

AUTITUDE!



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

WELCOME!

Welcome to issue 22 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!

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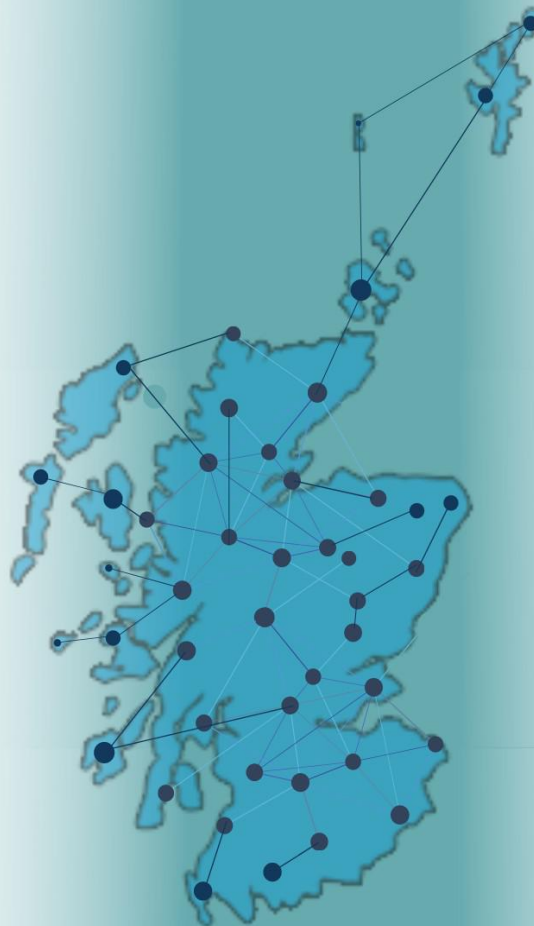
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Scottish
autism
WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED

Book your place for Click & Connect Block 9!

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>

Advice Line Q&A - Ask Us Anything!

Join us for an 'Ask Us Anything' Advice Line Live Q&A on Wednesday 7th June at 12 noon where members of our Advice Line team will be on hand to answer your questions, and to provide advice and signposting. You may have questions around diagnosis, education, accessing employment or you may be a parent or professional looking for advice.

For more information and to submit a question:

<https://www.scottishautism.org/events/advice-line-qa/advice-line-qa-ask-us-anything-0>

Fife OSS Groups

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ARE VALUED

Our One Stop Shop in Fife supports hundreds of people across the local area, every year.

From emotional support to understanding an autism diagnosis to support with transitions, the team are on hand to offer advice to autistic people, their families, friends and professionals.

If you live in the Fife area, why not come along to one of our groups? We are offering the following groups that take place in person or online via Zoom:

**Autistic Adults Peer Support Network
Parent's Group (Children & Young People)**

For more information and to book:

<https://www.scottishautism.org/fife-one-stop-shop>

Autism & Mental Wellbeing: Exploring the Impact of Stress - Now Available On Demand

As part of Stress Awareness Month and our continued focus on mental wellbeing, we held a special event where our panel of speakers discussed how stress impacts the lives of autistic people.

The webinar is now available on demand where you can hear our speakers including Dean Beadle who shares his own lived experience, Keri Dickson from Studio 3 who talks about Well-being, PERMAH and a low Arousal Approach, and Sarah-Louise Slater, Practice Advisor at Scottish Autism she explores the impact stress can have on care staff and how this often translates into practice. Charlene Tait, Deputy CEO at Scottish Autism hosted this event.

For more information and to book:

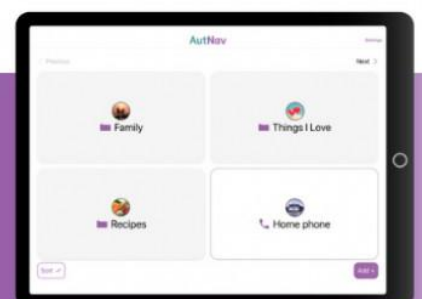
<https://www.scottishautism.org/events/online-events/autism-and-mental-wellbeing-now-available-demand>

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 1 1

So, we are in the middle of the Autism Acceptance month; how is it going for you?

