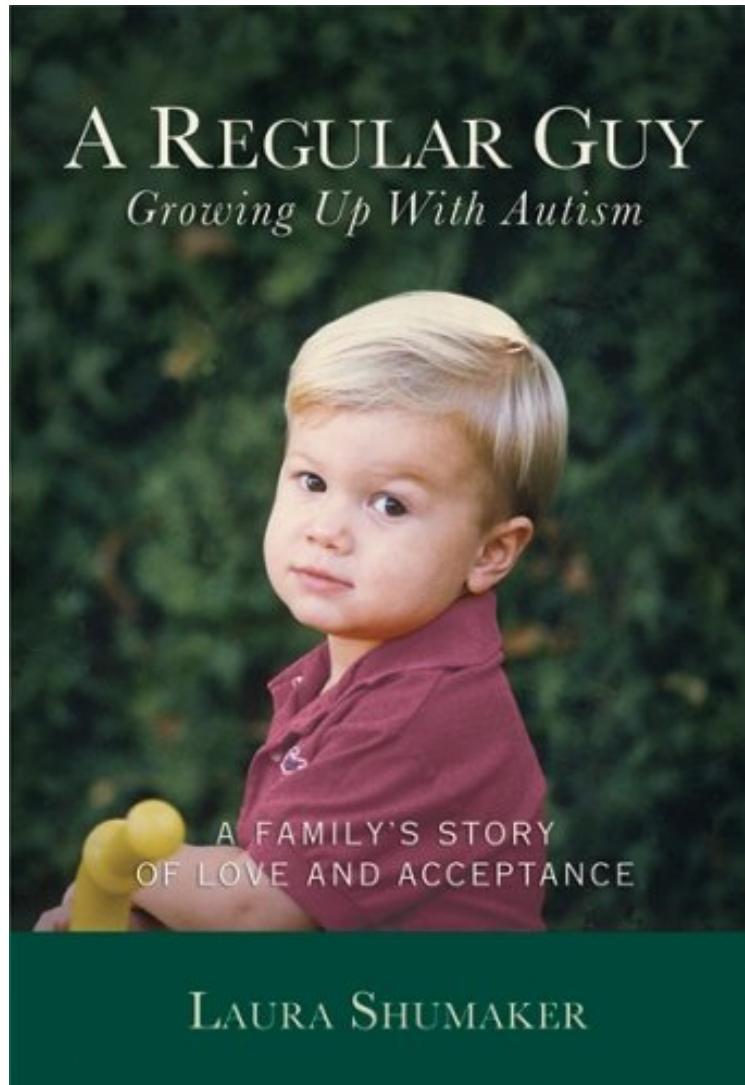


[Read now] A REGULAR GUY: GROWING UP WITH AUTISM (English Edition)

## A REGULAR GUY: GROWING UP WITH AUTISM (English Edition)

Von Laura Shumaker, Terri Hinte, Linda Kalin  
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Von Laura Shumaker, Terri Hinte, Linda Kalin : A REGULAR GUY: GROWING UP WITH AUTISM (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A REGULAR GUY: GROWING UP WITH AUTISM (English Edition):

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Across the Universe - Fitting in a Piece of the Puzzle Von BeatleBangs1964 On May 22, 1986 when Matthew Shumaker was born, the world was inching closer towards tolerance and understanding of autism. Matthew showed autistic behavior

