

AUTITUDE!



INFO AND ADVICE!
MOVIES! ART!
AND MUCH MUCH MORE!

WELCOME!

Welcome to issue 23 of Autitude!

Do you have artwork, photography, poetry or stories you would like to share? Or perhaps you have a suggestion of who you would like to see as our future Spectrum Superstar?

Whether it's a thought, suggestion or submission, send it to us at autitude@scottishautism.org.

We look forward to seeing your fab content!

**Scottish
autism**

**WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED**

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4. Events Update (incl. Click & Connect), launch of our conference and information about the new AutNav app.

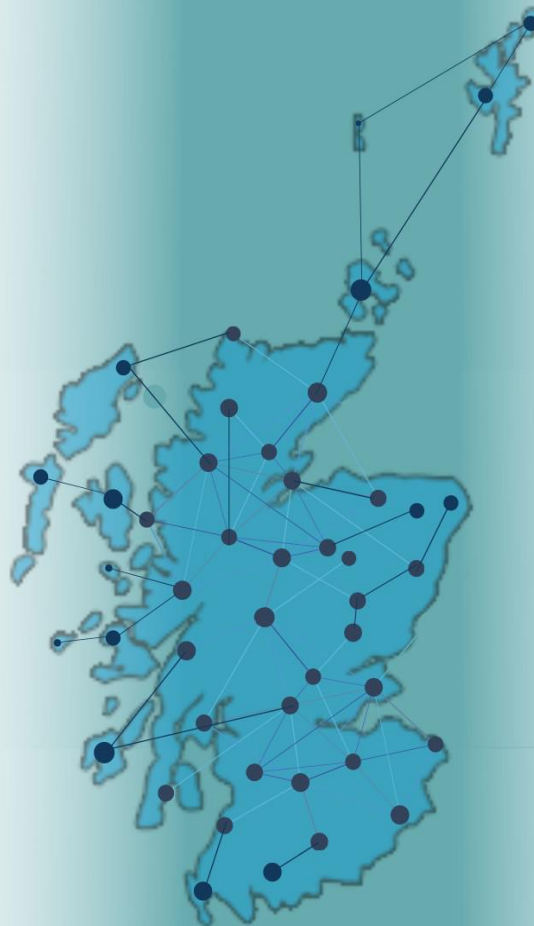
7. David Yeoman's Neurodiversity Journey.

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Scottish
autism
WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED

Book your place for Click & Connect Block 10!

Click and Connect offers three free online groups including Art and Choir groups for those who enjoy being creative and a Mindfulness for Autism Group for those who are looking to reduce the impact of stress. The groups are a great way to come together and meet new and like-minded people in a safe and friendly environment.

The groups are delivered online via Zoom and are open to the autistic community and their families across Scotland.

For more information and to book:
<https://www.scottishautism.org/click-and-connect>



Scottish Autism Conference

Why Relationships Matter in Good Autism Practice

5th October 2023

Join us online at our annual conference. This year we will be exploring how positive social relationships feature as a key factor in every wellbeing index, yet they are often missing from the way support provision for autistic people is talked about.

This conference will shine a light on the ways in which autistic people's relationships can be recognised and supported - relationships with one another, with family members, with partners, and between supported people and professionals. We will hear from a range of speakers drawing on lived experience, professional practice, and research about the positive ways in which autistic sociality can be supported, while acknowledging the vulnerabilities and difficulties faced by autistic people building relationships in a largely non-autistic world.

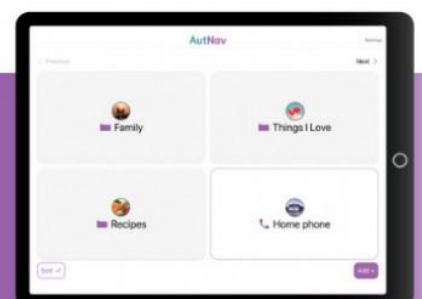
**To book your place, visit
<https://www.scottishautismconference.org/>**

AutNav

Scottish Autism in partnership with the National Autistic Taskforce are delighted to showcase [our new AutNav app](#), specifically created for autistic individuals.

The app has been developed in line with the vision of the late Dr Dinah Murray, who was passionate about supporting the rights of autistic individuals with profound communication difficulties, often supported in long-term residential care, and saw AutNav as a method to enable individuals to communicate their interests, and interact with friends and wider family.

AutNav is an app that brings together an individual's favourite content, and keeps it all in one place. It was developed so that autistic people, including those in supported settings, could have more autonomy, and more easily use technology to pursue their interests and keep in touch with friends and family. AutNav is available to download now for android and iPad devices.



My Neurodiversity Journey Part 12

My journey allows me to live in the present as I continue to research and learn about my diagnoses. What does it mean?

As my knowledge and awareness increases, I am easily reminded of what I wish teachers, medical professionals and especially my parents and close family members knew back in the middle 1960's.

The **language** used back then to describe my aptitude and personality was at best, a difficult child, easily distracted, can't follow easy instructions, daydreamer and constantly requiring reassurance and so on. This mantra started around the age of 4 / 5 years old and I repeated these comments hourly, daily and continued most of my life.

*I can speak on behalf of my mother as well as my own lived experience; no child, parent, grandparent carer, teacher or medical professional should be using this type of **language** in front of a young impressionable child.*

'Retard, clumsy child syndrome; thick, stupid let's discuss special schools' was the inappropriate **language** and topics re my own situation back in the day.

Thankfully we have moved on with more appropriate names and labels to describe our neurobiology. There is still much more detailed specific work to be done and implemented for the well-being of the child and society.

Thankfully we have moved on with more appropriate names and labels to describe our neurobiology. There is still much more detailed specific work to be done and implemented for the well-being of the child and society.

Having the correct label / diagnoses serves us in that it signposts next steps and a support package with all needs being met in the community.

All human beings whether Neurotypical or Neurodivergent are not broken or in need of being fixed.

A holistic person-centred approach will work if the relevant knowledge is available for the medical professional to establish the personalised support plan for the child.

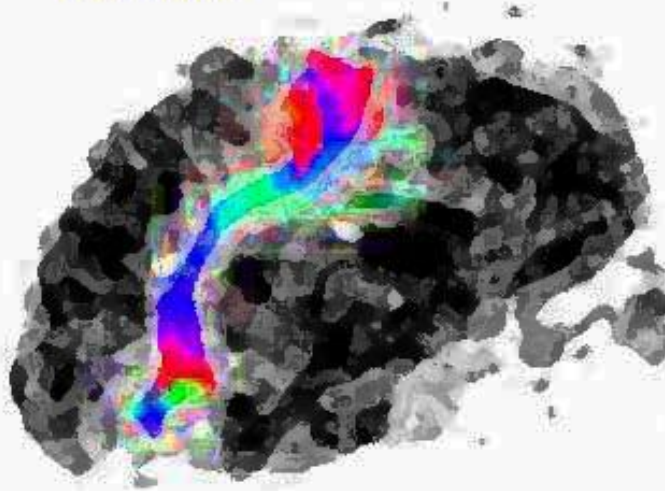
The knowledge I have of self now (IE my own unique neurobiology) as I understand my assessments and scoring for each section assists greatly in making sense of my life. The good the bad the indifferent.

So, let's go back to the beginning; the root cause of my life. Brain scans demonstrate that my brain is wired completely differently when compared to a non-autistic brain.

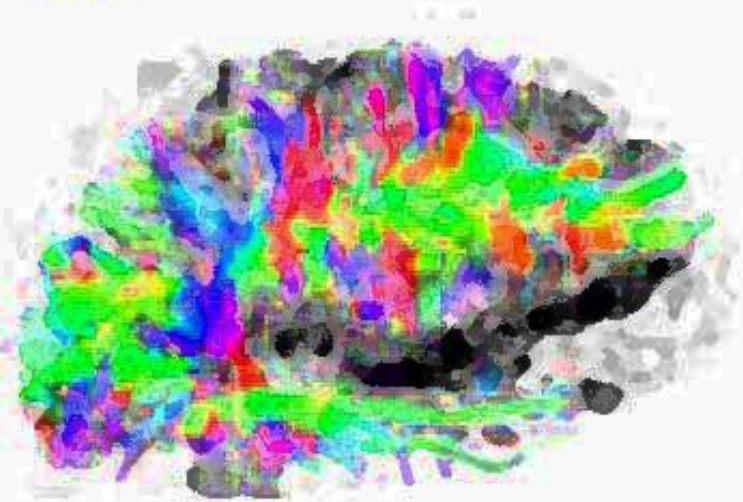
Again, I repeat my mother would wish the bottom line on my type of brain enabling my significant others armed with the knowledge on the deficits as well as strengths. Time spent enhancing my strengths and not suffering with no positive outcome on topics I was never wired to get; IE my deficits. This would be ABUSE.