Learnt anything new? Become more confused and frustrated at the lack of awareness and acceptance? Or are we on the right path?

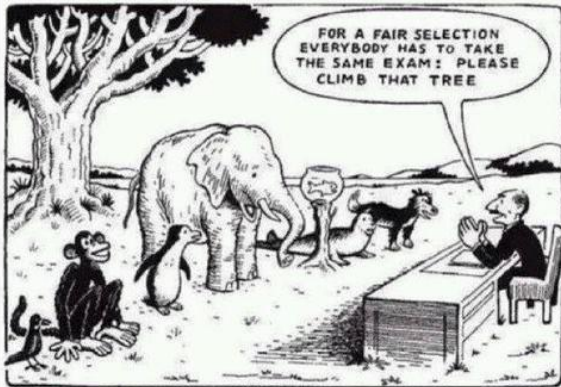
I am becoming more frustrated that the narrative has not moved on towards the end game.

Time to move the narrative onto **Autism Accommodation** month.

A celebration of the journey from **awareness** and **acceptance** to finally **accommodation** is the month I dream of and wish to raise a glass to. When?

When we have accommodation catered for in each environment autistics find themselves. I.e., sensory issues met, time out if required met, processing speed understood, executive functioning appreciated and so on.

Accommodation is the end game. When?



Our Education System

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

- Albert Einstein



Embrace neurodiversity

WHAT HAS 4 LEGS AND
HOOVES?

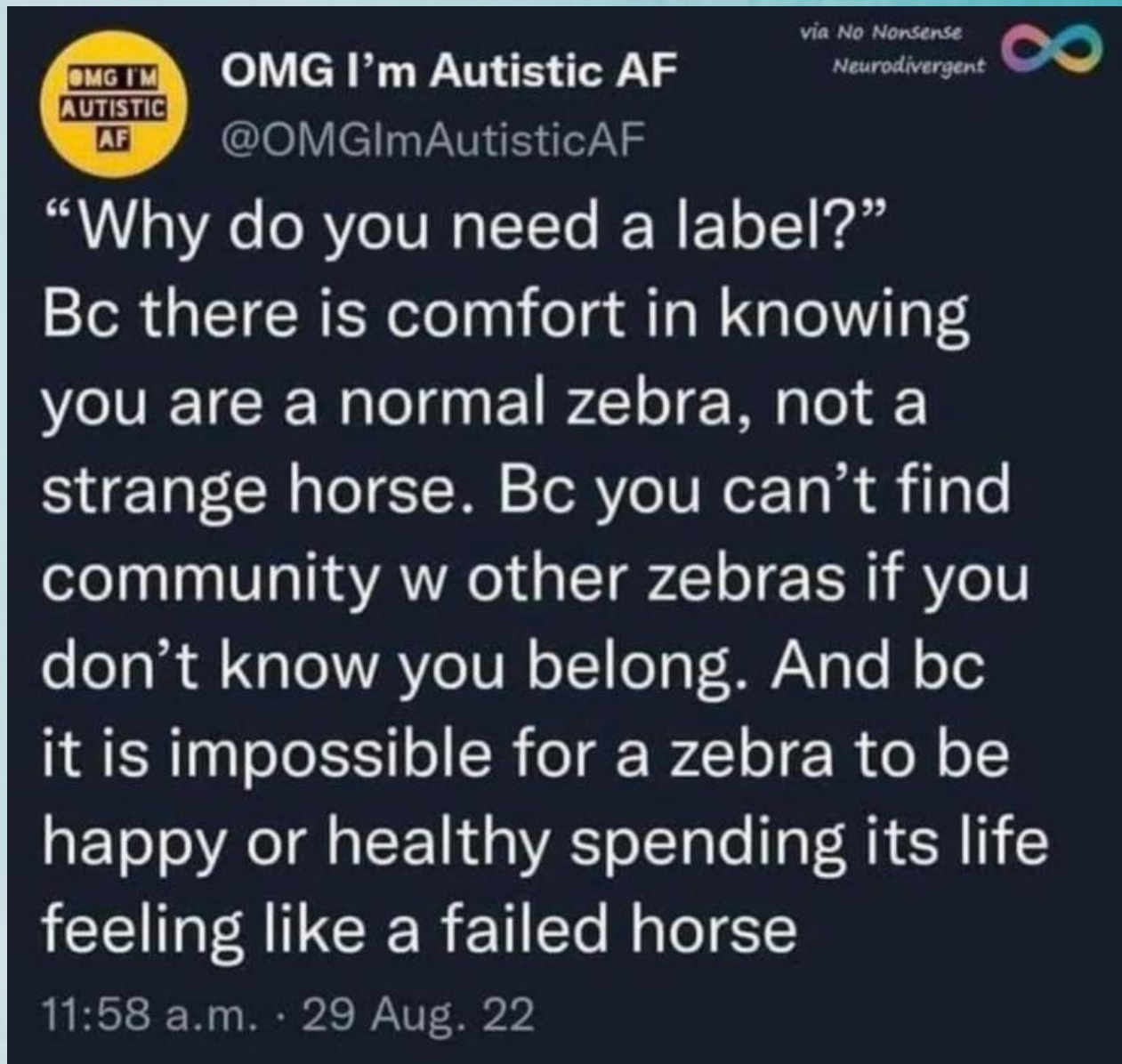
IF ALL YOU ARE
LOOKING FOR IS
HORSES YOU
WILL MISS
A LOT OF ZEBRAS
AND.....!



