

The image features a light gray background with a subtle gradient. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are several realistic-looking water droplets of various sizes, some overlapping. The text is centered and rendered in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow.

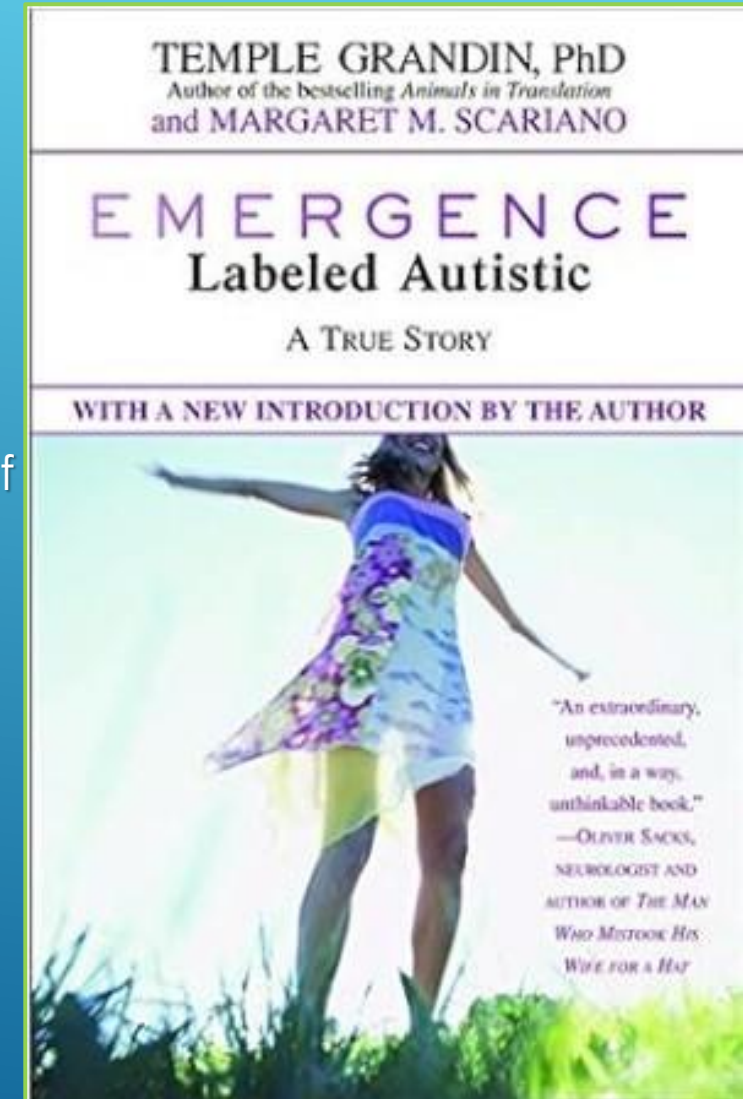
Autism Success Stories

Success Stories:

- **Emile Gouws PhD:** An ASD person who, by age 15, still wasn't talking. Emile is now a special educator at Edu360 Integrated Education in South Africa. Even in comfortable situations, he still didn't speak. In school he experienced "sensory overload," especially when lesson content was being discussed. After experiencing much emotional abuse by peers, he eventually learned to stop hand-flapping so that at least some of the abuse would stop. It was only when he got placed into a remedial school setting at the age of 14-15 that he began to speak verbally. Emile notes that this environment created less anxiety compared to regular public school: "Sensory overstimulation was one of the main REASONS why I was non-verbal, especially in unfamiliar environments." His parents "exposed me to different social situations and motivated me to not portray avoidance." He states that, "I learned defense mechanisms to deal with sensory overstimulation challenges." To this day Emile will stutter and struggle with talking when he's in a new and unfamiliar situation. Today, Emile is on the board of directors for the Interdisciplinary Council on Development and Learning and has presented at conferences throughout the world.
- **Stephen Shore EdD** – full-time professor at Adelphi University and adjunct at NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. As a child he was diagnosed with "Atypical Development and strong autistic tendencies" and was deemed "too sick" for outpatient treatment. He was recommended for institutionalization even as he remained non-verbal until age 4. He has written a book entitled, *College for Students with Disabilities*. Currently he's a board member of Autism Speaks, The Organization for Autism Research (OAR), the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), as well as president emeritus of the Asperger/Autism Network as well as advisory board member of the Autism Society.

