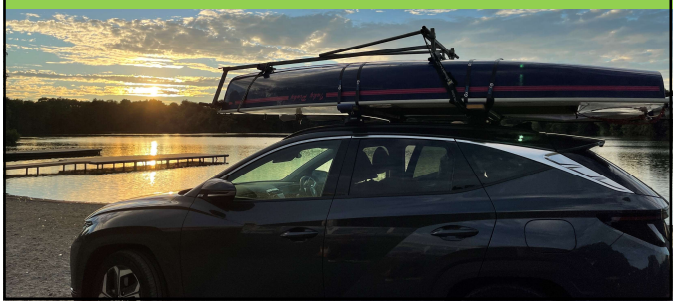
# AUTISTIC JOY: FROM WHY TO WOW!

(THE JOY IS IN THE JOURNEY)



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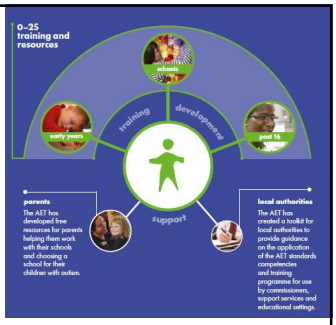
## Introductions




AUTISM IS A DIFFERENCE NOT A DEFECT

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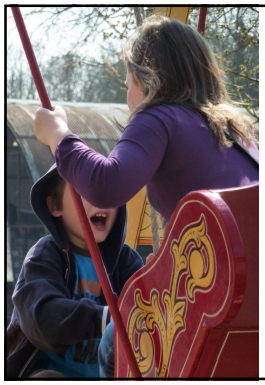


## A Neurodiverse Family

- Dyslexia
- ADHD
- Dyspraxia
- Depression
- Anxiety

- 2 children are on the spectrum, 1 husband (also autistic), I identify as autistic. We live with 2 cats (definitely Aspie)

3

4

5

Putting together a life that works and is beautiful to you

6

## What is autistic joy?

Julia Bascom, author of The Obsessive Joy of Autism describes:

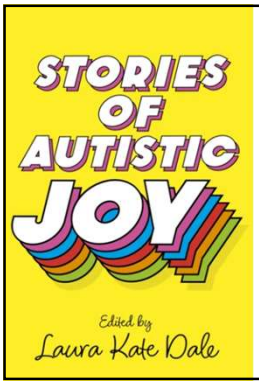
"sometimes being autistic in this world means walking through a crowd of silently miserable people and holding your happiness like a secret or a baby, letting it warm you as your mind runs on the familiar tracks of an obsession and lights your way through the day."

7

## Autistic Joy – Divergent Voices

What is autistic joy? (youtube.com)

8




*'I love that I don't need to feel ashamed at my happiest, and that my joy no longer needs to go through a filter before it's ready to see the light of day'*

*– Laura Kate Dale*

Stories of Autistic Joy: Amazon.co.uk: Dale, Laura Kate: 9781839978098: Books

9

## What We Love Most About Life - Chris Bonello - 2023

What Do You Love Most About Life? - Autistic Not Weird

10

## Why it matters to everyone… humans are not meant to be completely alone…

No man is an island,
Entire of itself;
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.

If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less,
As well as if a promontory were:
As well as if a manor of thy friend's
Or of thine own were.

Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
It tolls for thee. - John Donne (1572-1631)

Wilson the Volleyball - IMDb  Cast Away (2000) with Tom Hanks

No Man Is an Island by John Donne - Famous poems, famous poets. - All Poetry

11

## Where to find it – Co-regulation and…

- Our Passions and special interests
- Stimming and movement – Happy Flapping and tapping
- Having autonomy and being able to choose
- Sensory Joy
- In Flow

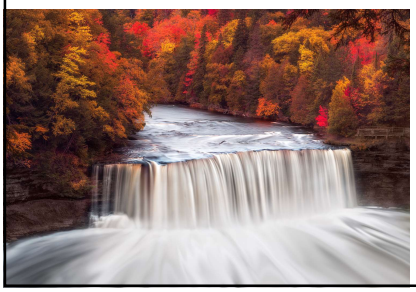
So much harder to find when you are in pain!

12

## Moments of connection and the joy of the infodump

13

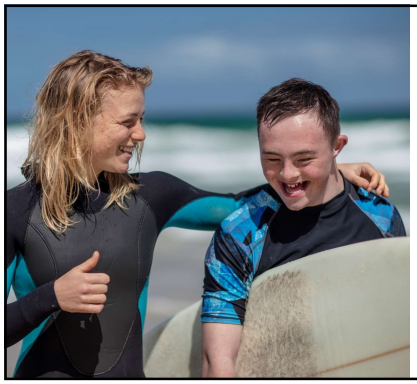
## What Can Autistic Joy Do? The joy of flow



Oh so hard to get into… but when I'm in it…..

