



My Autism - Post Diagnosis Today

by **David K Williams**

Today, it has now been over 7 years since I received my late diagnosis of Autism at the age of nearly 47, and I can say it has been a very positive thing. For a start, I have now been able to access Autism support groups, meeting many with similar experiences and people who understand the condition.

Having more time on my hands to do this and to slow down sure has helped a lot too. But that is only a small part of the positives:

- I have gained a much better sense of self than before, I can understand how I've reacted and still do to some things, to what causes my triggers and meltdowns and I've been able to detect the signs that cause them, making it easier for me to adapt to and prepare for situations.
- I can speak more confidently and with much less fear of judgement, harsh criticism, mocking ridicule and receiving negative labels. I find I can talk about many more things and not feel ashamed of who I am.

Slowly, I am starting to learn about and discover the real me, although I have still a long way to go; I no longer have to live a lie about who I am and being what people dictate me to be.

At the same time, I have gained a greater understanding of Autistic adults in their many varied forms.

My aim is to help make a better, more positive future for us, especially older late diagnosed ones like me, who were forced to mask for so many years, using my experiences to help whilst I still self-discover.

There is a very long way to go, and new barriers are still likely to appear, but if I can play a small part in improving things for the better, I'll be very satisfied.

David K Williams