

Volume 04 | May 31, 2021



## Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter | May 2021

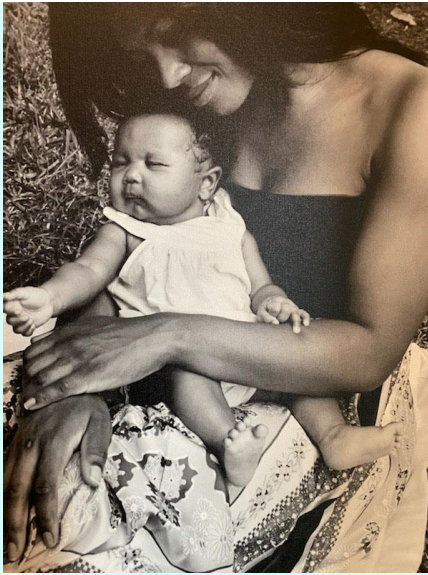
### Happy Mother's day



### Mother's love never ends

I don't know about you but I have been watching Saturday Night Live since I was about eight years old. I would stay up, sneak and watch the opening skit. It was hilarious to me and often - I didn't even watch the remainder of the show because the opening was just everything!

I still have this habit today and even though I can't stay up as late as I used to I enjoy waiting for that opening act. I was completely surprised and caught off guard to learn that the host Elon Musk



had Asperger's syndrome. BUT I knew it even before he announced it.

**I was looking at him like...**

**I know YOU!!**

*I know your EYE CONTACT!*

I know your MANNERISMS!

I know your HUMOR!

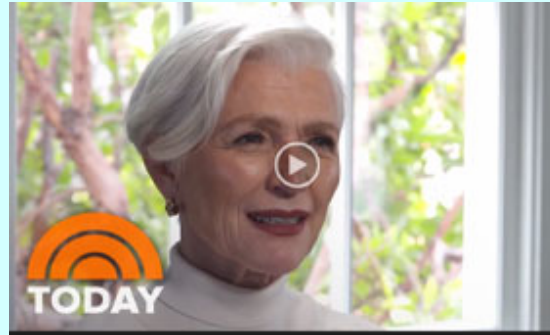
**You act like MY DAUGHTER!**

AND just as I was hitting my husband to wake him up to watch SNL with me. Elon Musk announced that he had Asperger's syndrome. If you think about it it's not so shocking. As he said - how do you think I am THIS creative.

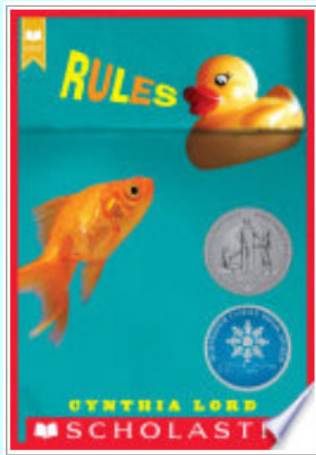


Of course Elon's appearance had mixed reviews. There was also a ton of feedback about his announcement, but that was not the point to me. I was grateful for his bravery. No matter how far you go in life, if you have an invisible disability it is hard. He handled the pressure well. Lesson Elon Musk is at the height of his career and it was still difficult. It led me to think -in honor of Mother's Day- what was his mother like and how did she handle such a brilliant child.

I began to do a deep dive on Maye Musk and her story. Like most mothers she had a lot of grit and determination. Maye was a single mother who knew the gem she had in her children and instead of focusing on the negative she rose to the occasion and infused positivity into their space. It really does not take much more than that. Acknowledgment - that's what we all want right?



I began to compare these traits with Temple Grandin's mother, Eustacia Cutler, who had quite a challenging time during a period where there was not much support raising her daughter. I could not imagine being in a space where you do not have a supportive family and you have a child that no one understands or cared to understand. Yet EUSTACIA CUTLER went above and beyond to give TEMPLE GRANDIN life skills and to let her daughter explore her brilliance. It's a testament to motherhood. It's a testament to the journey that we all take as Mothers.



We do not know what we are going to get in our children or how we are going to care for them. We always question whether we have given our children enough. We worry about the tools they will have to succeed. These two women did an exceptional job under extraordinary circumstances. Kudos - for not giving up! They built a bridge to the future and because of it we all benefit.

It is always challenging when I am constantly asked questions about my daughter's future.

- What will you do with your daughter when she is no longer in the school system?
- What is your plan?
- Are there places for her to live? How will she thrive?

The truth is - I don't know. I have had this master plan since I learned my daughter had ASD to prepare her for life. It reminds me of this book that my daughter had as a child called, The Rules. The book is about a teen who has a sibling with autism. The teen is trying to give her sibling all the rules of life - But learns it is simply not possible. However it is the task that has been given to many of us who love those with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Recently I had lunch with a colleague who runs Autism Shifts. We were talking about this vocational space and how we can help more parents prepare their children for life. For many years I asked her to lower the age of her program to

include younger children on the spectrum because it takes a little bit longer to infuse the vocational skills necessary to navigate life.



I am happy to say that Autism Shifts now has a program that begins at 15.

[MORE INFO!](#)

Although it will be rough to share all the RULES - at least we have a good running start - right?

Elon Musk gives you hope to reach for the stars. Temple Grandin gives you hope for creativity. What I hope for all kids on the spectrum is that they are allowed to dream and build their own bridges to the future.

This month I launched a podcast because I believe in the village and the concept of community. Kindly take a moment to review the icons I interviewed this month.



**Rick Davis**  
President of COQEBS



**Aron Bryce**  
Board member at Earth to Autism





**Caprice Edmond**  
Pinellas County School Board  
Member

**Terri Lipsey Scott**  
Executive Director - Carter G.  
Woodson African American  
Museum

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