

AUTITUDE!



INFO AND ADVICE!
MOVIES! ART!
AND MUCH MUCH MORE!

WELCOME!

Welcome to the final magnificent issue of Autitude in 2021. What a year it has been! Over 40 of you have sent in your artwork, photography, poetry and reflective pieces to make 12 fantastic issues.

We're delighted to share that Autitude will be continuing until April 2022, that's another 4 issues to feast your eyes on.

We are currently reviewing Autitude and want to know what type of content you would like to see more of in 2022! Also, do you have any thoughts on the frequency of the magazine (it is currently published every 4 weeks) do you think it should be published more frequently than this or less. We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas - Autitude is your magazine! Please email autitude@scottishautism.org

To make sure you are updated when the latest edition is released please sign up here – thank you!

**Scottish
autism**

**WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED**

A hand holding a smartphone with a 'CONTENTS' screen and a blue liquid spill on top. The background is orange and yellow with white speckles.

CONTENTS

4. Click & Connect Updates.

6. Letters To Angels by Lea B.

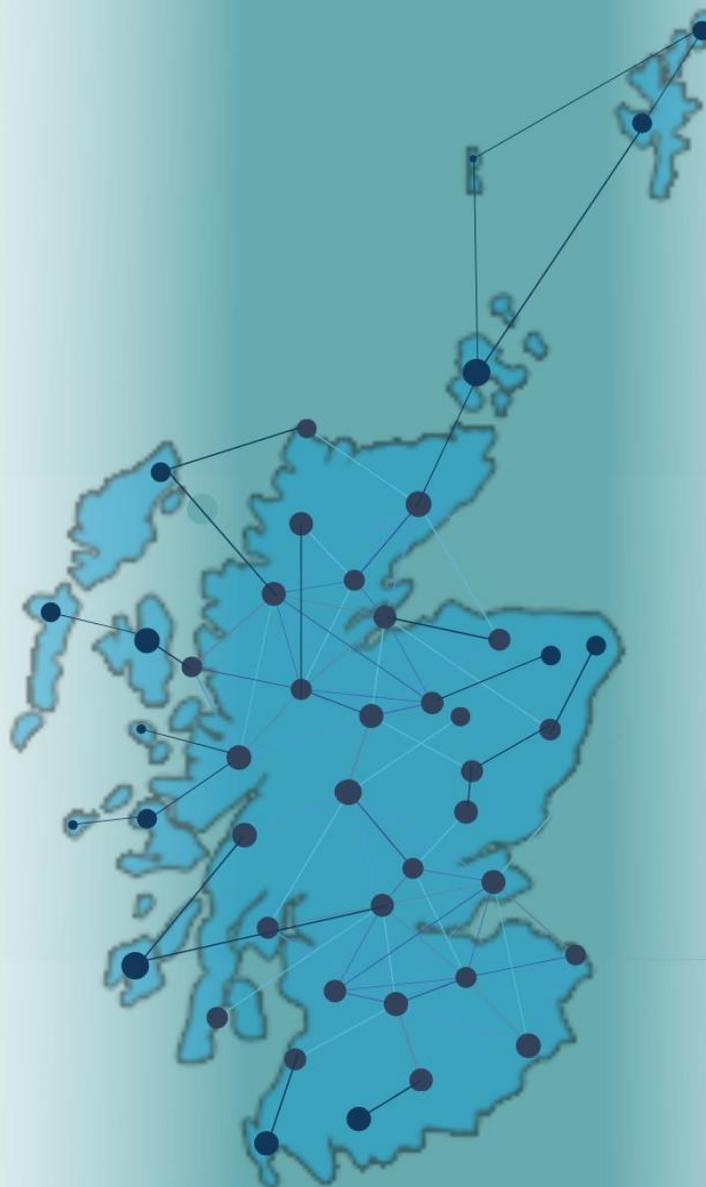
13. Artitude! – More of our readers creative work!

28. David Yeoman's Neurodiversity Journey.

32. Change by Dorothy Welsh.

34. Ash Loydon celebrates the return of Doctor Who.

37. Spectrum Superstars!



Scottish
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Click & Connect – Block 3

Click and Connect delivers a range of online events via Zoom to enable the autistic community and their families in Scotland to stay connected through the pandemic and beyond.

There are only a few sessions left in 2021!

Mindful Autism Support Group

Run by Jonny Drury, the group will take place on Thursday 16th December from 1pm - 2.30pm.

Virtual Art Group

Do you want to explore your creative side? Join our online Art Group taking place on Wednesday 15th December at 5pm - 6.30pm.

Virtual Choir Group

Share music with others in a fun, no pressure environment. Join our Virtual Choir which takes place Thursday 16th December, from 5pm - 6pm. All ages and abilities are welcome!

Mindfulness Community Programme - NEW!

If you want to take some time out of your morning to relax, this session may just be what you are looking for. Jonny Drury delivers the last of Dialogica's new 10-week Mindfulness Community Programme on Tuesday 14th and 21st December from 10am - 11am.

