



Autism Awareness

My Personal Definition

You are aware of Autism when....

You find yourself asking co-workers if they need to take a “self help break”.

You instinctively hold the ears of the person next to you when you hear a loud noise.

You find yourself trying to explain quantum physics to a six-year old.

You realize it isn't grief you feel, but rather a change in expectations.

You realize your efforts to clean-up or put away the train tracks are futile.

A single spoken syllable makes you cry.

You don't even blink at the sight of your mortified neighbors and your naked child running through the sprinkler.

You could spell Acrocanthosaurus in your sleep.

Your pharmacy offers you frequent flyer points.

You have your own chair in the principal's office.

You've stopped questioning if the pee you have to clean from the carpet belongs to your child or your dog.

You forget there are people that actually sleep without medication.

You cancel your gym membership because now you have appointments with the speech therapist on Mondays, the occupational therapist on Tuesdays, the behavior psychologist on Wednesdays, the music therapist on Thursdays, and the social skills group on Fridays.

You talk about GFCF diets and biomedical treatments the way your friends talk about soccer schedules.

You change your language on Facebook to Pirate English because that is what is spoken in your house.

You send love notes to the creators of Google because you just can't answer one more question.

You shoot that GLARE to judgmental shoppers at the grocery store with your death ray eyes.

You believe if you stare hard enough at your child in public, he will receive your telepathic message to stop the inappropriate behavior.

You talk to your eight-year old about college scholarship strategies because you've already emptied his education savings on private school tuition, education advocates, and education attorneys.

You feel dizzy from everything he spins.

You have sucked up more Legos in your vacuum that babies have sucked thumbs.

You secretly feel relieved that your child can't read the boredom on your face as he is describing the details of the Titanic to you AGAIN.

You are perplexed that the puppy won't respond to a behavior chart.

You only frequent restaurants that serve the five foods your child will eat. Except for that one across the street because apparently they use the wrong tomato sauce.

Your life is held hostage to your child's medication schedule.

You buy eight boxes of your child's favorite cereal when it goes on Buy One Get One. The next day your child announces he no longer likes that cereal.

You search the archives of your brain trying to remember if “Death of an Autism Insurance Bill” was ever on Schoolhouse Rock.

You cry when other moms ‘complain’ about the number of birthday parties their kids have been invited to.

You wonder when you will learn that when you say, “In a minute,” prompts your child to start counting down from 60.

You stop breathing when your child runs over to a man with no hair and wants to know why he's bald, and if he can touch his head – which he's already started doing before the startled man has a chance to respond.

You are grateful for digital cameras because it takes an average 82 pictures to get ONE where your child isn't grimacing.

You instantly appreciate a chapter entitled, “Underwear with Teeth”¹.

You pull your hoodie over your face because your child, who looks questionably old to be in a Halloween costume to begin with, is wearing it in your front yard in May.

Your eyebrow is raised that your child's refusal to eat crusts even extends to the outer edges of Uncrustable® sandwiches.

¹ *Be Different: Adventures of a Free-Range Aspergian* by John Elder Robison

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