

## INTRODUCTION

I started out by drawing up a five page presentation outline, and then I wanted to expand upon that. It was not until I had expanded it to 11 pages and counting that I realized that I was writing a book. I have been jokingly telling people ever since that, *"It was an accident, I did not mean to write a book, I just did."* I have had many "accidents" like this over the course of my life. Because this started out as a teaching outline, part of this book will still read as such, and therefore may lack the elaboration necessary to understand it. This will be in future editions, which will be downloadable as free PDF files at the Autism Ambassadors Corps' official website. Until then, a series of videos of a six hour seminar I presented based on it, will also be available at the AAC's official website:

[www.AutismAmbassadors.com](http://www.AutismAmbassadors.com)

I was not diagnosed with Autism until I was 40, in 2009, something that is not uncommon for those born before the 1990s. I began actually understanding myself and my Autism in September 2009, when I started attending a monthly adult Autistic/Asperger's support group. This group was run by two Autistics, who were also professionals who worked with Autistics, Sue Golubock (Autistic and now Ret. Occupational Therapist) and Tara Marshall (Autistic and Speech Language Pathology Assistant). In May 2011, Dr. Bryan Woodruff (Neurologist with a personal interest in Autism) joined our group. It is the insights and wisdom that I have obtained from this trio that have made this book possible.

### 4 POINTS THAT ARE PREVALENT THROUGHOUT THIS MATERIAL

1. It is a well-known fact that Autistics have neurology that is different from non-Autistics. Can you explain the difference? Don't feel bad if you can't, because most people are content to just say we're "wired differently" and then move on to the next subject. Nevertheless, neuroscience can give us far more in depth knowledge about the difference.
2. If you can only remember 5 terms from this material, they should be:
  - a. **Atypical Neurological connectivity:** The atypical nature of Autistic neurological connectivity is at the heart of what Autism is. Although what causes this in Autistics has still not been explained, the difference between Autistics and non-Autistics can.
  - b. **Hyper:** Various parts of the Autistic brain are hyperactive in comparison to the non-Autistic brain.
  - c. **Hypo:** Various parts of the Autistic brain are hypoactive in comparison to the non-Autistic brain.
  - d. **Paradox:** The result of hyperactivity and hypoactivity being characteristic of different regions of the same Autistic brain at the same time. It is my firm belief that understanding Autism as a "Paradox" is far more accurate than Autism being a "Spectrum."
  - e. **Brain Plasticity:** The human brain is in a constant state of change from the day we are born until the day we die. This means that any assumption that an Autistic will struggle with certain issues is contrary to the basic facts of human neurology.
3. Autistics are human beings that have the same needs and desires as any other human being; they just have unique challenges in obtaining them. This is contrary to how I feel that we are viewed, as nothing more than a bunch of neurological defects.
4. Autistics have discovered a lot of ways to overcome many of their personal challenges. Such information needs to be widely dispersed so that other Autistics and their loved ones might try some of them to see if they work for them as well.