

# From the First to the Last Websites

Recently going through old papers I ran into my first website.

It does not exist of course. It was printed. It was made by my daughter in 2000 when I lived with her in Houston. It was made after my trip to California, where my friend advised me to take my invention. She said that California was the most progressive state and they welcome new ideas. Probably she still had a Soviet Image of America. Progressive -yes, but welcoming-not really. They do everything to create a protective wall from newcomers.

## *2000 year...AMERICA*

“Everybody has ideas. Making them work-that is a real issue ”, - they used to say to me, and that part a person had to do on his own. It's true. People take their ideas to America, believing in the image of The Land of Opportunities.

To me It was hard to believe that no one had any interest in what I offered-help for autistic kids-not business ideas. As I have that habit-to go to the end and find out for myself the answers to WHYs. So I visited all possible places in the San-Francisco and Bay area, and ended up sharing my sad adventures with a salesman from a book store. He told me that I cannot go anywhere, unless I take a business approach. He gave me a book about NGO, grants, etc. I couldn't imagine my idea being scrambled by business requirements. But I had nothing to object to the man -I visited churches, charitable places, including something named “Jesus Seeds” . Everything was somehow businesslike. I felt I would not be able to handle the social issue, which was much more difficult than making positive changes in autistic kids. I should give up.

On the way back to Houston I looked through the book. It was about human relationships, right helpful contacts, right approach to right people, etc., something where is my weakest side. It was time to give up. NY, Texas, California -3 states....Magic number. It was time. ....At that time I did not know what awaited me ahead-7 countries.

Recently I visited local municipality saying that I'd like to create something for autistic kids, but it should be nothing about business or money...She said that first I have to go to an accountant to discuss taxes issue

But in 2000 my daughter suggested making a website, just sharing my work. Ray, the father of autistic girl, helped with English and placed a link to my site on his own, which was already popular and where he explained autism, united parents and specialists.

Next days I've read that

## **Viewers' responses to the first website**

*I have looked at hundreds, maybe thousands of web sites. but I can honestly say that I have never been moved so much by one, as yours.*

-A parent of a special child

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*Just can't get over your web site. So very beautiful. I have been an artist for many years, and what you are doing far exceeds anything I have been across. You have taught these wonderful children to see, and see far better than most artists. You are indeed a very special person with a very special talent.....Very impressed there are millions of people on the planet, and of them only a few have the ability to work with autistic children, and out of those there are only a few*

*chosen people with a gift to help. You are one of those people.....*

*-Robert Martinique, sculptor*

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*What a great website you have. I think you have hit upon a great tool to use with children who have autism and with children who tend to be shy or have behaviors which interfere with their learning. The key to any great work is that the person has a passion for it, which you do. You have combined the gift that G'd has given you with your love for children. Make sure the parents are aware of what you are doing. You have a great gift. I really like the story of Jacob and how you pictured his good and bad behaviors and then had him teach his siblings about the difference between the behaviors. A stroke of genius! I train parents of children who have autism and I will probably borrow some of your ideas to give them additional ideas. My wife works in a classroom with six children with autism and I am sure she will bring her camera to school more often. Thank you for looking at your pages. I will link to your website if you do not mind. Keep up the great work and may G'd bless you.*

*-The Autism Home Page*

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*Great, you have my total admiration for the work you do with kids..... Please never give up your efforts with the Kids. It's all we have to make it a better world to live in.*

*-A children sport coach*

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*Hello, I ran across your site several years back and was amazed to see/learn how you had used photography to help troubled children. I'm a Child and Family Therapist . I, too, was once a professional photographer and while training as a therapist I devised a group plan for using the camera in therapy-just as art has been used in therapy*

*for years. I now use my camera(s) for personal phototherapy but have never tried your approach with any of my young clients*

*I'm inspired to find that your site is still "on" and that you are apparently still pursuing your work with children and adolescents. I'm now going to pass on your site address to my fellow therapists, especially those who see their kids at home, school and out in the community. I would also like to present your program (perhaps your first story) to my closest colleagues in the form of a "slide" program so we might talk about it use and variations that individual therapists might be inspired to pursue*

