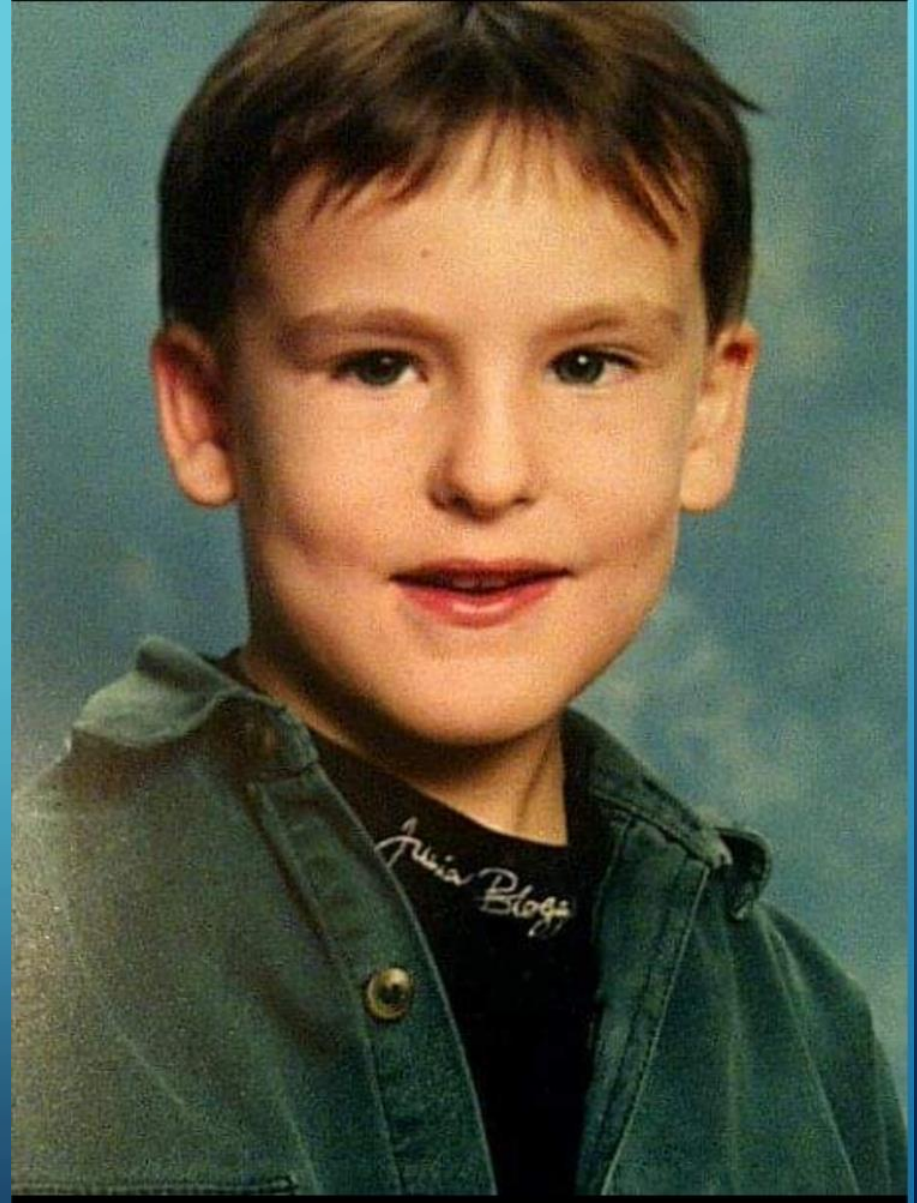




AUTISTIC IDENTITY

MY PATH TO SELF-ACCEPTANCE

DEAN BEADLE



WHAT WERE OTHERS SAYING ABOUT ME IN MY CHILDHOOD?

“you’d be successful if you’d just behave”

“why pander to the rude boy?”