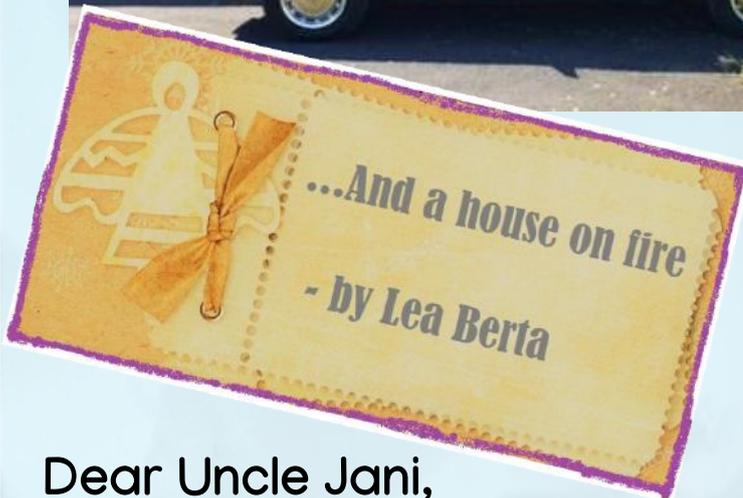
Find out more about the groups and sign up [here](#).

To stay up to date with Click and Connect updates and 2022 dates, sign up for Scottish Autism's events ezine [here](#).

Letters to Angels



This is what my Uncle Jani's very yellow Mercedes-Benz W115 looked like, with its hilariously square design and silver handles. You felt like an undercover detective in it...



Dear Uncle Jani,

How are you? I thought to write to you some, the December snow is inspiring me to do just that. I hope the winter holiday season won't slow down the delivery of letters to heaven, or to the cloud where you are enjoying afterlife, probably surrounded by the best vintage cars ever! (Have I ever said 'Sorry about your car crash'?) It was the best of years, it was the worst of years, my 2021. You will probably be pleased to find out that I'm already on my chaplaincy placement, as part of my training. The theory classes seemed to whizz by so fast the next thing I knew was that I was filling my paperwork somewhere in a building in town. New address, new location, lots of new things to take in. So far they have been absolutely supportive of the fact that Lea is not just Lea, it's Lea and her support team. But what kind of chaplain will I be? – I often wonder. How will I overcome my various sensory and processing difficulties 'on the spot'? And yet, if I have made it this far – which is a smaller miracle in itself, certainly facilitated by the Big Boss – then perhaps I should not be worried about the rest either. Progress is best acknowledged and cherished.

I still remember the day, some time in spring 2019, when I first told Henrik about my plan to become a chaplain. How his whole face lit up and he immediately told me with a smile 'That's great, Lea!', pretty much like he was about to set out on the mission himself. (Why not.) It was a bittersweet thing, walking into the place as a terribly green 'chappy' for the first time and knowing how far he and I are from each other currently. He probably would have commented, with a boyish smile, that I should just make sure that people know I am not 'chappy' as of pet food but a budding spiritual professional and everything will be alright. Aye. I'm still standing, even if my heart doesn't. Behind my well practiced communication panels and James Bond-level masking skills nobody will know. Only my fridge, when I have eaten up all the sweets and snacks in the evening. C'est la vie! (Or, in this case, c'est la henriks). Looking back, I should have just told him: 'Hiyaaa. Remember me? I'm your past life partner and I think I still love you present tense. Do you think we could give this another spin now that you don't hold powers of high jurisdiction? I guess it just makes things more, uhm... equal?' (tucks her hair behind the ear with a smile) Oh, those clip-clopping fifteen hundreds! Dating was so clear-CUT...

Anyhow, my graduation went well in October. So, the family of Very Important Papers in the drawer is now as follows: Communication degree (BA, Hungary 2006, really old... but, hey, so am I!), Community Development (with the same parameters, still feeling ancient), and the fresh and very Scottish BSc (Hons) combined degree, with the subject that ended with distinction being, of course: Religious Studies. There's something about faith, or the lack of it, that just inspires my mind to understand more. And then some more.

Did I tell you that I actually hugged Nessie on the day of my graduation celebration?? And I didn't even get wet! Nor her mouth smelled like fish, to be honest. Proof as below. See? I'm smiling in the photo. Soon after Baxter and I vacated the spot, a little girl wanted to go up there and have her photos taken. I think I JUST STARTED A LOCAL STUDENT TRADITION. I guess this is what you would call a 'cultural influx'. (But it's not valid without a dog, I am telling you, Uncle!).



This is what me in my black and blue graduation cap and gown, and my support dog in his blue working vest looked like, posing with a colourful mosaic Nessie-statue and cosy autumn trees. The big monster's neck was really hard to hug.

On another note: I promised you a while ago that I would update my list of likes – to keep you in the loop! Well, the current one would look something like this:

Favourite music: ‘that Robin Hood–song’ from Bryan Adams (actually, it’s called ‘Everything I Do’), Gustav Holst – The Planets, Dead Can Dance – Children of The Sun, plus any bird.

Favourite movies: Jesus Christ Superstar (the 1973 version; apparently nobody can do the Charleston as cool as King Herod!), The Little Buddha (1993), Groundhog Day (1993).

Favourite month: now June, it was May before migrating (here you have to wait a bit longer for the really good times, but a Lea shall embrace it as an exercise of howp/hope.)

Favourite animals: horses, dolphins, spiders, dogs, sharks (especially Great Whites), unicorns, the dragons of Scotland, and the fairies and water monsters of the Lothians (frequently saving my sanity).

Favourite food: without question, still pancakes and that Greek dolmades salad (Yassas!).

(Some of my) favourite books: Wind, Sand and Stars (Land of Men) by Saint-Exupéry (1939), The Unadulterated Cat – by Terry Pratchett (1989), Fever at Dawn – by Péter Gárdos (2010), Never Cry Wolf by Farley Mowat (1963), The Gospel of John (AD 70?).