So, I am Autistic with learning disabilities (Autistic Savant) and live with Bertie as he lives with me. I am confident Bertie has Dogbergers, so many traits
As a very late diagnosed Autistic (born autistic -unknown to all until 7 years ago)

Non-Autistic



Autistic

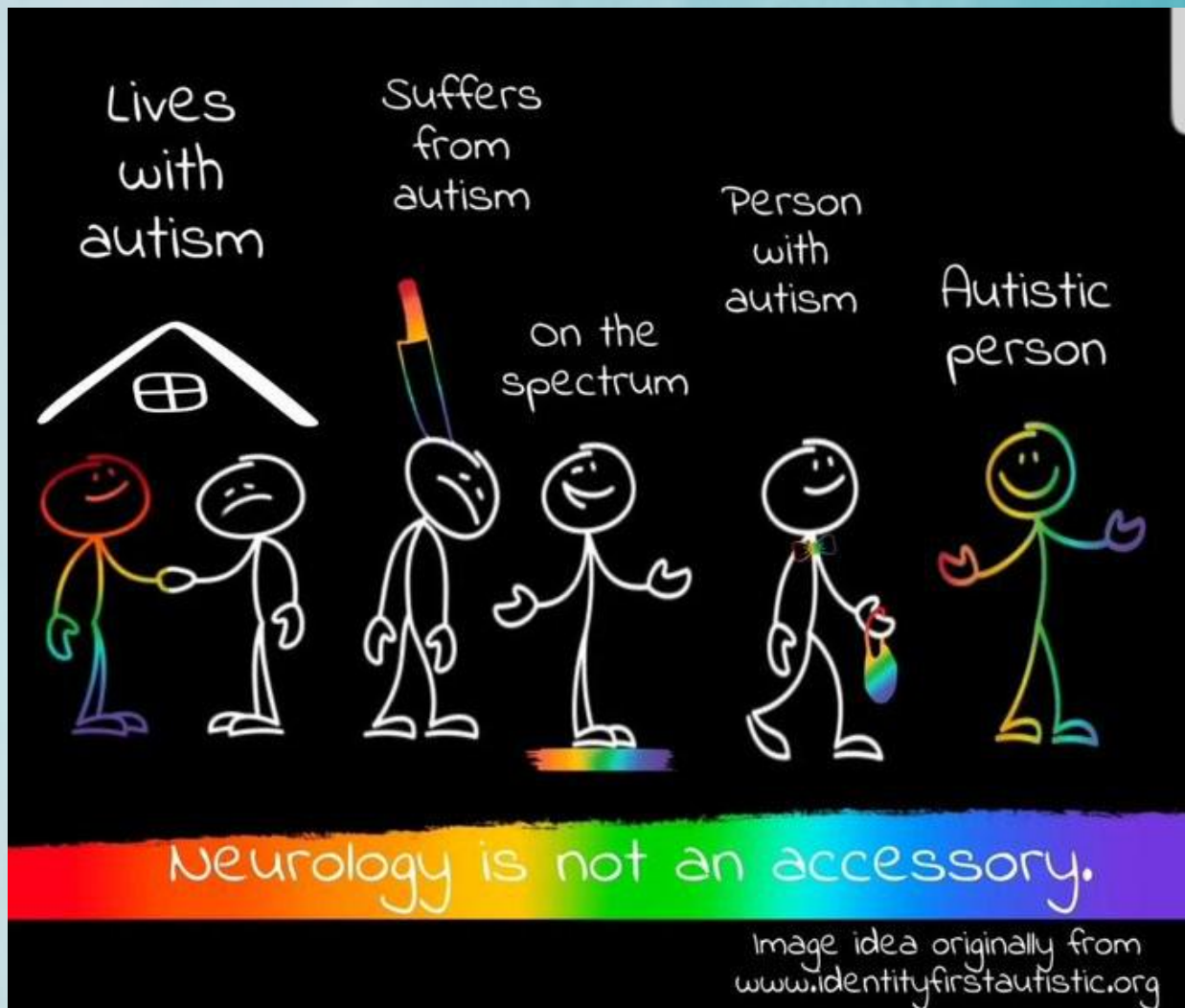


I am sure I can speak for most Autistics when I say **“we only suffer from ignorance”** and lack of services and support for our different minds.

This must change now. Awareness Acceptance and Accommodation.

I can only speak of my own understanding and will share my own explanation on how I describe myself and I know my mother would have wished this clarity back in the middle 1960's.

I also know, that my mother would not wish you as a parent, carer, grandparent or teacher to go through the same frustrations, disappointments as a family we did in the 60's with expectations not being met. This is the 21st Century.



I would never say that I suffered **abuse** at school, as teachers or parents' knowledge on Intellectual, Learning Disabilities or Autism was close to zero.

All were doing their best at the time.

That was then this is now. Excuses for young children at school not knowing how their own brain works is hugely disappointing and frustrating. Some may say **"unintended abuse"**.

I feel your pain as my mother would do to.

I was out of the NORM group for my age. I was different and by 3 deviations less than the mean average, the NORM in some cases. I will explain.

There are many positive benefits when our unique neurobiological is identified.

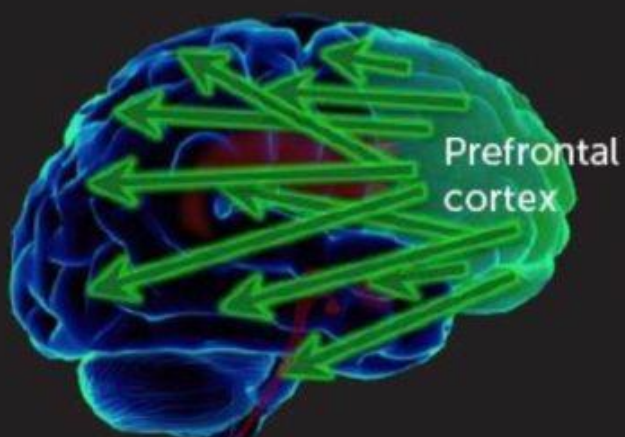
Whether you are a parent, sibling, grandparent, carer, teacher or medical professional, all will be delighted when our own unique lane is identified, and this is done as early as possible.

Breaking down the barriers for cultural inclusion is a must for Autistics in Scotland and a top priority on the desk of the Autistic and Learning Disability Commissioner.

The image below best describes what happens to our Autistic brains when we are not being hammered into a lane or hole that is not ours to be in.

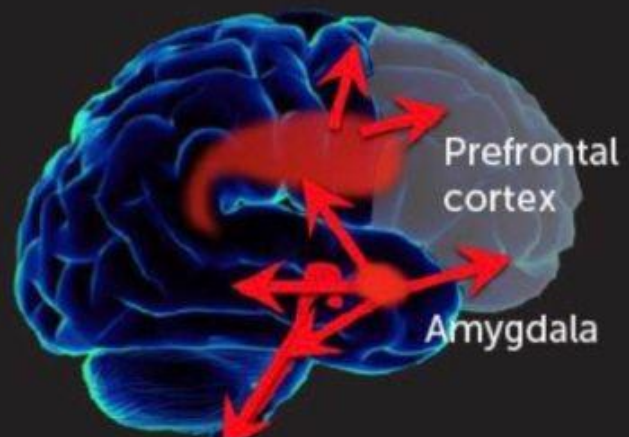
Being aware of our lane, our herd and by staying true to our neurobiology, we are giving our brain the opportunity to minimise stress, meltdowns, shutdowns, burnouts and in some instances situational mutism.

Unstressed



Tight control of thoughts, emotions and actions

Stressed



Weaker control of thoughts, emotions and actions

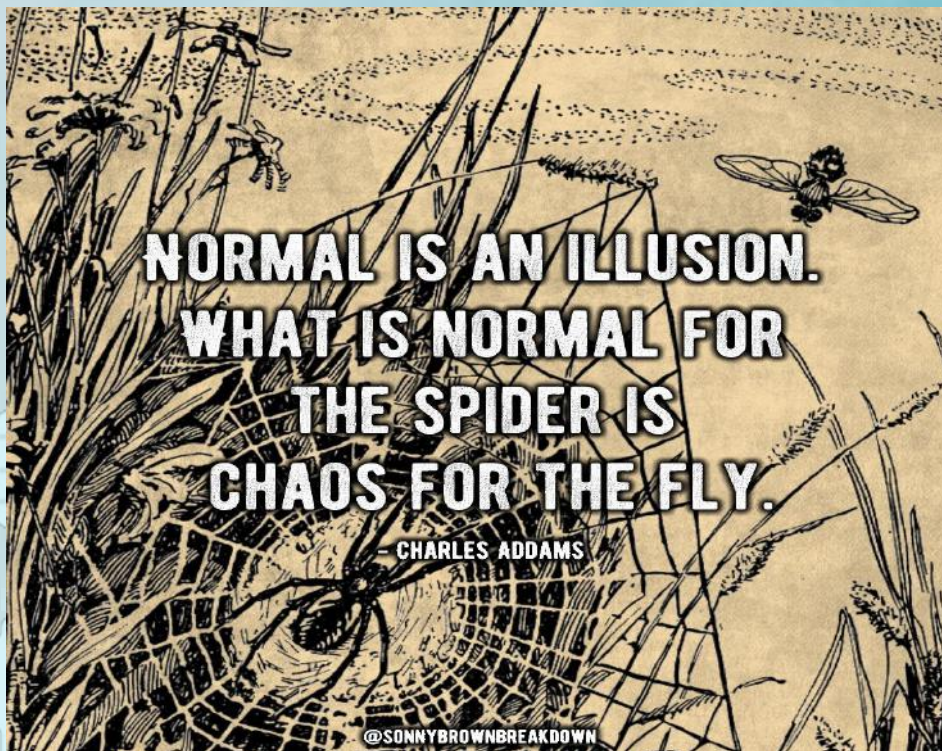
IMAGINE IF SCHOOLS
ACTUALLY HELPED

IMAGINE IF SCHOOLS
ACTUALLY HELPED
KIDS IDENTIFY
THEIR STRENGTHS
BY EXPLORING
THEIR TALENTS FROM
A YOUNG AGE AND
GROWING THEIR
SKILLS OVER THE 12
YEARS INSTEAD OF
LETTING THEM ALL
FOLLOW THE SAME
ROUTINE AND
LEAVING THEM
CONFUSED IN LIFE
AFTER GRADUATION.

