

## **Joshua Adkins – November 2011**

The thing I most want you to know is that when I type or write with Pip it is my work not Pips. I need you to believe that its mine! It is very important to me. People's belief in me helps me to keep achieving.

My strengths are Math, spelling and writing. Bouncing on my big ball, jumping, having internet time and listening to my music are activities I find fun and relaxing.

Trusting new people is hard for me and can take some time. Getting people to know, understand and accept me helps with the trust.

Once I trust you, we could be friends. I don't understand people. People disturb me from my world. Playing with others I just don't get, it is stressful. I don't want to play their games and I don't want them to play my games. I want friends. Not to play with but so I know that I can trust them and they understand me and so they won't laugh at me.

Not knowing what people are thinking of me is very stressful and can make me very worried. So does teachers, other parents and children with their own opinions or comments about me and what I should be doing.

My day can go bad rather quickly some days. When I arrive at school I have my whole day planned in my head like a movie. It helps me from stressing over what might happen and how will I cope. When there is a change in the day I can't cope as it's not in my movie for the day. The movie shows each subject like maths. My maths movie shows me that I don't know what the work will be. It's a bit like a file with a subject that I can open and find a solution to most problems. Its people like Mr J and Pip that help me make more files. They teach me how to cope.

Mum not leaving school when the bell rings puts me into a meltdown that I have no control over. Mum doesn't belong at school once the bell goes.

There are some days that I can't type or write very well because my head is too cloudy. On days like this it is best for me to do things on my computer or iPad.

Controlling my anger is so hard. I get angry when I am frustrated or confused. Sometimes I just need to bite, hit or squeeze someone. I mainly hurt Pip. I even can even hurt myself. I am trying to communicate to you that something is wrong or that I'm not coping. I need to physically release my frustration or it builds up inside me like a pressure cooker about to explode. It helps the anger to pass quicker. I don't want to hurt people and feel bad after. Pip is teaching new ways of releasing my frustration and getting me to show my emotions in another way. I have a ball I use for the physical release and I type my feelings. I am still learning this strategy.

I find it hard not being able to do all the things like my class. I feel different and don't like it. I went to camp with my class and did all that they did. It was the best week of my life. I felt the gap between me being different and my class close a lot.

It upsets me that I can't talk like my friend's. I have Beck and Pip to help me with this. I can say a few words now. I need you to listen to what I say because otherwise you will miss my words and at times other words too. I type the rest of my words on my computer or iPad.

Changes that happen around the school like new classroom, library and car parks being built are very stressful for me. I can cope better if I can watch the changes happening. I liked how Pip got me to write a report of the new classroom and car parks. It helped me to be able to accept these changes.

Change = stress.

Changes in the teachers around school like Mrs Barkle leaving - my favourite teacher at the time, Mr McMillan the principal leaving and Mr Hantz starting. I was highly stressed at these times. Mrs Barkle - who would replace her and would I like her and would she understand me and Autism. Mr McMillan was nice to me I was worried that Mr Hantz would understand. He very quickly put my mind at ease. Showing Mr Hantz my good work and knowing what he thinks of me keeps the stress away.

I take what people say literally. I often get confused, upset and anxious over what someone has said. Please explain to me what you mean and don't use sayings like "take a seat" because to me that is telling me I have to take a seat somewhere. Very strange. Say "sit down".

I get very anxious when other adults come into the classroom. I wrote this real life account of what happens in my head and to my body to help you understand.

*Strange people just walked into class and my heart starts to race. Boom, Boom, Boom. I hold my breath and my body goes tight, very tight like my skin is two sizes too small for me.*

*I stop working as my anxious brain takes over. "What are they doing here?", "Are they going to take my Pip away?", "Will they know what facilitation is and understand it's my work?", "What are they thinking?", "What can I do to make them leave?"*

*Moments like this send my world into chaos. Why can't my world be simple?*

*They don't understand what I go through when I have a change of teacher. I know I have Pip but my other solid rock is missing. Pip and my teacher are my solid rock because they keep my world stable. They keep me calm and stop me being scared.*

*I know I can't stop people coming into my class or a change of teacher but I have learnt to communicate my feelings. This is to try and let people know what I go through.*

*A big balloon being let go and sailing through the air getting smaller and smaller as the pressure is released is what I feel when the strange people leave the classroom. Ah Relief!*

Meeting people's expectation of me is one of the challenge's I face. When I first started school lots of people wanted me to do more than I was capable of. They didn't know me. That is the next challenge, getting people to know, understand and accept me. The biggest challenge is not knowing what people are thinking of me and if I have done my work well. The constant fear that Pip will be taken away from me is a minute by minute challenge.

From what I was like when I started school, doing ABA and no class work, to now about to finish primary school, being able to do most of the class work is a huge change in my life. This amazes not only my parents, Pip and school but me too. I can now say a few words and type the rest. People's belief in me helps me to keep achieving.

I am a loving child who would love to be free of autism but this is who I am, I can't change that. I am a person under the autism. Remember that.

new things.

Teaching that

pitched

learning +

I like my way but

Workshop

pitched

hard work

if good for me

Maths

part