Is this list okay for now? I could carry on and on and on but I think this gives you an idea of what happens when you hold on to your time-capsule as a stability seeking immigrant. Sending my love. I miss you, Uncle Jani. Do visit during the holidays if you can. Most likely, it will be one of those seasons when it will be me, my assistance dog Baxter and a care worker in the house. Please, do not worry about the helper. They wouldn't even notice you sitting on the sofa, most likely, you need to be a bit less busy to spot friendly ghosts like You. But, I know, Baxter and I would. So do come. By the way, you also asked me in your previous celestial mail what was my funniest childhood Xmas memory. That's easy: definitely the one where I asked my relative if we could also light up our windows, the ones facing towards the other building where some of the children I knew lived.

As fate rendered it, back in the early 1990s of post-Soviet little Hungary, there were not too many viable festive lighting means available for the average, contained-frustrated working class households like ours. That mostly meant candles. I was given a couple and I could swear it was the best thing when I finally arranged them in my room's window, standing there ready with the lighter. In my imagination, these candles were to mark the most important high rise flat in Europe that night – but perhaps in the whole hemisphere! Or, alternatively, the world, since I was to do great things in my life later, even if I wasn't to travel to the Moon or beyond with some of my teeth filled so early, preventing me from joining NASA (a true tragedy, if avoided, now I could write to you about my orbital view on things).

In any case, when about an hour and a half festive movie later I ventured back, following the trail of smoke, staring at a flame so bright, it occurred to me that one should never, ever use plastic containers under flammable material. 'Cause those candles didn't stop until they bit into the wood above my desk. Therefore, that Christmas in Angyalföld [angel-land], Budapest actually lasted till next year's July, by what time a helpful carpenter took care of the wooden seal, the wall, wallpaper and the paint. Carpenters come and save us from our miseries. Joy to the world.

Your almost-40, (still) chatty and (still) curious, half-chaplain niece,

Lea

...And the Dog!

PS: Uncle Jani, could you write me a card saying 'Thank you for your service, sir?'

- Baxter asked me to also put this here for you to read, he says he will be 41.

(Oh nooo, he took my biscuit again. Smart!...)

((He just apologised.))

Contact for Lea: leapublish@gmail.com

D E C E M B E R

AND i WANT A pAYRISE!

yOURS sINCERELY, mR. bAXTER

- AUTiSM SUPPORT CANINE,
ScotLAND



Baxter, my assistance dog in his blue working vest and deep snow. 'December - and I want a pay rise! Your sincerely, Mr. Baxter - autism support canine, Scotland.' [badly typed!]

ARTITUDE!

Frederik:

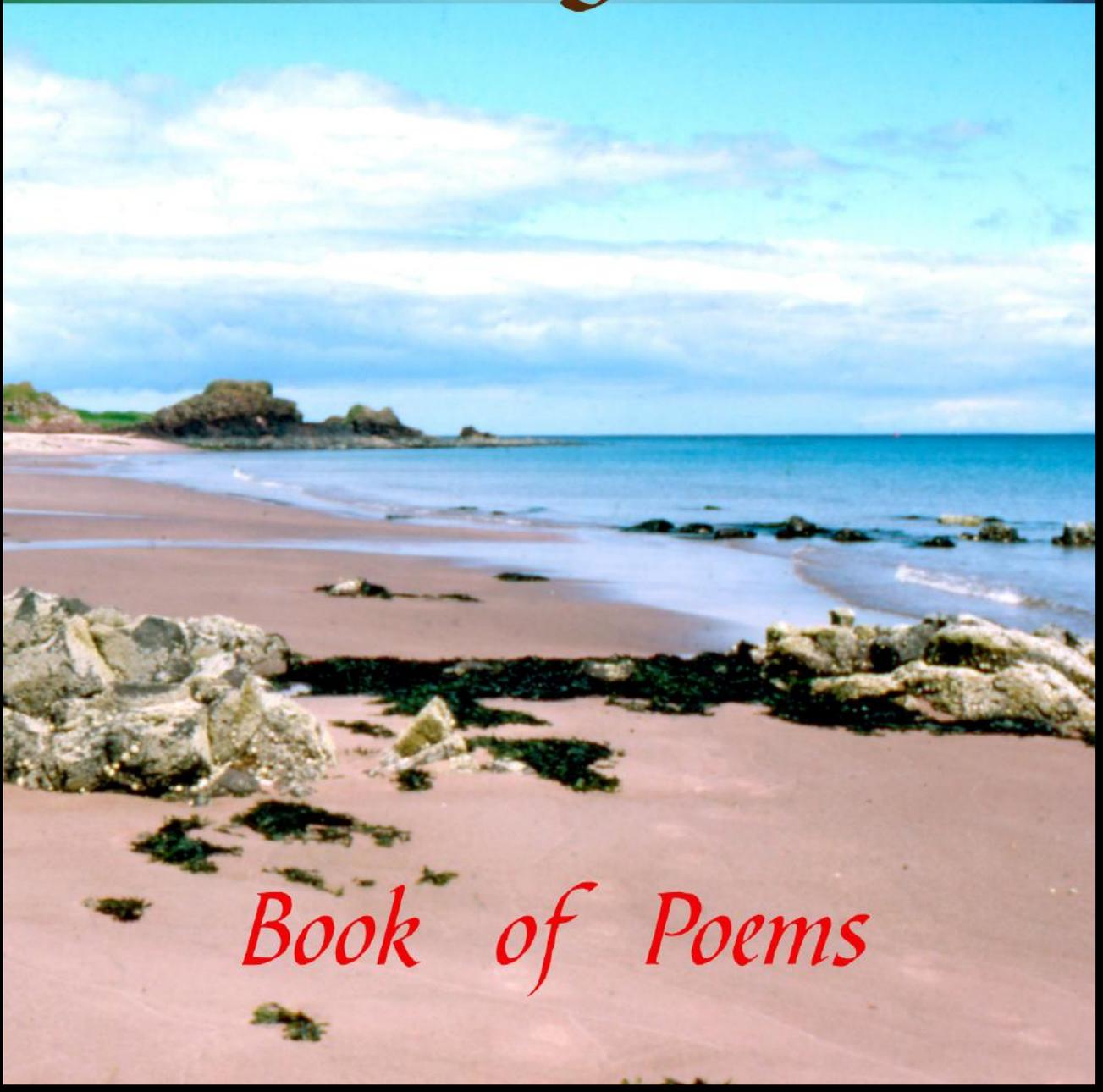
Soothing.

