person in Rain Man

Maidstone United Raiders' disability section



I truly believe that if we understand Chess, we understand the world. Chess has taught me to see things in a different way and is a game of life, in my eyes. Relating Chess to real life, I understand that sometimes we need to make sacrifices and also that the small pieces become the most valuable in the end. Pawns shouldn't be underestimated because in the end game they turn out to be vitally important. Remember every piece is valued, just like everyone in the world. We all have a role to play, just like every piece in Chess. The game demonstrates that the world is not based around kings or queens and shows we are all individuals. It also illustrates we offer something different to the world, just like on a Chess board all the pieces have a different part to play. Chess teaches us all that we must work together in order to accomplish our goals and survive in this mysterious world. Chess is like my family because I think of my mum and dad as the Queen and King who watch over the whole family, they are head of the family. My brothers would be the Knights in shining armour who protect me and my sister who are the castles because as individuals we both stand strong just like a castle. My brothers are always there to protect the castle, making sure it doesn't crumble. They stand as security not just for me but for the whole family, they also defend the Queen and King. My cousins and friends are like the pawns and play a vital role in my life, step by step they help me along the way and give me little words of encouragement. My uncles and aunties are like the bishop because they will serve if necessary, helping whenever possible but they also defend my family. You see in life: We all need help sometimes, not matter how small or big it may be, will all need guidance sometimes.



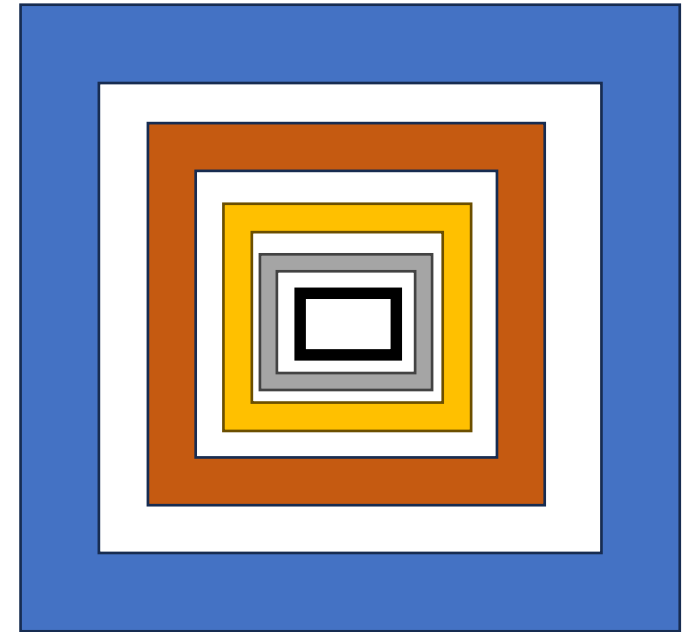
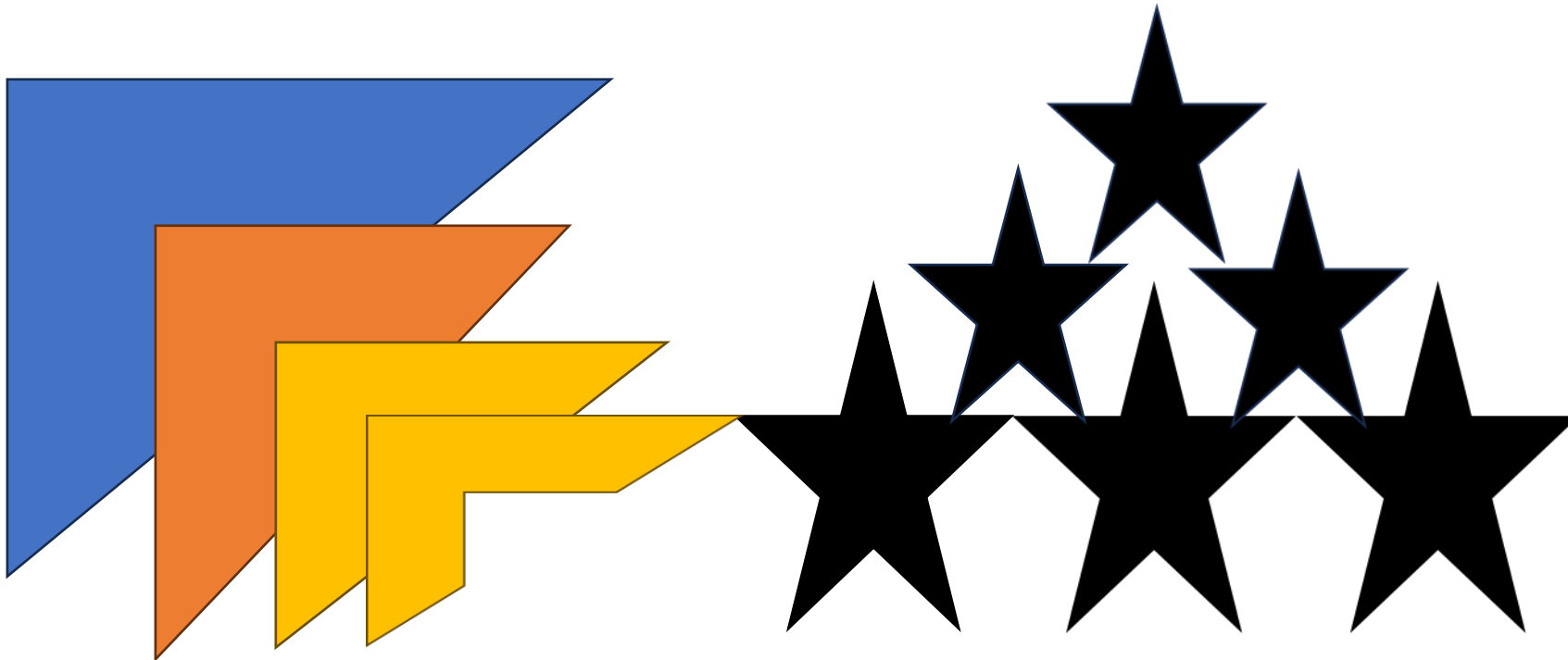
Order

