

Our Two-Handed Intelligence-Gifted World

Hello, my name is Peggy Magilen, and I write to speak about something of great importance. That is that individuals here on the ADD – autism spectrum **do not have a deficit or a disorder**, but rather are hard-wired for a gifted intelligence. This spectrum includes ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder), dyslexia, Asperger's Syndrome, and autism. One in every 59 children is now diagnosed with autism and this a constantly increasing number. However, this is not the negative aberration it is thought to be, for all individuals on the ADD-autism spectrum are a courageous move by nature to help rebalance our world. It is paramount for us to understand this by understanding who these individuals are and how they function.

Let me start with some history and a true story. When teaching in my third grade regular-education classroom, about 15% of my students each year would be on the ADD – autism spectrum. These students in my room were functioning well enough to be in a regular education classroom, and not a special education class. However, what I am sharing pertains to all of these individuals, including special education students, who give us even more to know about this topic.

Here is one of many fascinating stories I can tell:

Among the many amazing of these differently-gifted students in my class over the years, one particular year I had a young man, whom I will call Nick, had Asperger's Syndrome. Like all of these students on the ADD – autism spectrum, Nick was very intelligent but also like many, had significant difficulty with the more linear skills of wording, spelling, and punctuation when writing, and difficulties in other areas as well.

Looking at this student's year-end, district-required and district-scored test, designed to measure his essay writing ability in response to a prompt about competition, there were many missing periods and capitals and basic words misspelled. Of course, these mistakes drew his score down significantly.

But as I read his piece, to my great joy, with his intelligence and profound love of reading, a sentence actually exploded out of the rest of his struggled writing. Composed in his heart, and arising from his empathic and passionate excitement for a young girl's finding her own personal talent and worth in the prompt story, his response was: **"Annie's heart blossomed like a lotus flower in the spring."** This poetic sentence was punctuated and spelled correctly, and was far beyond the

wording of any other student-written responses in the class, and in the school's general third/fourth/and even most of the fifth grade population.

Here we can see what others are confused about: an obvious and beautiful intelligence along with what seems an over-bearing lack of essential skills. And of course, his paper was scored as below average.

And another very quick, similar example:

An older, autistic Rain Man, (Kim Peek in real life), when asked what he thought of his father's life-long dedication to dressing him, coaching him, and scheduling his days, said, "My father and I share the same shadow." Is this an assessment by a dysfunctional individual, or a profound poetic response describing the depth and breadth of Kim's relationship with his father?

Individuals on this spectrum have a gifted intelligence, and as I said, they are hard-wired to operate in this way. But, the extended part of this talk is about the fact that we all have this Connective Intelligence, as I call it. We have it, have always had it, but are not similarly hard-wired to use it. Thus, we have been led or walked away from it, almost entirely.

I realized when working with these students that this intelligence is like an open satellite dish, this being the operation of the right brain, the operation of all right brains. This is our gifted, receptive intelligence also, which is the domain of intuitions, insights, inspiration, Ah ha's, gut responses, thinking outside-the-box, and *our passions*, which are all how we get answers from the vast realm of what can be called the Unified Field of Intelligence. We all experience these receptive, deep knowings, subtly and frequently, but most people barely notice them, essentially giving them no importance in comparison to our rational thinking.

However, this unified field of intelligence I mention, is the information of life itself. As I was discussing this with my son-in-law one morning over eggs and pancakes, it came to me that this intelligence is given in part to animals in a basic set of instincts, with which for however long, they live in balanced relationship with the rest of life. In significant contrast, humans have only two basic instincts, that of grasping and sucking, but beyond this our connection to this vast field of information is an open, ongoing, and spontaneous ability to receive, feel, and read the impulses that come to us from this realm through our right brain's open Connective/Receptive Intelligence, and our heart. Yes, and as affirmed by the scientific research by The Institute of HeartMath in Boulder Creek, California, the

heart is far more than just a place of sentimental feelings and/or a physical organ that pumps blood.

A quote from The HeartMath Institute:

The heart is in fact, a highly complex, self-organized information processing center with its own functional “brain” that communicates with and influences the cranial brain via the nervous system, hormonal system and other pathways. These influences profoundly affect brain function and most of the body’s major organs, and ultimately determine the quality of life.

(www.heartmath.org/research/science-of-the-heart/introduction.html:.)

Returning to this intelligence for us:

We primarily leave this right/heart brain intelligence to poets, dancers, musicians, artists, engineers, architects, some scientists and inventors, and to our own hands-on and nature-related activities. The one intelligence we almost exclusively use instead is our Directive/Analytic linear, and what we call rational intelligence of the left brain. The left brain encodes, sequences, delineates, details, describes, categorizes, and compares thoughts, ideas, and concepts. Using it largely by itself, we are unfortunately left just pushing left brain components around and around in attempts to find answers and solutions, often using re-digested information, and most often not venturing outside any box.