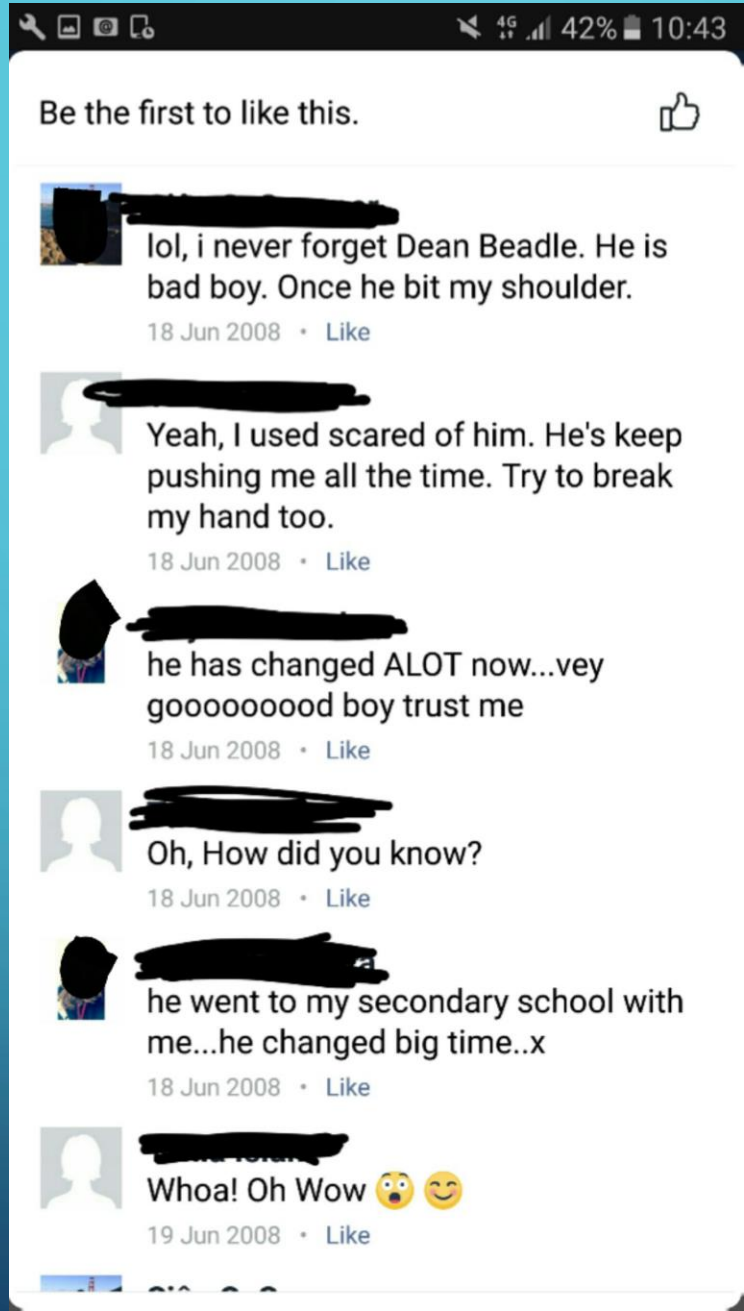
“why have you got a TA? Are you thick?”

“he’s sexually innapropriate”

“he’ll be in prison by the time he’s 30”

“he doesn’t know where the line is”





Be the first to like this.



[Redacted Name]

lol, i never forget Dean Beadle. He is bad boy. Once he bit my shoulder.

18 Jun 2008 · Like



[Redacted Name]

Yeah, I used scared of him. He's keep pushing me all the time. Try to break my hand too.

18 Jun 2008 · Like



[Redacted Name]

he has changed ALOT now...vey goooooood boy trust me

18 Jun 2008 · Like



[Redacted Name]

Oh, How did you know?

18 Jun 2008 · Like



[Redacted Name]

he went to my secondary school with me...he changed big time..x

18 Jun 2008 · Like



[Redacted Name]

Whoa! Oh Wow 😲 😊

19 Jun 2008 · Like

The background is a solid teal color with a subtle gradient. In the four corners, there are decorative white line-art elements resembling circuit traces or neural pathways. These lines connect to small white circles, creating a network-like pattern. The lines are most prominent in the top-left and bottom-left corners, and less so in the top-right and bottom-right corners.

SO DEAN, WHEN DID YOU FIND OUT YOU WERE
AUTISTIC?



ACCEPTING YOU'RE DIFFERENT- NOT EASY!