*So, I'm asking for your permission to do more than merely pass on your web site. I have no commercial interests to pursue here, and I respect your "ownership" of this intervention, as we therapists/counselors call it. I'm not even sure I can copy off your pages so as to project them on a larger screen in a staffing. But before I even began trying, I would like your permission, your "blessings" as it were*

*With some children, especially those between ages 7 to 11 this approach should work like dynamite to enhance their self-esteem, help them perceive their behavior in a self-empowering rather than shaming way. and so on You've already shown so effectively that it can work wonders with children who might otherwise be "lost" to themselves, their families, and society at large.*

*I hope you're still out there helping kids with a camera...*

-Smiles, Larry

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And I canceled my "giving up" intentions and continued my way

**2023 year....ALBANIA**

23 years have passed. I did a lot: books, articles, worked with a huge variety of kids, made mountains of experiments, but my mind is still not occupied with kids' issues.

Yesterday people in the bank got hostile after they saw something in my account. Maybe they took me for the Vlora mafia. I became a suspicious person, almost a criminal. With all those buying-selling property in different countries made me a suspicious person

Now 23 years later I still could not solve the same issue: how to help autistic kids, while staying away from money and business

And I'm again making a website, but now more about those predicaments. And I have to talk about greediness, fraud , stealing , manipulations, cruelty and things like that. Social issues. So sad

My first website was very simple by form, but content was uplifting

The new one is pretty and elaborated, but its content is gloomy

That is why I decided to reconstruct some of it, protecting the boy's identity. Usually I never use the real kids' photos, as they cannot give me permission . Regular kids are happy to help out, but that time it should be natural.

# MY FIRST WEBSITE

2000

Made by my daughter and me



Hi! My name is Dina.

I want to share with you my work using different tools to improve the lives of special children in order to make their lives more interesting and productive.



*Tools that help me in my work*

- [Give Them a Camera and You Can See a Miracle](#)
- [The story for me about myself \(learning material for parents\)](#)
- [David and Misha](#)
- [Hardship and Joy of Creativity](#)
- [Summer Story \(photography through the eyes of children\)](#)

My main tool is a photocamera, which gives limitless possibilities in working with any child. I apply photography in working in the mental retardation field, in working with autistic children, in working with children with behavior problems and with children who wish to have creative experiences.

I believe that any child could benefit from photography. Children like to possess things. Through photography they could possess the whole world and not only possess it, but also share it with anybody they chose. It's a strong motivation, it's an unlimited resource of knowledge, it's an infinite source of beauty and pleasure.

Besides the camera I use anything that makes a child respond. Concerning special children, it's very important to find those "special things" which touch the child's heart and then the child can achieve the most benefit.

In these stories I would like to share different ways photography could be beneficial for children and also some other tools children can respond to.

## Give Them a Camera and You Can See a Miracle

On these pages you won't find good quality pictures. I have an explanation for that. Although I am a professional photographer, I don't care about quality any more. Quality of pictures suddenly lost its value for me. For a few years in America I worked very hard to improve the quality of my pictures. I've learned and bought good cameras, changed lenses, tried to improve lighting, even enrolled myself in an institute of photography. Now my favorite camera is the "Point and Shoot" or PHD ("push here dummy" as it is named by the pros) camera. I have a preference for it, because it can make miracles, it helps me to see miracles.

Actually, there was a sign for it. Three times I took my professional camera to take some pictures and every time something strange happened and I couldn't get anything. When strange things like that happen persistently I usually look for a message. This time the message was obvious: "put away your complicated camera, forget about distance, sharpness, diaphragm, etc... take the PHD camera and join your friend Jacob in his fun", and that was exactly what I did!