A piece to resonate with, that asks for attention, is bringer of inner peace. Medium to connect with, the alloparents and the everything.

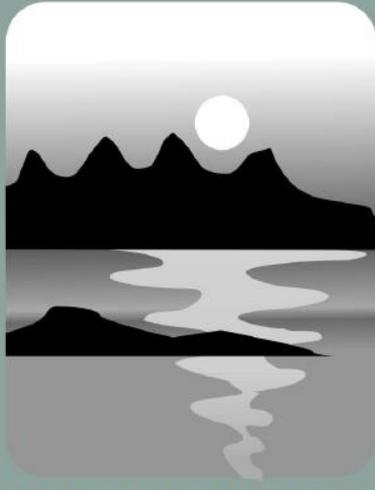


John of Roin.

The
Little
2000-2005 Edition



Book of Poems



All Poems
here are
original
works
please
do not
reproduce
them for
your own use

FRONT COVER

*Macharioch
Beach*

CONTENTS

Spirits of the Sand

The Black Candy Rocks

Lost & Lonely

Our Wind Flapping Head

Splash

Sand in your Hand

FJORD DREAM

Fjord

When Time Stands Still

Macharioch Bay

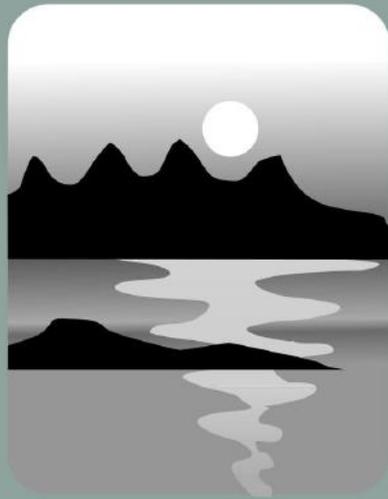
CAVE

These alone here on the sand

The thessalonia tide

When Time Stood Still

JUST AS GOOD



All Poems
here are
original
works
please
do not
reproduce
them for
your own use

FRONT COVER

*Macharioch
Beach*

CONTENTS TWO

THE
MONTHS, by S. Coleridge

My Old Dog

SECRET THING

Cara Island's Colours

Rainbow

SEA WIND

The Jura Stones

Silence and sound

A DRIFTWOOD TREE

Autumn's End

Winter's Golden-eye

SUNSET

The Moon Clouds

The Dream-maker

Fiona's Fortune

Spirits of the Sand

by John Roney

The sea, the sea and the land — knowing.
The sand into the land — blowing.
Sand, to sift sand through the palm of your
hand — going.
And do I know why we do all this to and froing.

The sea, the sea into the land — flowing.
The sand into the hand — glowing.
We're all banded together, growing.
We're all banded together for ever, vowing.

The sea, the sea, into the sea — ploughing.
Sand, sow sand over the land, howling.
The sea, going into the sea — towelling.
To me, my spindrift soul — flowering.

The sea, the sea into the land — gnawing.
The sand into the land — scalding.
Sand, to sift sand through the palm of your
hand — falling.
And do I know why we do all this crawling.

(cont. over)

The sea, the sea into the land — boring.
The sand into the hand — pawing.
We're all banded together, cloying.
We're all banded together for ever, jawing.

The sea, the sea, into the sea — bounding.
Sand, sown sand over the land, fouling.
The sea, into the sea — showering.
To me, my spindrift soul is flowering.

