

Top 10 Terrific Traits of Autistic People

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If you're sick of hearing about all the "deficits" challenging people on the autism spectrum, join the club! But for every down side to autism, there seems to be a positive -- an unusual trait that rarely appears among the "typical" community, but shines out among autistic folk. These plusses are well worth celebrating.

1. Autistic People Rarely Lie

We all claim to value the truth, but almost all of us tell little white lies. All, that is, except people on the autism spectrum. To them, truth is truth -- and a good word from a person on the spectrum is the real deal.

2. People on the Autism Spectrum Live in the Moment

How often do typical people fail to notice what's in front of their eyes because they're distracted by social cues or random chitchat? People on the autism spectrum truly attend to the sensory input that surrounds them. Many have achieved the ideal of mindfulness.

3. People with Autism Rarely Judge Others

Who's fatter? Richer? Smarter? For people on the autism spectrum, these distinctions hold much less importance than for typical folks. In fact, people on the spectrum often see through such surface appearances to discover the real person.

4. Autistic People are Passionate

Of course, not all autistic people are alike. But many are truly passionate about the things, ideas and people in their lives. How many "typical" people can say the same?

5. People with Autism Are Not Tied to Social Expectations

If you've ever bought a car, played a game or joined a club to fit in, you know how hard it is to be true to yourself. But for people with autism, social expectations can be honestly irrelevant. What matters is true liking, interest and passion -- not keeping up with the Joneses.

6. People with Autism Have Terrific Memories

How often do typical people forget directions, or fail to take note of colors, names, and other details? People on the autism spectrum are often much more tuned in to details. They may have a much better memory than their typical peers for all kind of critical details.

7. Autistic People Are Less Materialistic

Of course, this is not universally true -- but in general, people with autism are far less concerned with outward appearance than their typical peers. As a result, they worry less about brand names, hairstyles and other expensive but unimportant externals than most people do.

8. Autistic People Play Fewer Head Games

Who was that woman, and why were you looking at her? I know I TOLD you I didn't mind if you went out, but why did you believe me? Most autistic people don't play games like these -- and they assume that you won't either. It's a refreshing and wonderful change from the Peyton Place emotional roller coaster that mars too many typical relationships!

9. Autistic People Have Fewer Hidden Agendas

Most of the time, if a person on the autism spectrum tells you what he wants -- he is telling you what he wants. No need to beat around the bush, second guess, and hope you're reading between the lines!

10. People with Autism Open New Doors for Neurotypicals

For some of us neurotypicals, having an autistic person in our lives has had a profound positive impact on our perceptions, beliefs and expectations. For me, at least, being the mom of a son on the autism spectrum has released me from a lifetime of "should" -- and offered me a new world of "is."