1

We took our cameras, went to the park and had a great time there. And two days later we had even more fun when I brought the pictures and we could see and experience again everything we saw and experienced during our trip to the park. Chasing squirrels, taking pictures of beautiful flowers, birds and a cute girl, a funny puppy and our friend, a Russian cat.

And here is a story about my little friend Jacob and how the camera became his best friend and opened him up to a world full of wonders.



2

[Next>>](#)



Here is Jacob. He is 6 years old and he is a special boy.

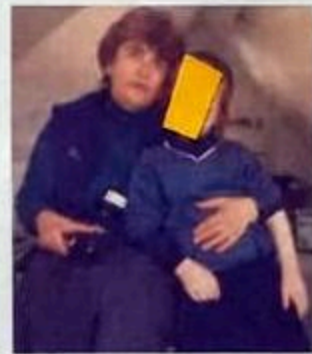


3

Hi! I'm Jacob!

Why is he special? He is special because he is funny, he is kind and loving, he is sensitive and affectionate, he is very social and friendly and he has a great imagination.

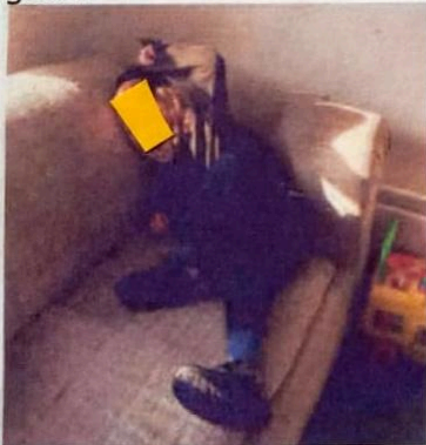
This picture of Jacob and me was taken by Jacob's younger sister, 3 year old Rita. She has been a great helper and was the author of other pictures in this story.



4

[Next>>](#)

Unfortunately, Jacob didn't know how to show people how good he was and some people thought that Jacob was a bad boy because he did a lot of things which were not so good.



He upset his younger brother.



6

He drove his sister to tears with his pranks



7  
He interrupted adults and liked to ask the same questions over and over again.

[Next>](#)



When Jacob and I became good friends, we decided that we had to do something about that. We didn't like the idea that people didn't know what a great person Jacob was.

First of all, we went to the store and purchased a photo camera and two folders: black and white in color.



We prepared the white folder  
for Jacob's good behavior...



9



10

... and the black one for bad  
behavior

We wrote down bad words that  
Jacob liked to repeat, Jacob tore  
them up...



11



12

... and threw them away in the  
garbage.

We took pictures of Jacob's bad behavior



Acting  
out...



Screaming!

... and other not so good things  
Jacob used to do.





We also took pictures for the white folder to show Jacob's good behavior



19

Nice eating ...



20

... and cleaning up after himself

[Next >>](#)

... playing nicely with cars



21



22

... and building highways



23

... doing puzzles

... and learning numbers



Jacob's favorite activity was talking, but as he didn't have many topics to talk about, he used to repeat the same things over and over again. So, we had to do something about that. One day we decided to open a school, where Jacob would be a teacher. Being a teacher, Jacob could enjoy what he loved so much: talking. Jacob was inspired by that idea. Jacob's siblings also agreed to participate.



25

Sister helped to prepare materials.



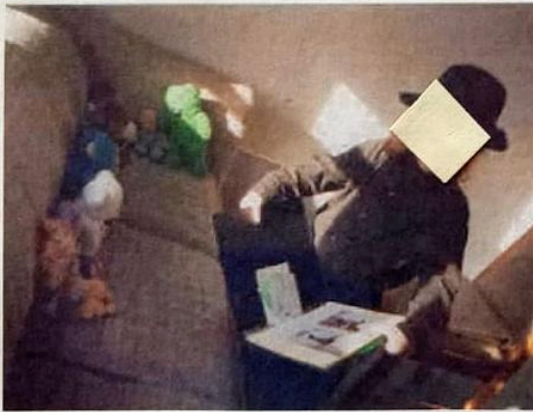
26

Baby brother helped to deliver students!