- @TALL -

CONFUSED IN LIFE
AFTER GRADUATION.

- @TALL -



We are all normal in our own way. Unearth my strengths please, let me find my normal. The tools are available, resources are not.

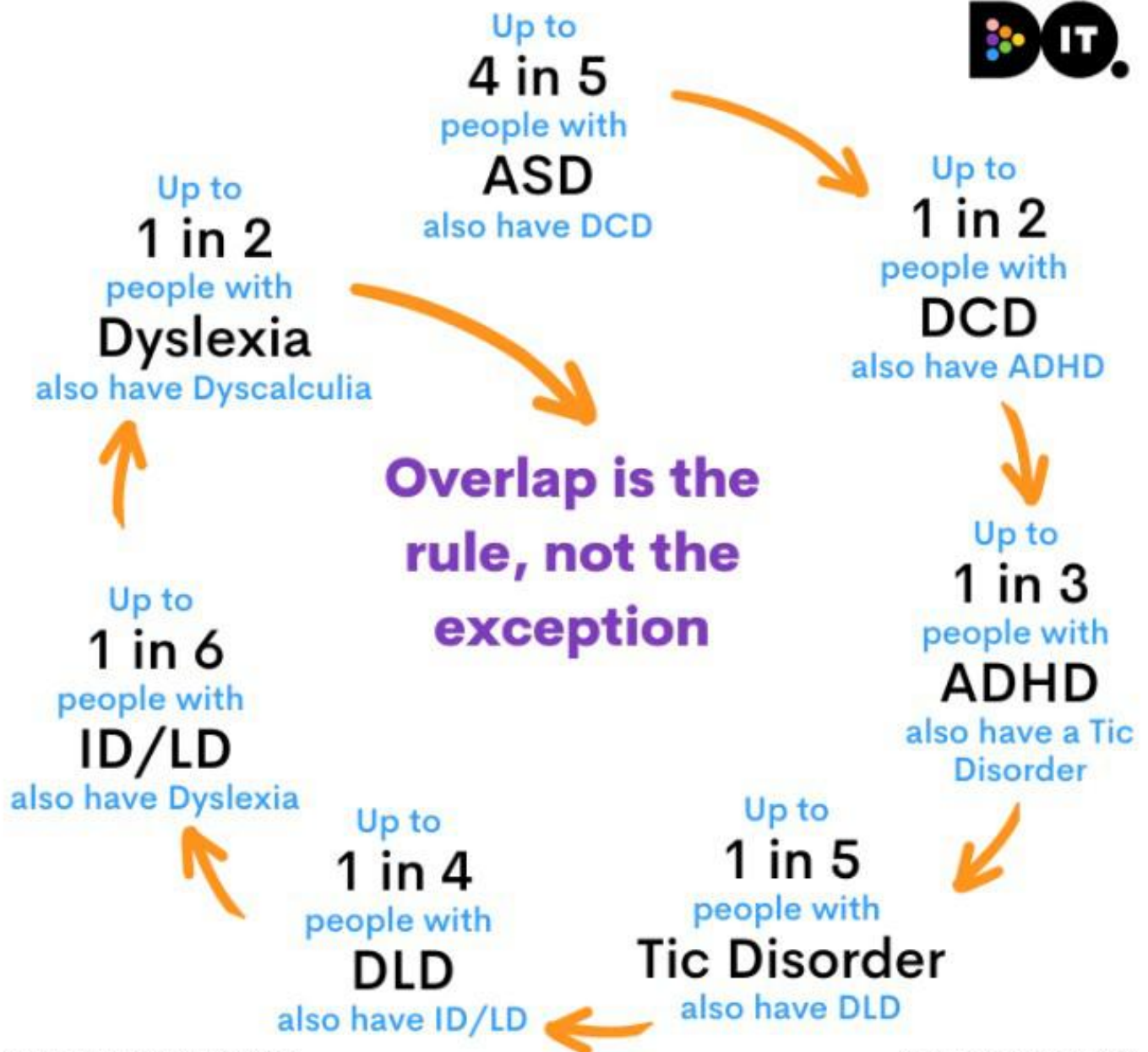
Comorbidity or co-occurring conditions is the medical language used today.

What does it mean? "As well as" along with diagnosis X, statistically other challenges are also evident. Holistic approach required. Not one size fit all. What is the origin of the presenting problem?

Do we have the right problem in the room?

The presenting problem is never the problem; always an assumed solution to assumed problem. Often as not this is inaccurate.

I will explain further on what this means as this knowledge and awareness will be an enormous assistance to you bringing up a child who is out with the NORM group in his or her class.



Source: Cleaton & Kirby (2018) in *Journal of Childhood & Developmental Disorders*, vol. 4, issue 3, p. 1-20.

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Prof. Amanda Kirby & Dr Mary Cleaton
www.doitprofiler.com

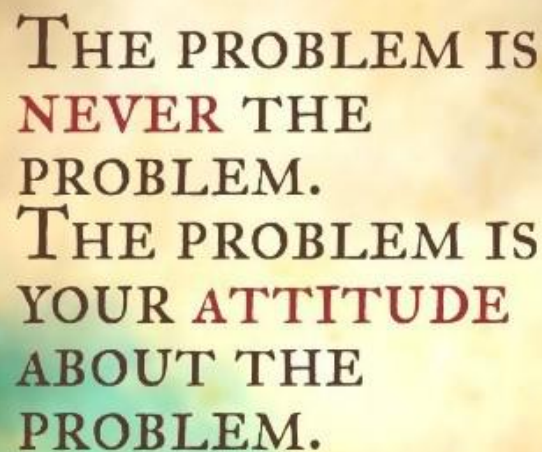
The waiting times for an assessment at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is woefully slow for reasons various. Very unfair for all.

There has to be a more efficient, effective and timely assessment for a child and parent etc to know how to act and react and communicate with an Autistic child as early on as possible.

What framework and working models are currently in practice?

Are they ethical and meet and individuals Human Rights and Equality act 2010?

Are they producing the appropriate outcomes?



THE PROBLEM IS
NEVER THE
PROBLEM.
THE PROBLEM IS
YOUR **ATTITUDE**
ABOUT THE
PROBLEM.

Strengths, deficits and the language used to describe our unique brains as Autistics, ADHD, Dyslexics, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia and Developmental **language** disorder etc.

Reviewing the past and correctly labelling all behaviours, actions, reactions in all environments I found myself in; starting from school age, especially at the beginning from ages 4 – 9 years old. A very impressionable stage where life long damage may or could or does occur.

Sorry, thus may appear a tad harsh; not meant to. Sugar coating will not work.

BY CHANGING YOUR THINKING

**BY CHANGING YOUR THINKING,
YOU CHANGE YOUR BELIEFS;**

**WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR BELIEFS,
YOU CHANGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS;**

**WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR EXPECTATIONS,
YOU CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE;**

**WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE,
YOU CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR;**

**WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOUR,
YOU CHANGE YOUR PERFORMANCE;**

**WHEN YOU CHANGE YOUR PERFORMANCE;
YOU CHANGE YOUR LIFE!**

***'It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.'* Charles Darwin.**

We all have a duty of care directly or indirectly to ensure that all children who have been identified as challenging, naughty, easily distracted and so on are probably screened /diagnosed for autism as well as other Intellectual or Learning Disabilities.

Step into you child's shoes for a moment – would you want they or them to be reciting using their internal voice re embedding their perceived failings hourly, daily. What will this do to the child's self-esteem and image.

Examples below:-

“I am not enough”

“I am stupid / thick”

“I am not as good as others”

Or. Being told you are “lazy and disruptive”

“Last in the class to lace shoes or tie your tie”

And so on.

Below gives you an example what goes on consciously and subconsciously with us all.

We don't live in the real world we live in the world of our own story. What we tell ourselves.

