



Asperger Love: Searching for Romance When You're Not Wired to Connect

Amy Harmon

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Jack didn't really like kissing. To him it was just mashing your face against someone else's. Kirsten didn't like being caressed. Like all couples, they argued, but in their case, lacking an inborn intuition about what goes on inside other people's heads, small disagreements about subjects like how to chop cauliflower spiraled out of control. Such is love between two people with Asperger syndrome—Aspies, as they often call themselves.

In "Asperger Love," Pulitzer Prize-winning "New York Times" correspondent Amy Harmon chronicles with humor and pathos the ups and downs of a 19-year-old boy in western Massachusetts and his 18-year-old girlfriend as they work to figure out how to live together. The e-book expands on an award-winning article that was published in the "Times" in December 2011.

Amy Harmon watches and listens and writes in novelistic detail as Jack and Kirsten struggle to master romance and intimacy the way other kids struggle with math. Because of what is sometimes described as "mindblindness," many parents, teachers and mental health professionals have assumed that individuals with Asperger syndrome are incapable of, or indifferent to, intimate relationships. The therapies and school programs designed to help them as the condition became better identified have focused instead on academic success, forging friendships and finding employment.

Yet as they reach adulthood, the quest of many in this first generation diagnosed under a broader definition of autism is turning out to be the same as that of many of their nonautistic peers: to find someone to love, who will love them back. With one in 88 American children estimated to have an autistic disorder, how they fare at that goal, experts say, is sure to figure into the prevalence of symptoms that are not part of autism but often come to coexist with it: depression, anxiety, and loneliness.

In "Asperger Love," parents and friends of those with the syndrome will learn what to expect of the Aspergian children in their lives. And every reader will discover, again, what it is to be human.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy Harmon covers the impact of science and technology on American life for "The New York Times." She has won two Pulitzer Prizes, one in 2008, for her series "The DNA Age," and the other as part of a team for "How Race Is Lived in America," in 2001. Harmon has also won the Casey Medal for excellence in reporting on children and families, in 2012, and the National Academies of Science Communication Award, in 2011. Harmon studied American culture at the University of Michigan and lives in New York City with Scott Matthews and their 8-year-old daughter, Sasha.

PRAISE FOR "ASPERGER LOVE"

"A wonderfully intimate look into the difficulties that people on the autism spectrum have forming romantic relationships. Required reading for couples, parents, teachers, and counselors." —Temple Grandin, author of

"Thinking in Pictures" and "The Autistic Brain"

"In "Asperger Love," Amy Harmon narrates the way autism impinges on all social relations, even among autistic people. In doing so, she breaks down the myth that autistic people are emotionally vacant. As she narrates the courage it takes for them to enter the arena of love, she lets us understand the resilience, the richness, and the deep humanity of the autistic experience, and she does so in moving, gripping prose." — Andrew Solomon, author of "Far from the Tree," winner of the 2012 National Book Critics Circle Award

"I feel richer having read this story; here's a human possibility I had never imagined. You root for Jack and Kirsten—and for talented Amy Harmon, whose empathy and attentiveness open a door to a faraway place in our own backyard." —Ted Conover, author of "Newjack: Guarding Sing Sing" and winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award

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Ann Gross:

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Thomas Jones:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? May be reading a book is usually option to fill your free of charge time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of publication that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the e-book untitled Asperger Love: Searching for Romance When You're Not Wired to Connect can be great book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

Christina Lazarus:

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