Fundamentally, the right/heart brain intuitively discovers the life forces and principles that connect us all to each other, to the world and beyond, while the left brain delineates the forms and details of life with which we live and work. Now, I know many will say using the terms right and left brain is an over simplification of how the brain works. However, true simplicity can encompass and unite a world of smaller detail in a larger functional truth, as many attest to with the use of the right and left brain terminology.

Our Directive Intelligence, absent the combination with the initial inspired, connective knowledge received by the right/heart brain, will always come up short of true answers for success and well-being. This is like only using one hand when we were gifted with two.

Starting with our other hand, drawing first from our intuitive, connective intelligence, we are then to use the left-brain directive intelligence to shape this often deep inspiration into a form deliverable to the world, this product inherently

designed for our success because it first came from the connective information of life itself.

How did my student Nick, write, “Annie’s heart blossomed like a lotus flower in the spring?”

Reading was his deep passion, and through his right/heart brain, he, and other spectrum individuals, see the deepest meanings in what is before and around them. Also, people on this spectrum are gut-empathic, compelled for justice and fairness, and they want to help the underdog near them, and even bigger, the world at large.

And, most importantly to know, the brain works best following a deep passion which accounts for Nick’s spontaneous beautiful words. Also accompanying the beautiful words were Nick’s correct spellings and punctuation, because *left-brain details and operations emanate and fall into place on their own when passions fuel the brain.* Passionate and nurtured connection to life feeds our optimal response, even when a gifted individual appears to be very out of step with the world: “My father and I share the same shadow.”

These two, the right/heart brain and the left, used in appropriate balance and cooperation with each other, are the Ying and Yang of our full intelligence. And those here to make this all very visible to us, *the canaries in the coal mine*, are spectrum individuals, here without a left-brain filter, and also, a very sensitive nervous system, leaving them overwhelmed by excessive linear information and reacting to any number of invasive environmental toxins. They find it extremely painful and nearly impossible to live in our one-handed, one-intelligence world, as do all others who remain wanting, and our earth which suffers continuous violation.

Closing with two more stories:

A less happy situation that arose as I taught, started with a precocious young man who loved to draw cartoons, at which he was very good. Each individual on this spectrum has their own combination of traits, and ‘Bill’ had what has been named ADD, Attention Deficit Disorder. I have renamed this particular learning difference as *Attention Differently Directed*, for *this* name refers to their orientation to the right/heart brain openness which I have described.

Bill, a natural cartooner, had difficulty staying focused on classroom assignments that were linear in nature, again things like writing, or practicing math facts, etc.

So, I let him cartoon after spending time on this classwork, which worked well, and I encouraged his cartooning complementary to his work in other ways. His 4th grade teacher let him focus even more on his ability to cartoon as part of his work, allowing him to excel in the class. Fifth grade came, and when I was on recess duty, I repeatedly saw Bill very uncharacteristically striding alone, driven around and around the asphalt playground, obviously deeply despondent, his head down the entire time. Inquiring, I found out the 5th grade staff had decided he was too old to be cartooning in school.

And, one last story, of which there are thousands, is happily opposed to this last. In a winery in Japan which wanted to make a better white wine for the public, and where autistics in their late teens and twenties received schooling and life skills, these students worked hard in their skills position, and as they often like, doing the same repetitive wine making activity day after day: tending the soil, pruning, crushing, bottling, putting labels on the bottles, and more.

These students were happy and motivated, sometimes even inspiring the California wine maker, hired for a few months to help at this winery on hilly terrain, the site also often subjected to cold temperatures. The students knew the goal was to make a wine that people would like even better. Now, in this environment, which respected and honored these individuals, and the differences of their learning style, some of those who had never spoken, began to speak, and other left-brain abilities developed, as passion and activity were the focus.

This now the bulk of my presentation, there are many further understandings to be had of spectrum differences, including remedies for their sensitive reactions to this world. But most important for us is to recognize their inner guidance through their abilities and passions, and their perceptions and gifts which they are here to share, which will define both their role and their belonging in this world.

And as for the rest of humanity, using both our connective and directive intelligences, as we also recognize and honor our latent abilities and our passions, we will insightfully discover both the naturally inspired answers, and the means, with which to solve the problems challenging us all and our planet.

This paradigm shift of understanding and combined approach is, for us all, our opportunity to create *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*, a title borrowed from an amazing book of this title by Charles Eisenstein.

Please go to my website if you have always felt different in some way, have a child or children who are definitely or might be oriented differently, or have always thought of yourself as ‘normal,’ yet would like to balance these intelligences within you to find your passionate inspiration to help bring about better circumstances for humanity and the planet. Look around, our one-handed world isn’t working all that well.