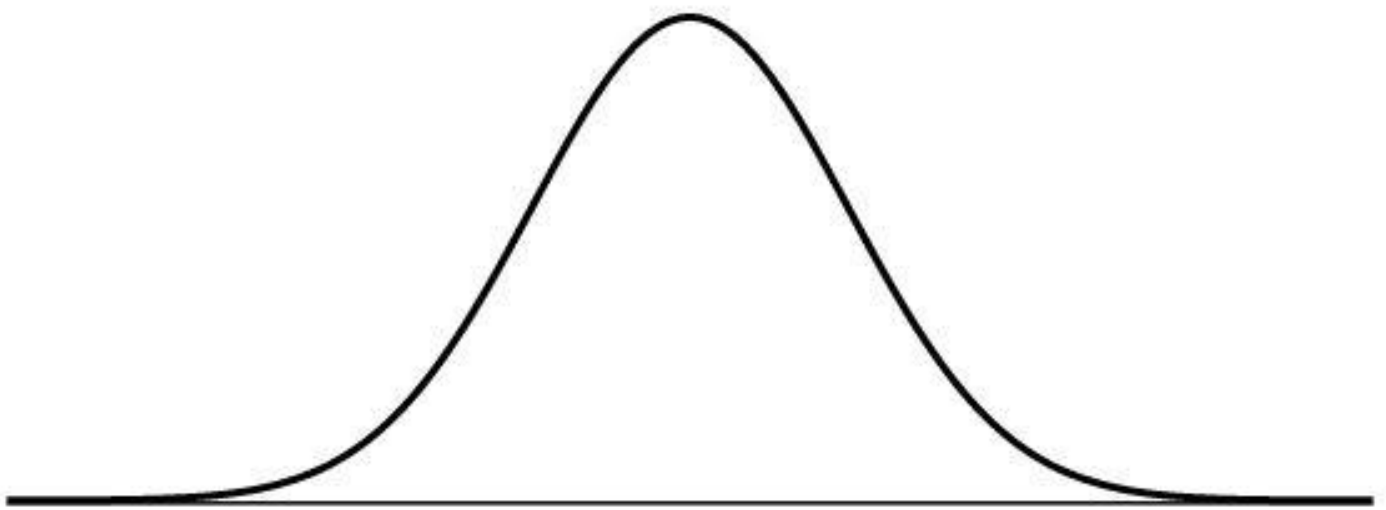
PROJECTING = PSYCHO DRAMA

Approx 60,000 – 70,000 THOUGHTS PER DAY

- **80 % OF OUR LIVES ARE SPENT PROJECTING!!!!**
- **Only 5 - 10% THOUGHTS PER DAY ARE NEW AND ORIGINAL**
- **60% OF THESE REPETITIVE THOUGHTS ARE THOUGHTS THAT YOU HAVE ABOUT YOURSELF AND THE WORLD AROUND YOU.**
- **WE CALL THIS OUR INTERNAL DIALOGUE / SELF TALK**
- **THE CONVERSATIONS YOU HAVE WITH YOURSELF THAT NO ONE ELSE IS PARTY TO.**
- **IN MOST CASES, NEGATIVE SELF TALK IN SOME WAY AND ARE OFTEN CENTRED AROUND YOUR INABILITIES AND FAILINGS.**

I will attempt to explain what each child, parent, carer, teacher and medical professional should know to minimise or eliminate further damage to a young child who is trying their best to communicate to you.

A normal curve shown as a bell curve



What Is the Empirical Rule?

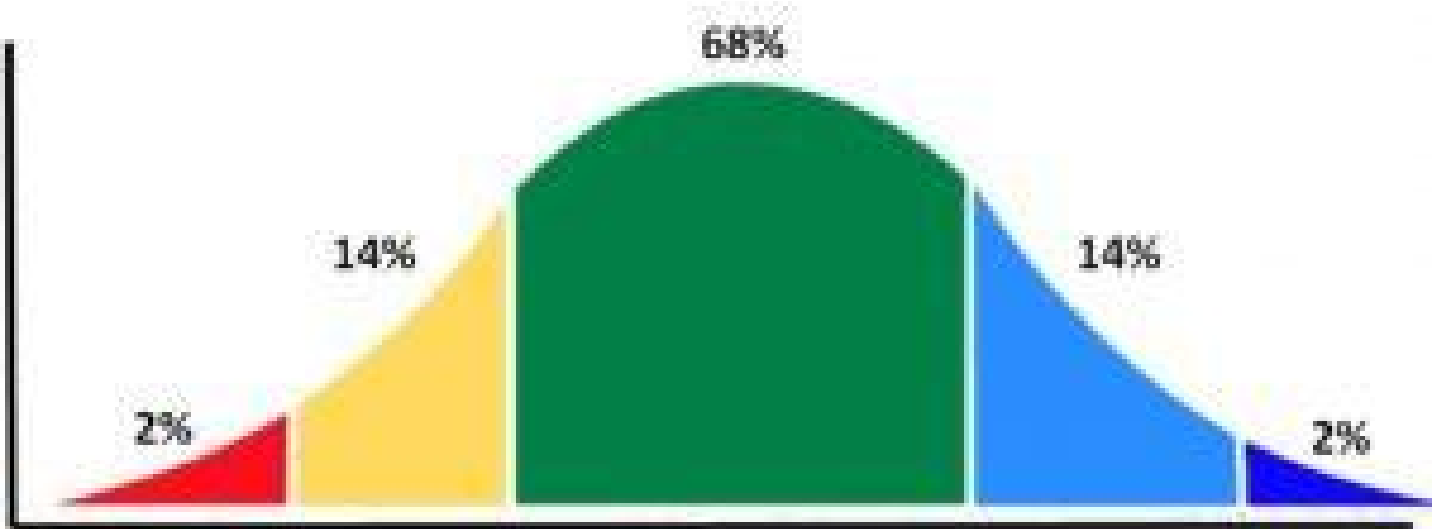
The empirical rule, also sometimes called the three-sigma or 68-95-99.7 rule, is a statistical rule which states that for normally distributed data, almost all observed data will fall within three standard deviations (denoted by the Greek letter sigma, or σ) of the mean or average (represented by the Greek letter mu, or μ) of the data.

The NORM group or mean average in any classroom setting is highlighted in Green where 68% of the class falls into.

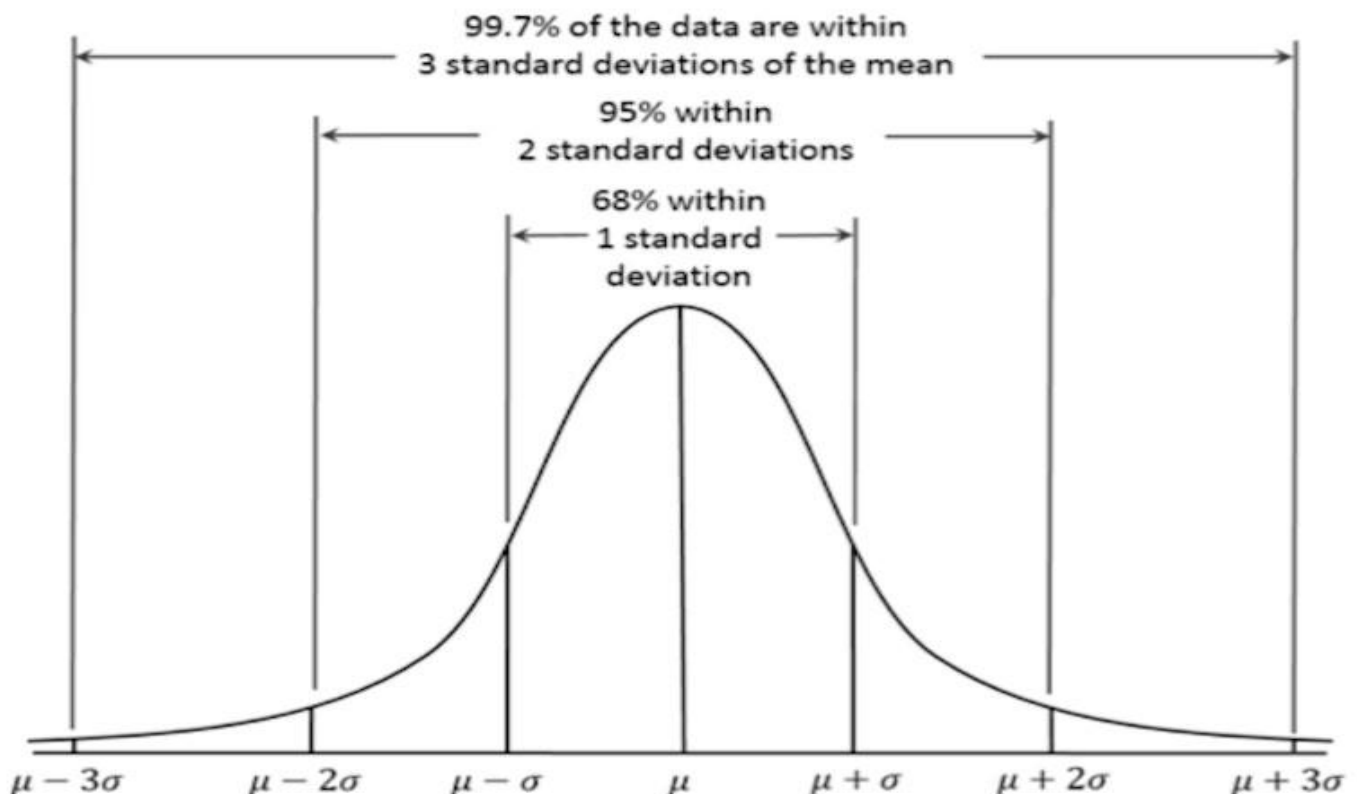
The 14% in yellow is 1 deviation less than NORM

The 14% in blue is 1 deviation above the NORM

The 2% red is 2 deviations less than the NORM as the 2% blue is above the NORM



A further image below demonstrates up to 3 deviations below and above the NORM / the mean the average.



Giving further context, my scoring for the following
Were: -

1) **Memory and Speed of Visual Processing** - covering 10 tests = low, below and well below the standard score

This equates to 3 deviations below the norm

2) **Phonological Skills** - covering 11 tests = well below and below standard score.

