

**As human beings...**

- We need to feel "heard and validated"
- We want to do well, and will, *if we can!*
- We have unique thoughts, feelings and dreams
- We need *unconditional love and to be accepted for who we are.*
- We have limiting beliefs about ourselves

**Your child is a little human, NOT a diagnosis**

1.

**About us**

**We are all part of a big, messy, human family!**

BODY  
MIND  
+ SPIRIT  
YOU

2.

**Our mission:**

- To change the way our society *views and addresses* autism.
- To equip and support dedicated moms (and dads) who have been wrongly left out in the cold, rendering them *defeated, feeling ineffective as parents, and helpless.*
- To offer world-class services and tools that are based on neuroscience and compassion.

**Hi, I'm Sue.**  
I'm the Mom of two *amazing* young adults with autism, and the Founder of Equinox Family Consulting Ltd. (est. 2006)

**Hi, I'm Karen**  
I'm the Mom of three incredible young adults, one with autism. I've worked with Sue since 2017.

3.

**Autism & the Mind-Body Connection:  
A path to healing**

Welcome!

My story

You have reason to be worried.

Limitations of our current approach

The Equinox Approach

The Game Changer

What you can do starting right now.

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4.

## My "Why"



The diagnosis

Nothing will stop me

A Solution?!

Passionate about helping others

5.



- Just after my son's 3rd birthday, everything went sideways. I couldn't engage him; controlling, rigid, physical outbursts, constant battles, lining up cars. I searched for 2 years for an answer!
- At 5 (2001), Asperger's dx (CAMH, Toronto), daughter 1yr
- Our home was a utter chaos, and a literal zoo (6 cats and 2 dogs)
- I could not be the mom I aspired to be. Shame and guilt plagued me. I felt judged and isolated, and had terrible public experiences.

6.

Keeping my two kids alive has not been easy!

Eating disorder relapses  
Suicide attempts  
Crisis unit visits  
Cutting  
Complex Trauma  
Rushed to hospital  
6-months inpatient  
Depression

7.



2003: discovered a parent-based, developmentally-focused intervention

- Parents trained by a Certified Consultant
- Educate parents, reduce difficult behavior, re-establish a *guiding relationship* with child
- Build child's missed steps of development
- A game changer for us; son so much happier, we felt so connected.

Embarked on 2-yr Certification journey; Certified RDI Program Consultant for 12 years

8.

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est. 2006

A rough start

Certified Professional Coach

EFT - reducing Mom's stress

Neuroscience & Compassion

9.

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**Autism, according to DSM-5**

Deficits in the areas of social reciprocity, verbal and non-verbal communication

Restricted, repetitive behavior patterns, interests or activities

Emotional regulation issues, anxiety

Physical issues

Adulthood

Outcomes

11.


**Associated challenges**

- Behavior, self-regulation challenges
- Gut issues, digestion
- Toileting
- Sleep often an issue
- Anxiety (chronic)
- Sensory Integration (mild to excruciating; touch, food intolerance, etc., etc.)
- ADD

**How can a child thrive with this going on?**

12.



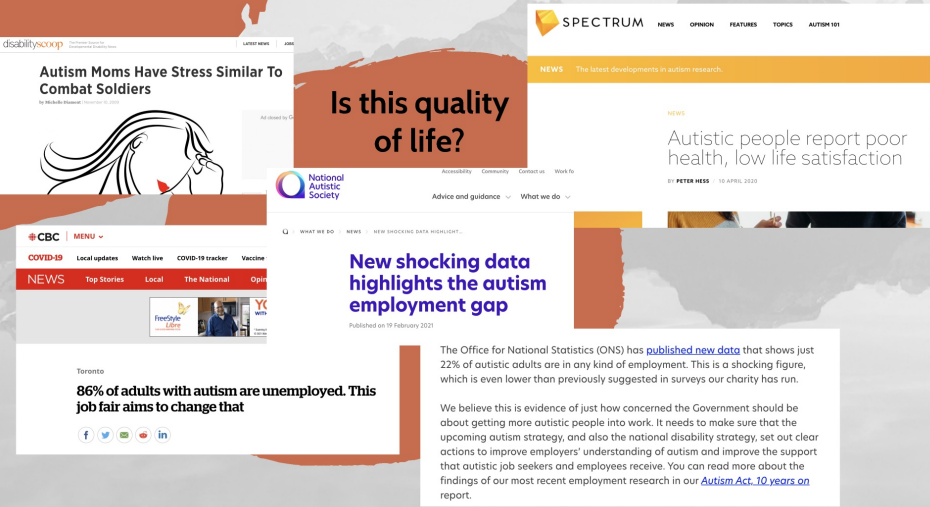


**Adults with autism**

- OCD, Bipolar disorder, Schizophrenic disorders
- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- GI Disorders, bowel disease
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Hearing issues
- High b/p, cholesterol

**Why?**

13.



