

# THE IRONY OF SUSCEPTIBILITY TO MANIPULATIONS

## GROOMING NEUROTYPICALS FOR SOCIAL INEPTITUDE

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The stereotypes of autistic people perpetuate a myth that they are socially inept. Yet non-autistics, also known as neurotypicals, portray ineptitudes on the basis of their susceptibility to body language, communication, and perceptual manipulations. How we learn these signals opens the debate for nature versus nurture, and the acquisition of social skill aptitude. Who is more socially equipped? The one who is capable of surrounding himself with pretentious body language, or the one who is mindful of her full spectrum of awareness? A neurotypical who communicates with learned body gestures is currently considered evolved, while the acquisition of those skills are a direct result of the inability to survive otherwise. The autistic who remains authentic in order to adapt to the current environment is potentially most equipped to function in society.

The cycle of life requires attracting a mate, reproduction, and adaptations for exploitation to those who threaten survival. In a typical preparation for a possible sexual encounter, high muscle tone became evident, the stomach is automatically pulled in, the chest protrudes, the body assumes an erect posture, bagging around the face and eyes decreases, and the person appears to become more youthful overall (Schefflen, 1972). While some courtship signals are studied and deliberate, others are emitted entirely unconsciously. An atypical sexual encounter will lack all of these elements, but might still yield a reproduction component.



The social behaviors of the neurotypical population do not distract the laser focus of the autistic person's communication. On a primal level, an autistic person's empathy is unfiltered and unmarred by the layers of social manipulation to attract a mate with nonverbal gestures. Autistic people tend to be practical fixers and not huggers. In a crisis, the autistic person will approach with a novel corrective system for creating balance in the environment, while the neurotypical will approach with tears, and offer warm hugs. Neurotypicals who nurture their social skills ultimately attract a mate, and their survival is guaranteed by laws of evolution. In contrast, autistic individuals are born with high social aptitude, but are otherwise perceived as disabled and socially inept. Evolutionary adaptation is contingent on multiple realms of survival, and the ability to attract a mate in a conventional manner is not the only way to advance a species.

Some might argue that mindful social behavior may decrease reproduction of the autistic subgroup. Without any social reciprocity that is congruent with their communication style, there are few social distractions. As a result, innumerable hours are available to devote to inanimate subjects which do not demand communicative reciprocity. The expert-level skillsets achieved meet the 10,000-hour mark with each area of interest explored in isolation. Autistics who spend less time pursuing a mate have more time to devote to their special interests and nurture their innovative streak. Thus the autistic subgroup may be recognized as the evolved species adapted for a post hunter-gatherer society and more technology-oriented world where novel skillsets are highly desired for survival. In essence, we see autism on the rise not by way of autistics reproducing. Rather, the procreation of mates with high-empath and high-analytic traits result in more autistic offspring. Inevitably, autistics are in every community and in every family we know. Since autism is a conglomerate of high-empath/high-analytic traits, the attraction of like-minded mates for ad hoc reproduction circumvent any social requisites.

An encounter between unlike partners such as a neurotypical and an autistic person may turn into a highly volatile situation when communication differences abound. The neurotypical will approach with a handshake, firm eye contact, and rudimentary chit chat. Those are learned social skills to gauge the frequencies emitted by the other person, otherwise known as reading the person on the other side of the encounter. The autistic person will avoid the handshake, make no eye contact, and will read the frequencies

directly from the sound spectrums. Without applying any superficial filters to measure the situation, the autistic person will already be aware of the other person's intention to evaluate them, which will both annoy and frustrate them because of the delay in the heart of the conversation. The autistic person will try to correct the situation with a novel approach, and offer a direct observation, such as, "You seem to be in a hurry today because you put your hair in a ponytail. Am I bothering you?" A classic reaction from a neurotypical is to respond with, "Do you realize that you are being very rude? Look at me when you're talking. You didn't even shake my hand. Wow—what is wrong with you?!" The neurotypical, aghast at being found out, will project their humiliation onto the autistic person, and blame them for lacking social skills. These predatory practices persist when autistics are forced into social skills trainings and therapies designed to teach them how to conform into social norms which are based purely on nurtured fallacies.

