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November 2020



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NOVEMBER - 2020



NEW MEMBER

AMISHA ARORA



World Diabetes Day

Jennifer Brooks

On November 14th, World Diabetes Day will be upon us again, and awareness for the condition is greatly needed. It is shocking that society still believe that diabetes is strictly caused by eating too much sugar, not exercising, and just generally living an unhealthy lifestyle. Whilst it can, in some cases, be caused by unhealthy habits, diabetes is so much more complicated than this. Here at Unity for Equality, we are committed to dispelling some of the myths about the disease. Keep reading to find out more.



Firstly, let's start by explaining what diabetes is. According to Diabetes UK, it is a serious, potentially life-threatening illness in which your body doesn't produce enough insulin; a hormone that allows glucose (sugar) to enter our cells, and give our bodies energy. Therefore, sufferers constantly have to monitor their blood sugar levels, and make sure they're in the normal range. If they don't do this, they could end up with additional health conditions further down the line, such as kidney problems and eye damage. They could even end up in a coma if their glucose levels are too high or too low. However, as serious as the illness is, it is also fairly easy to manage with daily insulin injections or

medications. As a result, most people with diabetes are able to live fairly normal lives, in spite of the enormous responsibility that their illness brings.

There are also many different types of diabetes, but the main ones are type 1 and type 2. According to Diabetes UK, the former is where your body produces no insulin whatsoever. As a result, sufferers have to test their blood sugar regularly, including before and after meals. This is to ensure they're not too high (also known as hyperglycaemia, or 'hypers') or too low (also known as hypoglycaemia, or 'hypos'). If a type 1 diabetic is experiencing a hypo, they may have to have a sugary snack or drink in order to get their blood sugars back to a normal level. However, if they are experiencing a hyper, they will have to inject themselves with insulin to lower their blood sugar levels. Type 2 diabetics also have to watch out for hypos and hypers. However, they might not have to monitor their levels as often as type 1 diabetics, or inject themselves. This is because their pancreas may still produce insulin, but just not as much as someone without diabetes. Nonetheless, this doesn't mean that their condition is any less serious. Even though they might not have to manage their condition on a minute to hourly basis in the same way as a type 1 diabetic might, they still have to monitor their illness, so they don't end up with complications further down the line.

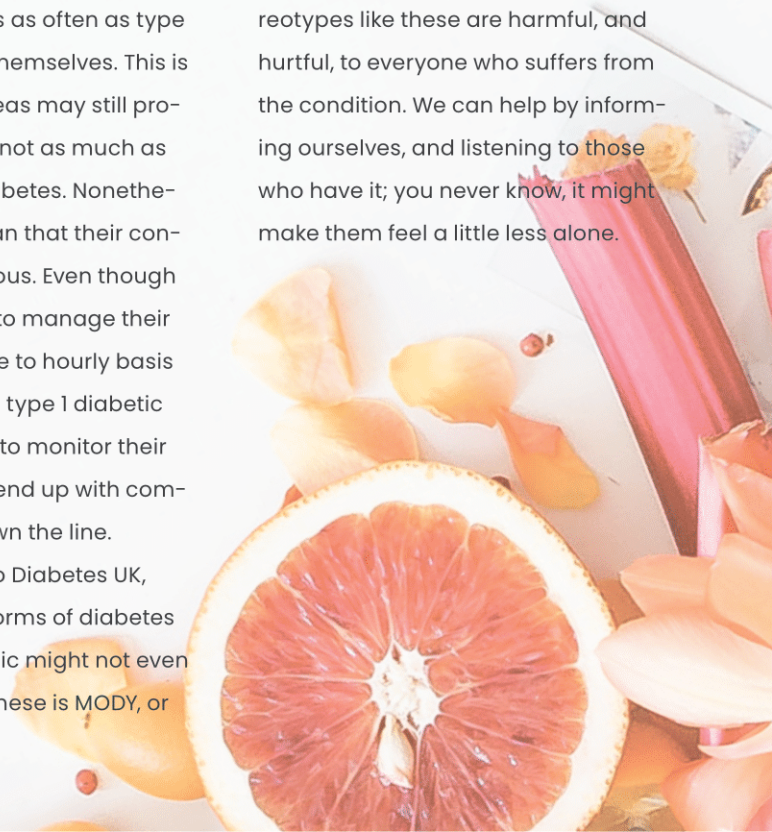
According to Diabetes UK, there are also rarer forms of diabetes that the general public might not even be aware of. One of these is MODY, or

