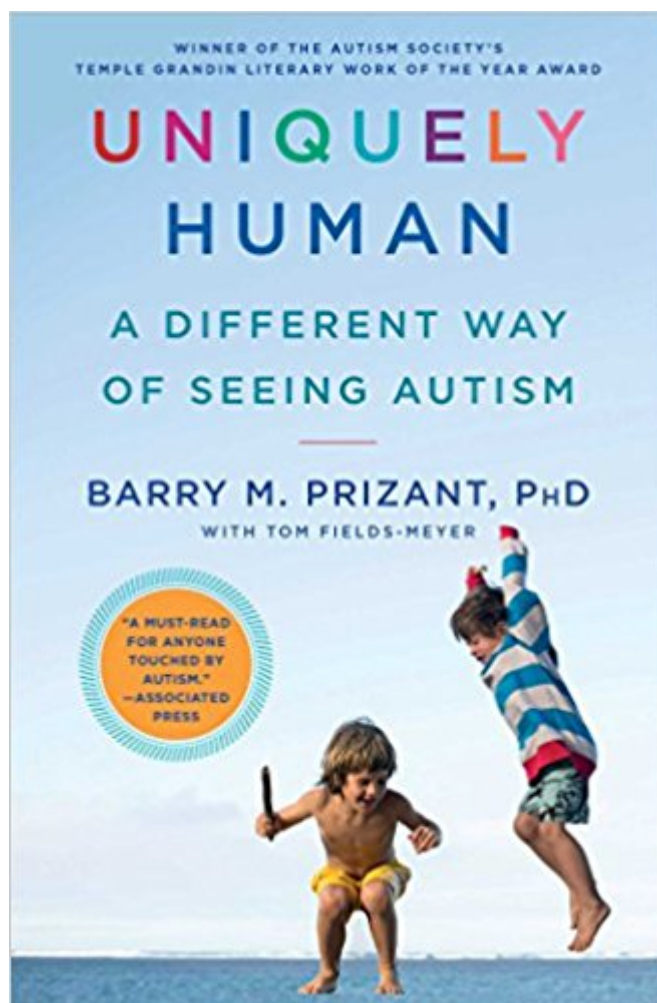


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# Uniquely Human: A Different Way Of Seeing Autism



## Synopsis

Winner of the Autism Society of America's Dr. Temple Grandin Award for the Outstanding Literary Work in Autism A groundbreaking book on autism, by one of the world's leading experts, who portrays autism as a unique way of being human—this is required reading....Breathtakingly simple and profoundly positive (Chicago Tribune).Autism therapy typically focuses on ridding individuals of "autistic" symptoms such as difficulties interacting socially, problems in communicating, sensory challenges, and repetitive behavior patterns. Now Dr. Barry M. Prizant offers a new and compelling paradigm: the most successful approaches to autism don't aim at fixing a person by eliminating symptoms, but rather seeking to understand the individual's experience and what underlies the behavior. "A must-read for anyone touched by autism... Dr. Prizant's Uniquely Human is a crucial step in promoting better understanding and a more humane approach" (Associated Press). Instead of classifying "autistic" behaviors as signs of pathology, Dr. Prizant sees them as part of a range of strategies to cope with a world that feels chaotic and overwhelming. Rather than curb these behaviors, it's better to enhance abilities, build on strengths, and offer supports that will lead to more desirable behavior and a better quality of life. "A remarkable approach to autism....A truly impactful, necessary book" (Kirkus Reviews, starred review), Uniquely Human offers inspiration and practical advice drawn from Dr. Prizant's four-decade career. It conveys a deep respect for people with autism and their own unique qualities. Filled with humanity and wisdom, Uniquely Human "should reassure parents and caregivers of kids with autism and any other disability that their kids are not broken, but, indeed, special" (Booklist, starred review).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"With the precision of a consummate scientist combined with the wisdom of a sage, Barry leverages his deep understanding of people with autism, revealing that individuals on the spectrum are just like everyone else - but perhaps just more so." This unique book is a must read for anyone desiring a deeper understanding, through the lens of a seasoned and mindful professional in the field of autism, answering the bigger question what it means to be human." Stephen Mark Shore, Ed.D. Clinical Assistant Professor of Special Education at Adelphi University  
Autistic Self-Advocate, Internationally renowned author of 4 books, consultant  
"Autism was initially described in 1943, and now with *Uniquely Human*, it is rediscovered 70 years later as a shared human experience. Autism is part of every community, and this tour of autism changes everything. Now, autism makes sense, and tomorrow looks a whole lot brighter for everyone. Stop what you are doing. Read this book. It's a masterpiece." - Carol Gray, Educator, Developer of Social Stories, International Consultant to Individuals with Autism  
"This is by far the most empathic, wise, and insightful book I have ever read about autism, and is one of the most empathic and wise books I've ever read about being human. I can't overstate the transformative power of this book: it breaks open the heart, extends vision where there was only fog, and inspires keen insight where there was only reflexive response." -- Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson, Vice President and Dean's Chair, American Jewish University, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies and parent  
"Uniquely Human is an amazing book! It will change our perception and understanding of autism. Barry Prizant has an intuitive understanding of autism spectrum disorders and the wisdom of four decades of experience. I strongly recommend this book to parents and professionals, and congratulate Barry for writing the book that needed to be written." -- Tony Attwood, Ph.D. Author of *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome*  
"I have read a million and one books on autism. *Uniquely Human* is the best book I have ever read, hands down...the paradigm of autism books. Thank you Barry for this incredible gift!!!!- Navah Paskovitz, Mother of three boys with autism, parent advocate  
"Refreshing--and constructive.... It should be required reading for all educators and practitioners working with autism....Breathtakingly simple and profoundly positive." (Chicago Tribune)  
"A remarkable approach to autism....A truly impactful, necessary book." (Kirkus Reviews, starred review)  
"Uniquely Human is

