Robert Naseef: Autism in the Family: Caring and Coping Together

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There is nothing more captivating to me than a person describing their journey becoming a parent. Unlike more traditional books I've read about autism, Robert A. Naseef captivated me into the world of their family and what occurred to them throughout the years. I find it unique to read a book that weaves personal and professional side by side. The exploration of what happened to Robert's son parallel to what has happened to his family. The book is staying true to its title "*Autism in the family: Caring and coping TOGETHER*" which provides a spectrum of issues presented to families with a child on the spectrum. Throughout the book Robert A. Naseef is making gentle and tender unfolding of what it is like to have autism in the family as a unit. Even the titles given to the various chapters have a soft tone to them as one would expect to come from a parent.

Each chapter begins with a quote from various people throughout history which all pertain to children and parents. It sets the stage to what the chapter is about and how one can benefit from it. In each chapter there are personal stories told and experiences shared. One of the best parts of the book for me is the last chapter which ends the book on a positive note of "*Reflections on Peace of Mind and Happiness*". I appreciated the subtle attention given in this book to males as there is a ratio difference between males and females on the spectrum with unique challenges for each gender and for individuals who identifies as transgenders. The book transition from focusing on the child to discussing parents, siblings and their interactions with professionals as well as the impact on the family unit. The book gives some attention to the importance of social support and friends in the journey

of life while caring for a child with autism. My two favorite chapters are "*Surfing Your Stress: One Wave at a Time*" and "*Ordinary couples, Challenged Relationships: Another Developmental Process*". In the chapter about "*Surfing Your Stress: One Wave at a Time*" I appreciated the attention to the basic functions and tasks on ones' day, such as: eating, sleeping, toileting, etc. Those basic functions are in many ways stressful for parents of neurotypical children so emphasizing them in this book again and relating it to parental stress is significant and different.

In 2003 I was involved in a qualitative study with my mentor, Dr. Ernst VanBergeijk. We interviewed parents of children diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome. We were not completely surprised by the majority of women present as participants. We only had one male participant. In the chapter "*Ordinary couples, Challenged Relationships: Another Developmental Process*" Naseef is providing both male and female perspectives on relationships in the shadow of autism in the family. I always believed that it is rather challenging to bring both perspectives together however the author did an extraordinary job in providing these perspectives. The positivity of the approach taken in this book is clear from the dedication, which stated: *To differently—abled, differently—minded, a unique people of all ages and their families* to the last chapter on the positive reflections on peace of mind and happiness of the book. The author also weaved and incorporated the life cycle and discussed the family cycle from diagnoses to adulthood as well. Whether you are a parent, sibling or a family member, please know that this book is an expected and refreshing view of autism in the family and should be in considered a permanent addition to one's library.

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Compliance with ethical standards

Ethical approval This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.