- Focus
- Dedication
- Persistence
- Lack of distractibility
- Feeling authentically me
- Time slips by unnoticed
- Powerful
- Feels like play

14



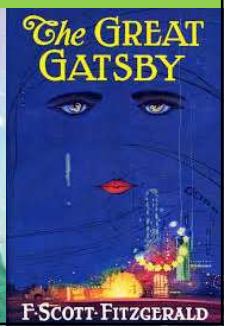
## Benefits of special and passionate interests

- Fun
- 'Time in' / recovery time
- Learn new things
- Finding friends with similar interests
- Developing deeper relationships
- To experience flow states
- To change the world for the better

**BRING THE JOY**

15

## Special or passionate interests are vital to wellbeing




16

## Sensory Joy

If you can only focus on 1 thing….

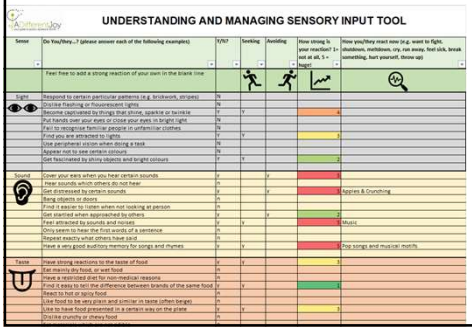
What is it you notice?

**DO MORE OF THE STUFF THAT FEELS GOOD**

**AIM FOR JOY!**

17

## Go hunting for the good stuff… (and minimize the bad)



UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING SENSORY INPUT TOOL

https://www.differentjoy.com/AdultSensoryAudit

18

## Autistic Stimming & Dirty Dish Dancing – ND MB

https://youtube.com/shorts/Q1MEB6_xKQY?si=Z4dXW3arW9_cSCJ_

19

## How Non-Autistic People Can enjoy it too

20

## FROM ANXIETY TO WELLBEING THE 5 C'S FRAMEWORK

Control

Choose

Create

Connect

Care

21

## How to cope with difficult times

How 'full' is your stress jar?

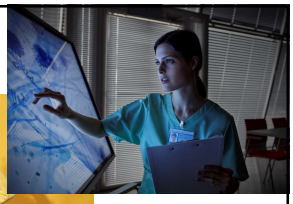
Stress
Worry
Anxiety

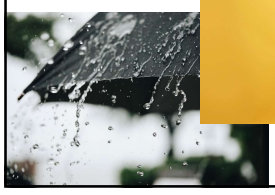
What do you do to turn on the tap and reduce your stress?

22

## What I can't control

Control

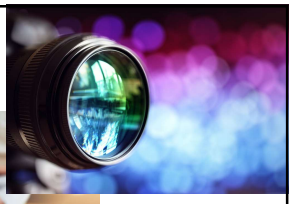


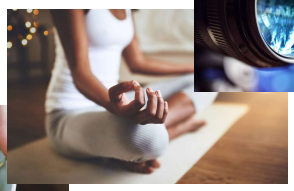


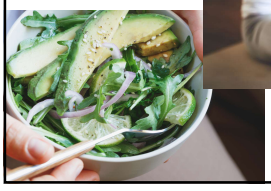
23

## What I CAN control

Control







24

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Control

5 C'S FRAMEWORK - CONTROL

| What I Can't Control | What I CAN Control |
|---|---|
| | |
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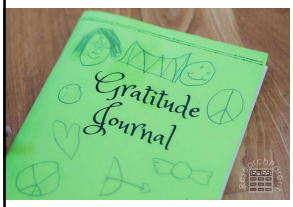
25

Where Focus Goes… Energy Flows – Tony Robbins

26

## How to get more of it – Be intentional




"in the past i always thought of gratitude as a spontaneous response to the awareness of gifts received, but now i realize that gratitude can also be lived as a discipline.

**the discipline of gratitude**

is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all i am and have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated with joy."

