



# Uniquely Ourselves

## A Collection of Inspirational Books

Autism is a highly complex condition, and that complexity is reflected in the broad and diverse range of books that have been written about it. Because living with autism isn't easy, one way that those who have been diagnosed can feel less alone is through seeing characters much like themselves represented across the media. The good news is that we're seeing a larger number of film, television, and literary characters now and proudly on the spectrum. It's a pretty beautiful thing!

The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time – Mark Haddon

Marcelo In The Real World – Francisco Stork

Mockingbird – Kathryn Erskine

The Perks Of Being A Wallflower – Stephen Chbosky

Loser – Jerry Spinelli

The London Eye Mystery – Siobhan Dowd

Anything But Typical – Nora Raleigh Baskin

How To Look For A Lost Dog – Ann M Martin

The Reason I Jump – Naoki Higashida

Freaks, Geeks and Asperger's Syndrome – Luke Jackson

Al Capone Does My Shirts – Gennifer Choldenko

Rules – Cynthia Lord

Truth or Dare – Celia Rees

MindBlind – Jennifer Roy

## **The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time – Mark Haddon**

This is a murder mystery like no other. Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. And he detests the colour yellow.

This improbable story of Christopher's quest to investigate the suspicious death of a neighbour's dog makes for one of the most captivating, unusual, and widely heralded novels in recent years.

## **Marcelo In The Real World – Francisco Stork**

Marcelo Sandoval hears music that nobody else can hear — part of an autism-like condition that no doctor has been able to identify. But his father has never fully believed in the music or Marcelo's differences, and he challenges

Marcelo to work in the mailroom of his law firm for the summer . . . to join "the real world."

There Marcelo meets Jasmine, his beautiful and surprising co-worker, and Wendell, the son of another partner in the firm. He learns about competition and jealousy, anger and desire. But it's a picture he finds in a file a picture of a girl with half a face that truly connects him with the real world: its suffering, its injustice, and what he can do to fight.

## **Mockingbird – Kathryn Erskine**

Caitlin has Asperger's. The world according to her is black and white; anything in between is confusing. Before, when things got confusing, Caitlin went to her older brother, Devon, for help. But Devon was killed in a school shooting, and Caitlin's dad is so distraught that he is just not helpful. Caitlin wants everything to go back to the way things were, but she doesn't know how to do that. Then she comes across the word closure--and she realizes this is what she needs. And in her search for it, Caitlin discovers that the world may not be so black and white after all.

## **The Perks Of Being A Wallflower – Stephen Chbosky**

The critically acclaimed debut novel from Stephen Chbosky, *Perks* follows observant "wallflower" Charlie as he charts a course through the strange world between adolescence and adulthood. First dates, family drama, and new friends. Sex, drugs, and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Devastating loss, young love, and life on the fringes. Caught between trying to live his life and trying to run from it, Charlie must learn to navigate those wild and poignant roller-coaster days known as growing up

## **Loser – Jerry Spinelli**

Just like other kids, Zinkoff rides his bike, hopes for snow days, and wants to be like his dad when he grows up. But Zinkoff also raises his hand with all the wrong answers, trips over his own feet, and falls down with laughter over a word like "Jabip." Other kids have their own word to describe him, but Zinkoff is too busy to hear it. He doesn't know he's not like everyone else. And one winter night, Zinkoff's differences show that any name can someday become "hero." With some of his finest writing to date and great wit and humour, Jerry Spinelli creates a story about a boy's individuality surpassing the need to fit in and the genuine importance of failure.

## **The London Eye Mystery – Siobhan Dowd**

Ted and Kat watched their cousin Salim board the London Eye, but after half an hour it landed and everyone trooped off—except Salim. Where could he have gone? How on earth could he have disappeared into thin air? Ted and his older sister, Kat, become sleuthing partners, since the police are having no luck. Despite their prickly relationship, they overcome their differences to follow a trail of clues across London in a desperate bid to find their cousin. Ultimately it comes down to Ted, whose brain works in its own very unique way, (Seemingly Asperger's) to find the key to mystery.

## **Anything But Typical – Nora Raleigh Baskin**

Jason Blake is an autistic 12-year-old living in a neuro typical world. Most days it's just a matter of time before something goes wrong. But Jason finds a glimmer of understanding when he comes across PhoenixBird, who posts stories to the same online site as he does.

Jason can be himself when he writes and he thinks that PhoenixBird-her name is Rebecca-could be his first real friend. But as desperate as Jason is to meet her, he's terrified that if they do meet, Rebecca will only see his autism and not who Jason really is.

By acclaimed writer Nora Raleigh Baskin, this is the breath-taking depiction of an autistic boy's struggles-and a story for anyone who has ever worried about fitting in.