not just the perfect title for Barry Prizant's book, it's also an appropriate summation of Dr. Prizant's career. Though a clinical scholar, he is a humanist first, and always has been "a professional who is fascinated by unexamined lives that could be lived happily, yet aren't. With every brilliant, illuminating example in his book, he steers us away from the traditional fix-it mentality and towards the beatific, personally rewarding detective work that the entire spectrum world would be well served to adopt. Thanks be to Barry for the first-ever "must read" written for parents, educators, and clinicians." (Michael John Carley, Founder, GRASP; Author of Asperger's From the Inside-Out) "Uniquely Human is brilliant. A revolution." (Steve Silberman, author of NeuroTribes) "Dr. Prizant explains the causes of behaviors associated with autism. I love his approach for understanding problems with sensory overload, anxiety and discomfort. He provides common sense, practical advice based on a 40-year career working in the trenches with both parents and teachers." (Temple Grandin, author of The Autistic Brain and The Way I See It)

Barry M. Prizant, PhD, CCC-SLP, is among the world's leading authorities on autism, with more than forty years of experience as a scholar, researcher, and international consultant. He is an adjunct professor at Brown University and coauthor of The SCERTS Model: A Comprehensive Educational Approach, now being implemented in more than a dozen countries. Dr. Prizant has published more than 120 articles and chapters and has received many awards for his career in supporting autistic persons and related disabilities and their families. Dr. Prizant lives in Cranston, Rhode Island, with his wife, Dr. Elaine Meyer.

My son was diagnosed with ASD in January 2012 and it took us 3 years to put all the "pieces" together to get where we are today. Many of that 3 years of exploration, failure and discovery could have been reduced in duration if we had access to Dr. Prizant's book. So many therapists (both in school and private operations) don't "get it". They focus on the deficits and "extinguishing behaviors" when they should be asking "why is that behavior present"? My wife and I finally figured much of it out after trying therapy after therapy and enduring years of meltdowns and stress. The "answers" for our son were 1) Our son has sensory over-responsivity. Parties, amusement parks, recess are all massively over-stimulating and stressful. We don't avoid these things but know he can handle only a few hours. 2) He has some challenges reading and absolutely hated to do it UNTIL we discovered how to use his "enthusiasms" e.g. Star Wars, Minecraft, World War 2, to get his engagement 3) He can relate better to folks if they meet him in "his world" - from there he comes to trust you and is willing to enter your world. We just finished a two-week trip to Europe where we employed lots of

