

Introduction

This is an incredibly touching story-- one that recounts the journey of a father and son in how they fought against fate and the adversities brought on by Asperger's Syndrome. It proves that anyone regardless of their age and circumstances, with faith, hope, love and wisdom, can overcome his or her development disabilities and go on to live a great life.

Through this book, readers will be brought along onto the journey of how a father and son overcame each of their Asperger's syndrome, getting a peek of the daily struggles and hardships from the perspective of those with ASD, along with the author's self-reflection and in-depth analysis on the ingredients to their success. This book is not only autobiographical but also pragmatic in describing and recording the journey to overcoming Asperger's Syndrome of two generations. It is one of the firsts of its kind in Hong Kong and possibly even in the entire Chinese community.

Having known the author personally for nearly four years, he is an amazing father and husband who is genuine and loving to all those around him, with great social skills as well as work-life balance. According to the author's self-assessment, similar to his son, he also possessed symptoms of Asperger's Syndrome ever since he was a child. However, he couldn't find any professional support at the time because the syndrome was still unknown to most in Hong Kong a few decades ago. So the author decided to rescue himself. Fast forward to now, he feels completely unencumbered and lives with ease. If so, one can definitely call it a successful case.

I have also had the honor to witness the amazing growth and development of the author's son. After nearly two years of training under Potential Development Association for his ASD during his kindergarten years, he now excels in primary school without any assistance or counseling services. He even received the "Conduct and Diligence" award at the end of the year and his teacher commended him as a "well-organized student, with immense leadership potential". Although we cannot foresee his future, the success so far could be an indicator for the solid foundation we have built for the rest of his growth and development.

The success of the author and his son proves that change is possible. Even though one may be born with a development disability like Asperger's Syndrome, it is possible to overcome its challenges and move on to live life comfortably. I believe the author's absolute trust and love in life was one of the secret ingredients to their success. I have witnessed first-hand the author's perseverance and determination in creating positive change as well as his complete trust in therapists and those around him. His relentless and proactive attitude was a great fuel that kept them moving forward in this uphill battle against ASD.

The author slowly began to realize his social and communication difficulties during his teenage years. But like other successful people, he did not complain or sulk. Instead, he persevered and proactively crafted himself strategies and implemented them daily, and slowly but surely, step by step, he overcame the social hurdles brought on by ASD. Two decades later, with nine hard years of struggling behind him, ASD no longer burdens him and he handles social situations with ease and confidence. Through these years, I am sure everyone around him has witnessed his tremendous hard work and growth.

Upon seeing his younger son encountering similar social difficulties like a reflection of his younger self, and its potential detriment to the sibling relationship between his two sons, he panicked. Employing the same persistent attitude and faith from his teenage years, the author made an incredible sacrifice— he decided to take half a year off from work and dedicate his time wholeheartedly in helping his younger son through his ASD. With an unwavering will, he focused all his time in teaching his son and helping him catch up. The author's dedication and love for his son is something we can all admire, and I am so ecstatic to witness the fruition of all their hard work.

Unlike the author's teenage journey, this time around him and his son are not alone in the battle against ASD, but instead with their loving wife and mother, plus a team of professionals, which meant a lot more resources and support than ever before. All the professional resources, advice, support provided a much more systematic training to help his son. The journey to overcoming ASD became a lot quicker and in just a little over two years, there was significant progress. With that said, the success ultimately relied on the author's open heart, trust, and respect for the therapists and professionals.

Their story also brings up some interesting points about a successful treatment. Although both the father and son each triumphantly fought against their own ASD, their respective experiences were completely different, and readers will have a chance to see the juxtaposition and how each approach works.

First of which is the author's method of "top-down," which is driven by his own will and determination to consciously overcome challenges. For example, when he experienced extreme anxiety during a presentation, he told himself to treat the audience as wooden puppets. Eventually it became a habit and was able to suppress his anxiety. The latter was the method of "bottom-up" and homeopathic. Since the son was only a few years old, unaware of the situation, he simply played and participated in activities with his father specifically designed by therapists and professionals. Day by day, he interacted and socialized with others. He learned to read his own mind and understand other people's feelings and affection. The author reckoned his son did not even realize it was therapy at all and was just enjoying himself in those training activities that were designed to feel like normal games and playtime. Relative to the top-down method, the latter was obviously significantly more stimulating, efficient, and fun in which improvements and progress came more naturally.

This is an incredible story of two generations successfully overcoming ASD in each of his own ways. Whether you are someone who has been diagnosed/labeled with Asperger's Syndrome or Autism, or a parent, teacher, social worker, psychologist, or therapists of someone who has crossed paths with it, or simply someone interested in human psychology and its growth and development, I am sure this can become a useful reference and you will find resonance in their hard-fought journey. How can you and I miss out on such an amazing story?

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