

The Teaching Tips and Tales Podcast Transcript

Episode TTT:012 Understanding Autism and Asperger Syndrome with Dr. Wenn Lawson

Show Notes www.mapyourlearning.com/?p=512

Adam: Welcome to Episode 12 of the Teaching Tips and Tells Podcast

Narrator: Welcome the Teaching Tips and Tells, the podcast dedicated to the art of teaching, the place where you can listen to stories from teachers' around the world. Come and listen, come and learn, come and share with your host Adam.

Adam: Thank you for joining me today on Episode 12 of the Teaching Tips and Tells podcast. Today's episode features an interview with Dr. Wenn Lawson. Dr. Wenn is an amazing individual who in 2008 came in 4th place in the Victorian Australian of the Year Award. He is a psychologist, lecturer and author and has written numerous books about Autism and Aspergers Syndrome. Even more incredible is that Dr. Wenn is himself on the autism spectrum and had to overcome a number of challenges in his life to get to where he is. According to the National Autistic Society, Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how a person relates to and communicates with other people and to the world around them. Figures suggest that there about 1 in 100 people in the U.K. with autism. In this interview, we debunk some of the myths surrounding autism as well as discussing some adaptations and strategies that could be useful for people with autism, carers or teachers. So here is my interview with Dr. Wenn. He starts by filling us on with what he does.

Dr. Wenn: I'm a certified psychologist, but the work I do is only, really in the autism community. I am an autistic adult and am a parent of autistic sons and a grand-parent to autistic grandchildren. So the work is really based around trying to help people understand what autism is and what people can do to support us really. and I think the political scene allows

Adam: I saw that you have a preference for autistic people rather than people with autism. I noticed that in the book even though one is more politically correct.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah it's like we don't talk about a person with deafness or it's kind of strange I think. Autism is who I am, I am an autistic person and I think the political scene or as you said being politically correct is changing. People are changing terminology and are thinking a lot more of people on the spectrum, autistic people rather than people with autism. It is catching on.

Adam: Is it problematic that the spectrum is so big that there are just these two words. I saw that you sometimes people are called Autie and Aspies as well. I like that and with just these two words but with the spectrum so big that everyone will have their own different challenges.

Dr. Wenn: Everybody has very different challenges and I think the difficulty is yes as you're saying because the spectrum is so wide, people sometimes don't appreciate those that are more high functioning, which is a horrible term, but that tends to be one that gets used, are not seen to have problems. They think of us as well as being oh well you're educated or you've got normal intelligence but actually autism has nothing to do with intelligence. Autism is a difficulty all of its own and being intelligent doesn't mean that you are more able so much as it means you have a lot of insight but can't change things. As in make the autism go away and I don't want my autism to go but at times, the impediments that it can offer are just that, impediments to things I really want to do. And that can be very depressing and frustrating and for those that are of an ordinary IQ if you like you know that's a challenge. If you have an intellectual disability and autism, you often don't notice your difficulties and sometimes it's like the difficulties are more for other people who trip over not coping with the behaviors that we sometimes exhibit when we don't know how to communicate. So really the answer is wherever you are on the spectrum to build good communication skills through whatever means you can find. Sometimes that means using something like a software package like *Proloquo2Go* for example on a computer that allows you to type if you can't speak. Sometimes it means using photographs and pictures. People don't appreciate that there are all sorts of ways to build good communication skills that don't necessarily involve speech. I find writing and poetry really useful for communication. Where on my end of the spectrum if you like, and I wasn't always here, when I started off as a small child I didn't have access to language you know, I wasn't speaking until well past my fourth birthday so I kind of feel like I'm in touch with both ends of the spectrum in lots of ways. Long winded answer, but it kind of gets you going.

Adam: Yeah. There is a lot of myths surrounding autism. What are some of the other ones that annoy you?

Dr. Wenn: Yes, the myths that if you read a book like *The Curious Incident of a Dog in the Night*, people think oh that's autism and we are all like the lad in the story and it's absolutely untrue. Very few of us actually are or *Rainman* of course, a very old film or movie now, but we're not all like Raymond in *Rainman*. It is a wide spectrum and many of us are policemen, teachers, doctors, in the armed forces, shopkeepers, we autism is such a wide spectrum that you will come across us in every walk of life as well as those that don't speak and have an intellectual disability or challenge as well. You know that's how wide it all is so there are a lot of myths.