At the age of 5/6 years old I was labelled a fish and undiagnosed Zebra but treated as being a horse. Why, because the education curriculum only catered for neuromajority minds, not neurominorities like us. The money and appropriate care in the community is not here presently.

This unfair disadvantage at an early age has to change to ensure each child are screened / assessed where they can accept their **"deficits and embrace their strengths"**.

From experience I had to suffer on subjects that my neurobiological brain was not “Chipped” to ever understand. Ever.



Scotland's requirement for an Autistic and Learning Disability commissioner with the powers to change is more compelling than ever before.

Until then we have unconscious abuse; due to lack of funding, appropriate training and **accommodation**.

Why? As autistics are not the priorities with the decision makers with the power to enable positive change to ensure all **environments** are **accommodating** to our tribe / herd. I.e., a normal Zebra, not a strange horse.

"Autists are the ultimate square pegs, and the problem with pounding a square peg into a round hole is not that the hammering is hard work. It's that you're destroying the peg."

- Paul Collins

<http://www.theautismeducation.com>

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

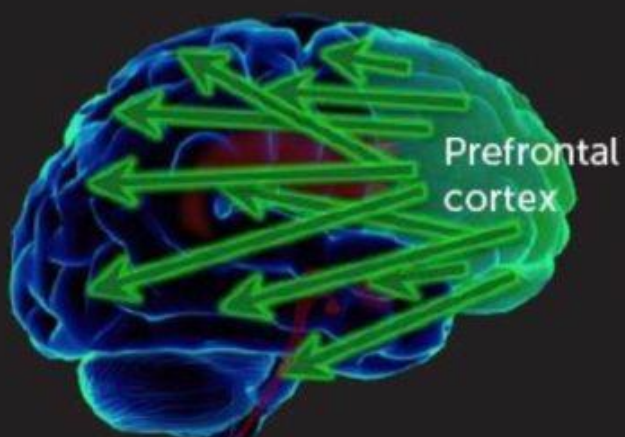
Whether you are a parent, sibling, grandparent, carer, teacher or medical professional, all will be delighted when our own unique lane is identified, and this is done as early as possible.

