

Possibilities

in Education and Training

Fall 2023



A New Beginning: C.J.'s Story

By Michelle Johnston

Charles "C.J." Grendler shows deep gratitude for the life-changing opportunity he received to transition from Woodward Resource Center (WRC) to a welcoming host home within the community. His time at WRC was marked by a challenging encounter with an aggressive resident, leaving him feeling unsafe and uneasy. In stark contrast, his new host home provides a haven of security and peacefulness, where he feels truly comfortable and at ease. The companionship of his host homeowner, Marcelys Burns, and Marcelys's brother, RaVelle, who shares the space, has become a source of joy and stability for C.J.

C.J.'s day begins with breakfast with Marcelys and RaVelle, setting the tone for a purposeful routine. C.J. and Marcelys have been working out daily since C.J. received a gym membership. Therapy appointments and errands punctuate his schedule, offering opportunities for growth and development. The calm and unhurried

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atmosphere of his home further contributes to his sense of well-being. C.J. enjoys remote control cars, playing video games, fishing and being around animals. He has a dream of one day working at John Deere, but is currently looking for a place of employment where he could work an hour or two a day, with the hopes of being able to choose the company he likes best. C.J. also has a close bond with his mother, Barbara. Barbara visits C.J. every three weeks, and they go out to eat and go grocery shopping which they both really enjoy.

When asked for advice on moving into the community, C.J. exudes enthusiasm, proclaiming, "Host homes are the best!" The genuine warmth of Marcelys makes it easy to understand why C.J. is so happy and thrives in this environment. Marcelys, driven by an innate desire to make a positive impact on others, embarked on his journey of support, care, and respect at places like Tynique's Rose Garden - a haven for individuals with developmental disabilities who need support.

Julie Adams, C.J.'s Money Follows the Person (MFP) Transition Specialist, played a pivotal role in C.J.'s transformation journey. MFP is a program which provides eligible Medicaid recipients funding for the transition services and enhanced supports needed for the first year after the transition to community living. With much dedication, Julie helped

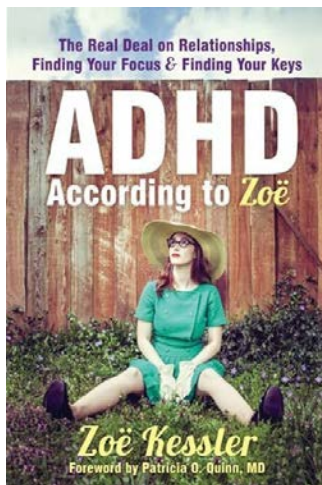
C.J. with the transition to the community and continues to visit with him regularly. She set up C.J. with the gym membership and is working to get him a new bed.

C.J.'s story is a testament to the power of a supportive mother and supportive communities and the transformative impact of dedicated individuals like Marcelys Burns and Julie Adams. Through programs like MFP and the unwavering commitment of compassionate individuals, C.J. has not only found a new home but has also embraced it with open arms, paving the way for a bigger future.



The Center for Disabilities and Development disability resource library wishes to highlight the autobiographies and biographies for both adults and children listed below. Learning information about disabilities is important, but just as important is to give voice to people with disabilities so that they can share their personal stories. You can browse through and find these books and others at the disability resource library online catalog at uichildrens.org/drl-catalog.

For more information or recommendations of further resources, please contact Mitch DeFauw at mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu.

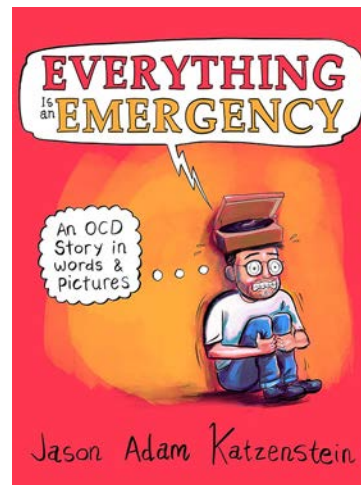


ADHD According to Zoë: The Real Deal on Relationships, Finding Your Focus, and Finding Your Keys

By Zoë Kessler

Like many women with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), journalist and popular blogger Zoë Kessler was diagnosed late in life—

well into adulthood, in fact. But instead of seeing this label as a burden to bear, Kessler decided to use it to gain a better understanding of herself, and to connect with others through her writing. In this unique and engaging memoir, Kessler shares her own stories of living with ADHD in a way that is relatable, but never predictable. Kessler also offers key coping skills based on her experience; skills that you can use to focus your energy, become more organized, and boost your self-esteem while tapping into creativity and humor.

