

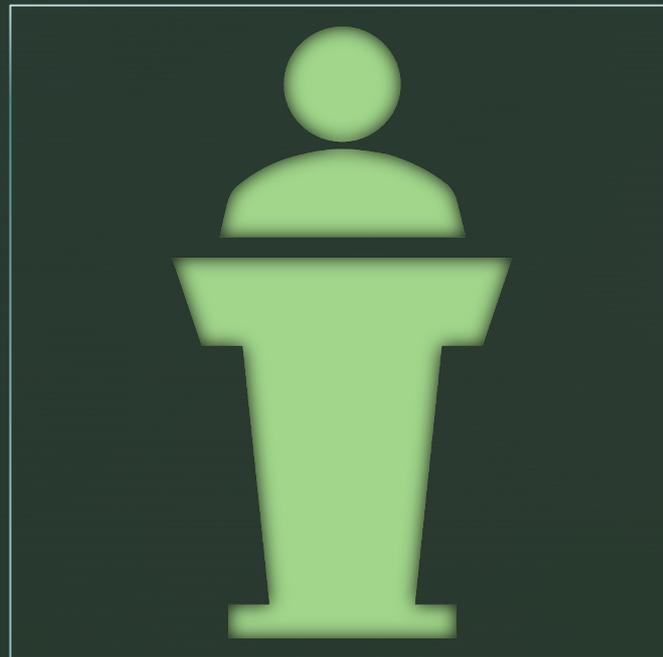
# Assembly Required

My Life With Autism: From Nonspeaking to Attorney

Haley Moss

# Opening Statements

The Nonverbal Child, The Jigsaw  
Puzzles, and “That Kid”



# Pathway to Autism Diagnosis

- Signs and Traits of Autism at age 3:
  - Nonverbal
  - Completing large jigsaw puzzles
  - Lack of social engagement





About “That Kid”

# Assembling the Village



# The Village

“It takes a village to raise a child. It takes an even bigger village to raise a child with a disability.”



## ➤ Does the Village Follow Instructions?

- There is no instruction manual for raising an autistic child
- There is no instruction manual for being an autistic person
  - We are not trying to become neurotypical people
- But, you can have a really awesome village
- Trial and error can work wonders

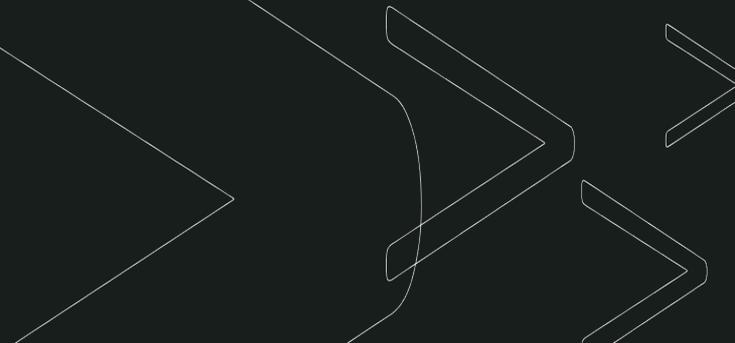
## Chronological Order & The Alphabet



**kelsey**  
@silence\_\_kit

Some baby on this plane is singing the ABCs all out of order and a guy just shouted "yes girl remix!!"

