

My Library has Grown

Since our diagnosis, I have paced myself with reading as much as I can about autism. Below are books I have focused onto help me better understand how AZ processes information, ways we can better understand him, and explain autism to him and our family and friends.

The First ones to read after receiving the diagnosis:

I will Die On This Hill: By: Meghan Ashburn & Jules Edwards. I did not read this until well into our journey. I wish I had been gifted this as we walked out of our evaluation. Meghan and Jules tackle neuroaffirming practices, share their journey of advocacy, and reminded me why I fight systems so much. This book helps provide hope while also igniting the activist in us all.

Uniquely Human: A Different Way of Seeing Autism. By Barry Prizant. Barry has been a pioneer in advancing the humanistic approaches to working with autistic individuals. He focuses on co-regulation, understanding the importance of communication, validating that behavior is simply a form of communication, the importance of safety and connection cannot be understated. He also provides a fabulous podcast that covers very important topics with fantastic guest speakers.

More than Words by Fern Sussman. This was recommended by the speech therapist who did Az's evaluation. It was great at helping me understand the various levels of speech and social interaction and where AZ fell. It then gave practical play-based strategies to help increase his socialization and communication. It helped me learn the world of speech therapy as well. (this is recommended for our children that are non-verbal or from ages 0-6).

Ten Things Every Child with Autism Wishes you Knew. By Ellen Notbohm. This book is fantastic at helping to explain how your autistic child is thinking, feeling, and experiencing the world. We recommended this for family to read to better understand autism and his world. Anyone who is new to autism can benefit from this book.

We're Not Broken: Changing the Autism Conversation. By: Eric Garcia. Eric is an autistic adult who is a political writer. He delivers a fantastic book exploring the history and progress for autistic individuals. He does a wonderful job starting the discussion of the disability movement.

NeuroTribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity. By: Steve Silberman. Mr. Silberman compiles a spell-binding historical account of autism from diagnosis to treatment to the disability movement. He captivates his readers by providing real life examples among the historical context. Spoiler Alert: if you felt

autistic individuals were marginalized before reading this, it will only grow your passion to advocate!

Look me in the Eye. By John Elder Robison. This book was fantastic and was written from an autistic adult. It allowed me to increase my perspective taking by sharing his personal journey. I think this book could be great for an adult or teen with autism who wants to normalize what they are experiencing.

A Parent's Guide to High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder: How to Meet the Challenges and Help Your Child Thrive. Sally Ozonoff, Geraldine Dawson, and James McPartland. This book was the first book I read in addition to "More Than Words." This book helped me prepare for the world we were about to enter. It helped understand speech, OT, PT services, ABA, the world of school, the diagnosis process, and how to get services started in the school.

Social Thinking Topic:

Thinking about You Thinking about Me. By Michelle Garcia Winner. This is the bible to understanding Social Thinking. It goes through the entire concept of the theory and interventions utilized with Social Thinking. It helped me as a parent and as a provider. Mark read it solely as a parent and found it very helpful. I will most likely read this several times and pick up something new each time.

Why Teach Social Thinking? By Michelle Garcia Winner. This also goes in depth on Social Thinking; however, it has more of spin for educational intervention and ways impaired social thinking can impact educational learning. This will help me advocate for my child on how his social thinking deficit impacts his learning.

Additional Books:

Autism and the family. By Kate Fiske. The autism journey impacts each and every family member in different ways. This books helps one better understand the family roles and how each person may be impacted on the autism journey. It now has made me a better professional in being able to educate my families, kids, and siblings. I recommend it for any professional working with families with Autism and for parents who have kids with autism. If nothing else, giving chapters to read could be greatly beneficial.

What Color is Monday. By Carrie Cariello. This book also greatly helped me in the grieving process. Her words were so beautifully written and captured how I had been feeling. Her book was about her family, the hardships, and ultimately the resiliency that came from raising a child with Autism. I loved her humor and honesty. I highly recommend this for parents. I have since moved past any grief I originally felt. I also

believe that if parents were offered support and guidance initially, there would be no need to grieve.

The Key to Autism: An Evidence Based workbook for assessing and treating Children and Adolescents. By Cara Marker Daily. I am still working through this book; however, I have loved how it breaks down the brain science of autism and then offers practical strategies to help with executive functioning impairments. This is mainly for professionals; although, I am sure I will utilize this as a parent as well.

The Loving Push. By Temple Grandin

Temple Grandin is a well renowned speaker who is also autistic herself. She writes this book for parents and caregivers to help teach when to push and when to hold space. I found the information to be invaluable and a good reminder of the difference between can't and won't. She breaks down the areas of need to be as independent as possible. I feel like I have a road map of areas of focus to help AZ grow independently into adulthood.

Books to explain Autism to your child and to celebrate Autism

Uniquely wired: A story about Autism and its gifts. By Julla Cook.

ASD and Me: Learning about High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder. By Teresa DeMars

This book does a great job breaking down various areas of struggle for a child/teen with Autism. I love this book because it also shows all the strengths someone with Autism could have.

Autism is....? By Ymkje Wideman-van der Laan.

This book focuses on the ways a child with Autism may experience the world. I think it is important to give language to as many areas of challenge as possible. This helps the child (and others) understand how Autism is impacting their interactions with the world.

All My Stripes (A Story for Children with Autism). Shaina Rudolph

Different Like Me: My Book of Autism Heroes. Jennifer Elder

Can I tell you about Asperger Syndrome? A Guide for friends and family. By Jude Welton
Although this uses the former diagnosis, I found it helpful for older kids or teens. I would just explain that Asperger's is now called Autism Spectrum Disorder, but the areas of concern remain the same.

Books to explain Autism to siblings and/or other children

We have been incredibly open with AZ's younger brother, NZ, and any child AZ may interact with. From the time of our diagnosis, we have explained Autism, what it is, what it means, and why sometimes AZ behaves the way he is behaving. Some of our favorites are:

What About Me? A book by and for an Autism Sibling. By Brennan Farmer

My brother is Autistic (Let's talk about it series). By Jennifer Moore-Mallinos

I see things differently. By Pat Thomas

This was one of our first books we used to read to both boys. It is a great book detailing the various ways Autism may manifest (passions (fixations in the clinical world), difficulty with social interactions, and sensory challenges). I loved this book because it normalizes things for children and gives them a name to what is happening. It also gives examples of how to include an autistic peer. I recommend this to our family and friends to read to their children.

Books for General Parenting and Discipline

Brain Body Parenting, By: Mona Delahooke, PhD

Beyond Behaviors: By: Mona Delahooke, PhD

Whole Brain Child. By: Daniel Siegel, MD and Tina Payne Bryson

No Drama Discipline By: Tina Payne Bryson and Daniel Siegel, MD

Out of Sync Child By: Carol Stock Kranowitz

1-2-3 Magic. By: Thomas Phelan