- Is it just me who makes mistakes?
- Everyone else vs me
- A sense of being alone (which is of course totally untrue)
- Media representation of autism is often alarming and misleading
- Other people asking questions about your difference that you struggle to answer
- Walking in new classroom with a TA opens the floodgates
- Fighting your own internalised ableism
- Pressure to compete
- Giving yourself permission to have your needs

BREAKING FREE OF THE MEDICAL MODEL

- Social model- change the environment to accommodate the person
- I still viewed myself through a deficit model lens for years
- “because, not despite” – crucial sentence for me
- Damian Milton’s double empathy problem



A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

- Each autistic sets the tone on how they are addressed- only I decide how I refer to myself
- Bear in mind: 'has' and 'got' are incredibly medicalised
- 'With autism' is also very unpopular with majority of autistics – this terminology is strongly linked to a medical model approach- many find it offensive
- Survey after survey finds 'autistic' to be the general preferred term

The background is a solid teal color with a subtle gradient. In the four corners, there are decorative white line-art elements resembling circuit traces or neural pathways. These lines connect to small white circles, creating a network-like pattern. The lines are thin and the circles are small, adding a technical or scientific feel to the design.

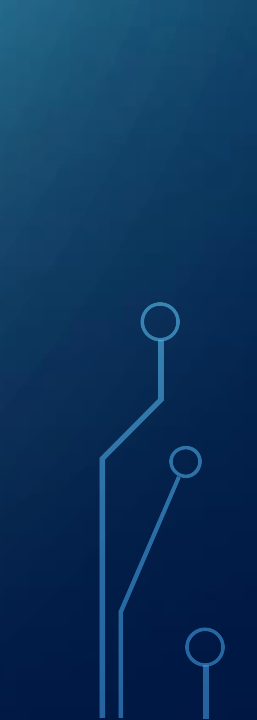

CASE STUDIES

Positive examples of sharing diagnosis with an autistic child



I explained it to my newly diagnosed 10 year old girl as "we now have a special label to describe how awesome you are. It explains why your brain works in a different way to your friends"

I used "android phone and iPhone" as the comparison: "both do all the same things but have different operating systems"




After the ADOS my son asked if he was an animagus. We assured him the dr had not said he could turn into an animal but she had said he was autistic. He punched the air with joy and shouted 'now I can solve mysteries' (Jonathan Creek, Mystery of the dog).

I came across Rosie King and showed him some of her talks before diagnosis. The one about how autism freed myself talks about who wants to be 'normal' anyway. Being extraordinary, being exceptional is about being different from the norm. Also creating a balanced view around sensory issues. That being able to hear/smell/see detail that others cannot is simply 'Wow!' As much as they need management to live with, they are a super skill, a talent that parents can harness and develop.

My daughter knew before diagnosis because of her brother. The positive culture we have around autism at home enables her to embrace it. Appreciate that the best way of communicating may be through a medium such as play, art with your kids, side by side. We often 'talk' whilst I'm driving or at night in the dark.


Always been open and honest with my daughter, if she asks questions we answer them truthfully and factual. She is a lover of facts. She will let us know when she doesn't want to hear by covering her ears and asking us not to talk about 'that' today. She understands that her brain is wired different and loves the idea of being non muggle (big Harry Potter Fan)



We have always discussed it very openly. I've always said that they had no chance of being one of Teh Normalz, simply because I'm pretty weird (though, sadly, NT), so differences were never an issue.

My eldest (14) identified people he thought were also autists (Dr Who; Wall-E amongst others), and we spoke about people in the public eye who were open about their diagnoses. My youngest (12), is coming to terms with her possible DX.

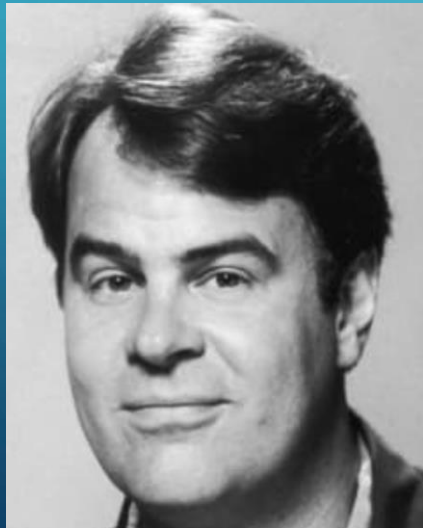
Both kids drew a pretty cool comic about it.



