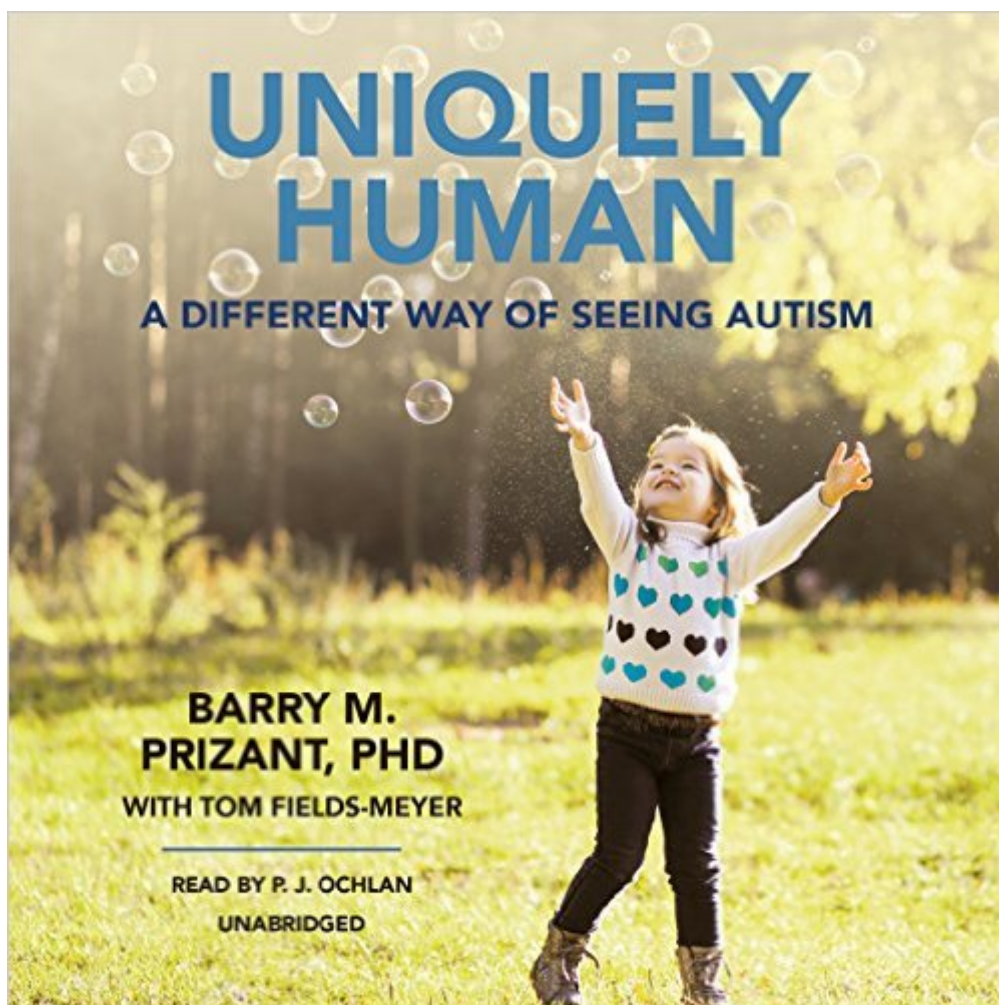


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# Uniquely Human: A Different Way Of Seeing Autism



## Synopsis

[Read by P.J. Ochlan] *Uniquely Human* is a groundbreaking book on autism, by one of the world's leading experts, who portrays autism not as a tragic disability, but as a unique way of being human. Autism is usually portrayed as a checklist of deficits, including difficulties interacting socially, problems in communicating, sensory challenges, and repetitive behavior patterns. This perspective leads to therapies focused on ridding individuals of "autistic" symptoms. Now Dr. Barry M. Prizant, an internationally renowned autism expert, offers a new and compelling paradigm: the most successful approaches to autism don't aim at fixing a person by eliminating symptoms, but by seeking to understand the individual's experience and what underlies the behavior. In *Uniquely Human*, Dr. Prizant suggests a major shift in understanding autism: Instead of classifying "autistic" behaviors as signs of pathology, he sees them as part of a range of strategies to cope with a world that feels chaotic and overwhelming. Rather than curb these behaviors, it's better to enhance abilities, build on strengths, and offer supports that will naturally lead to more desirable behavior and a better quality of life. In fact, argues Dr. Prizant, attempts to eliminate "autistic" behaviors may actually interfere with important developmental processes. While it never discounts the difficulties of living with autism, *Uniquely Human* offers inspiring stories, and practical advice drawn from Dr. Prizant's four-decade career working in universities, schools, hospitals, and in private practice. It conveys a deep respect for people with autism and the qualities that make them special. Filled with humanity and wisdom, *Uniquely Human* offers a compassionate and insightful perspective that parents, professionals, and family members will find uplifting and hopeful.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

My son was diagnosed with ASD in January 2012 and it took us 3 years to put all the "pieces" together to get where we are today. Many of that 3 years of exploration, failure and discovery could have been reduced in duration if we had access to Dr. Pizant's book. So many therapists (both in school and private operations) don't "get it". They focus on the deficits and "extinguishing behaviors" when they should be asking "why is that behavior present"? My wife and I finally figured much of it out after trying therapy after therapy and enduring years of meltdowns and stress. The "answers" for our son were 1) Our son has sensory over-responsivity. Parties, amusement parks, recess are all massively over-stimulating and stressful. We don't avoid these things but know he can handle only a few hours. 2) He has some challenges reading and absolutely hated to do it UNTIL we discovered how to use his "enthusiasms" e.g. Star Wars, Minecraft, World War 2, to get his engagement 3) He can relate better to folks if they meet him in "his world" - from there he comes to trust you and is willing to enter your world. We just finished a two-week trip to Europe where we employed lots of sensory supports (e.g. ear muffs), using a rental car rather than public transportation (which is loud, somewhat 'unpredictable' and out of our control), we alternated "big" sensory days (e.g. amusement parks) with "low" sensory days - watching TV and going to the pool. And he had NOT ONE meltdown. We had to discover all of these strategies by ourselves largely. Having more folks like Dr. Prizant we could have discovered these strategies MUCH earlier.

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