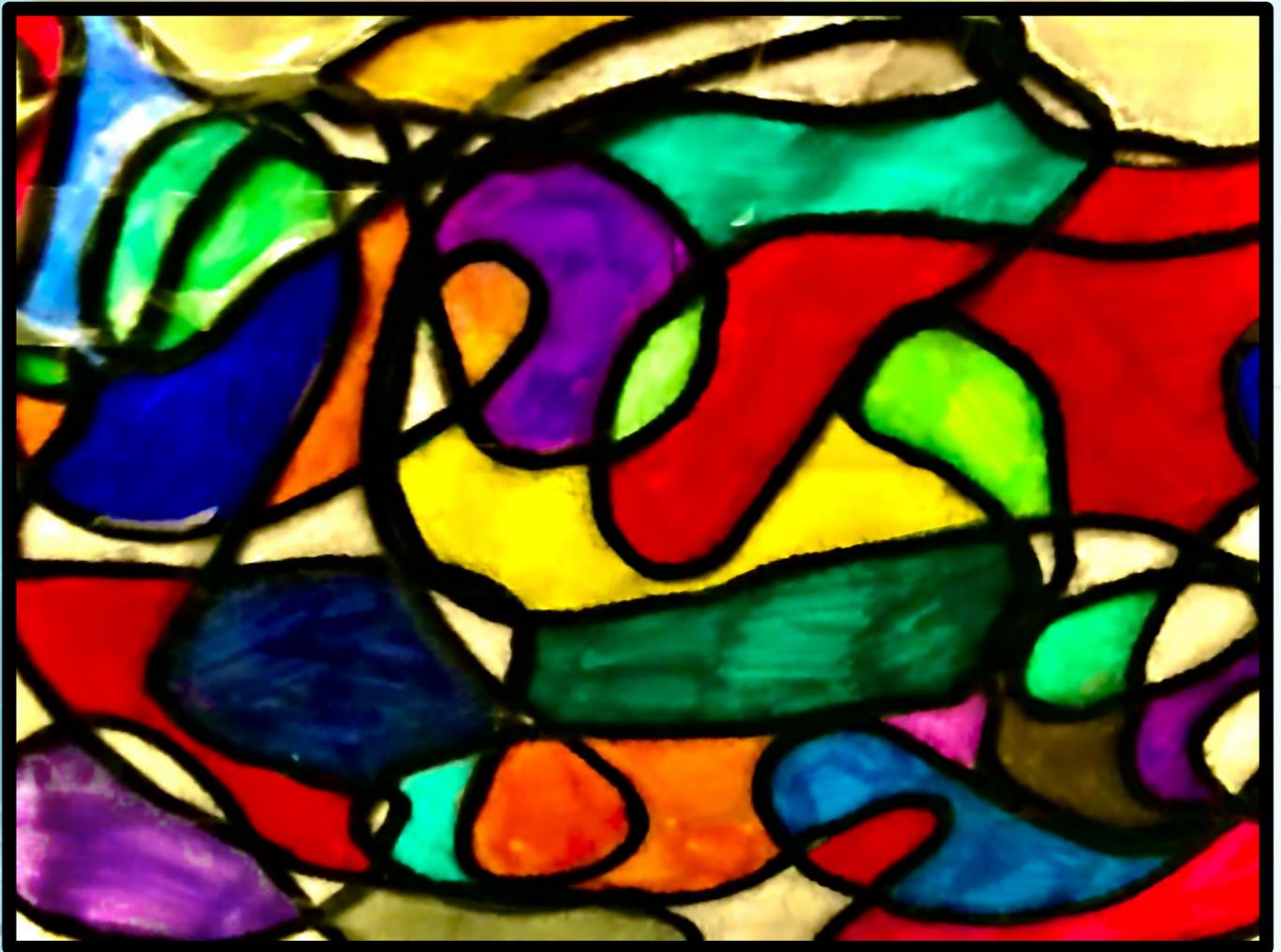
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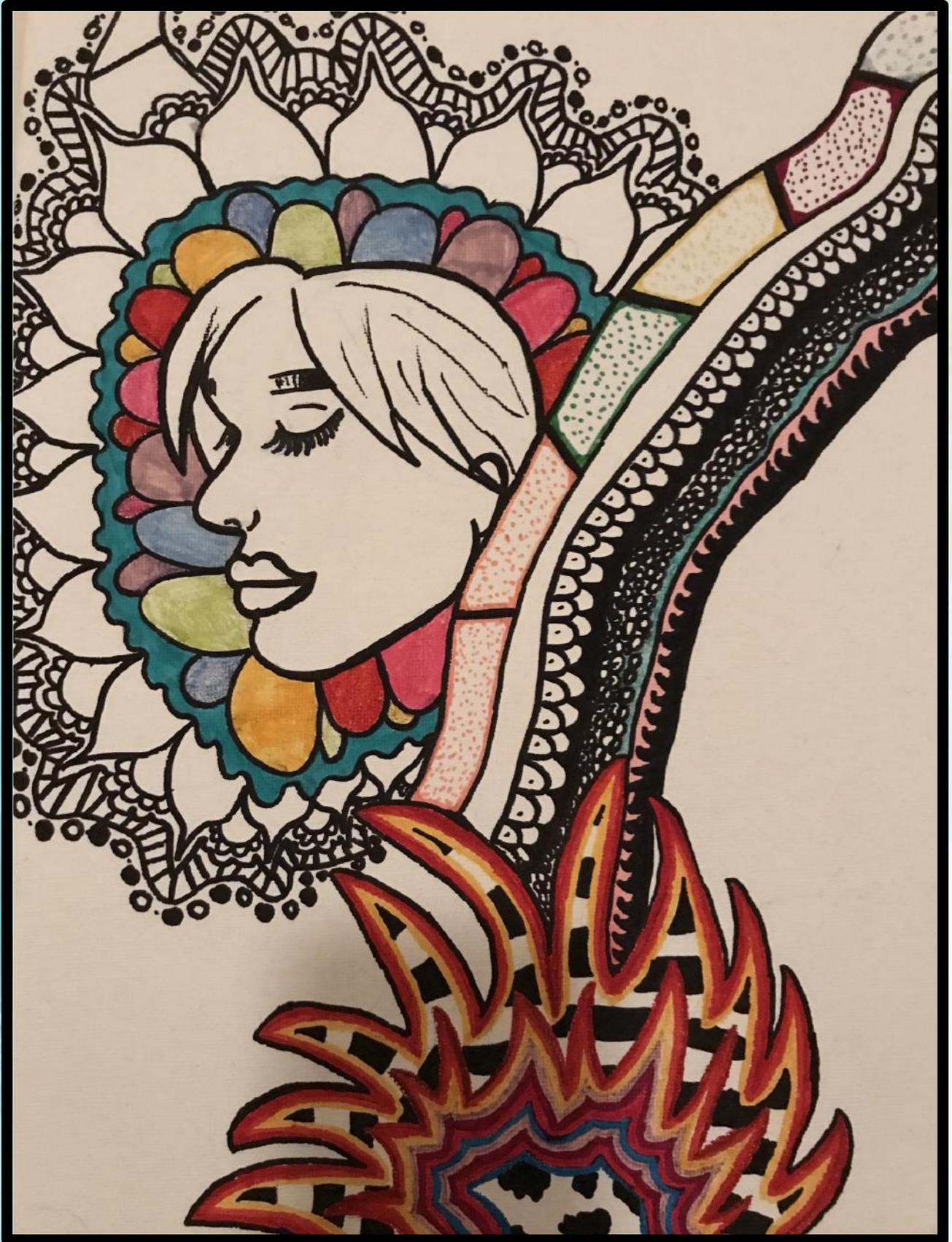
Lily's Artwork:

Hi I'm Lily and I am 17. Here is more information about my artwork:

1. Vibrant woollen textured tangle – reminds me of a bright stained glass window – it's covered with shiny tape and reflects the light – you can press it too so it is interactive.



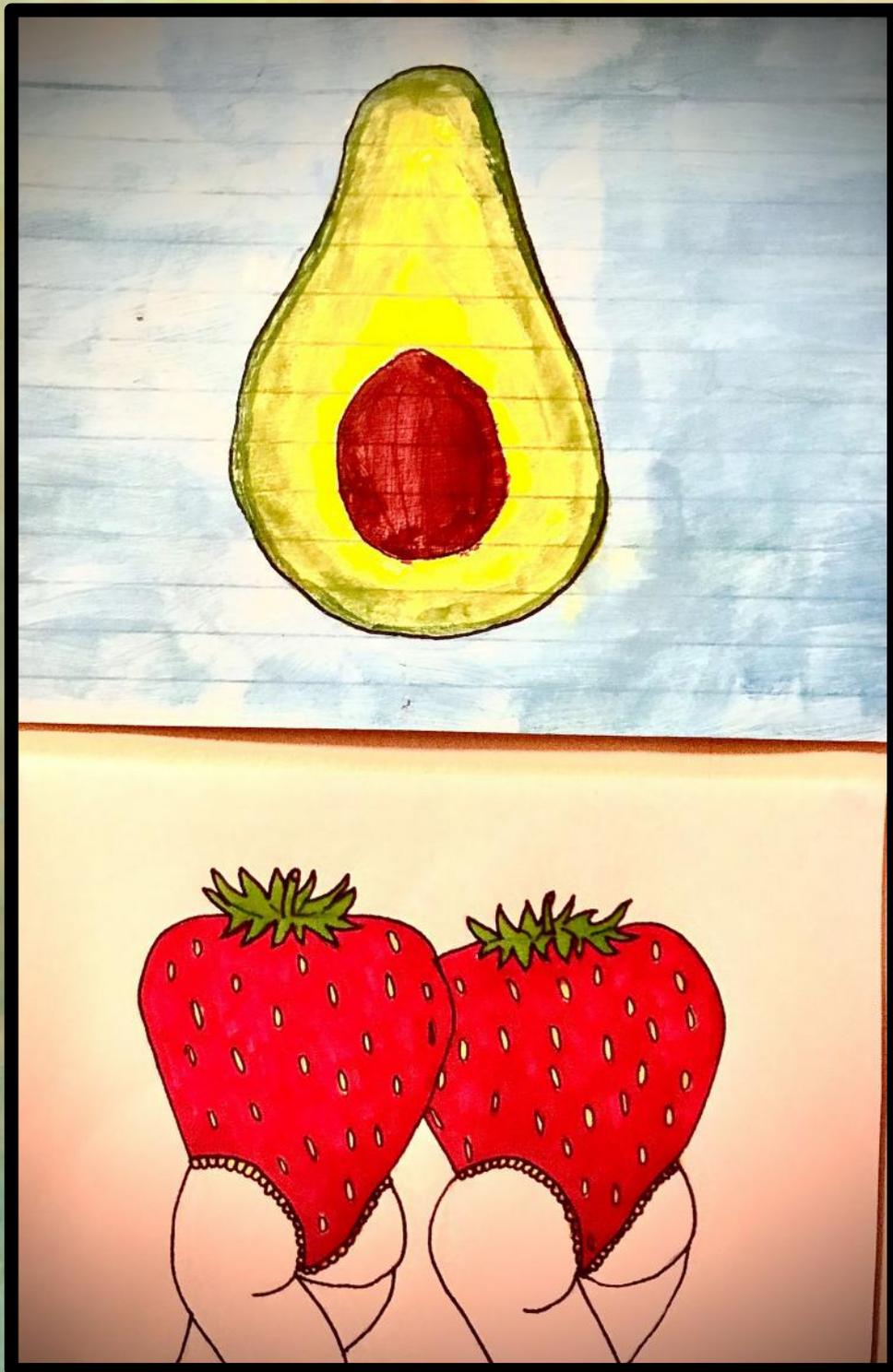
2. Day dreams and nightmares – Repeated patterns using sharpies on canvas.