— henri j.m. nouwen (1932-1996)
*Return of the Prodigal Son*

27

Choose

## What will you allow to take up your time and attention?

**LESS TIME ON:**
- News
- Unkind people
- Worrying

**MORE TIME WITH:**
- Pets
- Making great memories

**MORE TIME ON:**
- People who are kind
- My special interests
- Nature
- Books & Music
- Exercise
- Sleep & wellbeing

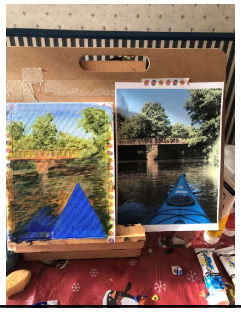
28

Create

## What can you create that will make your heart sing?

29

## The Creative Process -



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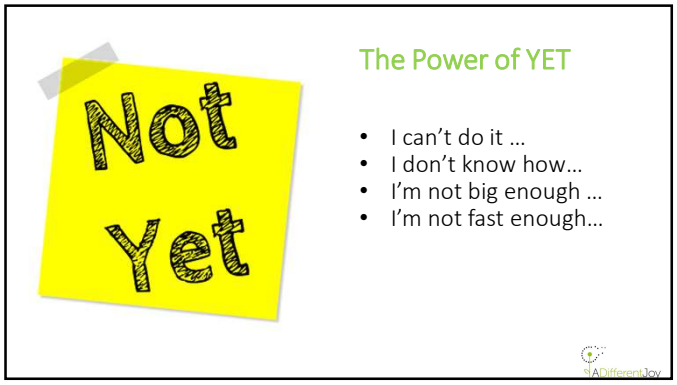
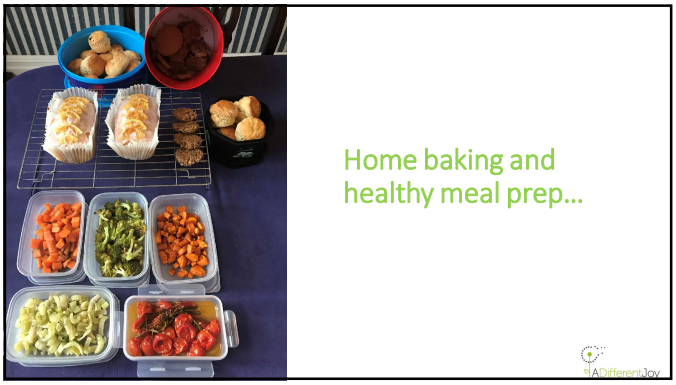



31

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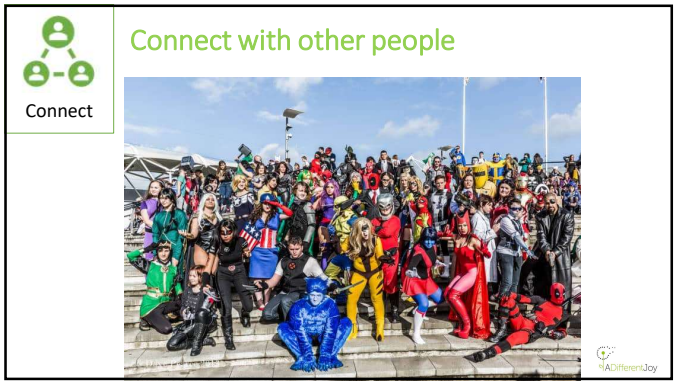


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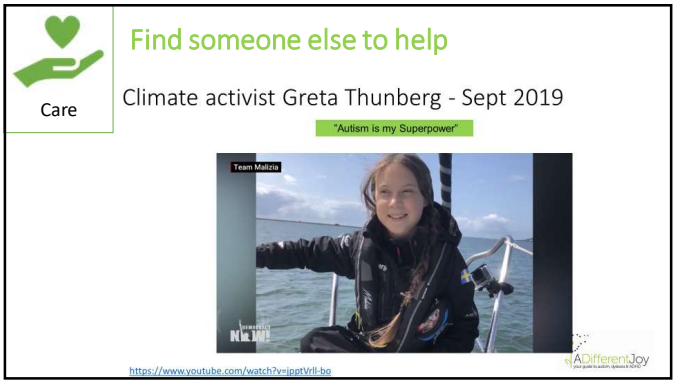


36

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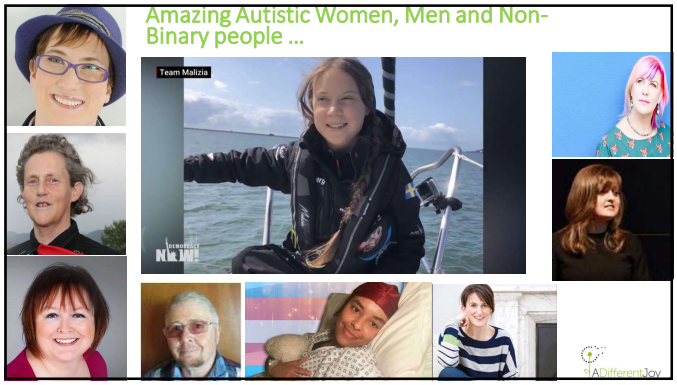
Amazing Autistic Women, Men and Non-Binary people ...
Team Malizia
ADifferentJoy

37

Autistic not weird
Insights from an autistic teacher, author and speaker
Nominee National Diversity Awards 2017 Positive Role Model (Disability)
Winner Autism Hero Awards 2017 Top Journalism Award
Winner Learning Disability and Autism Leaders' List 2018 Advocacy, Policy and Media
Winner Autism Hero Awards 2018 Online Social Network Award
Winner National Autistic Society Professionals Awards 2019 Outstanding Achievement by an Individual on the Autism Spectrum
"Serves real purpose... written with furious energy. Bonnello is writing the books that teenagers might relate to." -The Guardian (full review here)
Chris Bonnello
UNDER DOGS
UNDER DOGS: TOOTH AND NAIL
UNDER DOGS: ACCELERATION
UNDER DOGS: UPRISING
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38

It's OK to go the long way round.... So enjoy the ride!

39

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40

For more information go to www.differentjoy.com
"Essential reading for anyone living with or caring for a child who has learning difficulties in the autistic spectrum. It should also be compulsory reading for everyone working with children and young people, in any capacity."
A DIFFERENT JOY
Autism Dyslexia ADHD
SARAH-JANE CRITCHLEY
"Warm hearted book for parents of newly diagnosed autistic children with plenty of sensible advice."
"...an insightful, easy to navigate and very personal guide through the pitfalls of parenting children with 'hidden' SEN."
For more information and to order the book, visit:
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41