



You Are Aware You Are the Parent of a Child with Autism When...

Your life's journey doesn't feel like a stroll down a tree-lined path but rather a pogo stick race on gravel.

You now realize that EVERY pizza place uses a completely different sauce with a different proportion of herbs and only TWO in your region have the RIGHT sauce.

You believe you can diagnose Autism in people at school, in the grocery line, in other parents, over the phone....

You feel a personal connection to the Vikings on the Capital One commercials because you too believe you are a warrior.

You've earned honorary degrees in pharmacology, psychology, psychiatry and the law.

You are grateful that your nine year old is studying Quantum Physics and you're encouraging him to explore parallel universes to help you figure out how to be in multiple places at one time. Like the nights for instance when you have to take one child to music therapy, another to cheer practice, attend a SECAC event, speak to a Ravens Roost, and then prepare for the next day's IEP meeting.

You KNOW the saying "Save the drama for your mama" was written specifically for YOU.

Your alarm clock is your child with autism.

You know exactly the length of time you are allowed to keep a movie and the penalties for lost DVDs for six different video rental companies.

A lazy Sunday means you only have two therapy sessions on the schedule.

You offer, "Hey kids – I'll pay \$5 to whoever finds my Bluetooth," and your son calmly states, "That's not enough," as he walks away with the knowledge he is clearly a better negotiator than you.

You go to work with a 103 degree fever because you've used up all of your sick days to your child's assessments, medical appointments, autism workshops, etc.

You flap your hands for no other reason than to make the door-to-door salesman walk away.

You are not afraid of people who stare, new medication trials, neurological therapies, school psychologists, transitions to different schools, changes to behavior plans or the consequences of Rita's not carrying your child's favorite flavor. However, you admit you are still fearful of spiders.

You offer \$2,000 to the Comcast person if he can restore your On Demand service TODAY.

You cry the first time you hear your child with Autism refer to a neurotypical individual as "normal".

You wear a pirate costume to Target just to see if it really does feel that awesome.

You look back at your elementary, middle and high school days and begin identifying former classmates you now believe were undiagnosed.

You offer the advice to other parents that the right combination of Ambien, Tylenol Sleep Aid, and Key Lime martinis, CAN allow you to sleep through a child's tossing and turning, flailing, kicking, and occasional head butt to your spine.

You put your daughter on the phone with a telemarketer, telling her this man called your house looking for someone that can tell him EVERYTHING about German philosopher Martin Heidegger.

Those annoying Charlie and the Chocolate Factory songs are permanently playing in your head.

You cheer, celebrate and drop confetti from the ceiling the first time your 17 year old child puts her plate in the dishwasher unprompted. (This one has NOTHING to do with Autism and everything to do with plain old general parenthood.)

Your child can tell you on ANY given day how many days until it will be March 12 because that's when his favorite food – corned beef – goes on sale.

Your child's routine blood tests themselves are not that expensive. However, the \$150 Lego set bribes to get him to do the blood tests ARE.

In a somewhat feeble attempt to prevent more carpet stains, you tell your child to pick up the coloring book from the floor and color on the table. And then discover to your horror that she is literally coloring ON the table....

You suddenly notice that dogs have no sense of personal space.

You have a sense of excitement, no matter how wrong it is, when your doctor informs you that you need a minor surgical procedure because you realize anesthesia will be involved, therefore giving you the opportunity for a nap.

You wish you could remember 1/826th of the information your child retains.

You think EVERYONE has Autism.

*Written by Shelly McLaughlin, Pathfinders for Autism
© 2012 Pathfinders for Autism*



Merritt Properties is a proud sponsor of the Pathfinders for Autism Resource Center.