This equates to 3 deviations below the NORM

3) **Handwriting Skills** - covering 6 tests = all well below standard scoring

This equates to 3 deviations below the NORM

4) **Reading and Handwriting Speed** - covering 3 tests = well below in 2 and 1 above (Just)

This equates to 3 deviations below and 1 in the NORM

5) **Literacy & Number Skills** - covering 4 tests = HOORAY 2 in the norm group - (Maths) well below and 1 above the standard score

This equates to a mixture of 3 below, 2 above the NORM

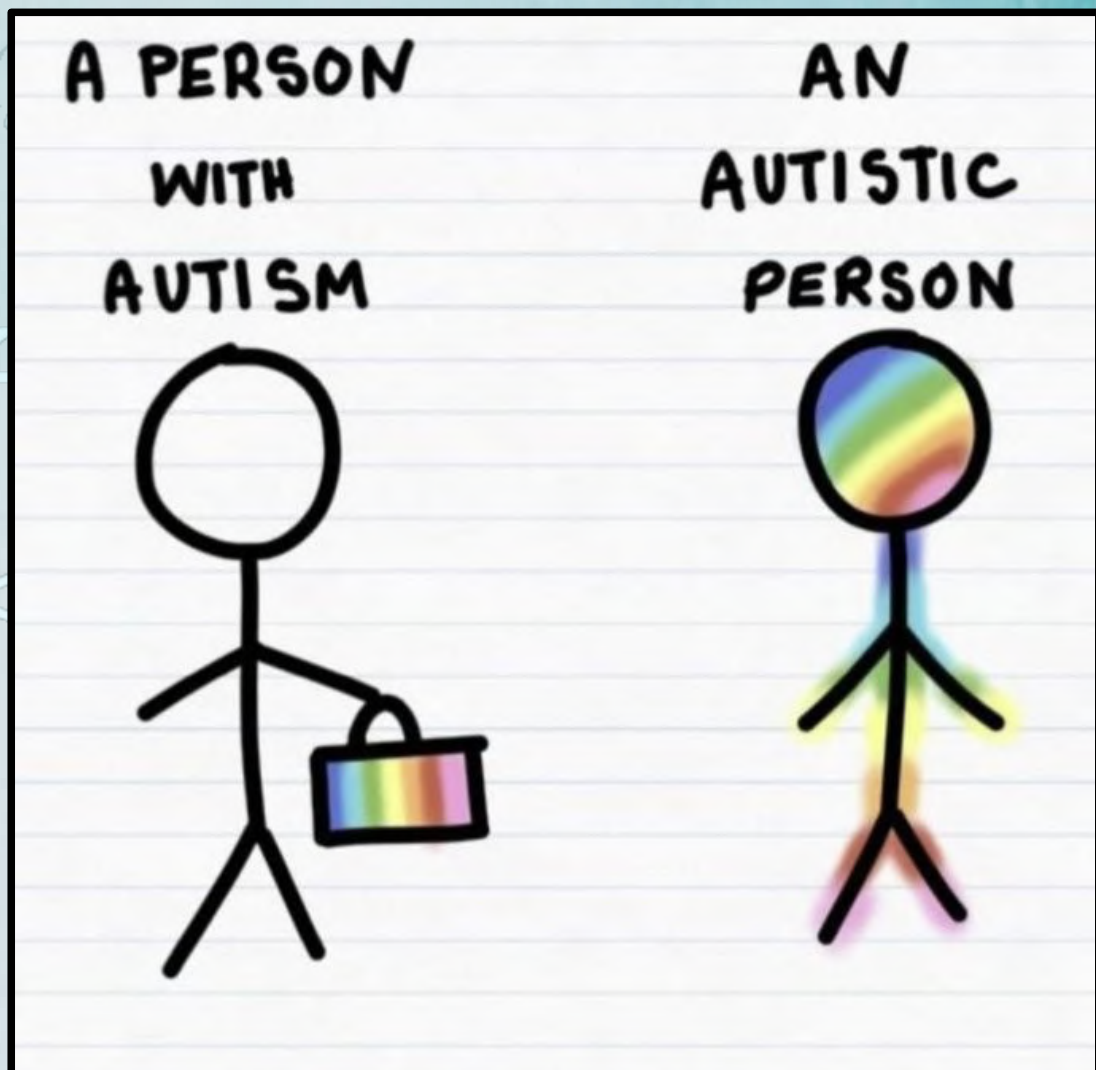
6) **Underlying Ability** - covering 6 tests - still attempting to own the deviations above the NORM.

My motivation for sharing my journey with what I have learnt and what was not available back in the 60's in contrast what is available now in the present.

There is no reason for any child and family with the resources available today to suffer as many did and still do.

This situation will change.

My purpose is to play my part in this process ensuring when the Autism and Learning Disability Commissioner is appointed, they / them have a targeted in tray for the first 100 days.



AUTISTIC SCHOOL TRAUMA IS ABOUT
MORE THAN PEER ON PEER BULLYING.

STAFF CAN CAUSE IT WITH
INVALIDATION AND ABLEISM.

PARENTS CAN CAUSE IT WITH
UNREASONABLE
EXPECTATIONS.



How much training do teachers receive before entering a classroom about neurodivergent children? Who are they / them teaching?

A person with Autism or an Autistic person?

Until the next issue, stay safe and be kind to yourself and gentle to those around you.

David Yeoman – Blogger, Contributor & Volunteer;
Scottish Autism Trustee, @ Autism Advisory Forum,
Consultant at Dyslexia Scotland. Advisor /
Consultant Autistic Knowledge Development.

ARTITUDE!