sensory supports (e.g. ear muffs), using a rental car rather than public transportation (which is loud, somewhat 'unpredictable' and out of our control), we alternated "big" sensory days (e.g. amusement parks) with "low" sensory days - watching TV and going to the pool. And he had NOT ONE meltdown. We had to discover all of these strategies by ourselves largely. Having more folks like Dr. Prizant we could have discovered these strategies MUCH earlier. My one suggestion is that the book seems to under-estimate the effort that comes with convincing (often intransigent and overworked) schools to try new approaches. That more than anything was the most stressful part of the journey - because that's where our son receives the most "therapy" time. And if you can't get those changes done you have to either move schools, move district or home-school. In the end, the school system we attended could not put him in a smaller classroom with peers so we had to involve a professional advocate and lawyers to get an outplacement. Sometimes you can be "positive" minded as much as you want but the school administration needs to know you will do all you can to get what your child needs. That said, I plan to buy three or four copies for many of the autism therapists in our world. If everyone could adopt Dr. Prizant's viewpoint I think special needs educators would achieve massive improvements in results and parent's lives could become much less stressed and uncertain.

As a dad of an autistic son, and a high school teacher this book is an absolute must read. It literally changed my life. There is not a day that goes by where I do not think about a certain message or part of this book. Thank you Dr. Barry Prizant!!

I love this book and Dr. Prizant's approach. This book is so validating and such an easy read for anyone who wants to better understand a child with Autism. It is a delight to see words on a page that actually resonate with our experience and reinforce our natural gut feelings that are all too often denied because we are too busy being told by old-school behavioral therapists and the school district that we need to fit a round peg into a square hole.

A really valuable book for parents and professionals! Dr. Prizant has provided us with a "unique" insight into better understanding individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Uniquely Human is masterfully and sensitively written, highly informative, and very perceptive. This book clearly brings to light many important ways of comprehending autism from the perspective of Dr. Prizant's dedicated career, and from the many individuals with ASD he has worked with and met, their parents, and the countless practitioners he has encountered on his professional journey. As a

retired Director of Special Education, I see this book as an invaluable resource to learn how we can better support individuals with ASD and their families. Dr. Prizant beautifully frames the many unique qualities of individuals with ASD and how we as practitioners can better use this knowledge to engage them in more meaningful instructional and treatment practices. He very effectively dispels some myths about ASD while he simultaneously opens our minds to countless ways to better educate/treat this often misunderstood group of individuals. I'm honored to have been a recipient of Dr. Prizant's knowledge in my role as Director of Special Education and the excellence of this book is no surprise. A must read !

As a sibling of a person with autism, I really enjoyed reading *Uniquely Human* - the combination of firsthand experiences, stories, and Dr. Prizant's earnest enthusiasm for individuals with autism allowed me to connect deeply with the book. "Autism isn't an illness. It's a different way of being human." One of the central themes of the book is the importance of perspective. I really appreciated the author's emphasis on listening, asking "Why?", and trusting one's gut instinct.

My little dude is going through some things right now (SPD, sleep disorder, possibly ASD) but he's smart as hell. We have therapy a few times a week but otherwise I'm home with him working on him using this in conjunction with ABA. Also for any parents out there going through this as well the apps from Kindle FreeTime have been SUCH a huge help. These are a GREAT tool to add into our therapy & homeschooling curriculum that I'm also doing with him.

So much of the scientific, medical, and popular literature on autism is "gloom and doom," focused on deficits, therapies, early intervention, miracle cures, "normalizing," and so on. This book is a breath of fresh air--written for families and professionals and autistic people themselves, sharing insight and perspective that Prizant has come to in his 40 years as a professional in the autism community. It's written in an accessible way, free of any and all dogma except to treat those with autism with respect and kindness. This is a terrific book, highly recommended.

A must read for anyone who works with children or adults with autism! I am a special education teacher and this book has helped me to understand the world my students with autism live in and how I can help support them. Easy to read and understand, I will be recommending this book to my

peers.

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