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.

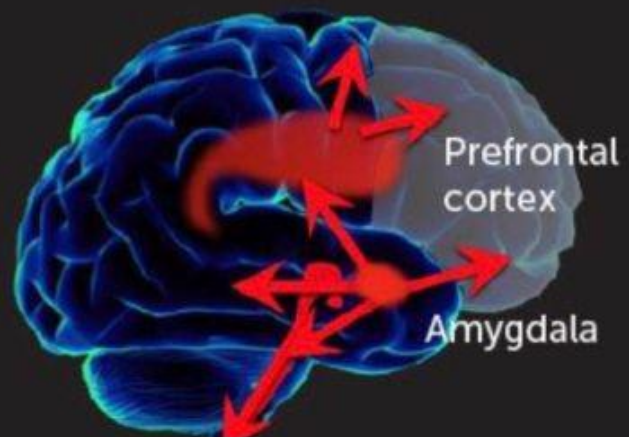
Being aware of our lane, our herd and by staying true to our neurobiology, we are giving our brain the opportunity to minimise stress, meltdowns, shutdowns, burnouts and in some instances situational mutism.

Unstressed



Tight control of thoughts, emotions and actions

Stressed



Weaker control of thoughts, emotions and actions

For those who missed Chris Packham inspiring documentary “Inside our Autistic Minds” I urge you to watch the two episodes.

You will find the programme highly inspirational and see with your own eyes what is possible when autistics are in the **right lane** with appropriate **accommodation**.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0bbnh47/episodes/p-layer>

Many of you will have read the highly distressing and tragic death of Harris Macdonell who lived in the borders.

Sadly, another heart-breaking story in the Sunday Post 16th April by award winning journalist Marion Scott. Link below.

“Parents of autistic teenager who took his own life warn inadequacies in mental health care are putting more young lives at risk”

https://www.sundaypost.com/fp/parents-plea-over-inadequacies-in-mental-health-care/?utm_source=twitter

A few people have asked why I applied for a position as a trustee. Fair question.

A chill goes down my spine when I read or see on TV the horrific abuse autistic people receive when in institutions of various kinds, including psychiatric wards, where autistics do not belong, as many Medical Professionals will testify.

As mentioned before, special schools were discussed for myself, thankfully quickly dismissed by my parents / grandparents when I was about 5/6 years old.

As much as I have a professional bio; my empathy /compassion bio I felt was equally important too.

Hopefully you will gain a feel and flavour for my motivation, passion and purpose to assist the autistic community in Scotland.

Who am I & Why am I here?

Thank you for reading about my life story to date; whether you are a parent, grandparent, teacher, student, recently diagnosed Autistic or waiting for a formal diagnosis.

Why did I apply to be a trustee board member?

Because, I am only too conscious of the feelings of vulnerability, insecurities, confusion, isolation and bewilderment you are experiencing. As a family we had them all.

Because, I have endured them all my life since about the age of 6/7 years old.

Because, I knew at this age I had failed to meet expectations.

Because, my mother and father also shared these feelings too.

Because, I can easily recall my first "Hurt" when a teacher advised my mother, I was the last to tie my shoe laces or school tie.

Because, I am filled with empathy and compassion as I am autistic with learning disabilities too, for assisting individuals and families with these emotions. I want to ensure your journey is a smoother experience than my family endured, especially in the early years.

Because, I know the feelings of believing the distorted stereotypes society hands to the "difficult child" at a young age. I know the suffering from the voice in the head that states "you are not good enough." this can lead to low self-esteem, poor self-image; and negatively affecting your mental health.

Because, the feelings of embarrassment due to the fact you failed every exam at school. “One day I will get found out” is the continues internal dialogue on repeat. Standard tests for standard minds; doomed to fail.

Because, I know the feelings of not fitting in, and of being different.

Because, I am passionate for all Autistic’s being accepted for who we are.

Because, I wish to serve you, the reader, to make a positive difference to all Autistic families in Scotland.