Adam: And what is your opinion on for example there are some schools, which are entirely for people with autistic difficulties. Is it a good idea to segregate people or?

Dr. Wenn: Well I don't think I see it as segregation, so I don't see it like special school but more like specialist schooling. And unfortunately, mainstream schools are just not equipped to work with a lot of us who are on the spectrum. So it's an awful lot of pressure on teachers teaching ordinary, typical kids and if there is such a thing cause you know typical children have their own issues, so I think specialist teaching is necessary.

Adam: Yeah, so the normal kids would be referred to is it polytrup polytrypic is it?

Dr. Wenn: Well that is a bit of an old term now, but you can think of typical children as being really good at having lots and lots of different interests and therefore are able to divide their attention between things, between interests, between themselves and other people and that is a polytropic disposition.

Adam: Polytropic, yeah

Dr. Wenn: It just means many and tropic is a word for interest so yes that would be where typical kids lie whereas children and adults with autism are tend to be more mono, sometimes I think of stereos and monos, but we are better at being single minded, better at having single focused interests, which allows us to go quite deeply into an interest but that does make it harder to share with other people who might not be interested in the things we are interested in. So yeah if you put typical kids together who are much better at sharing interests with children who are not and you've got a recipe for some kind of difficulties I think. Unless it is understood and people join our interest well then that is totally different because that gives a way in to sharing but it tends to me to be in that way

[19:18] because as autistic people we are configured, it's just the way our brain is put together so that you're monotropic.

Adam: And what are some of the ways that teachers can gain better skills to, to work with autistic children. I suppose one of the difficult areas is to actually build an awareness in the other children.

Dr. Wenn: Absolutely, I think that if once autism is understood, it's a bit like understanding any other area of disability. If somebody is paralyzed from the waist down you give them a wheelchair, they have special access in all sorts of areas and the children are taught how to assist, work with, support and that child in the wheelchair is just another kid, another member of the class. Once autism is understood and you realize that autistic kids have a single focused mind, you join their that interest and you use it to navigate playtime, class time, teaching. You can actually build shared interest across that domain with the other kids in the class and then that child with autism is another class member that's valued.

Adam: Yeah. Language is another area that needs to be carefully controlled. I read for example in your book, even intonation, emphasizing the wrong word could cause a misunderstanding or

Dr. Wenn: Yes

Adam: Confuse an autistic person.

Dr. Wenn: Very definitely so. When you're single minded, metaphor is a problem, even simile can be an issue, intonation. I wish that people would say what they mean and mean what they say. When they say things like I'll just be a minute, they don't mean that they are using that as a metaphor for a space of time. But a child with autism who is single minded and very literal will probably count sixty and will time you and will feel lied to if you don't stay with what you've said. So we need to explain metaphor, but until kids are old enough to understand that and old enough emotionally and socially is not the same as physically. You can be seven physically but emotionally still three. And therefore metaphor explanations have to occur over time, at an appropriate time, with the child's interest. So if their into Thomas the Tank Engine, you use Thomas to explain metaphor, if their into dinosaurs, you use dinosaurs. At the same time, you need to be able to explain what we're saying in a way that makes sense to children with autism. To be quite honest, all kids at least under the age of 11 benefit from us meaning what we say and saying what we mean. So it applies not just to children with autism or autistic kids, but to all kids.

Adam: Yeah and I read in Temple Grandin's book, which I really enjoyed as well, the fact that children under a certain age, so I think that it's under three or four that it is vital for parents to expose them to interaction.

Dr. Wenn: Oh sure, absolutely. We're people who need community. It's just that we don't connect to the understanding in the same way and can look like we prefer things, we prefer to be on our own or we prefer things in less socially minded situations. But actually it's more that we need things one at a time or we need things structured, ordered rather than keeping us away from, like I go to a supermarket but I might need headphones to be able to cope. Don't keep me away from a supermarket just enable me. I go to a party but I usually get there early, don't stay too long and have limited interaction but I don't keep away from the party. I've just got to organize it so that I can cope. If you put us in isolation, we will we won't thrive. We won't learn how to relate. At the same time, being thrust into the middle of everything causes us to overload and we won't relate either. So it's got to be done with autism in mind just like you would for somebody who is deaf or blind or had a different difficulty. If they need sign language, that's what we need. It depends on the individual.

Adam: And if these strategies aren't put in place what are some of the outcomes, you know the things that can happen? I suppose anger and frustration.