A poem, dedicated to my Uncle Pat, who sadly passed away,

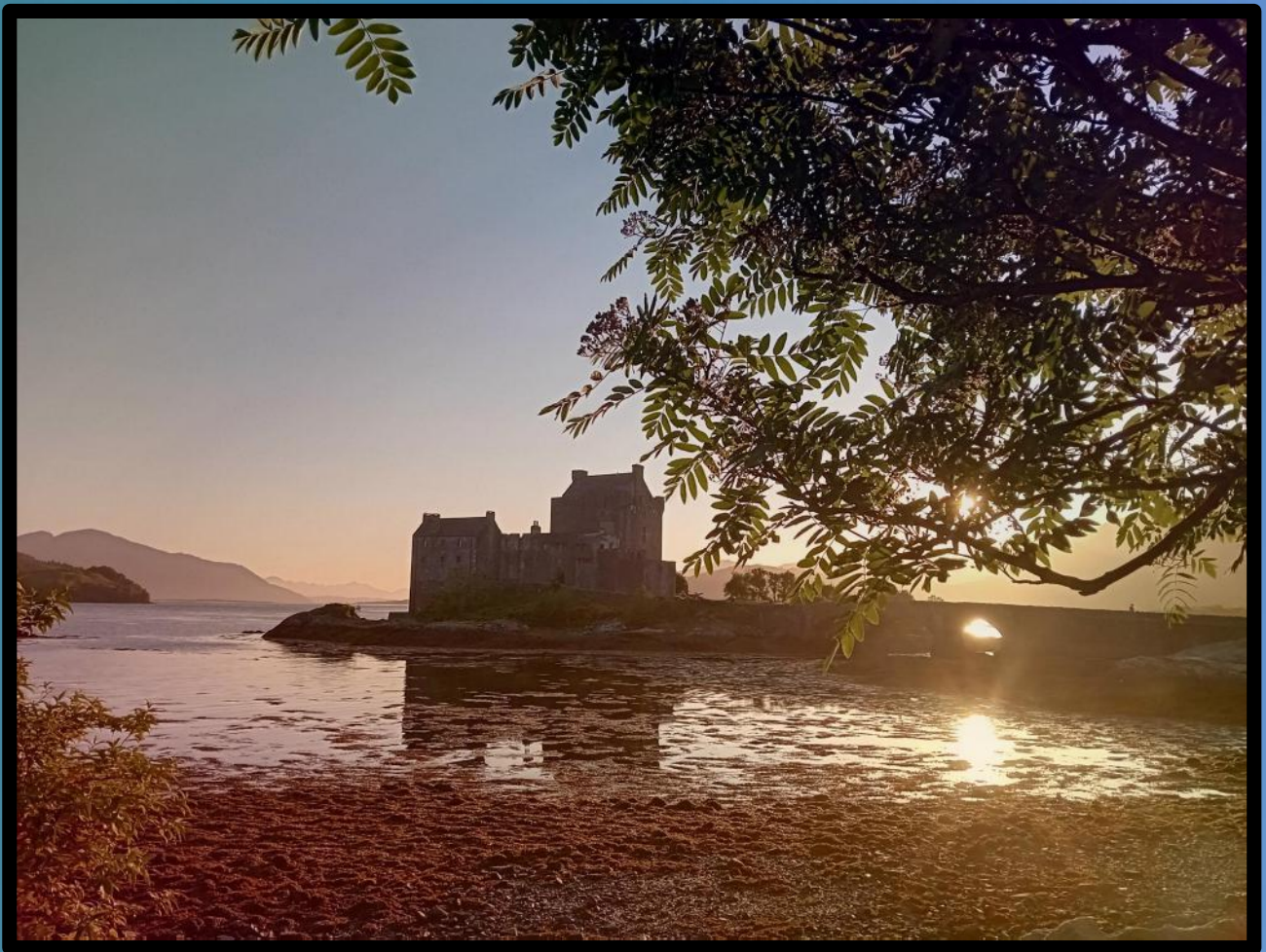
"Pat's Hat" by Sandra Smyth

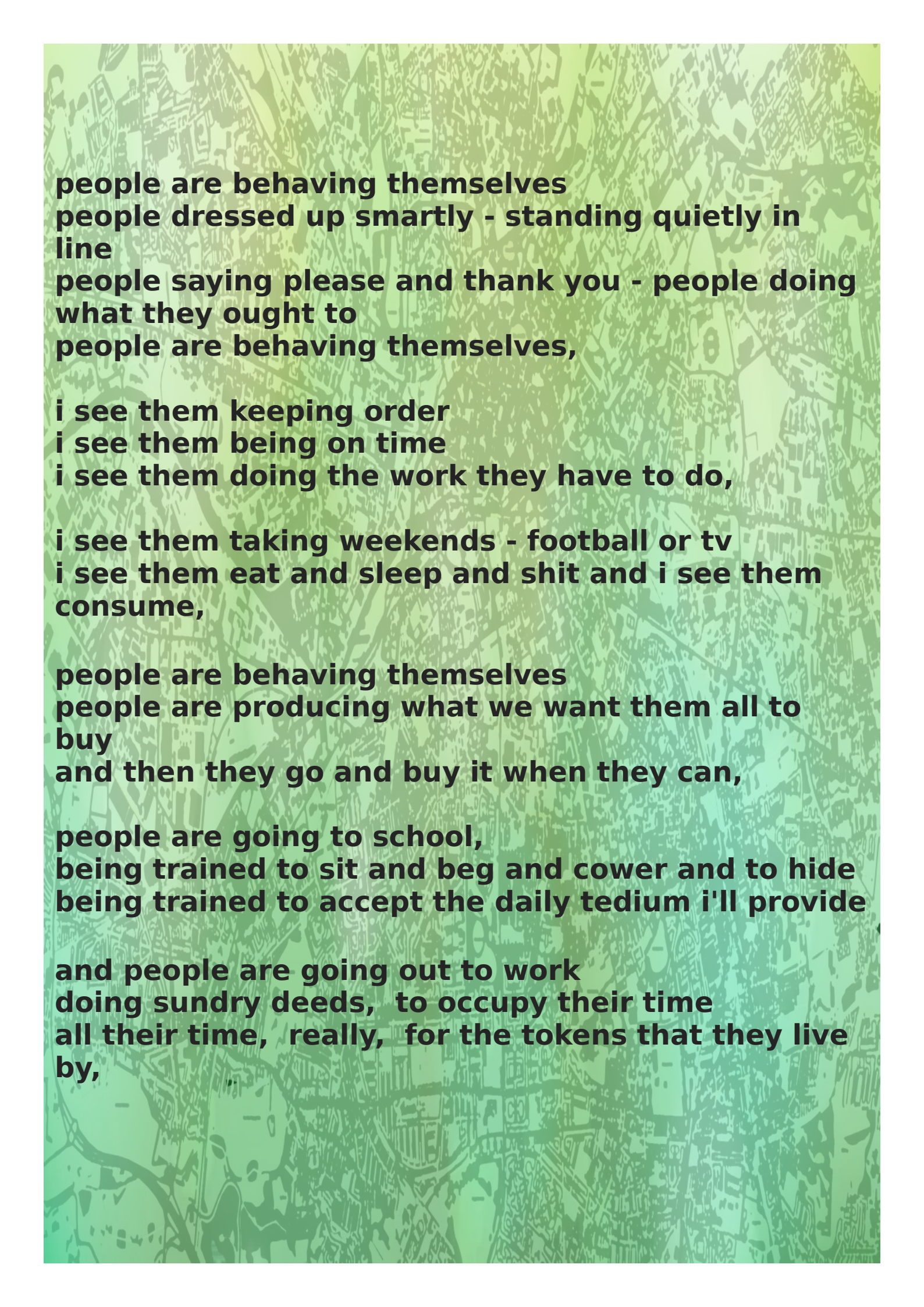


I remember my Uncle Pat,
never seen without his hat,
Large and brown, sat on his crown,
only at bedtime, he laid it down,
He was big, he was tall,
a gentle giant amongst them all,
He would visit once a week,
stood there with a bag of sweets,
We would go for a walk, and talk and talk,
His paintings of horses, a treasure to see,
an artist, he wanted to be,
I loved him with all my heart,
until the day came, when we had to part,
Goodnight, My Uncle Pat!









people are behaving themselves
people dressed up smartly - standing quietly in
line
people saying please and thank you - people doing
what they ought to
people are behaving themselves,

i see them keeping order
i see them being on time
i see them doing the work they have to do,

i see them taking weekends - football or tv
i see them eat and sleep and shit and i see them
consume,

people are behaving themselves
people are producing what we want them all to
buy
and then they go and buy it when they can,

people are going to school,
being trained to sit and beg and cower and to hide