Maturity Onset Diabetes of the Young. This is a genetic disorder that is similar to type 2 diabetes. It affects 1-2% of people with diabetes, and usually



is diagnosed before the age of 25. Another is gestational diabetes, which occurs during pregnancy. However, there are also many other sub-types which all affect sufferers in slightly different, yet equally challenging ways.

Diabetes is a complex condition, which isn't always fully appreciated. In fact, it is often trivialized; we are forever making jokes with friends about how we need to lay off the sweets, so we don't 'catch' it. But stereotypes like these are harmful, and hurtful, to everyone who suffers from the condition. We can help by informing ourselves, and listening to those who have it; you never know, it might make them feel a little less alone.



WORLD TELEVISION DAY

Abheek Singh

On November 21st, World Television Day will be upon us again. The day was made, by the United Nations, to celebrate one of the most significant technological advancements in history: the humble television. From when they were invented, to now, TVs remain to be the largest source of video consumption in the world, providing us with countless hours of programs, sports, and movies. So, even though they are an often-overlooked part of our living room furniture, it's still just as important for us to celebrate what a fabulous invention the TV really is.

First of all, let's take a moment to appreciate the man who invented the television: Philo Farnsworth. Farnsworth always had an interest in science and electricity, and during high school, he developed a fascination with coding and moving pictures. However, aged just 21, he put his skills to use when he invented the world's first all-electric TV. This was revolutionary; it was the first time more than one household could simultaneously view the same moving picture. Since then, the television has been a big hit, with billions of people being able to tune in to major political events, and, more recently, receive updates on the latest Coronavirus news.

Nonetheless, it's not just politics that television gives us access to; it also brings families together, and recently, this has become more important than ever. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are spending more time than ever before, indoors. Thus, the television shows we've been watching have not only provided us with some well-needed relief from everything that has been going on, they have also given us an excuse to spend time with each other, and switch off from our fast-paced lives. Nothing is more important than our health, and our peace of mind, and taking some time to slow down, and watch re-runs of Friends has made a world of difference.

World Television Day allows us to appreciate, and celebrate, the massive impact that TV has brought to our lives. Although some may argue that watching too much television can make us sluggish, disengaged, or even lazy, it has undoubtedly shaped our communities. So, when you turn your TV on, on November 21st, make sure to appreciate the magnitude of this invention, and be grateful for it. I know I will.



CELEBRATING

Thanksgiving

Abheek Singh

It's November, and Thanksgiving is just around the corner. The holiday is known for its turkey lunches, and its emphasis on spending time with our families. This being said, it might have to be celebrated slightly differently this year, due to the pandemic. So, let's explore how we can still celebrate Thanksgiving, even in unprecedented times.

First of all, it might be wise to lower your expectations this year. Due to the Coronavirus situation, getting together with too many family members, outside your household, is a very risky move. As a result, we may not be able to have the big family dinner that we've been looking forward to all year. But this doesn't mean we can't celebrate! It might just mean that we may have to lower our portion sizes if extended family aren't coming over. (Although leftovers are never a bad thing!) Or, if you're missing your aunts, uncles or grandparents, you could always Facetime or Skype them, whilst you're enjoying your meal, so it will be like they're at the table with you. It won't be the same, but it might be the next best thing.

Nonetheless, if you are able to, you might decide to have a small family gathering this Thanksgiving.

If you are to do this, be sure to take extra precautions, to ensure that you, and your loved ones, are safe. This involves limiting the number of people you are meeting up with, as well as ensuring that you disinfect things other people have touched, if they come to your house. Furthermore, if you decide to travel to see family members, make sure to look at travel restrictions, get a flu shot before you travel, and be extra cautious of people around you by wearing masks, and regularly washing your hands, or applying hand sanitizer.