Dr. Wenn: Huge, huge anger and huge frustration. In the old days, people would call it challenging behavior that we will see, but I think of it more as stress support needs. So they are very stressed, they need support and they are doing their utmost to tell you I'm not coping. And you know especially with girls on the spectrum it's becoming more and more, likely because girls present differently to boys in all aspects of life, that people aren't recognizing autism in the girls. They are seeing it more as defiant behavior or avoidant behavior but quite often that is actually their way of showing you that they don't understand something but they're bright enough to know how to get their own way and getting your own way is seen as controlling. But really controlling is just trying to stop things from happening that you don't understand.

Adam: Are more girls, are more boys affected than girls?

Dr. Wenn: Traditionally it's been believed that it's one to four but I actually think it's much more equal. So one girl to four boys traditionally but I actually think it's more like one to one or one to two. So there's quite a lot of research on girls and boys and why there are less girls being identified, but it's certainly girls are not picked up so well.

Adam: And what are some of the causes? Is it hereditary because I know for example reading about you that you have a son who is who is also on the spectrum.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah, no it is hereditary, it is genetic. The biggest amount of autism is genetic. There are other roots, but generally speaking it's genetically disposed, between male and female, both parents. So it's not just sort of handed down through the mother or handed down through the father. And it's a very complex genetic disposition. There are hundreds of genes involved so it's not like a single gene for breast cancer or something. It's a very complex situation and from mild to more extreme, as you said, it's a very wide spectrum so some of it doesn't cause problems for people, other people have huge difficulties.

Adam: I've also read in one of your books the word difability instead of disability, which I really liked as well.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah. I like difability because I hope that people will get the emphasis on being differently abled. It is a disability. I know I have a disability. It is very disabling being an autistic person in a world that is very multi tasked and that presents problems for me. It is disabling but difference of ability, with the emphasis on ability, is what I hope people will take from that word.

Adam: Does it mean the ability sets the people who suffer from autism, sorry that's a terrible way to put it, suffer from. Excuse me for that. That have autism, or are autistic are going to be quite similar? Or are the skill sets, they really depend on the person?

Dr. Wenn: No they're very skill sets are very different. And you're quite right. It's not that I suffer from autism, it's that I suffer from a world that does not understand autism.

Adam: Exactly yeah.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah and a lot of individuals are very able but people are expecting ability in particular ways so they miss, because they are not looking for it, so I might learn to tie a shoelace on my left shoe and if that was a typical kid, they there therefore can tie anything. They can tie both laces, they can tie ribbons and bits of material, bits of string, anything. But as an autistic person, I might only learn to tie my left shoe lace and need to learn again the right one and need to learn again for ribbons and strings. You know generalizing the learning is the habit. It's taking it further and that's part of that single focused disposition, monotropic disposition. I can multi task, but only in areas that I'm learning that

are often connected to what I'm interested in. And that's a very different ability set or ability type than we see in typically developing children.

Adam: And in adults are there difficulties that you have managed to, challenges that you've really managed to overcome?

Dr. Wenn: Yup. There are lots and lots of challenges I've overcome. Speech is obviously one of them. I didn't used to talk and now it's hard to shut me up. But I still find it difficult being in lots of noisy places. All I have to do is get there first so I shop at a quieter time for example. So rather than not go shopping, which is something that I'm tempted to do, I'll go at a time when it's not so busy. Rather than not go to the cinema, I'll go when the sessions are less busy or sometimes they have autism friendly cinema where they leave the lights on low and they don't have it quite as loud. If to a variety of situations rather than avoiding. I still have lots of difficulty crossing roads, I have

Adam: Driving?

Dr. Wenn: I don't drive

Adam: No?

Dr. Wenn: I found negotiating or navigating all the different paths, I would love to drive, I love the whole idea of driving a car. I've had several cars, several driving licenses as a learner, but I've not passed a test. I've failed three and then my family encouraged me to not continue. So although I really wanted to drive, for me it was difficult. But I certainly know autistic people who drive cars and it's not a problem to them, but it would be an issue for me.

Adam: But it might take them longer to master the skill, I suppose.

Dr. Wenn: It might take them longer, they might only drive at quieter times but yeah my partner is autistic and she my wife she drives everywhere. She's the chauffeur in our family and drives us everywhere.

Adam: Cool

Dr. Wenn: Yeah it is (laughing)

Adam: So coordination and things like that are areas or challenges that autistic people face.