Dr. Temple Grandin:

- She was non-verbal until age 3.5 - she was fortunate to receive early speech therapy.
- Her teachers taught her how to wait and take turns through playing board games.
- She was mainstreamed into a normal Kindergarten at age 5.
- Today she is a professor of animal science at Colorado State U.
- She was featured on NPR and BBC where she was the focus of a documentary entitled, *The Woman Who Thinks Like a Cow*.
- Also, she did a TED Talk in 2010.
- HBO made an Emmy Award winning movie about her life entitled, *Temple Grandin*.
- She was bullied as a child through high school. The only places she thrived were in activities involving horses or model rockets. Today, half of the cattle in the U.S. are handled in facilities she has designed.
- Her book was one of the first, first-person accounts of the experience of Autism vs. clinical books written by psychologists and therapists.
- To this day she can't follow rapid chit-chat conversations taking place between two or more people ... she simply gets lost/can't keep up. She also has great difficulty with multi-tasking, especially if under pressure and having to switch back and forth rapidly. She "can't follow" stand-up comedians because, "I'm laughing at the first joke he said, and by the time I'm done processing it, he's gone on with three more."



- **Aiden** – He was age 15 coming through our system, had some autistic traits and had been deemed to be “the sickest adolescent I’ve ever worked with” by his outpatient therapist. Aiden had experienced severe emotional and physical bullying in school. The therapist wrote a letter to the court indicating that Aiden should not be left alone due to the severity of his suicidal impulses, and he also indicated that Aiden was an extreme danger to others as well. From JDC, Aiden was placed in a residential treatment center that also focused on job skills and activities of daily/independent living. While in treatment, Aiden thrived. His self-esteem improved greatly as a result of being surrounded by adults who were interested in him, who were willing and able to draw-out his strengths, who valued him as a person despite his speech challenges and short stature, and who treated him with kindness and respect. Today, despite family difficulties, Aiden continues to do well and has meaningful goals.
- **Dr. Frederick Frese** (1940 – 2018): “I’ve got a message for all psychologists, for all my fellow Marines, for all my fellow travelers: Yeah, I’m schizophrenic and I absolutely refuse to be ashamed.” Frese was diagnosed with schizophrenia at the age of 25. For over three decades he spoke publicly about issues such as recovery and stigma and was a panelist on PBS’s *MINDS ON THE EDGE: Facing Mental Illness*. Dr. Frese noted that, “We accept that which is logical, that which is rational and reasonable. That which is crazy is dismissed. Therefore, it is very difficult for us [Schizophrenics] to accept that what we are thinking is in fact crazy. Psychosis is a ‘catch 22.’ If you understand that you are insane [experiencing psychosis] then you are thinking properly and are therefore not insane. *You can only be psychotic if, in fact, you believe that you are not.* Therefore, almost everyone with this disorder *initially denies that they have it.* Some deny it all their lives. Most of the 300 patients I have in the hospital where I work will tell you that they are not mentally ill. Denial of the disorder comes as part of the territory for most of us who have it. Some of those who have the disorder not only deny that they have it, but also deny that it exists.” Look for his article online, called: *12 Aspects of Coping With Schizophrenia*. **Dr. Frese’s statements about the difficulty of acceptance of one’s condition can be applied to ASD folks.**



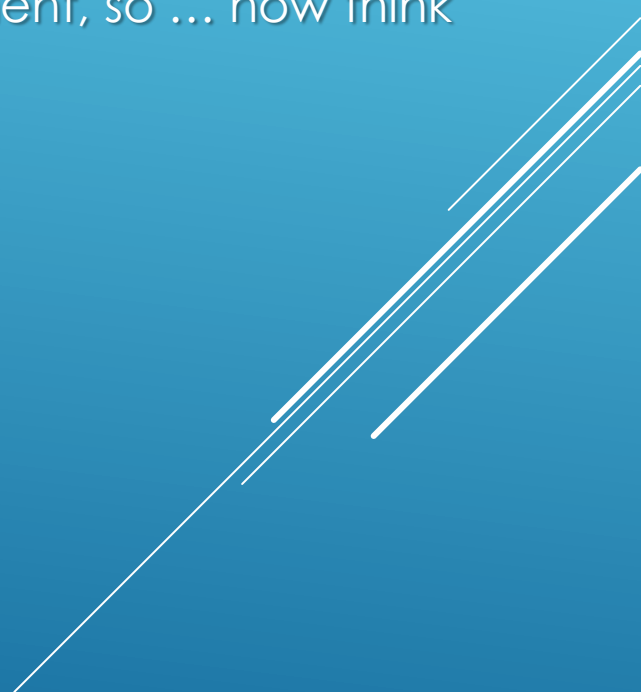
I'm highly selective of sensory toys, so you can trust these picks! #autism #sensory #autistic #adhd



