

SUBMISSION FROM JOHN STANNERS

1. Diagnoses came as a surprise. I got some support a bit. Yes, I think, yes at some stage in their lives all on the autistic spectrum condition (ASC) population will need help at some point.
2. It has made it very difficult to hold down a job but that was partly bad luck on my part being in the wrong crowd and [?] kinds of fields for the interest areas I have; I think if there is more ASC awareness in the greater population and support measures in place then young people coming through today will maybe fare better although the powers that be will maybe have to try to create more work around the cluster of abilities that people on the spectrum have. I am unemployed; like [?] some creating suitable appropriate work. This is what needs to be done, catered around ASC peoples' *special interest area* and strengths and abilities. The effect of being autistic for me on my mental health has been that I was unaware what my problem/condition/difference was for long enough; nor were my parents although I rocked and did not like to be touched, I thought that it was because of my skin which peeled at times; I would say to people "he's just like me!" and the [?] would reflect me and scoff and say "no he is not like you! That family Stanners they are all whatever and that John, he is the worst"; no school teacher, guidance teacher or anyone else knew about it as I was alone and the effect on my mental health was not good/poor in fact; my parents tried to bring me up as a normal person which I am not.
3. Good practice from mental health services where doctor in new charge (psychiatrist) did not dismiss me as waste ground of the town and told me I had something to offer and what happened to me was [?] on the part of the [?] population.
4. Unhelpful, ineffective treatment was being told: "do you want to make contribution to society!" by a psychiatrist when in fact everybody did and does; not effective approach. Strategy needs to be put in place but also, I believe, it is important as some ASC cases "not" always early intervention but allowing some young child to be allowed to spend time alone as solitary as imaginative, otherwise and creative, problem solving skills can be developed that way; see Anthony Starr's book "Solitude" explains the value of being allowed to be alone at a young age, not neglected, but allowed to develop out of solitude and tranquillity. Bronte sisters are a good example of what can be achieved by this approach. For some, if left alone, in later years, so not too much early intervention for me please anyway, maybe others yes but not for all as it could be long term damaging consequences from this approach equal to that of neglect. I personally want to spend most of my time alone, solitary.
5. Roughly, I was diagnosed with asperger's syndrome at 45, officially anyway; I am still trying to work out what it is and expect to not to fully know; but I think it is a little like the slaves from years ago before things improved for that group; and the

group that were told in the past “when we through you into the water if you sink you are innocent, if you flow at, you are guilty; lets sentence him”, much ignorance surrounds autism and the Government needs to also encourage scientific research and modern Scottish Government needs to implement a strategy of some kind for the ASC population as Wilberforce helped slaves long ago.

John Stanners

(Handwritten letter, some text was difficult to interpret and indicated by square brackets)