

One Voice, Many Countries
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I am a 22 years old autistic person who still cannot speak a word. My head is working. I throw in a word by typing it. I got this skill from Sinikka. I cheered up after that. Sinikka was my only word interpreter at first. Then my old man joined me daily. Now I often bandy words about.

I think it would be awful to be without words. The remnant of an idea would bring tightness to the mind. Being unable to speak doesn't make our heads empty. Always remember we poor wretches are not the same as jabberers who can speak...

I think I was always treated fairly. Never made to feel ashamed. Have always been in a position of trust as part of the family even if I am a poor wretch. I was trusted to get words out of my mouth. Always treated as an equal even if I was incapable of speech. I was told things in a fair way. The poor wretch's mind understood that.

Belief in me wonderful in school and at home. Fire of word resolved everything, but a gesture of appreciation on the dark side is the most important thing. Everyone's faith in me was wonderful.

Father's faith the best. I often wept over it. Mother always helped. My old man told me stories in the sauna. Taught me to exchange words. Mother always a darling woman spoke of her concern for me. Clever mother. Brother Ville never felt ashamed of me. To me he was a wonderful brother. A clever helper on the word path.

To my mind it is important to believe in us poor wretches. It is important that the world help us on our terms. Always ask us about things first. We'll tell you. Do not disparage us all the time. You helpers often speak badly of us. Do you feel good about that? We have feelings for sure. Learn to communicate in bird speak, then you'll know how we feel. It sure isn't fun not being able to understand anything without help. Then a jabberer is certainly a poor wretch.

If we do not get words out when we are small a typing machine helps. It releases distress in our heads. It is the same wretch behind the commas no matter whether it

is a spoken or a written word. The point is to understand that the words need to get out from our heads. Picture slips do not work for everyone. Pointing and regular words are the best for me as we wretches have ideas. The language connecting wretches and jabberers is only poor.

Use ordinary words. Don't slur them. We feel diminished jabber on among yourselves. We lose any interest in helping you. Is it fun to make disparaging conversation with a cripple? Because the mind works but defends aloud with a word. Give us the power to scribble words. Then you'll see how you have disparaged the poor wretches. It seems to me that you consider it fun to disparage us in some way. *We are* just 'those poor wretches who amount to nothing. Just a nuisance.

I think autistic people take their toll on you, the decision-makers. Ordinary people sit there nonplussed. Help for the autistic is lacking. Our intelligence level is sometimes higher than yours. Not always easy to be in a family with an autistic member. Your complicated stunts, computers and the like are fine. You make a commotion. You forget the facts. Autistic people are also human. Speak to us normally. We're not lacking a brain. all that's missing is being able to exchange words. Chatty people who address us normally and word machines help us. No heated use of pictures. More time for us to write.

Showing love is important for us. Not being outcasts. Those who are loved by the family cope well. It happens now that a great many autistic people are beaten into a corner in school and at home. We poor wretches are alone all the time. Not human persons. Autistic people suffer pain. Alone even if their brain is working. In the dark one is alone. Give them help, ordinary people! For them the pain is intense beyond words. Shouting thrusts to the surface of the autistic person. Head has an idea but cannot get it out intelligently.

Now listen, *helpers* a bit lacking in means and skills. More schooling for helpers. No switching of instructors. Autistic people must be able to get a dependable helper for a year at a time. Trust in us is important for autistic people.

I can say that things are going well for me. Sinikka has been my helper for a good while. We bandy words with my old man quite a bit. Now my old man, has become a great help to me as an autistic person. Brother Ville and mother are a help. I am a satisfied lucky fellow now. I try to be a good helper for other autistic people. I emerged from the darkness because people waffled to me and I was considered normal. I wasn't an oddball in my family, damn it! A speechless

member as good as the rest, now listen, people weren't ashamed of me. I've been part of it just like the rest. It's been great. Always has been a lot of trust in me. No fussing around. I have been shown love always. A wonderful thing. Even if I am autistic.

Now listen, nobody wants to be born autistic. And yet we are the people of ideas that's for sure. The "poor wretches" have given the world a lot of fine things. Then they've been good. But since the poor wretches need help signals to write, then jabberers' brains place an obstacle in our way. Discuss and reflect on how many phrase making, music-playing, old painters there have been among us poor wretches. And how many of us may still turn into such. I don't bet that all will. But dispel the darkness around us poor wretches. Take us for real people. Don't sideline us. It's hard enough to exist. Why must that feeling be made worse?