And

Routine



Order and routine is very important not just for me, but for everyone including those without Autism. It means I can prepare myself for the week, I use my diary and whiteboard to write things down, making sure I don't forget important things such as interviews or health appointments. As my memory is terrible, writing things down helps me get ready. Order and routine stops me from getting anxious and settles any nerves, with a routine in place I know what to expect. It gives me a lot time to prepare my work and work experience, it also allows me to check that nothing is overlooked. Another good thing about Order and Routine is that come bedtime I sleep so much easier and I am in a good frame of mind.



A day in the life coping with Autism without support

On a day I need to be somewhere or do something, I have to plan it myself, I feel a bit more anxious because the aid of support isn't there. I can do a lot of things on my own but the level of anxiety will definitely be higher because sometimes I feel isolated and not part of a team, being part of a team has always given me a guidance of reinsurance and is certainly a blessing. The days without support are quite challenging because I forget to do a lot of things, I also sometimes feel scared in the community without someone by my side, throughout my epic journey in life my family and friends have served and guided me in ways words can't describe. Suddenly not having that luxury can sometimes play a massive part in my daily life, it often makes me quite emotional but I have strategies, which work so well and give me a sense of security. One being yellow and blue rubber bands on the arms, the bands represent the light of eternity and the calmness of the ocean. Another coping method is sitting down and watching the soothing flow of Lava lamps, these little things give me warmth and bring peace to my world. They bands are brilliant because they are permeant reminders of the positivity in our world and whenever I am wearing them it feels like someone is walking beside me. If for some reason I can't use these strategies I often go for walks whenever I feel anxious or stressed, fresh air often settles the mind and works like a form of meditation. Without the aid of support I sometimes get bored and sad because I am a people person. I don't like being alone but to be fair that has been something I have got used to, I like to get out and meet the world. The support workers help me achieve my goals and encourage me daily, they are like my family. Support is vitally important for me and is leading me to my long term goal, which is to live independently in the community. The support for people with Autism is urgently important, however the right training is even more important because it teaches us knowledge and understanding. I need support with things like travel training, understanding of some correspondence, interview guidance, doctor and health appointments. Prompting to do daily tasks. Without support I might miss important letters because my memory is terrible. The support workers make sure I check my post, which is helping improve my memory. They also remind me to check my emails, which is vitally important, a job I need to do daily and is vastly improving thanks to support. Prompting to do things is essential for me because it helps improve my memory so much and allows me to prepare for so many things such as interviews and health appointments.