Furthermore, with Thanksgiving comes Black Friday. Like previous years, it's understandable that you'd want to make the most of the sales. However, you can still get those deals without putting yourself and others in danger. If you go to a store, use contactless payments if you can, and be sure to stay two feet apart from the other guests. Or, better still, shop online instead to avoid the crowds altogether.

So, with Thanksgiving coming up, make sure to have fun, even if you have to take precautions. Although it might be different this year, you can still enjoy the holiday.



WHAT THE INFAMOUS COLOR PINK MEANS TO WOMEN

Federica Soccal

Although we have been fighting for gender equality for years, the color pink is still holding women back. It has been this way since the day we were born, as shown by the color of our baby grows. Although baby boys are also dressed in a specific color, blue, in order to distinguish them from girls, men are allowed to grow up, and not be bound by that color as they mature. Nonetheless, girls and women's products remain pink, and this is shown everywhere we look; from our clothes, to our stationary, to even our body wash. Some of us may try to reclaim it, in order to regain some control, whereas others will avoid it like the plague. However, this leaves us wondering, will pink ever go back to just being a color, or will it always be associated with females?

Interestingly pink's association with femininity is actually quite recent. In fact, in the 1800s, boys and girls were dressed in unisex clothes that reflected their age rather than their gender.

However, in the 20th century, manufacturers attempted to sell more children's and infant's clothes by color-coding them. At first, pink was chosen for boys, as it was thought to be a stronger color. On the other hand, blue was chosen for girls, as it was thought to be daintier. However, as we are aware, this later changed. Although it is unclear as to why this was, some think it is due to the 18th century paintings, "Blue Boy," by Thomas Gainsborough, and "Pinkie," by Thomas Lawrence. The latter depicted a boy dressed in blue, and the former portrayed a girl in pink attire. The paintings were given a lot of acclaim after they were purchased by the American millionaire, Henry Huntington. The popularity that this brought forward could have contributed to the fact that even today, baby boys and girls are still segregated by the colors blue and pink, respectively.

This trend was further solidified in the 1980s, due to the invention of prenatal testing, where parents could find out the gender of their baby before they were born. This led to retailers capitalizing on this, as they realized they could sell specific clothes tailored for each gender, so parents could pre-plan

before their baby was born. Furthermore, we even have gender reveal parties nowadays, where parents can reveal their baby's gender to their friends and family with cakes or balloons, which further reinforces the "pink is for girls, blue is for boys" rule.

Nonetheless, since the 1960s, the women's liberation movement have believed that dressing young girls in stereotypically "girly" clothing would limit their opportunities for success. As a result, today pink is often avoided by women, who think that wearing it will make them look frilly or incapable.

Furthermore, I've also learnt that men too tend to shun the color pink, as they think that it may lessen their masculinity, as it is so often associated with feminine fragility. For instance, recently, at a dinner, I met a man who was wearing a pink shirt. He proceeded to reassure me that he wasn't gay, as if that would be my first assumption. This association is ridiculous, and it hurts everyone; men, who get bullied for liking a color that isn't traditionally masculine, and women who feel that if they wear pink, they'll always be treated as inferior, because of the connotations that the color has.

Little girls are taught that they can be anything, but not if they act in a traditionally feminine manner. They are taught that in order to be powerful, they need to reject the color pink, which they've been bound by, and instead adopt a more masculine way of doing things. Nonetheless, even when we want to distance ourselves from gendered items, we can't, because we'd be denying who we are, even though from an early age we've been taught that who we are is silly and unnecessary.

This seems to be a never-ending drama, with traditionally feminine products not being enough for men, or modern women. However, while second-wave feminism considered pink as childish, fourth-wave feminism is reclaiming pink from its sexist connotations, to empower the modern feminist. If we start to treat pink as simply a color, born out of a marketing strategy to sell more girl's baby clothes, it will return to be so. Change should be determined by people, not marketing strategies, and it starts with you.