3. 2 ghosts and a pumpkin – Halloween crochet.



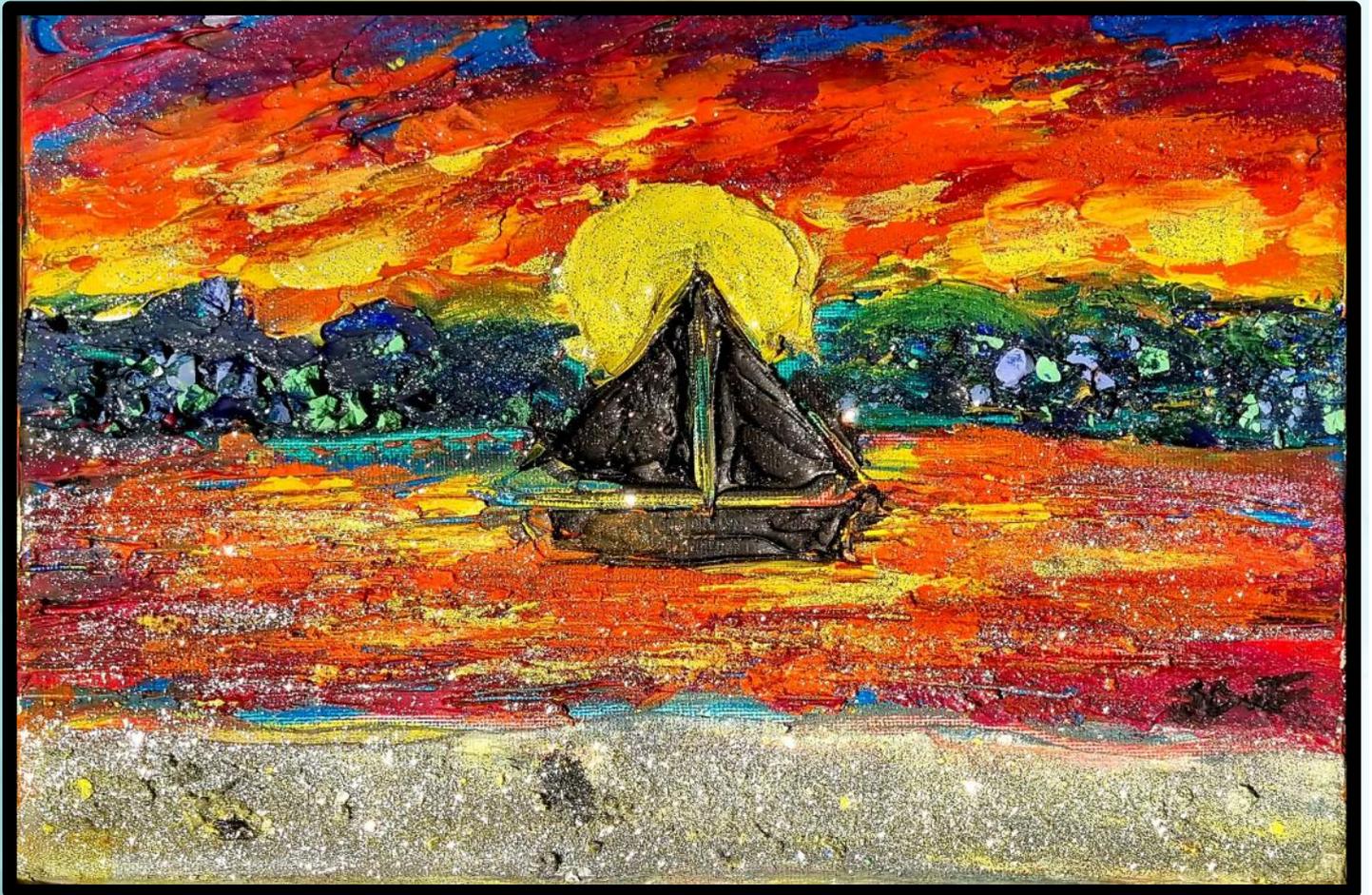
4. Ombre Avocado and cheeky strawberries – water colour – my favourite fruits to eat.



I love Scottish Autism's Virtual art group – it is a safe space to wind down after the stresses of college – it is relaxing and fun for me!

Sean Baxter's Artwork:

A Beautiful Day by the Bay.



I created this textured picture during the online art session for texture. I used a variety of mixed media including acrylic paint, chalk pastels and glitter. This was inspired by Lunderston Bay of the Firth of Clyde, where I frequently go for leisure purposes.

Tahir:

To me art is simply just a hobby and something I love to do.

I would like to be able to draw better than I can and practice always makes perfect!

Art is just another way I've found to escape into another world. It's another way to express myself. In real life, I find it hard to say what I really want due to communication difficulties.

My words always jumble. I feel like I never express myself properly that way.

When I draw, it's not so much my thoughts, I feel like it's my heart that does the talking. When I let my heart take control nothing matters anymore.

I'm just using my emotions to express it into a visual. It's the process. I enjoy drawing and creating something no matter the subject everything is special to me.