Despite not being based on a true story: this brilliant and emotional film about Autism really spoke to me and gave me a more understanding of Autism and its traits. In the movie Wendy an autistic young woman who's passion is Star Trek, lives an ordinary life in a group home monitored by house management. Another one of her hobbies is writing and she spends a lot of time writing a script on Star Trek hoping to enter the Paramount Pictures Screenwriting contest. When I first saw the movie I realized just how important supporting people with Autism is and it gave me a true insight to the Autistic world. It made me a bit tearful because its quite an emotional film but I certainly learnt a lot, seeing Wendy's epic journey. All the things that happen to Wendy should never happen in this world and in fact sickens me to see such a harsh reality. Most of the autistic traits on slide 7 relate to Wendy and are recognized throughout the film. During the movie Wendy deals with a lot of set-backs and copes extremely well independently, getting kicked of the bus for bringing her dog onboard and then having to ask for directions to Los Angeles is one of the challenges she has to faced. A couple trick her into thinking they will look after her by giving her a lift to Los Angeles but when she turns her back they steal her things and drive off. They steal most of her belongings including her little note book and some money from her wallet. Realizing she has to get on another bus she tries to purchase a ticket but then finds out she does have enough to pay the full price.

The movie illustrates the many forms of Autism including the lengthy processing of information and understanding of certain situations. It also demonstrates what strategies we can use to help with Autism and how to improve it. For example: In one of the scenes Wendy runs away from hospital after banging her head and the police chase her, however after understanding and realizing she is vulnerable the policeman uses Klingon to communicate with her and by doing so creates a sense of trust and Wendy realises she is safe. This particular part of the movie is a great demonstration of the gain of trust in Autism. The policeman knew she loves Star Trek and therefore understood that by using Klingon that was the right communication technique for her specifically. You see if we know the individual needs we can use the right techniques and understand Autism more. Some of the scenes are very concerning and could easily be prevented with the aid of support but with the inspirational Klingon scene. We can learn so much about Autism and now know there are sources and techniques out there we can use to support people with Autism. The understanding of it is slowly getting better and better and more people are becoming aware of it. Things are vastly improving, which is amazing yes but they can be improved even more with the right training and understanding of Autism.



Oasis café is a fantastic place to meet new people and learn about their lives, people from all over come to the church to socialize and it brings a massive smile to my face. To see all those different characters chatting is amazing because we can see the community coming together. People laughing and joking is very nice to see and always makes me happy, some of the stories I have heard are incredible and in fact have brought many happy and sad tears. Oasis is a place of peace and warmth and has become a second home, I will never forget its walls and tranquillity that lies within. Walking through those welcoming doors is one of the best things I have ever done and it's a day I will never forget, the memory will be with me for all eternity. I link it to the song Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong the song reminds listeners that when we are overwhelmed, find time to let it go and find beauty in things we may commonly overlook. I live on Buckland Road and usually my mum gives me a lift because she also helps out at the church. If she can't take me I usually walk or cycle and when I do I make sure I am ready the night before. So I know I need my story and sometimes my laptop because I do preparation for the Oliver McGowen training, I make sure I put these things in my bag ready for the morning and that way I don't forget them because my memory is so bad. Since it's a place I am very familiar with I can make it on time and get there very easily. When walking I usually listen to music, this not only passes the time but also warms me up and calms any nerves. Music gives me a sense of security and can in fact heal the soul and mend a broken heart. I always look forward to Mondays because I have made a lot of friends there and it's a permanent reminder that no matter what challenges I have or whatever comes my way I will always be okay. Its places like Oasis that keep me smiling from head to toe, it's a place I recommend to all, a chance to grab a drink and get to know people. If I cannot cycle or walk I would work out bus times and write the times down to remind me, I would also make sure I have enough money and put some aside.

