

Current Culture

Many people with autism have been treated badly, placed in institutions and subjected to treatments to make them 'normal'. 80% of school children on the autistic spectrum complain of being bullied.

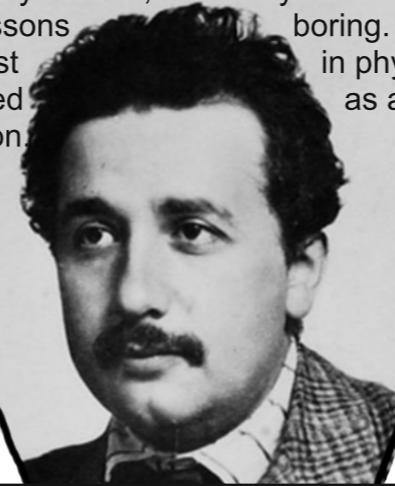
History

The word "autism," which has been in use for about 100 years, comes from the Greek word "autos," meaning "self."

It is thought that the following people were on the autistic spectrum:

- Michelangelo,
- Einstein, Newton,
- Hans Christian Anderson,
- Samuel Johnson, and
- John Lennon.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) probably had Asperger Syndrome, with delayed development, finding lessons boring. His interest in physics was as an addiction.



He lacked tact and social empathy... Einstein's unique way of thinking led to modern physics.

In the 1940s, researchers in the United States began to use the term "autism" to describe children with emotional or social problems.

'Rainman' was a popular film showing autism positively with Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise.



Tom Wiggins (1849-1908) was born a slave. Blind and autistic, he grew up hearing his master's children playing the piano.



Amazingly, Tom could play any tune on the piano and composed 100 of his own. His master took him around the world, earning a good living from Tom's very popular concerts.

Achievements:

Many unusual thinkers in the past, who added greatly to human thought and endeavour, were probably on the autistic spectrum.

All Equal
All Different:
people
with **AUTISM**
AUTISTIC SPECTRUM CONDITION
or **NEURO-DIVERSE**
people



NERDI!
WIERDO!
CRAZY!
FREAK!

You wouldn't like to be called -

Autism is a neurological difference which shows itself in a variety of ways and is for life. It can affect language, communication, social relationships, behaviour, sensitivity to touch, sound, taste and smells.



People with autism want to be supported to be the people they are.

Donna Williams is a teacher, musician, artist, writer and advocate. She describes her autism as 'electrical interference in her brain'. Williams has battled to make sense of the world.



Temple Grandin has autism. She is an expert on animal welfare and an advocate of autistic peoples' rights. Grandin has introduced many new ideas to the handling of animals, through her attention to detail.



Some parents and medical professionals view autism as a disorder that has to be cured, though none exists.

People with autism think differently to most people. This means they can come up with detailed and different solutions to problems.