

## Outline and Resources

Autism is a spectrum: some people you will interact with won't be able to speak, or communicate in a coherently verbal way. [That does not mean they can't communicate at all](#):

Types of communication

- [Sign language](#)
- [Behavior](#)
- Text-to-speech apps
- [The Picture Exchange System](#)
- Texting
- [Other forms](#)

Autism is differences in the brain: connections between the parts of the brain, and over- and under-development of parts of the brain.

These differences are highly individualized. "If you've met one person with autism, you've met *one person* with autism." -Dr. Stephen Shore

Common traits are social difficulties, like reading or projecting tone of voice, reading or projecting facial expressions, and reading or projecting body language.

Additional common comorbid traits:

- gastro-intestinal difficulties
- dietary sensitivities (gluten/casein-free is common)
- sleep disorders
- anxiety disorders
- [sensory sensitivities](#)
- [executive function difficulties](#)
- depression

Tradeoffs:

- very passionate and knowledgeable about hobbies and interests
- extremely loyal friends and spouses
- strong sense of justice
- direct, literal, and honest (No mind games, and if you ask "Do I look fat in this dress?" you had better be prepared for an honest answer rather than a white lie!)
- less interest in physical appearances, more in **who** you are and what things you like
- unusual ways of problem-solving or looking at a situation

[Sarah's house hunting worksheet](#)- example of unusual autistic perspective making a better overall result.

*Neurodiversity*: the idea that autism and other neurological differences are not diseases, but simply forms of human diversity (other examples: gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, skin color). Autism, then, is not a disease to be cured, but a difference to be respected and supported.

This does **not** mean that autistic people do not need help, or can't have support needs, or that hardships because of our diagnosis don't exist. [The social model of disability](#) accounts for some of this difficulty, but not all hardships of being autistic are blameable on society.

Autistic people have done valuable things:

- Temple Grandin redesigned cattle processing plants and slaughterhouses so they're more efficient and humane.
- John Elder Robison made flaming guitars and revolutionary sounds and special effects for the band KISS.
- Bill Gates and Steve Jobs transformed the world as we know it with personal computers and iPhones.
- [Many more](#)

Every autistic person is different, and has different skills and abilities.

Thinking Person's Guide to Autism (TPGA): [Medical Approaches and Best Practices for Autism and Aggression](#)

Autism.co.uk: [Autism Guidance for Health Professionals](#)

TPGA: [What ERs and Hospitals Need to Know](#)

TPGA: [To Professionals Supporting Autism Parents](#)