



May 3rd 2024  
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**Neurodivergence;  
Autism and Emotions // Part 3**

It needs to be reinforced again that this series is about the Autism Spectrum. Specifically, Autism that is termed 'functional autistics'. This is a growing sector of society; they are not the Asperger's kids that need continual care thru their life. They are not the 'nerdy' PhD's who are accepted because of their overwhelming intellects. It is about those of whom you could not tell they have issues of any kind by 'looking' at them. They are the ones that fit the mold of social rejection for reasons unknown to them.

Neurodivergent's tend to be viewed for the most part, as "emotionally dead". That may well be a function of the levels and intensity of turned backs, forced isolation, and other factors driving autistics into corners they prefer not to be in. Since most others don't know how to interact with aspies, the overwhelming trend is to look the other way, or expect 'something' out of them they just don't have or understand how to give. A lot of times it's worse. Older aspies, as children, were prone to feeling the brunt of other children directly putting them down. Today's children are a lot different in their interaction with peers and aspies, since this condition has become more normalized. Children oppressive toward other children can be worse than adults on adults, or adults on children; and as for all of us, the formative years are as children. By the time older generational aspies became adults, they became 'conditioned', or 'assimilated'. It mostly boils down to the fact that aspies don't want to be alone; their forced to be alone thru life circumstance. Isolation then evolves into a need based on survival, which unfortunately for many becomes morbid loneliness and isolation; and all that goes with it.

It is today a blessing to see that the new generations of young adults and children are far more open to aspies, and most other forms of neurological illnesses; simply because a lot of today's parents either grew up on AD-HD medications, or knew others on those meds. They know first hand or watched what their peers suffered thru, even to this day. Things do change, even if the cogs are slow to turn, or learn.

Aspie unmasking can be eased around people with no expectations, or strangers. This of course dictates that an aspie is actually comfortable in situations where people are unknowns; and also that they can process, {foreign to aspies}, the social signals and small talk. Unfortunately, most cannot. When others see aspies getting worse; it's because of the attempt at unmasking and trying to fit in better; which pretty much backfires more than not.

Then there's the self acceptance of neurodivergence, commonly known as denial. The expectations of autistics who are termed 'functional' varies as to the individual. Aspies have expectations of what they may want from or thru life, yet the mental health 'system', in all it's brevity, seems to have other ideas. A lot of times there is not the physical or social ability to do what is 'expected'. As with most 'systemized' individuals, the desire to be supported by 'the system' is NOT a desire; and yet the choices offered become totally unreasonable; leaving no other REALISTIC options available. Since the 'disease', or perhaps the condition of neurodivergence can be invisible, the mask becomes distorted, morphed and just plain ugly.

This is not emotional death, it's flat emotional affect. Inside aspies hurt just like everybody else.

Paraphrased from {???}  
***"If you're too tired to speak; sit next to me; as I am too, also fluent in silence."***

To try and wrap up the concept of 'spectrum', let's look at a simple way of understanding the 'traits' of aspies as they relate to all individuals on the spectrum.

All individual traits can range from non existent to full on disabling. If traits are plotted on a simple scale of (0 - 100); 0 being non existent, and 100 being disabling; then we can see how individuals can be so different, and still share the same condition.

Trait (1) 0-----\*-----100  
Trait (2) 0----\*-----100  
Trait (3) 0-----\*-----100  
Trait (4) 0\*-----100

Any particular trait can be mapped in any individual as seen above. Where they fall in any individual simply relates to the level of disabling within that

individual. So since no two of any of us are alike, then we can see how traits make the individual. If a person is angry, it is not necessarily the result of one trait or combination of traits. Anger can be caused by so many traits working together, that any two individuals can be completely different in their situations, yet equally as angry, or tend to blow their tops in specific situations to them, verses others.

I leave the designation of traits to professionals, as traits, and effects can overlap, and become confusing to most of us. This mapping can be possibly designated by simple testing; quite different than today's psychological testing which tends to be so cryptic that how professionals discern a thing from them is beyond this author.

Next; inside the head of aspies.

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## It is an honor to be a part of the healing of Cowlitz County

*Chai Rivers Recovery Cafe Staff*

Newsletter Editorial Staff:

*Jim Barbieri*

*Connie Kruse*

*Rose Hoggatt-Nickle*

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### Family Fun Night

This month our focus for our family fun night event being held on (May 29th, from 4 - 6pm) is the Mt. St. Helens Eruption! Not to be confused with the periodic eruptions of happiness emanating from the Cafe! Dinner and games, children welcome. Come blow your top with us!

We will also be holding a field trip to the mountain on (May 18th) {signup required}; for those interested in attending this epic event that put our Section of the Mountain on the Map!

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### Ongoing Training!

Suicide prevention seminars have been held, and will continue being held here at the Cafe; so as to educate us all in this devastating and crippling issue in which very few of us have been left untouched.

**Call or text 988**

**Or chat 988lifeline**

## What is a Peer?

Our lived experiences is what we share  
It means we have been there  
Not always we can relate but change we can anticipate  
We help each other  
To support one another  
When these experiences we've been given  
Are no longer our burden  
When you feel discouraged  
We are here to encourage  
We remind you that every life matters  
Even when you feel your whole life shatters, YOU matter  
We know what it feels like to be left in the dark  
We are here to ignite your spark  
There is nothing that you cant overcome  
We see you trying, but we also see you carrying a ton  
So we remind you to give yourself a break  
When you've had all that you can take  
What is peer? A peer is me. A peer is you  
When we can share all the things we have been through  
It makes our burdens lighter  
When were standing with a fighter  
"I call myself a survivor"  
Healing is for everyone  
Even if you feel it hasn't begun  
Even when it feels like the end  
There are always ways to mend  
Even if you feel the mend hasn't started  
Because these life experiences got you all disheartened  
Whether they be from someone else or your own mistakes  
Having HOPE is what it takes  
We hold the hope for you  
When you feel there's nothing more that you can do  
Because we once didn't see it ourselves  
Self love will be inspired  
And it starts with yourself  
Don't ever give up, do what you can  
It's not always easy as some things are out of our hands  
Remember there is always someone out there who understands  
It's going to be ok  
Maybe not tomorrow  
But your peer support will hope for today  
This is my truth  
I hear what you say  
My HOPE is that you will find relief  
This is my core belief

Written by:

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