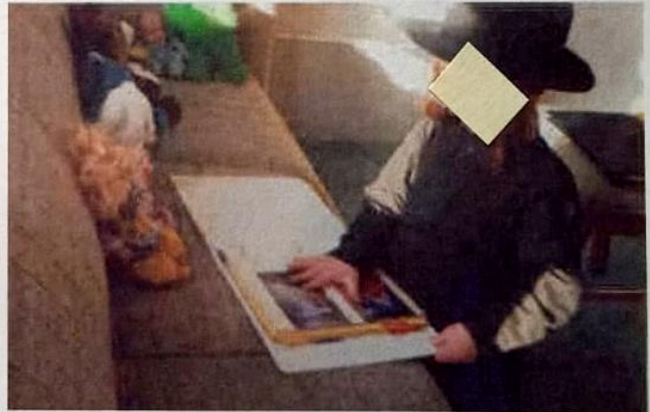
Finally the school was opened and Jacob started teaching. First class was the most important. It was behavior-control class. Jacob explained to the students everything about bad behavior... and good behavior. As a visual aid he used his own pictures -- examples

from the black folder



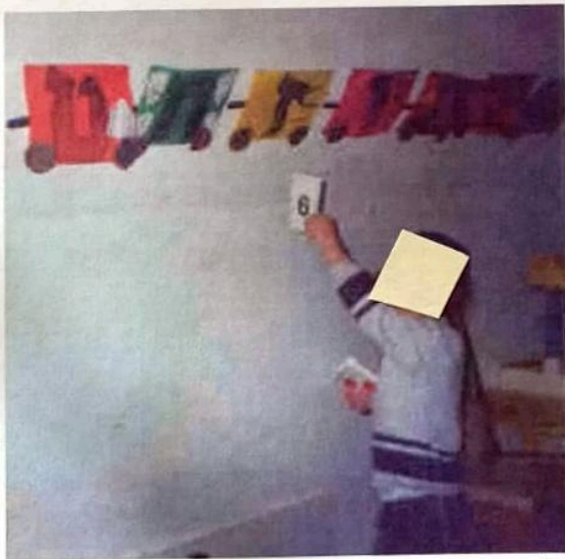
27

...and the white folder



28

Next class was about the Hebrew alphabet.



29



Jacob was a very strict teacher and used behavior modification in his class. He put bad behaved students in time-out.



Next class was fun. Jacob didn't forget about physical education and did exercises with the baby

And in the next class Jacob shared with the students his first work as a wedding photographer.

Last week we attended a wedding. As Jacob is a very friendly person, people loved to pose for him. He took a lot of pictures when we went to the wedding.



His grandparents...

32





... His younger sister

33



... and just guests

34



Jacob was especially pro the picture of the beauti

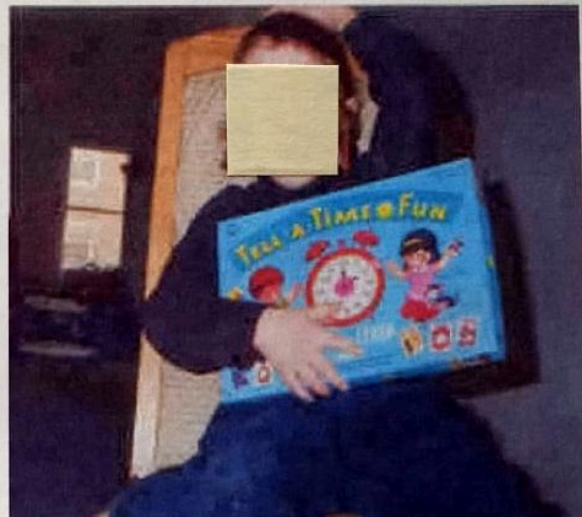
35

Soon we decided, it is time for students to learn reading. We started to work on our own, handmade, ABC's. Jacob and his sister took pictures of each other with different objects starting with different letters.