Dr. Wenn: A lot of people, not all but I'm I have something I, I should know the word for it but it's escaping me at the moment, which means I have a difficulty

with physical coordination. Navigation, navigating stairs and steps, I can't think of the term. Some people have that with words, they have a difficulty with language. They can hear it but the processing can be quite slow and they might come out with something even weeks later with something that was said weeks before. It's taken them that long to master or understand it. I'm also dyslexic and hyperactive. So there's those are extras that go, can go with autism at times. Certainly not with everybody but yeah.

Adam: So you do have some autistic people that might have a really high verbal reasoning but will be very good at articulating themselves. Well obviously as you are but

Dr. Wenn: It's less common I think I am, this is my area of interest, I love words, I love language but reading is very difficult for me. So with all of my studying at uni going over journal articles and reading books was a nightmare. Lots of going over and over and over and highlighting and recording things and then listening to it. It's, I find that whole area very difficult. So I'm drawn and I love words but at the same time they're a problem for me. And that's just me. For other people with autism, processing language is hugely difficult and they have all the [3:26] issues, not hearing words that their hearing is fine but it's the actual processing in the brain that can be quite difficult.

Adam: And does that also cause difficulties in social context of reading

Dr. Wenn: Yes

Adam: Body language

Dr. Wenn: All of that. The social context, most people the currency for communication is language. And for a lot of people on the spectrum with autism, autistic people are finding language is an area that is one of their worst for it moves so fast, people don't stop and wait and count to ten for you to answer. And they give up or they then do something terrible which is called paraphrase. They've said something, then they paraphrase it, then they say it again. And for a lot of us as autistic people that means I have to go way back to the first thing, I'm still processing that when they've presented it a third time and each one of those is actually different so it's a nightmare.

Adam: I've probably been doing that myself yeah.

Dr. Wenn: I encourage people, rather than paraphrasing, say the same thing to me after ten seconds. Don't slow down or increase the volume of your voice. I'm not deaf. Just, I might just need it again after a short period of time. The biggest

thing I'll need is just time. The ten second rule is a great tool when people are conversing.

Adam: So when you meet a person for the first time and have a new interaction and strike up a conversation would you bring it into conversation quite soon that you are autistic or do people usually spot that straight away?

Dr. Wenn: It really depends on the situation I'm in. If I if it's with a shopkeeper or taxi driver, on the bus or train I probably don't mention autism. But if it's in a situation where I'm more likely to meet someone again or it's important or an opportunity they that I feel they need to know this then autism is on my agenda very surely yeah.

Adam: And does it also cause autistic people to sometimes feel that they are on the outside looking in?

Dr. Wenn: Very, very, most of the time actually it's hard to explain this but it's just like watching a video. Things are going on in front of you that you can see but can't quite touch. If I'm, if we're talking about dogs or birds or autism I'm center stage, I'm right there. I'm with you sort of thing because I'm really interested in animals and birds and autism. But if we were talking like a lady in this I went to the doctor's surgery just a couple of days ago, and the lady said to me will you have a summer here in the UK?

Adam: (laughing) I've heard that a lot.

Dr. Wenn: And I said to her well, yes, summer isn't over yet but we're moving into autumn

Adam: Yeah

Dr. Wenn: But we've had the majority of it. And she then said but it's rained a lot and I said

Adam: And that's what she meant yeah

Dr. Wenn: Yeah she wasn't actually meaning we hadn't had the season of summer. I couldn't answer very quickly. I couldn't process what she was saying even though I know academically they English talk a lot about the weather. And they don't, it might mean something in the way it is put across, I still have to go through all of those understandings, words, analogies, by the time I've worked out what is being said, the person might have lost interest but that's how it is.

Adam: Do you find it's like having to build up an almost dictionary in your head or an encyclopedia of all these different terms and words and social cues that people use?

Dr. Wenn: Yep you do. I do. I've got this kind of filing system in my head but I'm still not always sure which area to go to for the answer that person or it's still a lot to work through to where you kind of realize I'm looking for clues. What are they talking about and sometimes I'm watching something on telly like the news and I'll come away feeling quite frustrated or angry and when I talk it over with my wife usually she'll say no that wasn't what they meant, what they meant was. And it defuses me because I realize that I was way off track on my thinking. Other times, I feel like I've got a very strong intuition and somebody might be saying something but I realize they're not trustworthy. Even if I haven't recognized what's being said in the words, there is something about them that I'm able to pick up. So you try and live your life and combine these things to get you through.

