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# Preface

I got this E-mail from a friend who is married to a man with characteristics of Asperger syndrome (AS), has a son diagnosed with AS, a daughter with high-functioning autism, and who recently took in a nephew with AS.

*Lynn,*

*Thought you might get a kick out of what transpired at my house last night. Well, my 81-year-old grandpa came by last night and bought me a bucket full of grapes. Well, you know all people of that generation think all of the summer bounty needs to be preserved in a jar of some sort. He says “Here Kristal, I brought you some grapes so you can make some jelly.” Thrilled as I am I say, “Wow, thanks Papa! I know what I will be doing tomorrow.” You know me . . . diabetic . . . can’t eat jelly. So here is where it gets comical with the whole autism twist . . . so many diverse reactions.*

*Husband Brian—“MMMM Jelly, you haven’t made jelly since the summer you broke your leg.”*

*Son Zachary—“JELLY?? I like jelly . . . can you make cherry jelly instead? I like cherry jelly. Do we have any cherry jelly here right now? (last seen going toward house . . . in search of cherry jelly).*

*Nephew Matthew—“JELLY!!!! YOU KNOW HOW TO MAKE JELLY?!?!?! WOW THAT IS AWESOME! I can’t wait to taste it. (Always nice to impress a teenager.) I just love jelly on toast, do I have to eat it hot? (Did I mention he won’t eat or touch anything hot?)*

*Daughter Karie—“JELLY, I HATE JELLY!!! (covers mouth) I won’t eat it. You won’t make me eat it, will you Mommy?”*

*So here I am making jelly. I must admit the kitchen smells really good, but I am glad I am the only one here because I would probably be getting comments about the smell. I know you might not get the kick out of the whole thing like I did . . . but daily life here just gets more and more interesting.*

*Kristal*

If I were a really talented writer I could have created that story, but real life is just so much better! I wrote this book at the urging of the many parents I have encountered over the years. Many said they wanted a book that would help them be proactive, not just reactive. I have endeavored to do that here. I hope that you find this a true guide for surviving the adventure you will embark on as you raise your child with an autism spectrum disorder.