## **How To Look For A Lost Dog – Ann M Martin**

Eleven-year-old Rose is autistic and struggles to understand her classmates. But when her father gives her a stray dog, which she names Rain, the dog becomes her best friend, her anchor in a confusing world. So when Rain goes missing during a storm, Rose refuses to stop looking for him...A touching story from the beloved author of The Baby-Sitters Club.

## **The Reason I Jump – Naoki Higashida**

Written by Naoki Higashida when he was only thirteen, this remarkable book provides a rare insight into the often baffling behaviour of autistic children. Using a question and answer format, Naoki explains things like why he talks loudly or repeats the same questions, what causes him to have panic attacks, and why he likes to jump. He also shows the way he thinks and feels about his world - other people, nature, time and beauty, and himself. Abundantly proving that people with autism do possess imagination, humour and empathy, he also makes clear how badly they need our compassion, patience and understanding.

David Mitchell and his wife have translated Naoki's book so that it might help others dealing with autism and generally illuminate a little-understood condition. It gives us an exceptional chance to enter the mind of another and see the world from a strange and fascinating perspective.

## **Freaks, Geeks and Asperger's Syndrome – Luke Jackson**

Have you ever been called a freak or a geek? Have you ever felt like one? Luke Jackson is 13 years old and has Asperger Syndrome. Over the years Luke has learned to laugh at such names but there are other aspects of life which are more difficult. Adolescence and the teenage years are a minefield of emotions, transitions and decisions and when a child has Asperger Syndrome, the result is often explosive. Luke has three sisters and one brother in various stages of their adolescent and teenage years but he is acutely aware of just how different he is and how little information is available for adolescents like himself. Drawing from his own experiences and gaining information from his teenage brother and sisters, he wrote this enlightening, honest and witty book in an attempt to address difficult topics such as bullying, friendships, when and how to tell others about AS, school problems, dating, relationships and morality. Luke writes briefly about his younger autistic and ADHD brothers, providing amusing insights into the antics of his younger years and advice for parents, carers and teachers of younger AS children. However, his main reason for writing was because so many books are written about us, but none are written directly to adolescents with Asperger Syndrome. I thought I would write one in the hope that we could all learn together.

## Al Capone Does My Shirts – Gennifer Choldenko

When Moose Flanagan and his family move home, yet again, and become residents of the famous prison island Alcatraz, things get interesting. First of all, they share the island with a few other families and a lot of pretty heavy-duty criminals including Al Capone. And secondly, Moose's sister is starting a new school, which everyone hopes will help her become more integrated with those around her. When Moose comes up with some pretty cunning money-making schemes based on his famous co-residents, he does not count on his sister becoming inadvertently involved. This is a charming, funny and utterly enchanting book that skilfully and delicately weaves a humorous tale with some important issues.

## Rules – Cynthia Lord

Twelve-year-old Catherine just wants a normal life. Which is near impossible when you have a brother with autism and a family that revolves around his disability. She's spent years trying to teach David the rules from "a peach is not a funny-looking apple" to "keep your pants on in public"---in order to head off David's embarrassing behaviours. But the summer Catherine meets Jason, a surprising, new sort-of friend, and Kristi, the next-door friend she's always wished for, it's her own shocking behaviour that turns everything upside down and forces her to ask: What is normal?

## Truth or Dare – Celia Rees

A room of secrets in a house of lies...When Josh explores his grandmother's house he finds an attic up a closed-off staircase. In it is a collection of strange drawings by his uncle, Patrick, who died suddenly in his teens. But he has no grave, and his name is never spoken. And Josh begins to uncover the dark truth his family has hidden for forty years..."Truth or Dare" doesn't let up - and hits you with a final twist."

## MindBlind – Jennifer Roy

Fourteen-year-old Nathaniel Clark lives in two worlds—the outside world of his family and friends and his own, special, inside Aspie world, where he's not forced to interact with people or worry about wearing his clothes right-side out. The world where he can solve mathematical problems that elude even the brightest graduate students. The world where he feels he can find his own inner truth. People say he's a genius, but Nathaniel thinks differently. According to a book he once read, a true genius uses his talent to make a contribution to the world. Nathaniel takes the definition literally, and begins his quest for genius status. "I will start, right after I wash the chocolate off my face. If I want to be seen as a genius, I should not look like an idiot." Nathaniel has a sky-high IQ and perfect SAT scores, but Jennifer Roy and her husband, Greg, have a remarkable 8-year-old son, Adam, who not only inspired the character of Nathaniel Clark, but also created the "Amazing Race" charts and the narrative at the back of MindBlind