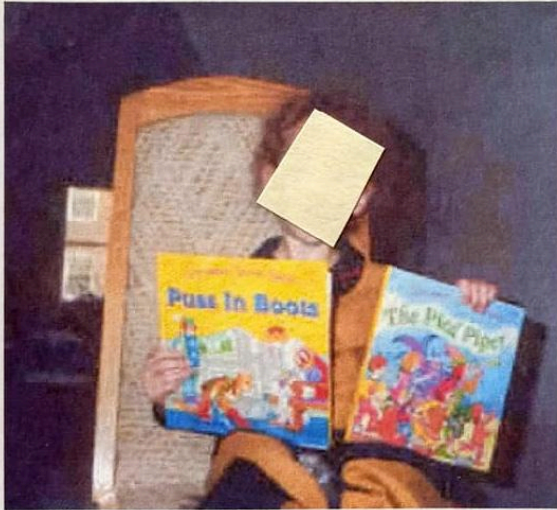
A for Apples...

36



and G is for Game

37



B for books...

38



P for puzzle

39



ABC came out very good  
and Jacob enjoyed teaching  
his students English letters.



Working on school issues, Jacob stopped upsetting his younger siblings and became good friends with them.



41



42



43

Eventually our work together come to an end, and the last day came. We decided to spend it in a special way. We both took our cameras and went to the park. On our way we stopped by the Russian store to say "Hello!" to Jacob's new friend - the Russian Cat.



44

She was, as always busy with her newspapers and magazines.

...but she was glad to see us and agreed to let us take some pictures of her.



45



46

We did a lot of other interesting things on our way to the park such as chasing a squirrel...



47



48

[Next >>](#)



taking pictures of flowers ...



49



50

... and trees

Finally we came to the park and Jacob had a lot of fun there...



52



53

.Such as, Jacob constantly asking for his camera: "Picktza! Picktza!"  
Because there were so many exciting things around ...



54

a cute dog ...



55

and a lovely little girl ...

a bird, which is leaving the  
park ...



56

and a bird which is so thirsty ...



57

everything attracted Jacob's attention. He kept crying out: "Picktza!  
Picktza!"

On the way back we took pictures of each other so that we could always remember what a great time we had together!



58



59



Ever since the word "piktzah" came into Jacob's life, his behavior improved noticeably. He stopped many of his bad habits and acquired new good ones. He could feel, that he did something important, he was proud of himself. It was much easier to manage his behavior, using that new tool.

Taking pictures became his favorite activity and my main reinforcement. "If you will behave like that, we cannot go outside and take pictures" was enough to stop his bad behavior. Having his behavior pictures, displayed in the album and especially to show them to students in school gave him a great help in understanding his own behavior. I didn't do much in that story, Jacob himself did most of the job.

One of the improvements was his growing interest for reading. Before that he couldn't sit quietly for even a moment to listen to a book, whereas now he even started to ask himself to read him something.

During the three months that we spent together, he turned from a wild uncontrollable boy into a very well behaved child with a variety of interests and initiative, and busy with interesting activities.

I also have positive results working one on one with autistic children. I don't use ABA or other specific methods in my work. I see an autistic child as a very unique personality who needs an individual approach. The basis for my work is to establish a contact with a child, learn his likes and dislikes and what can catch his interest.

Photography is an excellent tool to attract a child's attention. It is also a great resource to develop language, visual skills and imagination. For reserved autistic children it's a good way to start to comprehend and appreciate life around them. Photography also helps to develop such accompanying skills as cutting, coloring, measuring, gluing and so on. It can be a great help for learning colors, numbers, objects, relationships between people and objects. It's a safe method for a child to approach a complicated picture of life.

I also make my own learning materials: stories, puzzles, games, where the child is the main character. I try to talk to a child as much as possible describing pictures and explaining their meanings in order to promote development of language, and do a lot of other things to involve a child in my world, a world full of beautiful and interesting things about life, which photography truly reflects



Other stories will follow.....