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.







Rosie Mapplebeck - Art and poetry.





Brian Koppelman

Temple of the Women



The Scapegoat

**Close your eyes to your sun little one
Who led you here with branded head
all red to light their blues, affixed such
blame?**

**Your look is wild, you're lost, so lost, in a long
dead sea
so stay with me**

**Enter my beauteous rusted golden lands
lit by streaks of Indian ink, of indigo and pink
oil paint slicking
the crust of dust and stone
onto branches crushed where desert roses
alone
bloom into my bones**

I am Oosdoom

**Oh join with me and let your skull sink
down like mine, let brushes stroke
your sagittal crest with ochre trails
beneath the salt-lined weeds**

**Here is water to burn our thirst
in tongues lolling for liquor, no wonder your
ears droop**

**We'll pierce our moon with Death's sharp
spines**

**Your eyelids soon will dim like mine
below the frosted rime**

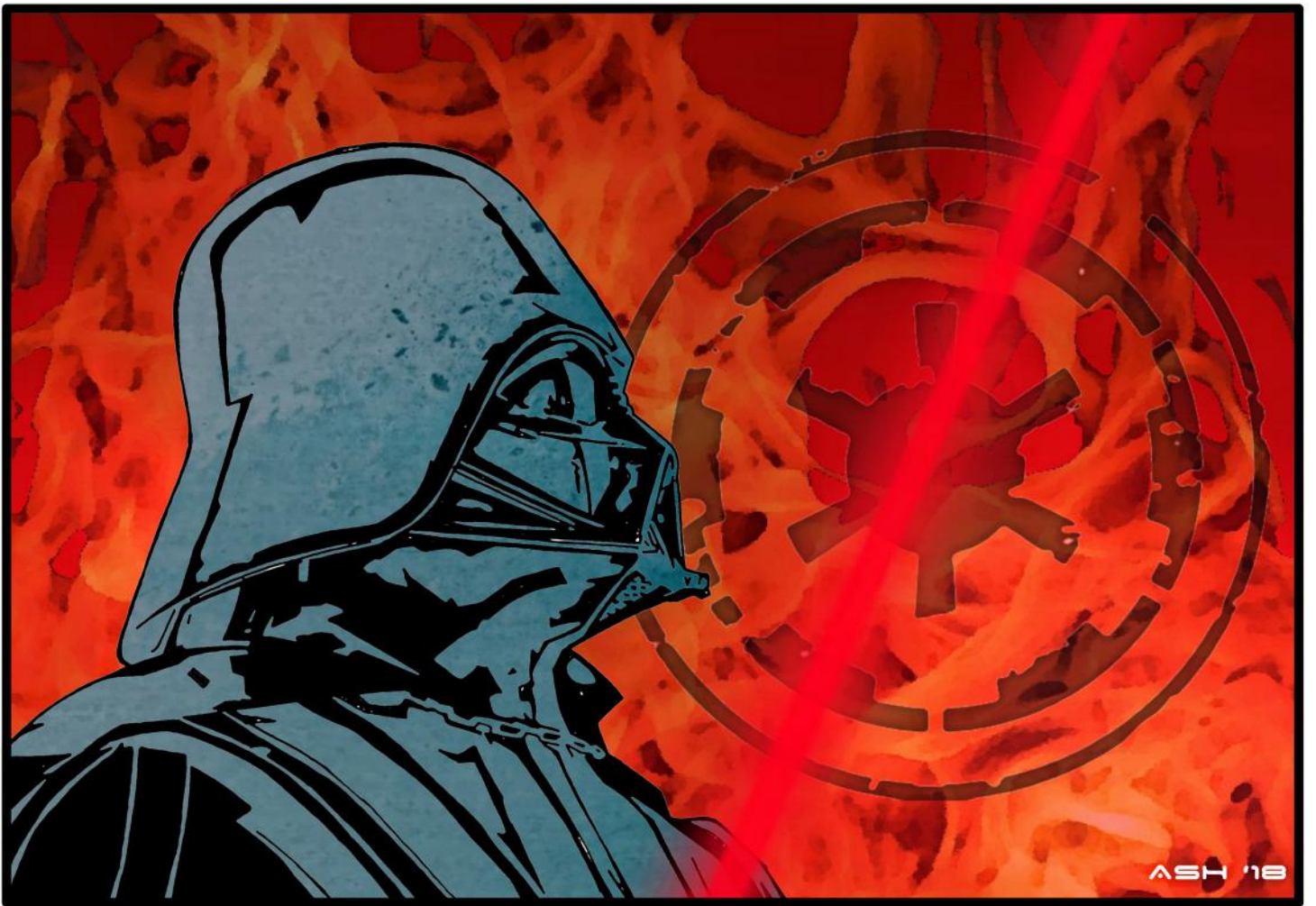
**Without my orbit desolation grows
desecration, desiccation, decimation shown
by ivory strokes depicting salt
from drought and famine, parched of love
we shine our hurt**