from infancy. He did not socialize with peers; played with spools of recording tapes; loved drains and spinning the wheels of toy vehicles and had delayed language development. "Words are flying out like endless rain into a paper cup; they slither while, they pass, they slip away across the universe." -- Beatles 1970 His brother Andy, born May 17, 1988 was Matthew's social opposite. A mediator and peacemaker from toddlerhood, Andy supported and defended his older brother from cruel peers and misguided strangers. He understood Matthew's placement in special needs classes and often acted as Matthew's social interpreter. Many of the exchanges Laura Shumaker had with Andy are heartwarming; it is clear to see that Andy was blessed with the gift of empathy and compassion from the start. Their younger brother John, born in 1992, would follow in Andy's footsteps developmentally. Matthew was desperate and determined to fit in socially. As a child, he would ask repetitive questions about which states and how many airports people visited. He would often make blunt comments about people's appearance and no amount of coaching and explaining appeared to register. On one occasion, he practically had a sitter leave in tears because he kept commenting about her weight and what she ate. "Thoughts meander like a restless wind inside a letter box. They tumble blindly as they make their way across the universe." -- Beatles, 1970 Matthew, ever socially challenged would sneak off the property on his bike to try to meet with other kids. When he was 14 (this would have been 1999-00 and not March of 2002 as was recorded in the book), he was involved in a bicycle accident that resulted in injury to another child and a lawsuit ensued. Matthew fled the scene and had trouble answering questions about the accident when it was brought to his attention. Matthew's troubles appeared to accelerate once he reached puberty. Socially naive, he failed to recognize ridicule for what it was. Cruel peers would tell him to do ludicrous and embarrassing things and Matthew thought these kids were his friends. Andy rushed to his defense and Matthew was crushed because he "didn't know what friends DID do." "Sounds of laughter, shades of earth are ringing through my open views inciting and inviting me." -- Beatles 1970 Andy, on the other hand did understand the concept of friendship. I just loved the way he went along with Laura when she insisted on throwing him a surprise party in 2000 because he didn't want one in the first place. I really loved Matthew's point-blank refusal to attend his own 14th birthday party because he didn't want to be associated with his special needs classmates, the only guests who would attend. Two things that angered me was when a rude shopclerk ridiculed Matthew to Laura after he tried to engage her in a discussion about poisonous plants; the other thing that irked me was when someone asked if Matthew was "brilliant like Rain Man." How I hate Rain Man! That term is a slur against people with autism and the irony of it all is that prodigious savantism affects less than 10% of the autism population! How thoroughly disgusted I was with that shopclerk for deriding Matthew! One especially sad part in the book was when Matthew got into an altercation with his father. Peter had naturally reached the breaking point with Matthew's aberrant behavior which, on this occasion resulted in Matthew throwing a rock at a woman who looked askance at him. The police were called and Matthew tried to make a personal friend out of the officer who arrived on the scene. It was sad, really. It turned my stomach and made me sad when Matthew asked the officer (who had once before talked to Matthew about NEVER throwing rocks for ANY reason) if he "shot bad guys." The "good guy bad guy" talk was sad as it sounded like the kind of thing a 5-year-old would say. It irked and saddened me when Matthew said "I hope he gets those bad guys," "Does Officer Jones think I'm a good guy or a bad guy" and "I'm a good guy," when the officer left. The irony of this unfortunate event and that stomach turning exchange was that in trying to show he was a "regular guy," verbiage Matthew routinely used to describe himself only underscored his differences. The officer did an exemplary job of responding to Matthew with respect and diffusing a volatile scene. On a related note, the San Francisco Chronicle article about Matthew dated 1/15/06 includes an anecdote about Matthew, then 19 wanting to go into the barbershop unescorted "like a regular guy," yet insisting on wearing a Jr. Sheriff sticker because he "wanted people to think" he "took care of bad guys." That was very sad and the kind of thing a child 1/4 of his age might say and do. There were some genuinely funny parts. John and Andy traded Matthew stories and laughed affectionately. The stories the boys related were funny, such as when Matthew asked a little person if he was a man or a boy. Matthew's insistence on walking into his dentist's office alone "like a regular man," and insisting on finishing a Care Bears book in the company of others in the waiting room lent a note of poignant, bittersweet humor. Matthew, ever a Beatles' fan (good taste in music) related to the 1966 Paul McCartney classic, "Eleanor Rigby," as he identified with "all of the lonely people, where do they all come from." He wanted so badly to be seen as "All Together Now" instead. The Shumakers hired students to coach Matthew; one especially kind young man named Ben would take Matthew to visit his campus and meet his friends. He would gently coach and guide Matthew in how to talk to people, as Matthew had a tendency to ask questions and make comments many found bizarre. Matthew flourished under Ben's kind tutelage. School was one place where Matthew did NOT flourish. His social difficulties precluded him from finding his niche there; he would often sneak into a "regular" class and pretend to be a student there. When discovered, he would loudly protest being returned to the special needs class. His innocent misreading of people resulted in a tragic misunderstanding and the end of high school for Matthew. (This incident, along with the bicycle incident are given as taking place within a month of each other in a 1/15/2006 article of the "San Francisco Chronicle." After his one disastrous year in the local high school, the Shumakers set out to find a good residential placement for Matthew. After visiting several unsatisfactory places in their area and on the East Coast, they found the ideal fit for Matthew at the Camphill Community in Pennsylvania. It warmed my heart to read of how Bernie, David and Guy, the immediate

staff there wanted Matthew and vowed they had the right program for him. Indeed, these men and the rest of the staff and residents alike (a community of "diverse abilities," as they are called - I LIKE that) all made inroads into Matthew's social difficulties and helped accelerate his progress. Matthew's disastrous attempt to connect with girls on a romantic level was very sad. Shortly after his arrival at Camphill, Matthew, then 15 (15 in the book, 16 in the newspaper article) and Laura visited a girl with autism in whom Matthew showed an interest. Matthew made many comments that rang the death knell for any bond with the girl's parents and the girl herself, severely autistic did not appear to understand the involvement a physical relationship would entail. The saddest part of all was when Matthew said upon leaving that the family wanted him to stay, but he "was a busy guy." He did not see how his behavior had the opposite effect. Also sad was Matthew's tendency to greet people with the statement that he was not to be messed with; such a statement suggested a hostile posture. Luckily, it is Camphill to the rescue. Matthew's teachers and counselors discussed the aspects of romance and what such a relationship would mean. They cultivated his childhood special interest in gardening and, on visits home, Matthew performed landscaping work throughout his neighborhood. His reputation in his home neighborhood was enhanced by his landscaping prowess. The Beatles' 1970 classic "Across the Universe" could easily be the soundtrack of this book.

Kurzbeschreibung A Regular Guy: Growing Up With Autism is a memoir about life with an autistic son, Matthew, written from his mother, Laura's perspective. It answers the many questions that people have about autism through the story of Matthew's life spanning from babyhood to young adulthood. A Regular Guy illustrates the many ways in which family, friends and strangers are touched by Matthew's desperate desire to be a regular guy, and how his brutal honesty and social awkwardness bring out the best and worst in people in touching and humorous ways. In turn, A Regular Guy leads readers to love and accept Matthew, quirks and all, and inspires them to understand and tolerate the differences in others. Kurzbeschreibung A Regular Guy: Growing Up With Autism is a memoir about life with an autistic son, Matthew, written from his mother, Laura's perspective. It answers the many questions that people have about autism through the story of Matthew's life spanning from babyhood to young adulthood. A Regular Guy illustrates the many ways in which family, friends and strangers are touched by Matthew's desperate desire to be a regular guy, and how his brutal honesty and social awkwardness bring out the best and worst in people in touching and humorous ways. In turn, A Regular Guy leads readers to love and accept Matthew, quirks and all, and inspires them to understand and tolerate the differences in others.