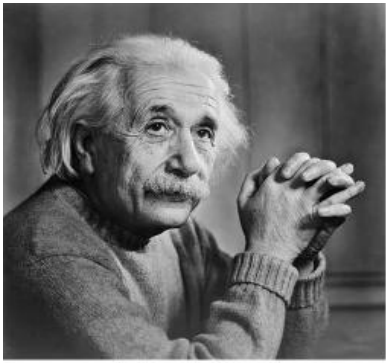
Tuesday



MADM
Making A Difference
Maidstone



On Tuesday I volunteer at MADM a charity shop in Maidstone town centre for 4 hours, working mainly in the warehouse at the back of the shop. The tasks vary from PAT testing, sorting out clothes hangers, putting up wedding dresses. I do something new each day and have made a few friends, I am also learning new essential skills or the time and have joined a excellent team. The work is very fascinating and gets me out of the bed, volunteering gives me a sense of purpose and lends a hand to others in need. MADM is a new volunteer role but I have settled in comfortably and they have made me feel so welcome. Kind people, kind hearts, another place of warmth and peace. Volunteering I believe is underestimated by many, in fact I have learnt more and made more friends through my work experience than my paid work placements. They more people we meet, the more stories we hear, the more understanding we will know. Volunteering is powerful and looks brilliant on the CV, I love volunteering with a passion, the only down side is that it doesn't pay the bills. My volunteering has lead me to the working world and has taught me so much, so many stories and essential skills learnt, such as PAT testing and till experience. So not matter how small the task or easy or hard, it will always help someone and is never wasted. In terms of getting there I walk because its about ten minutes away. Being a people's person it is like a blessing and giving your own time, is possibly the best gift of all time. I feel volunteering would be a good idea for some of my friends because you pick up so many vital skills and can learn so much. Regardless of how long I am there for I will never forget the importance of a volunteers world. Since volunteering my circle of friends has definitely expanded and has without a doubt been all worth while.



Albert Einstein
Scientist

These unique characters are extremely famous and are perfect role-models for the Autistic world. They have not let their Autism get the better of them and how far they have come shows their true character. So if they can do it, why not us? All four of them started off beginners just like us and many years of practice and the persistence has clearly paid off. Levels of incredible IQ'S and greatness alone has lead them to the hall of fame. Well known by many around the world these incredible people have given us a degree of hope, something worth fighting for. Hope is massive in our world and can in fact give us a sense of freedom. I believe Autism is a good thing, maybe the best of things and can teach us a lot. Remember greatness lies within us all and even in the darkest of times we can find a light. Autism is a very delicate subject as we know but the more we understand it, the easier our knowledge of it. Together as a community we can help each other understand this strange topic. The understanding of Autism is vitally important and will hopefully lead us down the right path.



Heather Kuzmich
Appeared on
reality show

Bobby Fischer
Chess
Grandmaster



Jennifer Aniston
Actress



A Story Of Experience

A while back I was in supported living and had to deal with a few issues. It was meant to be a journey of excitement and learning, however it turned into a nightmare. Due to poor support and lack of understanding individual needs, I had to endure three different nightmare situations. One of the tenants wasn't in the right place because he had severe issues - the support workers didn't see the man on the inside, they only saw the major challenges he was faced with. All the support workers have access to everyone's care plan, so why did it all go horribly wrong.

Is it down to the lack of knowledge or understanding?

The challenges I had to face could have been easily prevented.

We all stumble across issues or challenges in our lives but what I went through should never happen again. Explaining these situations is hard to put into words and hurts a lot inside because the tenant was extremely kind. A story of such anxiety still plays on my mind and can in fact scar someone for life. Every support worker should know their clients background before supporting them, the care plan gives us enough information about the tenant and there is no harm in asking questions regarding their needs and backgrounds.

When I have a new support worker I always sit down with them and we discuss short / long term goals, what I need help with and any major issues such as anxiety or medical conditions. I feel this needs to be address immediately because its very vital information and they can adjust to these needs as soon as possible.

Future Vision

To infinity and
beyond!



How will the support for Autism be in the future? Remember its never to late for change and I truly believe things will improve. We can already see more people are becoming aware and recognizing Autism and its many challenges. If we come together as a community we can realize the importance of this intriguing topic. It breaks my heart to see other tenants being stigmatised based on their learning difficult and Autism. Most of the support I receive is good but can be vastly improved with the right training provided. If we start teaching Autism at a young age the understanding of it will become more global, certainly within schools. As we speak Autism is in fact being discussed in schools and young children are slowly becoming aware of it, which is a massive positive. However we have a long road ahead but we are on the right path, with every step we will reach the goal and become fully aware of Autism. What annoys me the most is if we can teach Autism in schools, why can't it be taught around the world. I think Doctors need to become more educated on the subject because they are not necessarily aware of Autism and therefore do not have autistic friendly measures in place. As I stated earlier it doesn't cost much to purchase these vital pieces of equipment so why is there some in certain hospitals and not others? In my eyes I find it very difficult to understand such a harsh reality because I am such a caring person.