**You pant in artless trust
My hurting water brings no cure, no feast
Drink then to your death
Wither and like false snow
be dust.**

**Rosie Mapplebeck
2.11.16**

Celebrating 40 years of Return Of The Jedi.











Like Clockwork.

The part of the Different Minds One Scotland initiative I've been helping with/working on of late involved the issues of social interaction for Autistic peeps so I thought what better time to re-share the sorry tale of one of the probably only two occasions I've ever been drunk – I mean really, really drunk – in my entire life.

Because there aren't enough reasons to take the absolute mickey out of me as it is.

Take yourself back, if you will, to the heady days of 1995...I've planned a Clockwork Orange themed night out for my 26th birthday to – hopefully – cap off a fairly eventful albeit slightly strange year where a massive group of us Droogs (well 6 of us) were going to spend the nochy out for a slap-up pischafest followed by much drinking with a wee bit of dancing thrown in.

No Synthmesc or Drencrom tho' as I was booked in to work the next day.

This may be important later.



I must just add though that anyone expecting a drunken tale of film/book-based ultra-violence ending with me passed out in a bin is gonna be a wee bit disappointed as everything went amazingly – saying that we did all get turned away from a fairly well known 'rock club' for being 'under-dressed'(!) but luckily another – obviously cooler and more literature savvy – club let us in (and even played The Universal by Blur at one point – ask your Dad) which was nice and made up for the lack of Beethoven or The Heaven 17.

Anyway, slightly tipsy and a wee bit worse for wear I rolled home around 3.30 AM with one of my mates in tow (they lived around the corner so we shared a cab) and proceeded to pop on a pot of coffee....next thing I knew it was 6.30 and I suddenly remembered that I was due at a fairly large scale balloon modelling gig at a big corporate opening at 8.30 for a 9.00 o'clock start followed – from 12.30 till 4.30 – with a massive pre-Christmas arts/play session with around 150 kids.

So I did what any sane person would do in that situation.

I kicked my friend out and proceeded to shower and shave whilst drinking even more coffee in the hope that it would both sober me up and keep me awake.

Grabbing my kit and costume I headed out for a cab, making it to the venue in record time I'd say I felt kinda invincible – but that's a different movie – I signed in and was shown to a room where I could get changed in privacy.

Or so I thought until I was halfway thru' changing my trousers when I realized that it had huge windows and they'd forgotten to close the blinds.

Not wanting to appear like I wasn't a hip and happening modern guy I just carried on.

It was then I noticed that there was an oh so slight smell, almost as if someone had poured alcohol over the sofa and not washed it out.

Then it hit me.

To my horror I realized it was me.

Yup, I seemed to be seeping booze from every pore.

Spraying myself with deodorant to the point of choking I decided to carry on regardless.

