



Intellectual
Property
Office

My 'Late' Autism Diagnosis

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Intellectual Property Office is an operating name of the Patent Office

Traits

'Intellectual' / mature

Social difficulties: "What do you want me to say?"; uncomfortable at e.g. discos; taking things literally / naivety / gullibility

Very organised / good attention to detail – but can't see the big picture

Very good memory

Obsessions

Also: 'body language'; theory of mind – other people have different intentions to me

Why did I seek a diagnosis?

CBT therapist suggested looking at Asperger's syndrome / autism

First attempt: hit a brick wall.

Second attempt: result.

The assessment

First part: general stuff with one practitioner

Second part: the big one! Four hours, parents, another practitioner asking questions. ADI-R (Le Couteur and Lord, 2008)

Qualitative Abnormalities in Reciprocal Social Interaction

Qualitative Abnormalities in Communication

Restricted, Repetitive, and Stereotyped Patterns of Behaviour

Abnormality of Development Evidence at or before 36 months

Also: theory of mind; central coherence theory; executive function; sensory sensitivities

Impact of the diagnosis: personal and professional lives

Personally

“It all makes sense now”. Feeling unbelievably stupid! Sadness, regret, anger

Learning things from books, websites, etc.

“And now what?!” Life is complex, even for neurotypical people...

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-50380411>; <https://aeon.co/ideas/my-autism-journey-how-i-learned-to-stop-trying-to-fit-in>)



Professionally

The IPO is very supportive of disability: networks; adjustments; ‘bring your full self to work’

Why wasn't I diagnosed earlier?

I didn't 'look' autistic. And no need.

“Too normal to stand out, but not normal enough to fit in”

‘Stigma’