# Speaking & Writing Words

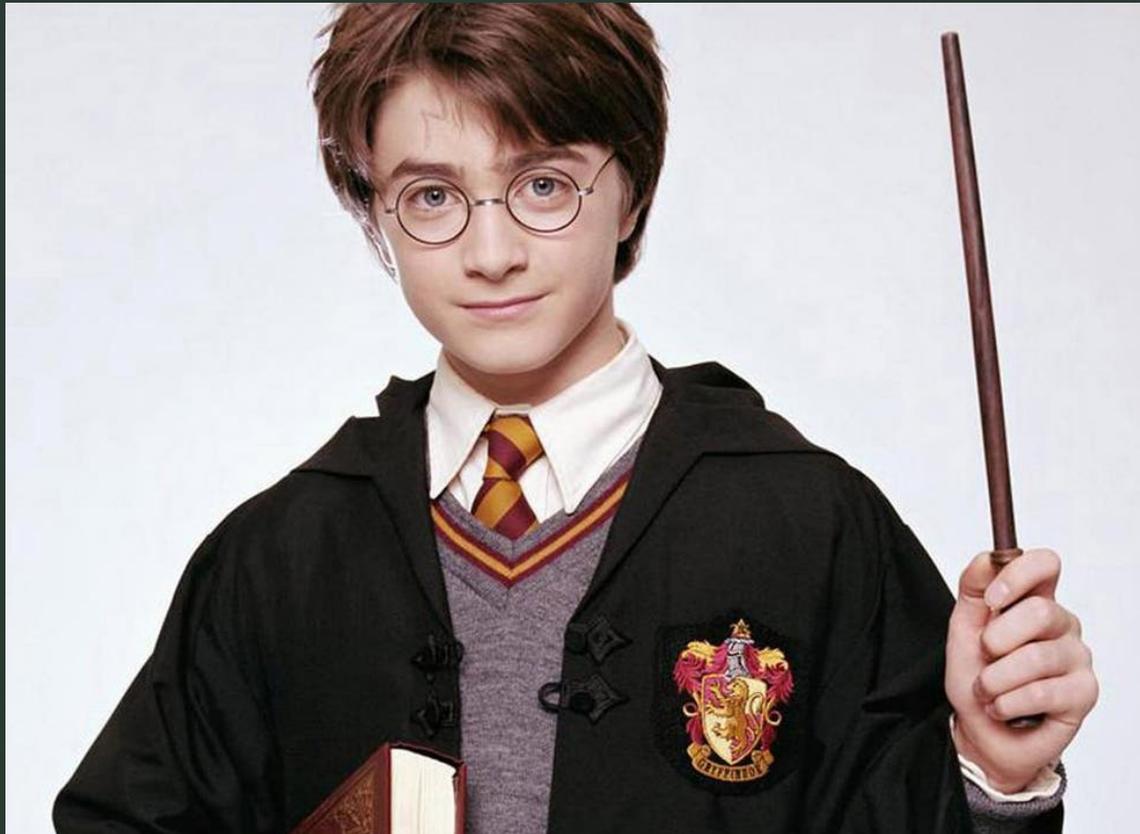


# Is the Mic On?

- Mainstreamed in kindergarten
- Transition from echolalia
- Passion in talking
  - Wedding toasts
  - Drama
  - Special interests



# Talking About Autism



# Why I Write

- Writing as a third language
- The importance of giving back



# Closing Arguments



I AM a work in progress,  
I am getting to my goal  
a little at a time,  
not all at ONCE.

# Journey to Attorney

- Graduated from college
- Graduated from law school
- Passed the Bar Exam!
- Sworn in as an attorney



## ➤ Unpacking “Openly Autistic”

“To me, being 'openly autistic' means not having to hide or mask my autism; it is the freedom to be exactly who I am.”



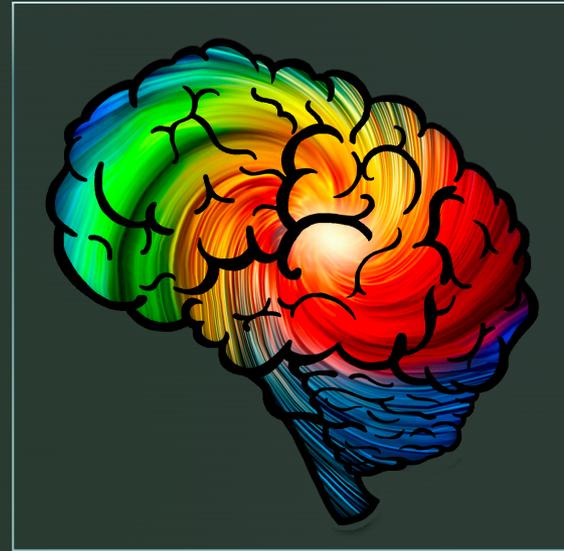
# Passion. Positivity. Persistence.

- The things that drive me to become...
  - The best attorney I can be
  - The best autism advocate I can be
  - The best human I can be



# Shaping The Conversation

- **Neurodiversity** is a concept where neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other human variation.
  - Includes autism, ADHD, learning disabilities, Tourette Syndrome, and intellectual disabilities.



# Thoughts on Inspiration

- My journey should not be exceptional
- Things that inspire me/should inspire you:
  - Making change
  - Getting involved in the autism community
  - Celebrating autistic achievements as a norm, rather than exception
  - Ending different disparities our community faces
  - Listening to diverse voices in autism