Animal adaptations for exploitation "go back deep in evolutionary time. Capuchin meat thieves do not choose their victims randomly. Capuchin monkeys selectively target muggable victims—those whom they can menace, by virtue of their higher rank" (Buss et al., 2008). The higher order of predatory practices is dependent on who sees themselves as more higher ranking. Neurotypicals who are susceptible to perceptual and gestural manipulations consider themselves as the higher ranking order of the species, and target the ones who are immune to these manipulations.

The autistic person who sees right through these layers of perception is potentially existing on the planes of actuality. Autistic people are not susceptible to optical illusions (Chouinard et al., 2016) and are less likely to catch a contagious yawn from a peer (Senju et al., 2007). Both of these may be understood as markers of a specific disorder, or analyzed as higher order traits. Optical illusions tap into the manipulability of the typically-wired brain of the individual who is accustomed to nurturing their behavior and perceptions around an imagined norm. Catching a yawn from a friend is an imitation of a social gesture when you take a clue that fatigue is a behavior that should be practiced at the given moment. Psychologists pathologize this behavior as a disability, while autistics recognize their altered state as a strong ability to coexist in both friendly and hostile environments. In the worst case, an autistic person who expresses their ability to "see the energies" or "hear the frequencies" of others, may find themselves institutionalized or drugged into submission.

Neurotypicals remain equipped to survive only when they nurture their social behaviors, while autistics can survive in both worlds using multiple skillsets.

A preference for gestures as a sign of higher ranking in social aptitude prevails. Early Cartesian influences are seen in emerging psychological perspectives which disregard the role of human gestures in physical, social and evolutionary mechanisms of human behavior (Hevern, 2008, p. 217). Body language is generally observed in the meeting of a potential mate, and is evidenced in specific gestures accompanying "I," "me," "we" and "us" pronouns matched by small movements of the head, eyes, hands, fingers or even the shoulders (Davis May, 1970). An excited mate would gather her hands inward to demonstrate "we" and display her wrists as a sign of submissiveness for the word "us." Neurotypicals have relied on these gestures for so long, that the lines between what they have nurtured for reproduction and what they have been equipped with by nature has blurred. The nurtured skillsets may rob them of the ability to see more clearly what is available to them in the unmanipulated planes.

Autistics who alter their habitual performance find that their ability to read people with their innate tools are dulled. Without these skillsets, they are vulnerable and blind in a world that is full of manically gesturing people who seem to know what they are doing. The chaos is unbearable and the amount of time spent recovering from faking for a single encounter makes the attempt not worth the effort. Therefore autistics are not vulnerable to nurturing their social skills to manipulative levels. Neurotypicals are entrained from infancy to return their mother's loving gaze, to coo in delight from their mother's nonsensical babble, and to clap their hands to imitate adults. Autistic infants have been found to fixate on geometric shapes instead of facial features (Pierce et al., 2011), look away from extended parental gaze, have hyperlexia and communicate in full sentences without the expected babbling (Rapin et al., 1983). These early signs of inability to groom for social ineptness makes the autistic person prepared for a high-tech/low-manipulation world that seeks out their novel abilities.

The lack of acknowledgement that autistics are performing at a higher level stems from an initial dichotomy in perception of the other. The social condition is such that the majority creates the norm, and the hierarchy of control begins with those who put themselves there first. To elevate oneself onto the pedestal of that social order requires a significant amount

of manipulation of others, a skill which autistics neither have the interest nor the desire to get involved with. Autistics will achieve civil rights when they go against the expectations of gathering in large numbers to advocate for their cause. By staying true to their neurology, the advancement of their acceptance will be promulgated by the cave-dwelling, keyboard-pecking, and truth-telling traits of this meta-species.

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