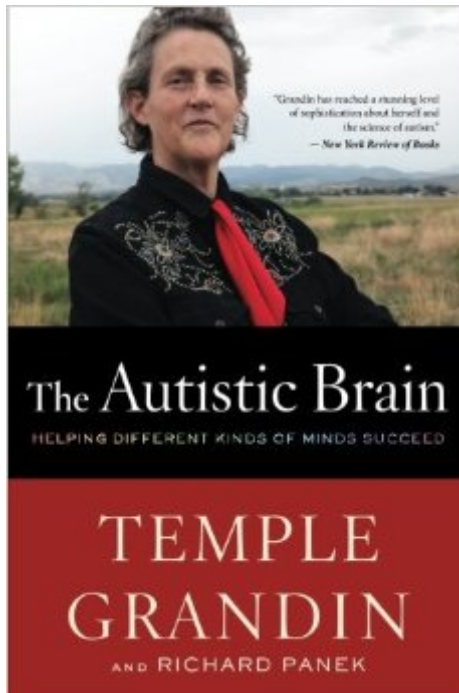


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# The Autistic Brain: Helping Different Kinds Of Minds Succeed



## Synopsis

“The right brain has created the right book for right now.” —Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Temple Grandin may be the most famous person with autism, a condition that affects 1 in 88 children. Since her birth in 1947, our understanding of it has undergone a great transformation, leading to more hope than ever before that we may finally learn the causes of and treatments for autism. Weaving her own experience with remarkable new discoveries, Grandin introduces the advances in neuroimaging and genetic research that link brain science to behavior, even sharing her own brain scan to show which anomalies might explain common symptoms. Most excitingly, she argues that raising and educating kids on the autism spectrum must focus on their long-overlooked strengths to foster their unique contributions. The Autistic Brain brings Grandin’s singular perspective into the heart of the autism revolution. “[Grandin’s] most insightful work to date . . . The Autistic Brain is something anyone could benefit from reading, and I recommend it to anyone with a personal or professional connection to autism or neurological difference.” —John Elder Robison, author of Look Me in the Eye “The Autistic Brain can both enlighten readers with little exposure to autism and offer hope and compassion to those who live with the condition.” —Scientific American

## Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Mariner Books; Reprint edition (April 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0544227735

ISBN-13: 978-0544227736

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (308 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Very well written text on autism and brain science. The collaboration between Grandin, probably the world’s best known individual with high functioning autism, and Panek, a well regarded science writer, was a smart move for this book. While I have not read a previous work by Grandin, as a

parent with a child diagnosed with moderate level autism I have frequently read about her and have seen enough interviews of her that I could hear her voice as I made my way through this text. Out of necessity, I have read a high number of books and research papers associated with autism, and the vast insight that Grandin shares from her own experience is valuable, as is what she shares about brain science and the opportunities she has had throughout the years to participate in groundbreaking research that included scans of her own brain. These two topics are interwoven throughout the book, and I agree with other reviewers here that this book probably has a wider audience than what the authors may have originally surmised. However, because I have read so much with regard to autism, potential readers of this book should be aware that the criticisms from autistic readers that Grandin mentions in this book about her past assertions with regard to how "thinking in pictures" is a common trait across autistic individuals, might cease but be redirected toward the fact that Grandin heavily concentrates on high functioning autism, not the entire spectrum. The DSM-5 may no longer include different degrees of autism, but even Grandin explains her reservations about DSM diagnoses. Potential readers just need to keep in mind that the vast majority of her focus here is on those with high functioning autism like herself.

*\*The Autistic Brain: Thinking Across The Spectrum\** is hands down *\*brilliant.\** Every parent and teacher of an autistic child should get a copy of this book and read it with highlighter in hand. In fact, Grandin has written a book that will help teenage autistic children understand their differences and *\*abilities.\** And therein lies its brilliance. The chapter called "Lighting Up the Autistic Brain" asks the question what does an autistic brain look like -- and is it different from a brain that has suffered trauma/injury? Grandin takes us to Schneider's Pittsburgh lab, where HDFT technology is literally lighting up those differences. For those of us with brain injuries, HDFT can illuminate which fibers are damaged and how many. But, as Schneider tells us, the autistic brain is *\*not\** damaged. He says: "we're looking at anomalous growth, be it genetic, be it developmental, etc., within that process." In other words, the autistic brain is not the product of trauma. It is not damaged. It's *\*different.\** I'm still pondering the profundity of this concept and how the book leads us to examine the autistic differences of being. *\*The Autistic Brain\** is part memoir and part scientific exploration of the multiple differences of the autistic brain. Don't be but off by the science part of it. Temple Grandin writes in a way that is uncomplicated and direct. She makes sense of a very complex subject. (Her explanation of the "kinds" of autism is one of the best I've ever read.) Because she lives the differences inherent in autism, we come to see those differences and respect them. Grandin calls these different ways of thought Picture Thinking, Word/Fact Thinking, and Pattern

Thinking. In the margin of my copy, I wrote: The theory of multiple intelligences for people with autism. Right on!

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