



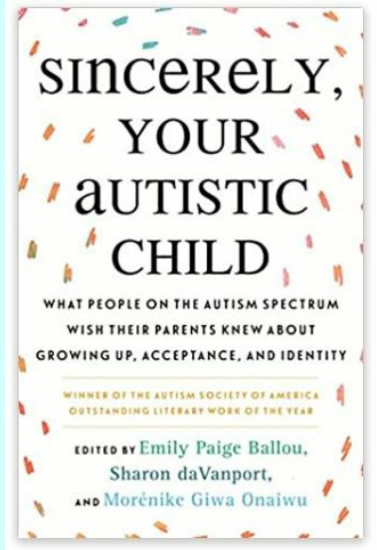
Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter | June 2021

It's a Marathon Not a Sprint



A Love Letter To An Autistic Woman I Do Not Know

I had some time on my hands for once. Real time to reflect and let go. I picked up a couple of books because my favorite pastime is reading and one of the books literally took my breath away. The book takes a singular perspective on autism from a rainbow of women who are autistic. The authors either take a look back on their experience or share their real world impact. They also take a look at the people- primarily parents who made assumptions about them and educate the reader on what they wished we all knew about autism.



There are many outstanding contributors to this book- but after reading this particular author I re-evaluated my actions as a parent. In sum she demands that parents listen to their autistic daughters and empower them with confidence and strength. She explains the consequences of failing to listen to our daughters and how limiting their environment or encouraging blind compliance could lead to future issues when our daughters become women. NOW- I have thought about my daughter's future often. Sometimes daily-but admittedly I am looking through my lenses and not hers. The author explains that we should talk to our daughters, ask them to open up about "why" they do, feel or act on something and ultimately help them find a creative solution to address their needs. Failure is not an option.



"People assume I do not have challenges in some areas because I am competent in others. Just because I can write a successful grant proposal doesn't mean I can navigate a crowded club to stay safe. Just because I can explain how matrilineal descent works doesn't mean I can figure out what to order from a restaurant menu. Just because I can be really articulate and give a television interview doesn't mean I am able to speak up when I'm emotionally distressed or threatened."

Thank you Karen Lean for sharing your most intimate space and teaching me that I have a long way to go to understand my daughter's unique footprint in this world.

**Sincerely, Your Autistic Child -
Edited by Emily Paige Ballou,
Sharon daVanport and
Morenike Giwa Onaiwu**

Fear - False Evidence Appearing Real

I cannot say I do not have any anxiety or fear about the future. I firmly believe if we are honest - the moment we have children and realize the

importance of raising them -we exude these feelings. Our daughter is no longer a child anymore. She is a true teen and that realization comes with additional FEARS that I fight frequently. The older she gets the more her father and I realize that there is so much left to teach her. What we have learned is that we cannot properly advocate for our daughter without taking care of our own mental health.

My husband and I went off the radar this month and I mean truly off to rest our spirits and to put to bed FEARS and anxiety about how we will resume normalcy as a family post Covid. Some of the challenges we had in public suddenly dissipated in a quarantine environment. We no longer had to scope out the landscape of places or determine if it was a safe space for all of us to be PRESENT because our home became our refuge. It was such a blessing in many ways but it wasn't reality.

We had some strong bonding time over this past year and half and realized that we have different parenting approaches. This is OK and will probably place our daughter in a better position to cope and advocate for herself as an adult. We also realized that we had tremendous FEAR with our first child as well- and she is quite an outstanding young woman!

No one will ever know your individual journey unless you share it. I have new concerns daily and battle how I will continue to advocate for our daughter now and for a lifetime. For at least now - I plan to educate and advocate out loud to conquer ALL of it.

Life is precious and brief. Time to get back on the saddle and ride it out.



In case you missed it ... [May Newsletter](#)

[Our Blog - Stay Connected with Us](#)

[Our Resources Page](#)

Visit Our Podcast!



[Special June uninterrupted interview with Alex Harris on the evolution of arts in our area.](#)