being trained to accept the daily tedium i'll provide

and people are going out to work
doing sundry deeds, to occupy their time
all their time, really, for the tokens that they live
by,

**i see them buying houses that they never will afford
and i see them taking holidays from stress
i see them taking loans out to keep up with our demands
and i relish their discomfort, i confess,**

**but people are behaving themselves
they all look the way i would expect
their clothes are all configured in a way i recognise
and their homes are all like mine but small and quaint,**

**their hobbies all resemble mine -
it's comforting to know there are no other kinds of folk
no people whom i would not understand
and if anyone is out there who does not take in the news
well i'm sure they don't exist - they cannot possibly exist
cos i know i've got them all in hand,**

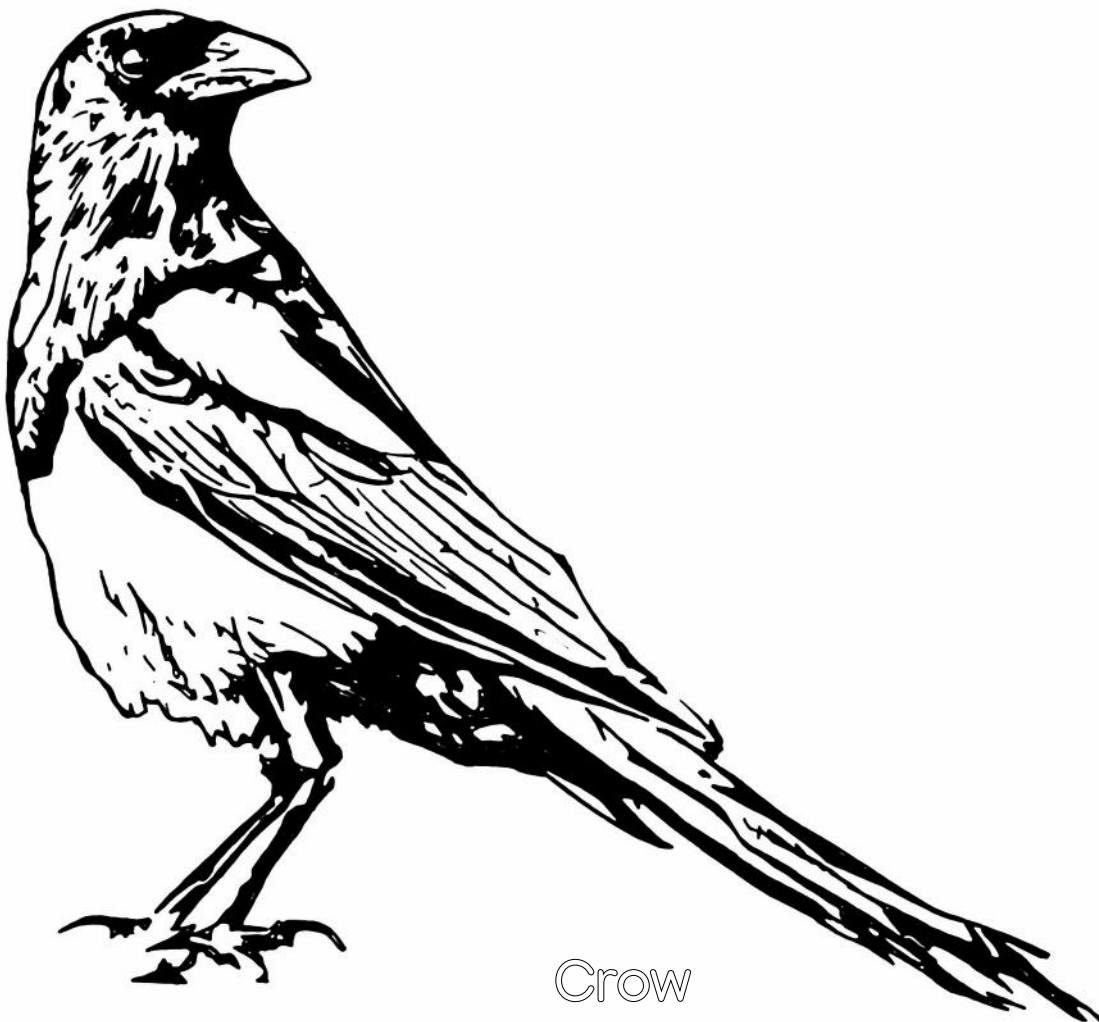
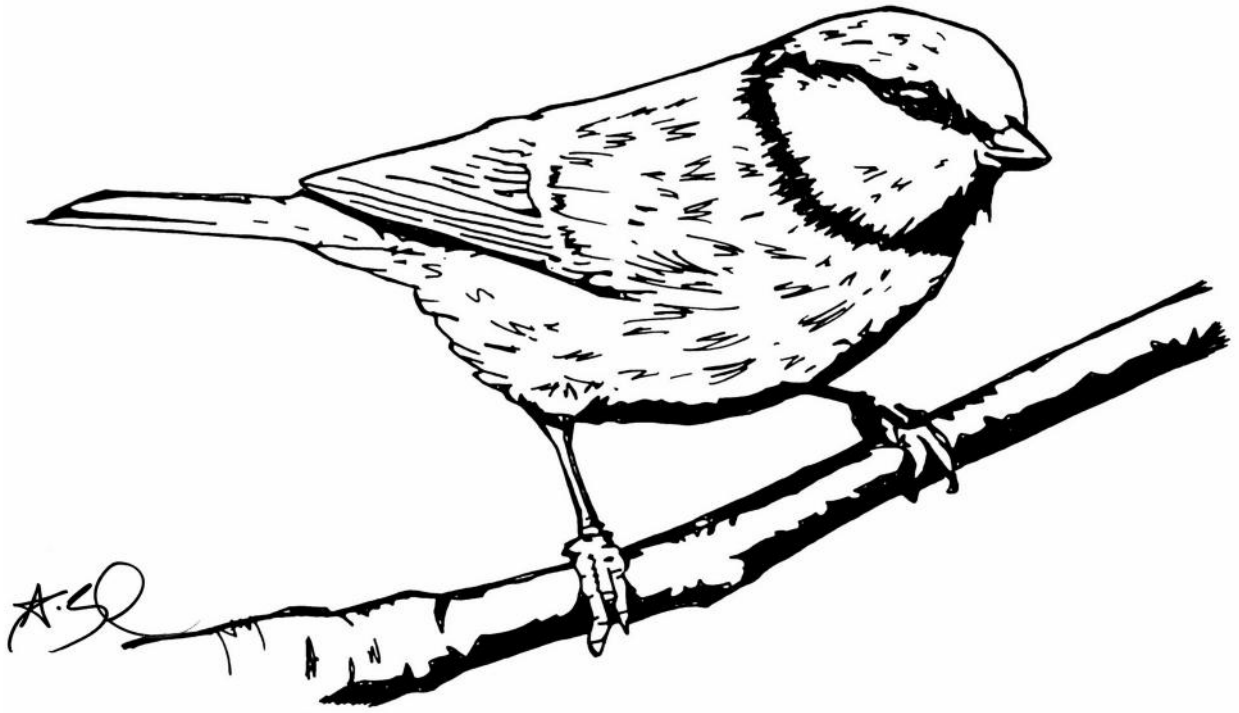
**i'm happy with what i have done
i've done everything in my power to be fair to everyone
and i'm happy with the words they will write
because legacy means nothing, and i will not be here
and if i leave descendants then that's their problem not mine,
and the people are behaving themselves.**