0:56 / 0:59

I'm highly selective of sensory toys, so you can trust these picks! #autism #sensory #autistic #adhd

- **Elon Musk** – Founder and CEO of Tesla and Space X: Politics aside, notice how Elon has been able to capitalize on his strengths in order to build a career as an inventor, entrepreneur, and businessman. Of course, it helps that he's also super-intelligent, too!

 - **Dan Akroyd** – Actor: His two special interests are ghosts and law enforcement, so ... now think about how fitting he was for a role in the movie Ghost Busters!
- 

Non-verbal girl with Autism speaks through her computer 20/20 ABC News

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=xMBzJleeOno>


Wow! – When Carly started typing at age 11, she actually **knew how to spell**, even though no one had ever taught her (due to not having good fine motor skills). This reveals a **hidden intelligence** that no one suspected because the doctors referred to her as being “**mentally retarded.**”



Non-verbal girl with Autism speaks through her computer 20/20 ABC News

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Carly Fleishman Give Late Night TV a Try!

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=xPtCf8DBZ0E>

"I stopped using the labels 'low functioning' and 'high functioning'; now, instead, I use **'verbal' and 'non-verbal.'** Some non-verbal people can type independently, and then you find out that they have a good brain in there [even though] they cannot [perfectly] control their movements, and they [sometimes] have sensory scrambling problems" – Temple Grandin



FOR LETTING ME AUDITION FOR YOUR JOB TONIGHT.

Carly Fleischmann Gives Late-Night TV A Try

Observations About Carly:

- Carly's intensity of acting-out started to go down once people figured out how to help her to communicate how/what she was really feeling and experiencing on the inside. Her neurology didn't change, but her heart, mind, emotions, and spirit did. Feeling understood AND being able to express herself both contributed to a lessening of her level of experienced, internal irritation!
- Once Carly began to **FEEL** understood and began to be **ENABLED** to communicate, she became able to function on a higher level, including:
 - Setting goals,
 - Giving and receiving humor,
 - Thinking about having a boyfriend,
 - Having the nerve to go on national television in front of a live studio audience, etc.





11/11/51 – 12/19/09

Kim's life was a "success," not because he held a high-paying job or cured cancer, but because he was able to use his talents to help others in simple ways because of the ongoing love and support he himself received.

Remember Tom Cruise's early movie, *Rain Man*? The movie was about a man named **Laurence Kim Peek**. Peek was born with a condition known as macrocephaly, which caused the circumference of his head to be abnormally large, in addition to a damaged cerebellum — the back part of the brain that coordinates movement and balance — and a rare birth defect known as agenesis of the corpus callosum, the cluster of neurons that connect the left and right hemispheres. Kim Peek's one-of-a-kind brain allowed him to read two pages of a book at once, recite the day of the week for any date in history, and memorize some 12,000 volumes. Kim was called an "Autistic Savant," but he wasn't truly autistic — i.e., his deficits were severe, but so were his gifts. When he was just nine months old, a doctor told his parents that he would never walk or talk and that he should be institutionalized. Some years later, another doctor suggested a lobotomy. Peek certainly had severe developmental problems. He didn't learn to walk until he was almost four years old and he required help to do basic things, like dressing and brushing his teeth, until the end of his life. Peek also had low-average I.Q., around 87, and struggled with subjects like math. In the movie, it shows how Kim was able to count cards in Vegas without writing anything down. Peek displayed jaw-dropping memorization skills as an adult. He could memorize facts about everything from history to sports, leading to his nickname "**Kimputer.**" He retained everything that he read. This turned Peek into a walking encyclopedia. For instance, Peek could give detailed driving directions to cities across the world based on maps he had simply once glanced at. Having memorized phone books, he could even tell strangers the names of their neighbors. His father, Fran, said: "Kim is **not behaviorally autistic**. He has a warm, loving personality. He truly cares for people and enjoys sharing his unique skills and knowledge capacity."



