

HOW TO BEST HELP AN AUTISM MUM - A book review

How to Best Help an Autism Mum, Sharon King

A book review by Manar Matusiak

This book by Sharon King, an autism mum of three very different children with disabilities, is written to give some insight into the needs of mothers from the point of diagnosis of their children onwards. King's three children are diagnosed with Kabuki Syndrome, Classic Autism and Asperger's Syndrome.

The book is intended for those close to the mother such as friends and family; however, it is just as pertinent and useful a read for professionals.

How to Best Help
an **AUTISM** Mum
S H A R O N K I N G



In charting her journey complete with trials, tribulations as well as the times of joy and delight, King's reflections are also relevant to society at large.

“We are primitives no more; we have come far enough along the evolutionary yardstick to be fully aware that difference is not threat. More; difference and diversity are essential for a healthy, dynamic society.”

“When each one of us accepts responsibility for our own thoughts and actions, then this

frightening, powerful sea that is 'society' soon breaks down into much more manageable, much more human-sized portions."

King credits those who get it right, who think before they speak, who make the effort so she can visit with her children, and who offer informal much-needed times of respite. She also describes how hurtful some people can be. These can be from comments including dismissive, unempathetic words from professionals; hurtful advice from 'well-meaning' individuals; and downright rudeness and abuse from strangers.

The pride and joy that King's children bring her, are evident throughout the book. Whilst keeping positive, however, King also writes with realism. She is honest about the difficulties and the very low periods she has experienced and she offers suggestions of how others can help. She is honest about how mothers can be torn between being protective of their children and at the same time wanting them to be as independent as possible and, again, she explains how others have helped. She is honest about when she has got it right and when she has got it wrong.

In writing about her experiences with her children, King also provides very useful insight into the spectrum that is autism. With two children on the autism spectrum with very different strengths, skills and needs, King touches upon the subjects of empathy, theory of mind, sensory differences and stimming from her own personal experiences. Many parents reading the book will relate to these experiences. Friends and family will gain further insight.

This book is written in a very readable, chatty style. Whilst addressing serious issues, it also offers strong positive messages about what is achievable. It is a book that anyone who has a family member or a friend with a newly diagnosed disabled child should read for insight and tips on how best to help.

If you need help looking for services for an individual with an autism spectrum condition, we can help. Click below for the Autism Placement Support Service.

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Autism Placement
Support Service**