OTL Cellartapes.

Celebrating summer and our garden visitors!



Blue Tit

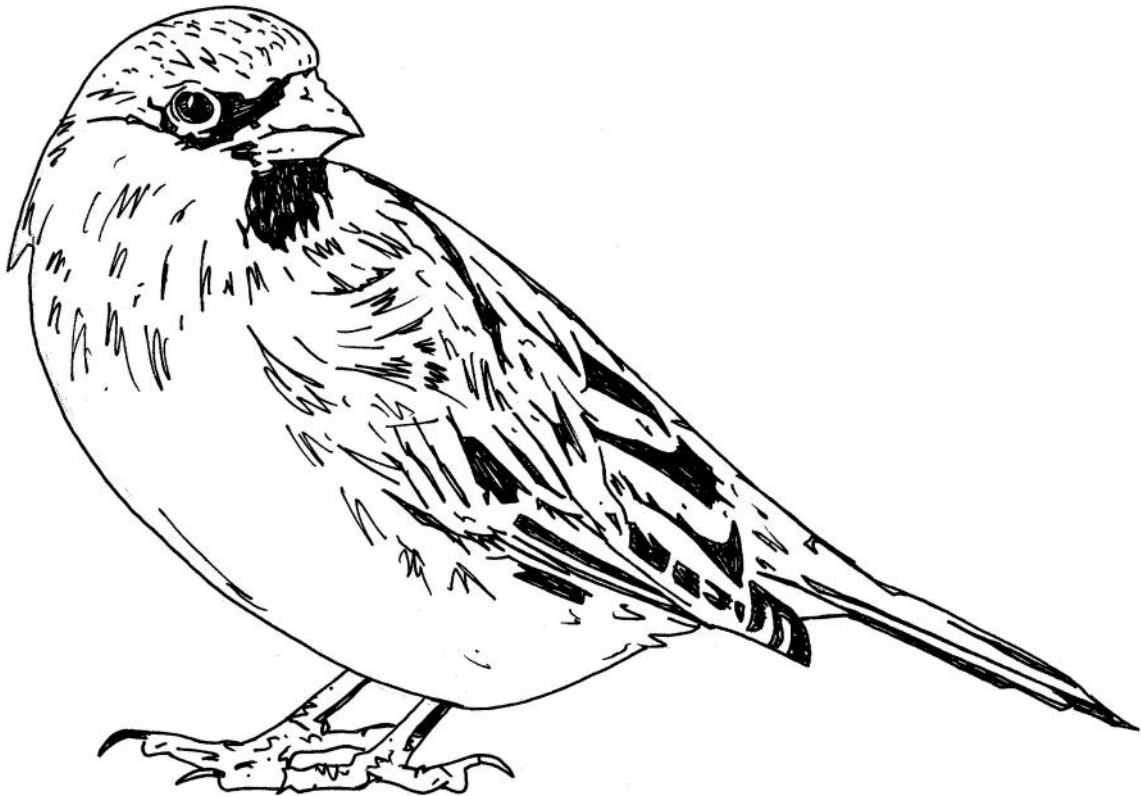


Crow



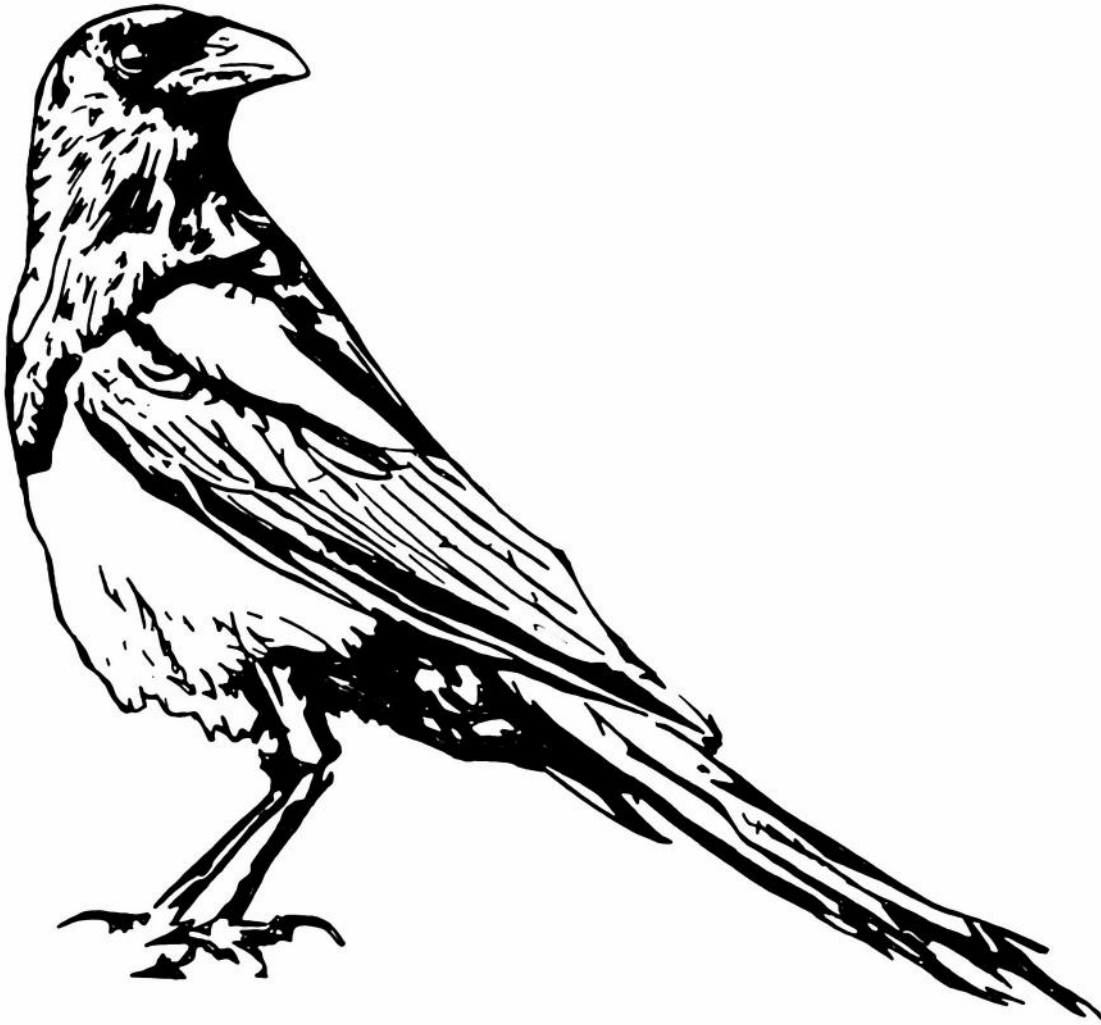
Starling

Pigeon

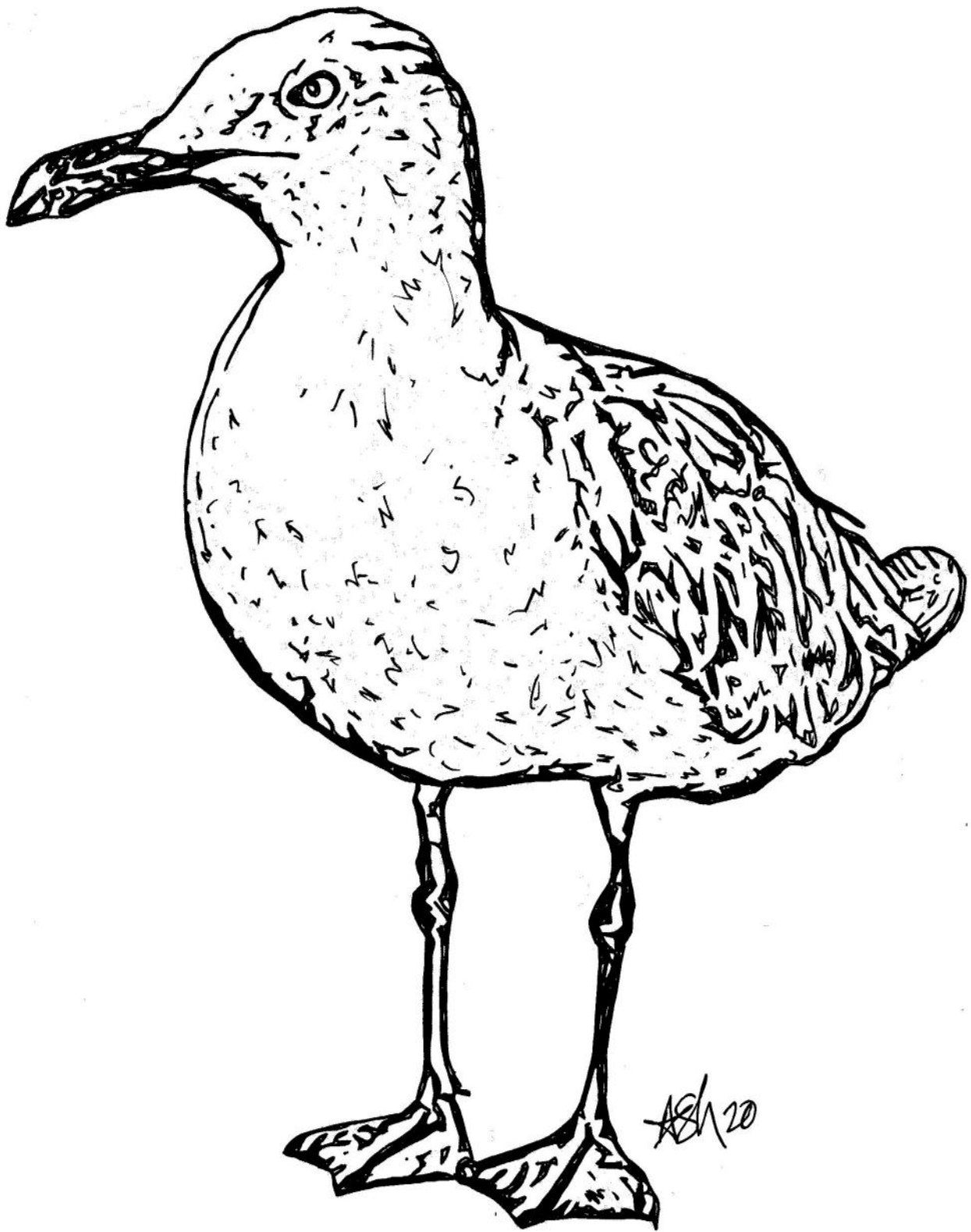


Sparrow

Magpie



Robin



Seagull

INTO THE UNKNOWN

A SHORT STORY BY OWAIN MACGREGOR

This story starts unlike any other, with “Odin” picking up a “package” from a “friend” who has a submarine, an old u-boat. He got the package from an unknown place. The car drives up to the bay. Odin’s friend greets him through the open hatch of the sub. Odin’s friend is holding the package, a massive box the size of a coffin with lots of tiny holes in it.

A week ago he was sent a letter about this “package”, detailing what he needed to do; the letter reads –

On the 8th of November 1978 you must meet me at the Hague to get this package. Deliver the package to Berlin. I am not telling you what's in the package in case this letter gets lost. The reward when you deliver part of the package is 13,000 guilder, I know it's not that much but we are running low on funds since we can't make money in the normal way. You know what I mean. Be prepared to have a gun just in case something happens. From your good friend, agent “Loki”

Odin finishes reading the note. On his calendar it says the 28th of October. “Odin” starts frantically getting supplies to leave, in his purple Volkswagen Scirocco with one black stripe down the middle. He sees it from his bedroom window and grabs all the gear he needs; he mutters on about the stuff and gets it all packed. He has a quick look over everything and closes the boot leaving plenty of space for this “package”.



Back to the present (November 8th, 1978): the agents are carrying the package. They carefully place it on the floor, then open the boot lid and slide it into the car with all the other stuff that Odin has in the boot. Then he closes the boot lid, locks it and walks to the driver's door. It's clean and in pristine condition.

"Odin" finally says a goodbye to his German friend and watches the u-boat go back under the sea.

The day is very cloudy, almost no light in the sky; like shadows of planes flying overhead. Odin opens the car door, slides into the driver's seat then puts the ignition key in, then the car screams to life, as though being just saved from hell.

He then drives on through the blaring cars with their bright luminous lights. He fully turns on his lights and comes out onto the open road, as the grey fog rolls in. The clock on his dashboard says 22:30. He hums to himself – all he can hear is him humming... and something breathing? He ignores it, thinking nothing much of it. Odin is calm and collected and only has one true goal: to get this package delivered. He continues to drive until the sun comes up, a yellow haze flashing into his eyes but he manages to keep control of his car. Through the window he can see dark trees that rise up like forest giants. He then hears... tearing of cardboard? He ignores it again, thinking nothing of it. He keeps driving on til the sign says 30 kilometres to Berlin.

The package then stands up! and quickly Odin sees a hand and suddenly the car is swerving left to right – Odin manages to swerve to the right – dirt bellows from the ground as he drifts off the road. He crashes into a tree, making a massive hole in the boot.



They lock eyes: he sees the package: a girl, pretty small and with tape over her mouth. The tape is barely holding, her bounds undone. Odin notices a Soviet symbol on her uniform, a commie then – and that she is raring for action.

Thinking quickly, Odin calms her down in Russian, and speaks about what they can do about this situation. She then says that she can have a look at how to fix the car. Odin agrees and gives the commie the metal plate and mini welding kit which happens to be in the back of the car, and while fixing it they talk about their lives and how they got there.

While searching for the food in the boot, he finds the actual package – not the girl, but the plans for the new extension to the Berlin wall. Odin decides to give the commie half the reward.



His reasoning for this is that as they talk, he finds out she didn't want to be a commie and was forced to be one because she was abducted as a child into the KGB. With repairs now done on the car, they change into spare clothes so the border guards aren't suspicious. Odin and the commie, nicknamed Sally, both then jump into the car and start driving again and finally get to Berlin.

There they drive on through several junctions when they come to an abandoned tavern; he orders Sally to stay in the car. Odin opens his door and steps out into sunny Berlin. He closes the car door behind him, then walks up to the tavern door, then he chaps on it 6 times. An agent from the inside says, "come in" – Odin's boss, nicknamed 'Thor' for how strong and muscular he was. Odin handed him the plans for the new extension of the Berlin wall. Thor gives him the money in an envelope with the insignia of a red fiery chameleon on the back. Odin stuffs the money in his jacket pocket. Thor then says in a chill smooth voice, "13,000 guilder as promised". They then have a strong drink and talk about Sally, and the troubles on the way.

Odin knows that there is always someone in the agency writing down the things people say even if it's useless information. He was using his words to slightly disguise the truth just in case the KGB finds out. He then leaves, opens the same door that he entered to this dingey tavern. He quickly sprints for the car, opening the car door and then closing it behind him. Sally then asks if he dropped off the package, and Odin says, "yes I did and los gehts!". He puts the ignition key back in and drives them off, back to start a new life, through the intersections, all the way to Amsterdam, no longer solo.

The end – or is it?



SPECTRUM SUPERSTARS!



Name: Henry Kenneth Alfred Russell
Born: 3 July 1927 (died: 27 November 2011)
Occupation: Film director, screenwriter, all round
genius.

AUTITUDE NEEDS YOU!



Well that's it for issue 23!
Hope you've enjoyed it!
Don't forget to send your contributions to
autitude@scottishautism.org