**Is this quality of life?**

**Autism Moms Have Stress Similar To Combat Soldiers**

**Autistic people report poor health, low life satisfaction**

**New shocking data highlights the autism employment gap**

**86% of adults with autism are unemployed. This job fair aims to change that**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published new data that shows just 22% of autistic adults are in any kind of employment. This is a shocking figure, which is even lower than previously suggested in surveys our charity has run.

We believe this is evidence of just how concerned the Government should be about getting more autistic people into work. It needs to make sure that the upcoming autism strategy, and also the national disability strategy, set out clear actions to improve employers' understanding of autism and improve the support that autistic job seekers and employees receive. You can read more about the findings of our most recent employment research in our [Autism Act 10 years on](#) report.

14.

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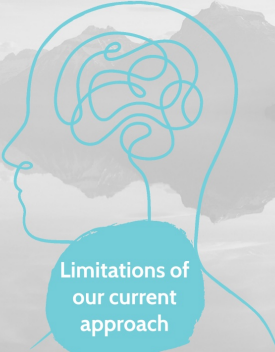
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15.



**Parents Deserve Choice**

Moms are THE most important person in their child's life - they are responsible for their child's future!

Child's Q of L is dependent on having a "safe", emotionally-attuned relationship with at least one parent or caregiver.


Almost 20% of parents suffer from PTSD!

**Child**

16.







## Child is *misunderstood!*


- Behavior is seen as intentional. How you view behavior = how you address it
- Families torn apart by stress; parents disagree on how to manage behavior
- Child's fragile self-esteem *plummets*
- Mom feels she has no value, becomes a chauffeur; helpless and dependent on therapists (this is so unfair)

A better way

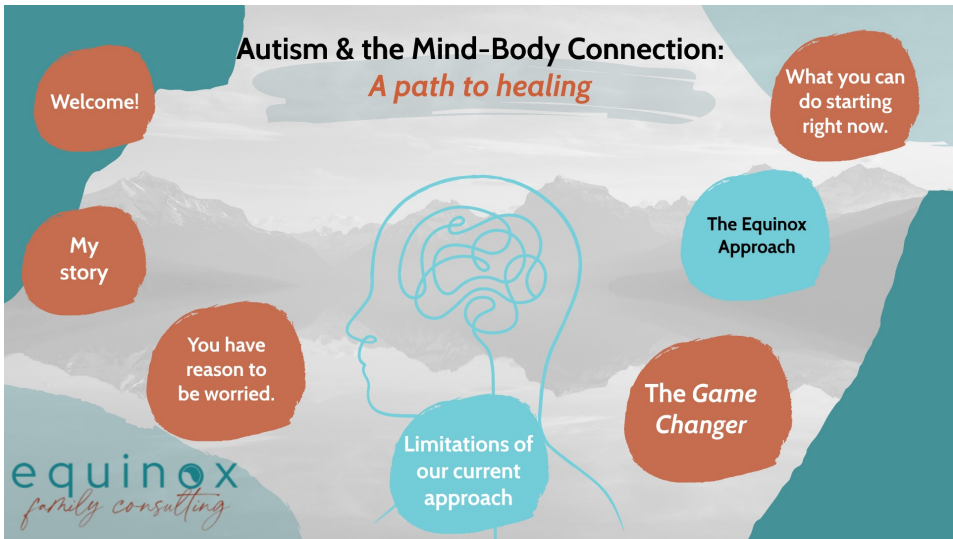
17.

## Let's helicopter up, and look at why this is happening in the first place...



18.

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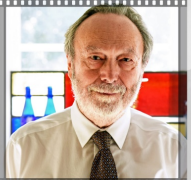
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Dr. Stephen Porges, PhD  
Kinsey Institute at Indiana University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
(my hero)

## The Polyvagal Theory

The neural regulation of our bodily organs influences our emotional responses and behavior toward others and our environment.