Amazingly the morning went by without a hitch, sure some especially small people seemed to be staring at me oddly as did some of their parents but I'm kinda used to that plus I'd noticed as the day went on that my eye was feeling a wee bit sore and scratchy so thought maybe I'd banged it at some point and they were just concerned.

Or it might have been the fact that – I'd only noticed when I caught my reflection – that I was still wearing my – by this point a wee bit crusty – Alex DeLarge eyelash and mascara.

Phew I thought to myself, it should be OK seeing as the chances of any of these pre-teens having seen A Clockwork Orange and knowing who I'm copying are pretty small.

I'll admit that it wasn't till a few weeks later that although none of the kids would have clocked it there were probably a fair few parents scratching their heads that night and wondering why the place booked A Clockwork Orange balloon modeller and for that I can only apologize.

As 12.00 o'clock got ever nearer I started to feel a little unwell, my stomach was churning and it felt as if someone was sticking a big pin into my – non crusty – eye so I reckoned that what I needed was more coffee.

Luckily the venue were really pleased with the event and offered me a cup before I left which I tanked down whilst plotting if I had time to go to McDonalds to buy more before getting another taxi to my next job.

The answer was surprisingly yes – so with two cups of hot Maccy D beverages in my sweaty palms I hailed a cab and arrived in plenty of time to not only drink both of them but order a couple more from the venue cafe before starting.

Sorted.

Well I was till my work colleague (and friend who to save their blushes – and mine – will remain nameless)* slowly looked me up and down and said "You look awful, go and have something to eat." before sending me back to the cafe for soup and bread.

Amazingly this seemed to work and I suddenly felt fine, no more than fine, I felt great and jumped into a huge amount of runaround tag games and the like before around 40 minutes in getting really, really tired, eventually spending break-time with my head lolling about like a particularly cheap nodding dog.

And with that my friend got someone to drive me home(!) under strict orders to put on a pot of coffee for me, put me under a blanket, lock the door and pop the keys thru' my letterbox.

Which at the time I found utterly mortifying but now think was utterly fab.**

And with that I ended up dropping off to sleep only to be rudely awakened not by the dustman but by a couple of friends around 9 o'clock at night who'd turned up to take me out as a surprise because they'd missed my birthday.

Not realising (till at least last year, yes I know) that you can actually say no to stuff I shambled around getting ready and was soon heading into town with no idea where I was going or why.

But at least my tummy felt better.

Anyway cue a couple of hours of pubs and drinks before hitting a club (as the kids say) which oddly was the club we'd been knocked back from the night before but heyho, them the breaks and by this time I was feeling not only very tired but very, very bloated.

You see I've never ever gotten really drunk before – or since, well maybe once – because I have a cunning plan in place to stop that happening, for every pint/short I have I follow it with a Coke which seems to counteract the alcohol.

If I ever miscalculate the amount I'd drunk I'd then just buy a huge bag of peanuts, partly because the salt seemed to sober me up but mainly because I have a slight peanut allergy so I'd end up totally emptying my system of everything booze an' all.

Tho' to be fair it did mean I'd end up looking like Pete Burns for the day afterwards but it was/is a price worth paying.

Tonight though neither of these things helped.

You see the club didn't sell peanuts and I'd been drinking Jack Daniels which meant that the folk I was with assumed – after seeing me with a glass of Coke that I was drinking it mixed, so I ended up with a Russian Roulette style table of tumblers of just Coke and tumblers of Coke and Jack.

The only option was to grab the nearest one then run off and hide somewhere in the hope that someone else would drink the rest.

The night was about to take an odd turn though because as I was wondering around I suddenly felt a tap on my shoulder and turned to see the mum – and stepdad, who I bizarrely knew from The QM at Glasgow Uni – of a kid from one of my groups.

"Hiya Ash! Fancy seeing you here! Out on your own?"

"Nope, out for my birthday – just looking for my friends!"

"Oh congratulations mate! – What's that you're drinking?" – he grabs my glass and sniffs it – "Jack and Coke? Be right back!"