I find so much joy in doing art and I believe I can push myself enough then I can thrive at anything.



WINTER
LANDSCAPE

By Tahit Khan



CHRISTMAS

ORNAMENT

By Tahir Khan



WINTER VILLAGE

By
Tahir
Khan

To me:

Art is fun.

Art is colouring.

Art is doing pictures.

Art is an act of expressing feelings, thoughts, and observations.

Art is drawing and painting.

Art makes me think.

Art lasts longer than most thing.

Art makes me feel happier and more relaxed.



By Tahir Khan

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

My Neurodiversity Journey Part 2

Autistic & Dyslexic Blog Post

Thank you for reading part 1 of my journey last month and your comments.

Last time I finished off by mentioning distorted belief systems and the effect that has on the mind / body connection.

They are both connected.

How does our own language effect our mind body connection?

Language influences the mind and affects the way we live in the world.

Language gives us emotional responses & impulses - our best friend our worst enemy.

Would you agree?

Language, by using labels and names prevent you from doing what you want. We all have to be careful what we do name and label as it may become real!! In our own minds using our own internal dialogue.

Its important to remember; "we don't live in the real world - we live in the world of our own narrative or internal dialogue."

As the great Rudyard Kipling; journalist and writer so eloquently said "Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind."

So, going back to my own distorted beliefs they started at a very young age along with my own story I was telling myself. My long-term memory is one of my super strengths; and I can vividly remember at the age of 7 at prep school; the head teacher advising my Mother that I was the last in the year to tie my shoe laces and school tie.

This was my first real hurt in life; I felt it and it landed right on my gut.

I had not met expectations. I was a failure.

Well, that's when I started my own narrative or internal dialogue or self-talk.

Did my masking start then; probably.

From that day on at school it was a battle which continued throughout school life.

I gave many clues throughout my school years that "I was not right" not fitting in, the butt of many jokes.

At times I would be called snobby, stand offish; however, there is another ingredient was and is present that all were unaware of; I had actually zoned out (due to autistic processing deficits) and many other labels society chose to hand out free gratis and for nothing; when in reality unknown to all back in the 60's and 70's and up to my formal diagnoses 5 years ago I was born autistic, dyslexic, dyspraxic, ADHD, dyscalculic with Mears Irlen syndrome.

Although; unknown to me and others around me I was all of the above.

Many of you may relate to the behaviours experienced the names and labels picked up from well-intentioned parents, teachers, coaches and peer groups and the effect it has or had on your own self-esteem, self-image and perception and how it left you feeling.

I also confirmed to myself that I was thick and stupid as I failed not once but twice every exam that I sat.

Society must be right then I often said to myself I have no passes in my O' levels, never sat Highers, could not speak French.

When passing my driving test first time at the age of 17 as a family we concluded it was an error a mistake!! LOL.

I believed my own narrative that I was thick, stupid and retard which was the label for being Autistic or child psychosis; I had the proof as I failed my O Levels twice.

I had convinced myself society labels were correct. So, what then happens when you start off working and do alright?

Well, the self-talk starts the internal dialogue goes into over drive.

I will get found out, soon, will it be today; more masking required at an unconscious level.

In my late teens early twenties, I self-adopted another new distorted belief system

Imposter Syndrome: – My internal language changed the further as I climbed the career ladder. If only they knew I was thick and stupid – the anxiety increased; the masking of my deficiencies increased. I was more than aware I could not pronounce certain words and had to adapt even further as the business language environment required.



To offer a sense of balance; I went on to co-own a multi pound business; visited 12 countries due to business travel and saw parts of the world I would not have necessary visited. In the press in the recent year's headlines have included: -

“Tel's mind Guru's on job again”.

“Top Scots Shrink” etc

“The shrinks are on me - the brains behind our revival is psychology guru David Yeoman”.

I will finish off by quoting George Orwell.

“If thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought”

Once you accept the deficits then you can embrace the strengths.

I am not thick or stupid or a retard and I am neither a genius or a guru.

I am Neuro Autistic with dyslexia and other co occurring conditions and most thankful I am.

Until the next article, stay safe and be kind to yourself and gentle to those around you; being careful of what you label.

David Yeoman - Blogger & Scottish Autism Contributor @ Autism Advisory Forum, Consultant & Volunteer at Dyslexia Scotland.



CHANGE

I'd like to make a change and see the fearful thrive
I'd like to give them back a life and feel that they're alive
I'd take away their shadows and watch their colour grow
I'd see them crawl to standing tall and push the dark
below

I'd take away their stress and strains and body always
shaking

I'd fill them up with hope and love and stop them almost
breaking

They've hit the very bottom with nowhere else to go
There's nothing left to fight for they're lowest of the low
Their knight in shining armour never seems to come
The very last delusion is burning in the sun
And no-one wants to know you and all that you have
been

Your knowledge, skills and kindness now go to waste
unseen

But I see your destruction of what they've done to you
And I would like to change your way and put you back like
glue

I know that you are hurting and need to take your time
But I will take you by the hand and soon you will be fine

Dorothy Welsh

SPECTRUM SUPERSTARS!



Name: William Richard Werstine, better known as Billy West.

Age: 69

Occupation: Voice actor extraordinaire, comedian, impressionist, musician and former radio personality.

AUTITUDE NEEDS YOU!



Well that's it for issue 12!
Hope you've enjoyed it!
Don't forget to send your contributions to
autitude@scottishautism.org