Autism and COVID-19: Ways to Cope

Jennifer Brooks



For many of us on the autistic spectrum, the outside world can be a confusing place. However, with the right help and support, many of us live full and productive lives. This was until the Coronavirus pandemic occurred. For most people, coping with COVID-19 has been challenging, but for those of us autistic individuals who already struggle to make sense of the world around us, it has been almost unbearable. This being said, although it is perfectly reasonable for us to be struggling, there are always things that we can do to make things a bit easier. Keep reading to find out some tips on how to make the situation just a little bit more bearable.

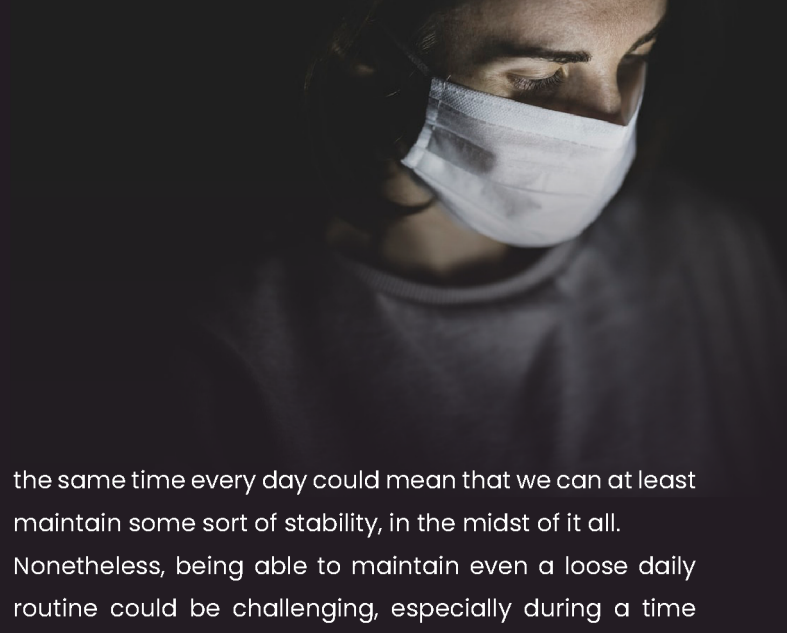
For many of us with autism, keeping a routine helps to keep our anxiety levels at bay. After all, it can be exhausting trying to negotiate with unpredictable conversations, and social situations; especially as they don't come as naturally to us as they do to other people. As a result, maintaining a clear routine can give us some sort of control. This being said, because of the unpredictability of our current situation, the routines that we have lived with for years have suddenly been thrown into chaos. This being said, there are still things we can do. Even if the rules about lockdown and self-isolation are constantly changing, making sure we go to bed and eat meals at

the same time every day could mean that we can at least maintain some sort of stability, in the midst of it all.

Nonetheless, being able to maintain even a loose daily routine could be challenging, especially during a time when everything is so stressful. Due to this, being able to complete even small tasks, like showering and eating, could be overwhelming for anyone on the spectrum; especially during the Coronavirus pandemic. However, there are plenty of tips circulating the internet on ways to better cope with executive dysfunction issues.

For instance, the blogger, *Autistic Mama*, suggests on building on small habits, rather than routines. This is especially because routines tend to have multiple components to them. Habits, on the other hand, focus on 1 or 2 concrete steps, which makes the task at hand feel more doable. For instance, if taking a shower feels like too big of a task because of all the steps it takes to do it, then simplify it; you could use 2-in-1 shampoo and conditioner, so that you only have to lather and rinse once instead of twice. It may seem small, but it could make a massive difference.

However, I think the most important advice I can give you, regardless of whether you're autistic or not, is just to be kind to yourself. The world is a scary, strange and confusing place at the minute, and it's natural that anyone would be struggling to come to terms with it. So, let yourself feel whatever it is you're feeling, and then get proactive, and come up with a plan on how to get yourself through this. It'll get easier, I promise.



New Merch!

Check out the new merch we just dropped!



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