



Natural Learning Concepts

<http://www.nlconcepts.com>

Toll free: (800) 823-3430 Main: (631) 858-0188 Fax: (631) 858-0061 sales@nlconcepts.com

TEN REASONS WHY PEOPLE WITH AUTISM ROCK

1. People on the autism spectrum don't play mind games

Sarah: "I'm going to have a cozy day at home honey, but whatever you decide to do is fine."

Mike: "Great. I think I'll head on over to Greg's house to watch the game and have a few beers."

Sarah: "Fine! You might as well sleep over there too since the locks will be changed by the time you get home." (Exits room and slams door)

Mike: (Frowning, confused and totally nonplussed) "What the..?"

Typical people are often masterful at saying one thing, while meaning the opposite. It's a game that most of us hate but we play it anyway. Consistently needing to read between the lines can be emotionally exhausting. Why is it so difficult for most of us to simply say it straight? People on the autism spectrum don't play these mind games. They tell it like it is and it's remarkably refreshing to be in their company. They don't expect you to play these games either. They mean what they say, and expect you do too. That's right! They'll take what you say at face value, without secretly doubting or disbelieving your word. What a great characteristic!

2. People on the autism spectrum are not interested in "looking good"

Many of us have an unconscious need to impress others. The clothes we wear, the topics we talk about, and even the careers we pick are often influenced by what others might think of us. People on the autism spectrum tend to do what makes them happy. If those ugly red shoes provide great comfort, then so be it. If reading children's comics make them laugh like a little kid, that's what they'll do. They're not about to feign interest in some philosophical argument just because it might make them look good. They're not interested in keeping up with the neighbors or buying the new "in thing" because that's what everyone is doing. They are who they are and that is that! This makes them genuine, sincere people who are unique and fascinating to be around.

3. People on the autism spectrum maintain an innocence about them

Many people on the autism spectrum have an uncanny ability to maintain the innocence of a little kid. They are captivated by the small things in life and are likely to be far more impressed by a leaf blowing haphazardly in the wind, than by the worldly possessions someone is flaunting in front of them. Foreigners to deception, they believe every word you say and this characteristic leaves them as gullible and naïve as a child. They don't look for hidden meanings and even if they did, they are unlikely to find them. They accept the world at face value, often delighting in the beauty around them.

4. People on the autism spectrum are honest

Since deception is not part of their makeup, people on the autism spectrum hardly ever tell a lie. One might even say they are honest to a fault. People on the autism spectrum will call it as they see it. If you want the truth, you know who to go to but be prepared for a brutally honest answer. Most of this population has never perfected the art of a white lie. They typically do not cheat or steal and remain remarkably in integrity. Most often people on the autism spectrum are valued friends who are honest, forthright and one hundred percent loyal.



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5. People on the autism spectrum delight in the moment

For many of us, the book we found fascinating in college wore off pretty fast. The jingle that first made us laugh drove us crazy 20 minutes later. The first sunset we witnessed captivated our heart but years later we put on sunglasses and barely notice it. Sadly, it doesn't take much for us to become blasé about the world around us. Most people on the autism spectrum are just the opposite! The joke that had them in stitches a month ago has the same effect on them today. The light reflecting off the glass window has them just as mesmerized as they first time they saw it. The color of the sky after a summer storm fills them with wonder each and every time. Perhaps because they are so sensory aware, they possess the talent of delighting in the small moments of life. One thing is for sure, their enthusiasm for life is contagious and it's great to be in their presence.

6. People on the autism spectrum have an intense ability to focus

While the rest of the world is socializing, many people on the autism spectrum are pursuing their interest with frenzy. There are no limits to the amount of time and effort they will dedicate to their passion, and they possess a unique ability to filter out the rest of the world while doing so. This intense focus and attention to detail enables them to master a subject or skill, which is often a great asset to the workforce. Temple Grandin says that if we eradicate autism from the world, we'll also be depriving ourselves of all the great gadgets and technology we enjoy, such as software programs, computer chips, video technology and the likes. While many of these inventors and pioneers might not be diagnosed with autism, many of them certainly possess autistic traits and the ability to focus intensely on their subject of interest.

7. People on the autism spectrum don't gossip

You know those people who are always talking behind your back? You can be sure they are not on the autism spectrum. People on the spectrum do not indulge in gossip. In fact the whole thing goes right over the top of their head. And as for all those private smirks and eye contact people surreptitiously engage in during a public exchange, you can bet your spectrum friend will never do that to you. If your spectrum friend has something to say, he'll either say it directly or keep it to himself. Blabbing about it to other people is completely foreign to his nature.

8. People with autism are not judgmental

Wouldn't it be great if people could just accept you as you are? The answer is to befriend someone on the autism spectrum. People with autism concentrate on the matter at hand. When they're listening to you speak, this is where they maintain their focus. They won't be furtively judging you on your clothes, your level of success, the color of your skin or how well you play baseball. If Jim tells his autism spectrum friend that he likes eating burgers from McDonalds, his friend thinks "Jim likes eating burgers from McDonalds." He doesn't judge Jim based on his eating preferences or secretly concludes that Jim has poor eating habits, and is in need of an education on the food pyramid. The same holds true when a person on the spectrum encounters someone, who, let's say for example has pink hair. There is no judgment about what type of personality this person must have or the background they must have come from. They simply acknowledge the presence of pink hair and move on. The ability to abstain from jumping to conclusions about people based on their appearance, career or some other aspect is admirable, and we have much to learn from our friends with autism in this department.



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9. People on the autism spectrum make great employees

Many people on the autism spectrum make great employees with admirable work ethics. They are typically creatures of habit. They arrive at exactly the same time every day and never leave early. They wouldn't dream of taking extended lunch breaks and you won't find them socializing at the coffee machine. They're more likely to be working studiously at their desk. Many of us balk at the routine aspects of our job and overlook the small details we should pay attention to. But this is often an area of strength for those on the spectrum, who are masterful at paying attention to detail. They are honest and loyal workers, who certainly don't enjoy job hopping and are typically committed and dedicated to their place of employment.

10. People with autism have a unique perspective

People with autism have a unique way of communicating and a fascinating perspective. Many are capable of such a diverse range of exceptional abilities. If you take the time to look, you'll find that the amount we can learn from them is quite staggering. Because people with autism have such a different way of thinking and being, they can contribute greatly to us, the workforce and to how we view life. If you are lucky enough to be close to someone on the autism spectrum, you will know firsthand that not only do they see the world from a different angle, but they have changed your perspective too and instilled in you a sense of compassion you never knew you were capable of feeling.

To all of you out there who are on the autism spectrum...You Rock!

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By Jené Aviram

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