Adam: I heard you talk in an interview on your website which is beautiful. I really like the page. You were talking about empathy and how it's not the autistic people that do not have empathy, they are not able to express it in the same way as polytropic people.

Dr. Wenn: I think at times we're almost over empathetic. We feel everything and we feel it intensely and it's too difficult. I've got friends who can't watch the news because it's too awful. We empathy tends to be a felt experience when I'm connected. So if there is no connection because there is no interest for example, it's harder to empathize. I also think typical people have learnt how to act as if they have empathy. So somebody loses a loved one to death and the person says something like I'm so sorry and they have no feeling about it at all but they know the right, seem to know the right way to respond. And sometimes somebody might say well how awful that must be and it's not necessarily empathetic or empathy for the other person. It's if it were to happen to them, they would feel terrible. If it was their son or something. And again, that is not actually empathy but it's classed as empathy. So yes, in autism empathy tends to be there when we're connected or tends to be for everything because we can't separate stuff and that's painful. So people will do their utmost to keep away from, they won't watch the news for example.

Adam: And moving away from unhappy things and sad things, what about humor? Is that another, I guess it must be a really difficult area as well. Sarcasm and things like that.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah this is interesting because I don't think of sarcasm as humor.

Adam: No, me neither (laughing)

Dr. Wenn: (laughing) yeah I think that I might find it difficult to get some of the jokes, some things on telly. That, that awful program where they take videos of people with mishaps you know. Someone falls into the wedding cake and everybody laughs. I can't understand that.

Adam: Ahh like Candid Camera yeah

Dr. Wenn: Yeah Candid Camera and Funny Home Movies or something it's called

Adam: That's it yeah

Dr. Wenn: Awful. I don't understand that but other perhaps slapstick is the expression for it. I don't understand that one but *Laurel & Hardy* and other things. You'll see autistic people laughing away at some of the very funny antics and then we might laugh when somebody is very angry and animated, they just look so funny. But we are failing to pick up on the fact that they've gone red in the face and their voice has gone higher because they're crocks but we might miss that but laugh when we should be apologizing for example. And I'll often use quite a bit of humor in my talks, but I actually don't recognize that I've said something funny. People laugh and I keep going. I've got their attention and it's good but I may not actually realize what they are laughing at.

Adam: Does that offend you if I mean they might be laughing because they really found it funny and they thought maybe you were intending to be funny. But would you get offended if they if they laughed

Dr. Wenn: Because I don't notice, there isn't the time to get offended. There is very little I get offended at to be honest. And I have no idea what embarrassment feels like which is uncomfortable for other members of my family. So I might be talking about something or other and you know my daughter will say Mum that's embarrassing. So, it's a bit difficult. So although yes I'm now a man, I'm fully transitioned, I'm a man mum and I haven't any sense of embarrassment. I don't have any difficulty with that, but other people might.

Adam: And so it's more their problem. They have to learn to deal with that and understand that rather than

Dr. Wenn: Yeah I think that you know as a world, as a society, especially western society, we're often that word you used earlier back there politically correct

which I had to, I'm not sure what it is. People are aware of being judged by others so they perhaps learn to put on an act or they learn how to be what they think other people want and unfortunately, I don't think that's crediting us as humans for the things we actually go through. We've learnt, to our detriment I think, to hide well. Other [14:16] because we need to talk about being depressed. We need to talk about failing. We need to talk about gender differences. We need to talk about sexuality issues. They shouldn't be hidden. They shouldn't be underground. But people do this as a way to protect from what they think is being judged by others cause they want acceptance and that's sad.

Adam: Feeling a community around you is very helpful as well to help you advance and learn new skills as well. Does it help to have communities of people, Aspies and Auties, people with asperger's and autism to come together and discuss things or

Dr. Wenn: You'd think it should but it's interesting because quite often, because we're very black and white, very literal and focused on our own interest, coming together as a community can be quite difficult. It's fraught with communication issues. We once had a gathering at the beginning of our youth group we formed for people on the spectrum in Mordenbrough, where I lived and when the guys came together they kind of sat in their own space with their backs towards each other without any idea how to relate. And I initially had to say these are the chairs for you guys to sit. Adam you can sit there, Joe you can sit there. Adam tell us about your video game and I had to encourage and find a common denominator if you like for everyone to come together and share. Within a couple of months, I didn't have to do that anymore. People were [16:06], they were themselves. You couldn't shut them up.