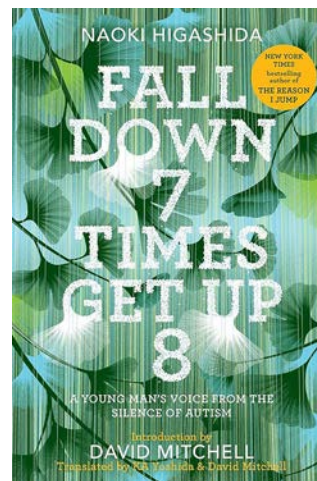


Everything Is an Emergency: An OCD Story in Words and Pictures

By Jason Adam Katzenstein

Jason has obsessive compulsive disorder, a mental illness that compels him to perform rituals in order to protect himself from dangers that don't really exist.

Everything Is an Emergency is a comic about all the self-destructive stories someone tells himself, over and over, until they start to seem true. In images surreal, witty, and confessional, Jason shows us that OCD can be funny, even when it feels like it's ruining your life.



Fall Down 7 Times Get Up 8: A Young Man's Voice from the Silence of Autism

By Naoki Higashida, K.A.

Naoki Higashida was only 13 when he wrote *The Reason I Jump*, a revelatory account of autism from the inside by a nonverbal Japanese child, which became an international success. Now,

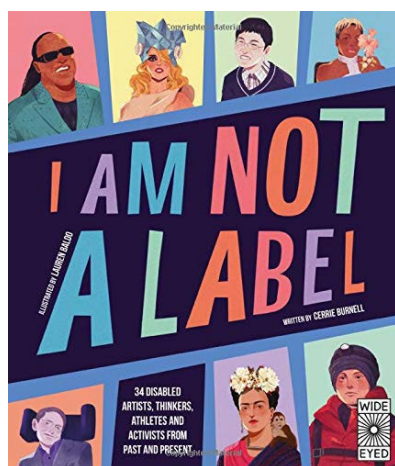
in *Fall Down 7 Times Get Up 8*, he shares his thoughts and experiences as a young man living each day with severe autism. In short, powerful chapters, Higashida explores school memories, family relationships, the exhilaration of travel, and the difficulties of speech. Acutely aware of how strange his behavior can appear to others, he aims throughout to foster a better understanding of autism and to encourage society to see people with disabilities as people, not as problems.

How I Own Cerebral Palsy

By Carmen A. Lebron

How I Own Cerebral Palsy is a captivating look into the life of Carmen Lebron, a teen, set on living a life of positive impact and free from physical and mental barriers. Heartfelt, honest, and full of liberating moments for the soul, Carmen's story

is a riveting testament to why we should never under any circumstances consider giving up.



I Am Not a Label: 34 Disabled Artists, Thinkers, Athletes, and Activists from Past and Present

by Cerrie Burnell

In this stylishly illustrated biography anthology, meet 34 artists, thinkers, athletes, and activists

with disabilities, from past and present. From Frida Kahlo to Stephen Hawking, find out how these iconic figures have overcome obstacles, owned their differences, and paved the way for others by making their bodies and minds work for them.

Temple Grandin Thinking in Pictures

My Life with Autism

Foreword by Oliver Sacks



Thinking in Pictures: My Life with Autism

By Temple Grandin, PhD

Temple Grandin, Ph.D., is a gifted animal scientist who has designed one third of all the livestock-handling facilities in the United States. She also lectures widely on autism because she is autistic, a

woman who thinks, feels, and experiences the world in ways that are incomprehensible to the rest of us. In this unprecedented book, Grandin delivers a report from the country of autism. Writing from the dual perspectives of a scientist and an autistic person, she tells us how that country is experienced by its inhabitants and how she managed to breach its boundaries to function in the outside world.

Uncomfortable Labels: My Life as a Gay Autistic Trans Woman

By Laura Kate Dale



In this candid, first-of-its-kind memoir, Laura Kate Dale recounts what life is like growing up as a gay trans woman on the autism spectrum. From struggling with sensory

processing, managing socially demanding situations, and learning social cues and feminine presentation, through to coming out as trans during an autistic meltdown, Laura draws on her personal experiences from life prior to transition and diagnosis, and moving on to the years of self-discovery, to give a unique insight into the nuances of sexuality, gender and autism, and how they intersect.

Possibilities in Education and Training is a quarterly publication of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. It is an outreach initiative of the Conner Training Connection, a program funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to support the transition of individuals with disabilities from congregate to community-based settings.

As we work to
create light for others,
we naturally light
our own way.

Mary Anne Radmacher

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