We are "hardwired" for safety

The vagus nerve innervates our major organs

The body's physical state impacts behavior

Emotional Freedom Techniques

Neuroception

20.

**FREEZE**  
Depression  
Shame  
Shut-Down  
Detached

**FLIGHT FIGHT**  
Panic  
Fear  
Anxiety  
Worry  
Rage  
Anger  
Irritation  
Frustration

**SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**  
Joy  
In the Present  
Groundedness  
Compassion  
Mindful  
Curiosity

DEACTIVATION

As mammals, we move through a "sliding scale" of emotional responses to our environment, depending on the resilience of our *unique* nervous systems.

What one child considers a minor incident, could be **traumatic** to another. It is **subjective**.

21.

A "disconnect" between body and mind

The autonomic system in our kids is "suppressed" causing:

- Behavior, self-regulation challenges
- Gut issues, digestion
- Toileting
- Sleep often an issue
- Anxiety (chronic)
- Sensory Integration (mild to excruciating; touch, food intolerance, ADD)

**Seriously?**

Behavior is **INVOLUNTARY**, and based on a child's "neuroception" of safety

22.

Spectrum | Autism Research News  
<https://www.spectrumnews.org>

**VIEWPOINT**

**Brain-body connection may ease autistic people's social problems**

BY STEPHEN PORGES  
20 AUGUST 2019

23.

**Polyvagal Theory makes novel assumptions of cause.**

- Assumes an atypically 'tuned' autonomic nervous system mediates several behavioral features associated with autism.
- Provides an optimistic strategy to reduce symptoms by 'retuning' the ANS

**Provides an optimistic strategy to reduce symptoms by 'retuning' the autonomic nervous system as a preferred portal for treatment.**

- Polyvagal Theory leads to new tools to 'retune' autonomic state
- Enhancing emotion regulation, spontaneous social behavior, and the body's ability to restore homeostasis (rest/restore/regenerate)

24.

## Emotional Freedom Techniques

### TRUTHS

1. Everything is energy
2. We are emotional beings, and our bodies are energetic systems
3. Negative emotions are stored in the body, disrupt flow of energy

My Magic Bullet

Looks weird but it works!



### Conscious EFT

Developed by my mentor, Nancy Forrester, NeftTI

Western psychology meets Eastern acupuncture

Studied rigorously; evidence-based, used for PTSD, depression, stress, anxiety, weight loss and more

Reduces the emotional "charge" of issues, so we can take action without being "hijacked" by our amygdala (the body's alarm system)

25.

26.

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## The Equinox Approach

Giving children with autism and their families an equal shot at quality of life, through tools and coaching based entirely on neuroscience and compassion.

Parents

Children

28.



## For Parents

- Access to an online, proprietary curriculum based on a developmental approach, to build a safe, emotional connection
- A community of parents that "get it"
- Safe and Sound Protocol (if required)
- Conscious (trauma-informed) EFT for EFFECTIVE stress relief & tackling personal issues
- Group & one-on-one coaching
- Mindfulness meditation & Self Compassion work
- Flow Code Coaching (coming soon)



29.

## For children

Safe and Sound Protocol,  
overseen by Sue  
(Stephen Porges, ILS)

Self-Compassion

GoZen



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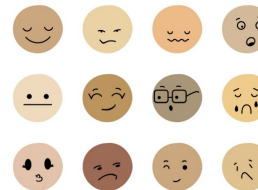
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## HONOR YOUR FEELINGS

@THERAPYTOOLSFORALL



THEY MATTER

Show empathy for your child when they are upset. Breathe. Remain calm.

*They are having a hard time, not giving you a hard time.*

Acknowledge yourself

Self-care is a gift to your child & family

How to reach us

32.



Asking for help and support is a sign of strength!!

33.



Create small windows of time for self-care. TAP when you're watching TV or at a red light!

Avoid negative social media (whiners)!

If you learn to accept and love yourself, it will have a direct, positive impact on your child and family

34.

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Are you a parent seeking help,  
or an intrigued professional?

Empowered Parents Navigating Autism - FB

[sue@equinoxfamilyconsulting.com](mailto:sue@equinoxfamilyconsulting.com)

[equinoxfamilyconsulting.com/talk](http://equinoxfamilyconsulting.com/talk)

35.

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