Adam: They felt relaxed.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah they were relaxed and they weren't judged and they could be themselves but initially it was quite difficult because we don't start a conversation with hello, how are you, what's your name, I am. It's, I might start a conversation with have you seen the latest Star Trek movie? And somebody, or whatever it is I'm interested in. So that's different to the way that typical people relate. So you've got to build up a community. But once you have that, we're loyal, we're committed, it's very difficult to find fault with somebody. Like we're great employees for example because we're on time, we're committed to the work we do as long as we're interested. No interest equals very little engagement to be honest. So interest is the key.

Adam: And is it difficult to gain independence or does that come the older you get

Dr. Wenn: Sometimes it is difficult to learn to be interdependent because of that issue with sharing and connecting with others. We tend to try and do everything on our own. The girls in particular you will find this true. They don't, they find it very difficult to accept support. So you've got to use that, what do they call reverse psychology stuff where you look as if you need their help rather than trying to help them.

Adam: The other way around yeah

Dr. Wenn: Yeah and then you're more likely to get support, get interest and cooperation. It's a bit like that with the teenagers I think too. So I have excellent friends, people I absolutely love and I'm totally committed to. But they are people who are open minded who are of the same, I don't know, we're soul mates really. There's a connection between us. But I might not have a vast majority of people that I relate to. So it would be a selected handful really.

Adam: Yeah. Is there support available now? Now with the you know modern technology, the internet, different types [18:28 overtalking] that was not available before?

Dr. Wenn: Yeah, yeah. For sure. Internet has completely changed the world as far as autism is concerned. Probably for the people who invented it anyway, where we are

Adam: Oh yeah Bill Gates, people like that.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah, yeah. Exactly. If you didn't have autism then you probably wouldn't have to the degree. It would have taken typical people a lot longer to get there because that focused ability, you can hone in on something and develop it. But it does mean you can relate across a computer screen. With keyboards and technology we don't have to have social skills. We don't have to have good eye contact, you don't have to try and work out someone's face so it opens doors for us. It's brilliant. I know that it can be misused but you can't tell me that being amongst ordinary other people that the internet isn't being misused either.

Adam: Of course, yeah

Dr. Wenn: Misuse and abuse each other outside in the world and also [19:32]. So you've got to be canny, you need to have, for children, parents need to monitor what their seeing and doing cause we'll believe all sorts of things which might not

be true. And we will learn how to access things that people might think that we won't get through that. But believe me, all autistic people are pretty clued up when it comes to technology so you've got to monitor that.

Adam: If people want to learn more about autism, are there places they can go? I guess the net is awash with loads of with useful links and documents, articles.

Dr. Wenn: Yeah.

Adam: Videos

Dr. Wenn: It certainly is. The UK, the NAS, National Autistic Society has a great website, lots and lots of information and connections to all sorts of other sites and places. My website, I hope, would have quite a bit that could lead people into exploring other things. There are, there are so many to be honest. The Autism America, there's lots of sites that would open doors for people. Again you just go search and go with what's popular and for real. I'm not saying this very well. You've got to check things out carefully but it's there.

Adam: And take out the information I guess that is if you're an autistic person or someone with Aspergers that is relevant to you as well.

Dr. Wenn: Yes and if you know I had a young friend who bought thousands of dollars worth in Australia. He got caught up in stuff on the internet. People would say would you like to buy this, he would say yes. That's that literal stuff. So there's that other side which is devastatingly difficult but for communication and joining with others and finding information the internet is great. It just has to be policed a little bit and adults who are wise and understanding can obviously stop that. But for those of us with autism sometimes it's not that easy.

Adam: Okay, I hope you enjoyed the interview with Dr. Wenn Lawson. I want to start by thanking Dr. Wenn for taking the time to be interviewed and for providing such useful information. You can find out more about Dr. Wenn on the website www.mugsy.org. There you can also find a link to his new book Older Adults and Autism Spectrum Conditions. If you want to attend a conference or workshop with Dr. Wenn, please see the tour dates section on the same website. I'll finish by leaving you with a quote from the interview. It's not that I suffer from autism, it's that I suffer from a world that doesn't understand autism. Thank you and until next time

Female Announcer: Thank you so much for joining us on this episode. Please subscribe to get instant access to new episodes.