A message from



Lisa Ackerman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER

Following that fateful visit with the neurologist, we visited many other professionals, including medical doctors, speech pathologists, audiologists, and behaviorists. The list seemed endless. The common message we were given; *Autism has no hope, and no cure.* In fact, the first three medical doctors recommended that my family find "institutional placement" for Jeff who was the ripe old age of 2½ years at the time.

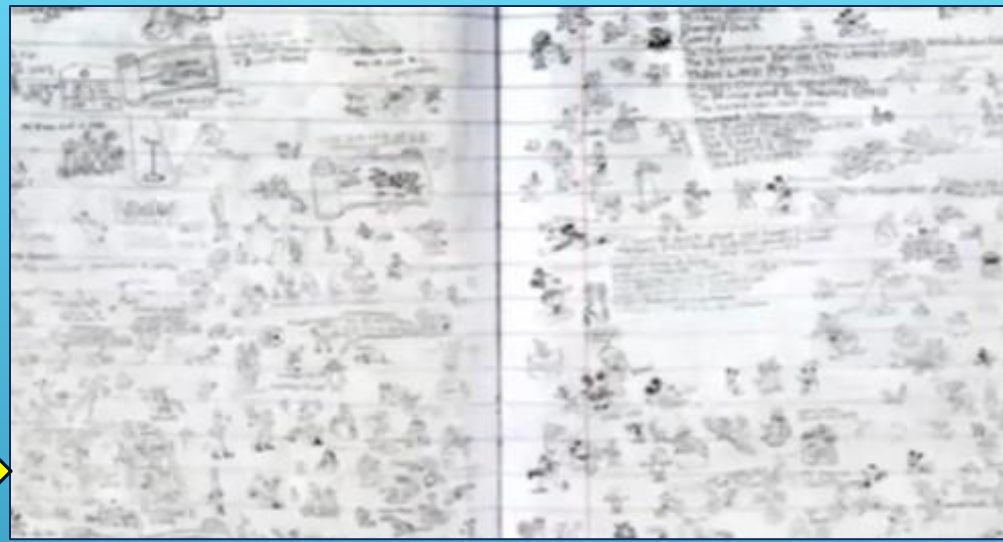
Refusing to give up on our son, my husband and I spent hundreds of hours talking to any and all parents of a child diagnosed with autism, reading dozens of recommended books, watching countless hours of educational videos, and of course, surfing the internet constantly. We were determined that our beloved son would grow far beyond his label and that he would have a future that was wonderful and amazing despite his autism diagnosis. Early on, the most important step for us was to GET BUSY. **It was up to us, HIS PARENTS, to make a difference for his future.**

<https://tacanow.org/who-we-are/#mission>

Where is my son Jeff now? He is in his last year of college at his first-choice university. He talks, makes jokes, plays multiple instruments, and composes his own songs, socializes with typical friends, and is an active member of society with a bright future. He also happens to be the sweetest, kindest person I know and is practically always smiling. That is a far cry from his early diagnosis and the initial prognosis for his future.

Because parents have seen such success with this approach, they volunteer for TACA to share their experience and hope with other families. Each year TACA is grateful for the dedicated volunteers paying it forward to help other families find community and a path for their child.

VOLUNTEER TO BE A PARENT MENTOR



**Improving Social Communication
in Autistic Clients**
Neurodiversity Principles in Action

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██████████ This is his composition book That he takes around with him and makes his drawings. Okay, so the prognosis for Justin ██████████ ██████████ was total dependency his whole life on other people. Basically, quality of life: don't expect much at all. This video was from four years ago. There was a plan in place that Justin helped to make to move into his own apartment. Two years ago, he moved into his own apartment in New Jersey. He takes the Path Train and the New York City subways on his own, and he teaches cartooning and drawing to young children in elementary schools. He also works in bakeries and designs children's birthday cakes with cartoon characters. Again, lifelong interest nurtured. And Justin's one of the coolest people you'll ever meet in your life. He's just a very, very nice young man. ██████████

TV Shows & Books Featuring (Main or Other) Characters that Clearly are on the Spectrum:

TV Shows:

- Monk
- Big Bang Theory
- The Good Doctor
- Criminal Minds
- The Middle (the youngest son, Brick, is on the Spectrum)
- Ludwig (BBC)
- The Mentalist ... possibly

Books:

Sherlock Holmes