I informed my 7 year old grandson that he has Autism and we proceeded to read a book called 'Autism is....?' He was able to relate to some of it and became extremely angry, the book flew across the room and it was not mentioned again until I organised a trampolining session which he really wanted to go to. I informed him that it was such a shame that he couldn't go, as only children who have autism could go....in that moment he screamed out "Yay I've got autism" 😂 On a separate occasion I was telling him that he has super powers as he has awesome hearing and a fantastic sense of smell...to which he replied "that's not awesome, I can really smell other people's farts" 😂 He's been fine with it ever since.

The image features a dark blue gradient background with white, stylized circuit board traces in the corners. These traces consist of straight lines and right-angle turns, ending in small circles that represent components or nodes. The traces are located in the top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right corners, framing the central text.

BUT WHAT ROLE MODELS ARE THERE?





Following

Rhi

@OutFoxgloved Follows you

Late-diagnosed #Autistic woman in #Wales.
#Writing when I can: #Playwright #Poet #Blogger
#PublicSpeaker Appreciator of the little things
in life #AutDuck



Following

DrEmilyL

@TheBullyingDr Follows you

Autistic Psychologist (biology, anxiety, autism,
public performance and anti-bullying strategies).
Speaker, trainer, researcher, author. Remainer.

Wales thebullyingdoctor.com

Born 25 September Joined April 2013

78 Following 2,898 Followers



Following

Gill Loomes ●🐛

@LoomesGill Follows you

Disabled socio-legal scholar-activist and artist:
#Disability #MentalCapacity - Interested in
social "voice", passionate about #Advocacy
#AutisticsInAcademia



Following

jon adams

@soundcube Follows you

Not surviving PTSD Vwell. FRSA Synaesthete
Neurodivergent Polymath MHChampion Artist
Poet Performer Speaker Digital art&Sound
Conceptual Geologist VeganCatLover



Following

Shona

@Shona_Mu Follows you

#AutisticParent, trainer and researcher. MA
autism graduate Member of the women's network
at RCOG. Views own.

Sheffield, UK Joined November 2010

744 Following 7,489 Followers

The image features a dark teal background with a subtle gradient. In the four corners, there are decorative white line-art elements resembling circuit traces or neural network connections, with small circles at the end of the lines. The central text is in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

BUT WHY DO YOU WANT/NEED A LABEL?

Yesterday, at a conference I was speaking at, I was asked a question which I have been processing ever since.

“If we are living in a time of celebrating diversity, then why can’t we meet all the needs without the autism diagnosis. Why do we need to give the child a label?”

Lets look at this. ‘Giving the child a label’ implies that it is a taint, a millstone around the neck, a stain on the individual’s life. The opposite is true in my life. Knowing I am autistic has given me understanding and self-awareness. It helped others to understand my needs. It also has given me a sense of identity and has shown me that I belonged to a tribe of amazing people. My ‘label’ has never been the problem. We have no qualms about ‘labelling’ people LGBTQ+, brown-haired or Canadian. So why should ‘labelling’ autistics be an issue?

The issue is that society still, for the most part, attributes negative meanings to that ‘label’. The medical model of disability. The deficit model. I have no issue with being defined by my autism. I do, however, refuse to be defined by a deficit model. We don’t need to ‘do away with the label’ we need to do away with societies nonsensical view that somehow having that ‘label’ is damaging and reductive. Autism means different. It means unique minds. It means *brilliant*. It has never and will never mean less.

And while we’re at it, lets look at the word ‘label’. It implies its been given; tied on to the wrist of the individual by the diagnostician. I was not given my autism, I merely had it confirmed. ‘Label’ also implies its temporary. Removable. Every experience I have is seen through autistic eyes. Every emotion I feel is felt with an autistic brain. I am an autistic man. That isn’t going to change. I don’t have a label tied on with string, I have an identity.

So to address the original question, I don’t feel that telling children they are autistic is a problem. The real problem? That so many people still view it as a problem. The word autism must stay, what needs to go is society’s dodgy attitudes.



