

Listening is an ACTIVE Skill!



People Without Words Still Speak



Upward Bound, Jenna Bush April 2026
book club pick

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People often ask me where my daughter is on the spectrum. When I am asked this question I try to use it as an opportunity to explain what the DSM-4 and DSM-5 are and why they matter. The manuals are important because they describe particular diagnoses and provide guidance for private and public entities and professionals (See below).



DSM-5 What it is and What it diagnoses

[Learn More](#)

But in reality as a family member, it really does not matter because a diagnosis can become JUST a label. It is written by a nonverbal autistic person. What we once believed about persons who do not speak is simply outdated. The brain is

powerful and just because people speak does not mean they have anything to say.

Our former caregiver, Cynthia Mettling, who we affectionately call Mary Poppins., shared this book with me.. It is written by a nonverbal autistic person. What we once believed about persons who do not speak is simply outdated. The brain is powerful and just because people speak does not mean they have anything to say.

Listening involves all of the senses! The next time you engage with a person who cannot speak-think about what they might be saying.

See the WORLD

I might as well call my caregiver a ghost writer for this issue. Every year as we approach Autism Awareness Month she sends me amazing articles, links or information that educate or lift the spirit. This post on travel is one worth sharing.

As families who care for persons on the spectrum, we do not always discuss the isolation and challenges with engaging with the general public. One wrong look or cruel statement-generally heard under someone's breath- sends you straight back to your protected circle or home. These micro aggressive actions makes it challenging to explore and expose a person on the spectrum to life.

It takes tremendous fortitude to ignore people who make you uncomfortable and protect your loved one at the same time

Michelle Yunker is a woman on a mission to help persons with invisible disabilities see the world. She is a Travel Agent who cares for her sister and wants to give her the opportunity to explore our beautiful world.

I think that is what we want for everyone we love!



Elevate Travel by Michelle's Post

[Read the Post](#)

Where Did the Time Go?

Our daughter was diagnosed with Autism 14 years ago. I remember that day clearly as it altered our life permanently. There were so many questions.

How does one become autistic?

Is it environmental?

Is it genetic?

Is there a cure?

What will life look like for her?

How do we help her become her best self?

How do we explain this?
How will we afford her care?
Will we have to care for her forever?
What services exist for persons with autism?
How do we protect her?

Where did the time go?!!!

When I speak to young parents now I have tremendous perspective. I can now share our experiences and let them know they will make it. The journey will not be easy. The journey will challenge you in unimaginable ways but the journey will make you stronger.

You could not have told us 14 years ago that all would be well- but it is.

As we approach Autism Awareness Month- know families like ours need your support. Community matters to all. Our daughter is a strong reminder of what community can do.



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