And with that he stomps off to the bar and leaves me with his missis who goes on to tell me how much their daughter loves me and thinks I'm great.

Which comes as a surprise seeing as she's spent the last 6 months utterly taking the utter Michael out of me with her pals and generally being a total Heather.

Seems that this was, according to her mum, her way of showing folk she gets on with them.

Fair enough.

So step-dad comes back from the bar with THE biggest tumbler I have ever seen and thrusts it into my hands with a huge grin and cry of "Happy Birthday!" to which I mumble a thank you before making an excuse that I need to find my mates cos they'll be worried before tottering off to a corner where I plonk myself down and start crying.

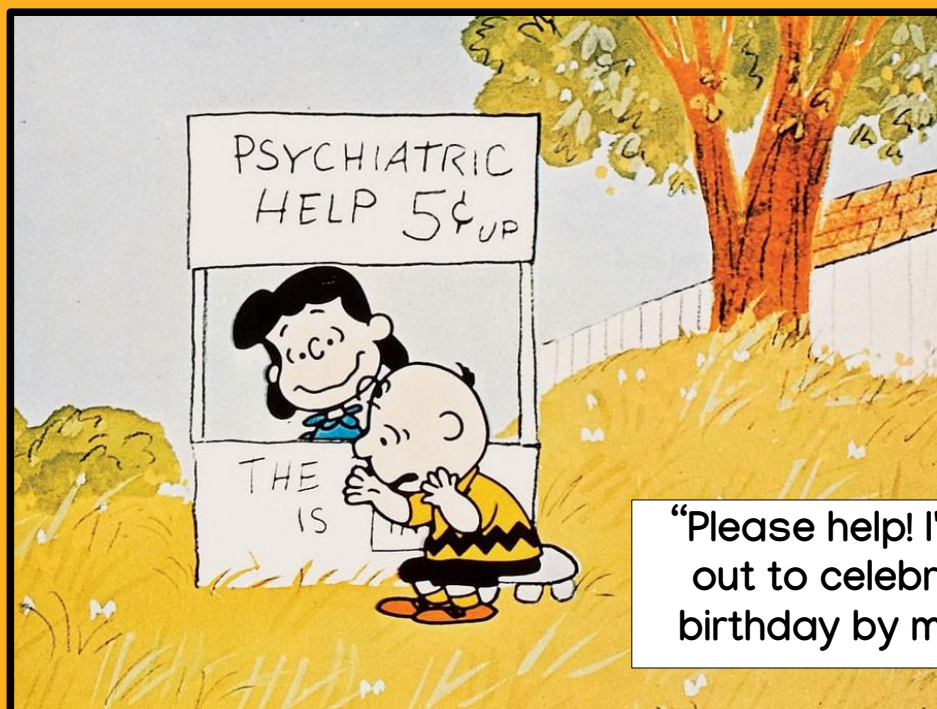
Proper sobbing, wailing cries – not big burly manly drunk tears that is.

Well as I'm sitting there cradling my drink a girl came over to check if I was OK.

"Are you OK?" she asked (see told you).

"Um, yeah, it's my birthday..."

"Oh are you out on your own? That's really rubbish..."



"No, I'm out with friends, it was actually my birthday yesterday but they're still taking me out...I'm crying because they keep buying me too many drinks and my stomach is full."

And with that she quickly pulled away, gave me a very odd look and beat a hasty retreat.

You can draw your own conclusions from all of this because frankly it's still confusing over a quarter of a century on.

Thanks for listening.

Ash



*Oh go on it was Kelley.

**No seriously, thank you.





SPECTRUM SUPERSTARS!

Name: Andrew Warhola Jr. (AKA Andy Warhol).
Born: August 6, 1928 (died: February 22, 1987).
Occupation: Artist (Printmaking, painting, cinema, photography).

AUTITUDE NEEDS YOU!



Well that's it for issue 22!
Hope you've enjoyed it!
Don't forget to send your contributions to
autitude@scottishautism.org