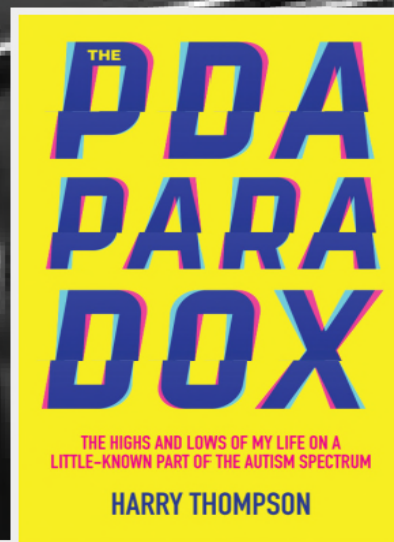




# The PDA Experience



Harry Thompson

# PATHOLOGICAL DEMAND AVOIDANCE (PDA)

## MAIN CHARACTERISTICS:

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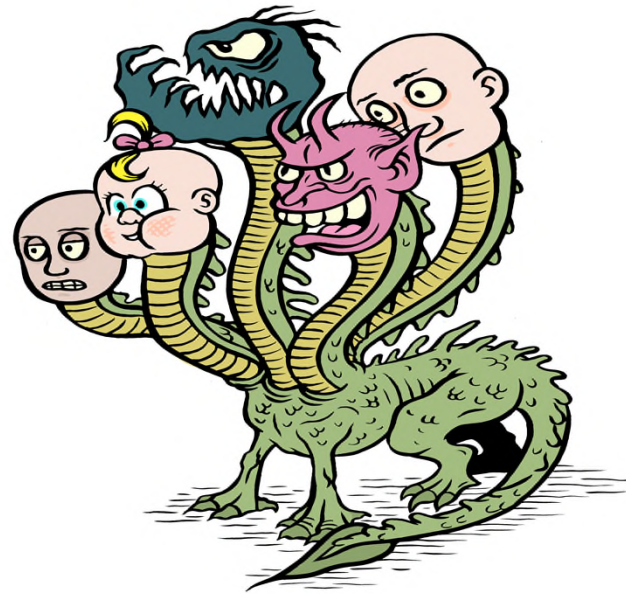
- **Resists and avoids the ordinary demands of life**
- **Uses social strategies as part of avoidance**
- **Appears sociable but lacks understanding**
- **Experiences excessive mood swings and impulsivity**
- **Appears comfortable in role play and pretence**
- **Displays obsessive behaviour often focussed on other people**

# **'MASKING' AND HAVING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES**

IT'S LIKE HYDRA BEAST FROM GREEK MYTHOLOGY - THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT HEADS BUT DEEP DOWN, IT'S ALL PART OF THE SAME BEING

THE CENTRAL THRONE OF THE PDAER IS FOREVER BEING OCCUPIED BY DIFFERENT SELVES; THOSE IDENTITIES ARE NOT FAKE AND ARE TRUE TO THE PERSON AT THE CORE (WE ARE STILL BEING OURSELVES)

THE DARKNESS IS FIERCELY PROTECTIVE OVER THE PDAER, LIKE A FATHER FIGURE



# THE 'DEMAND CYCLE' IS FLUID.

DEMANDS ARE FLUID, NOT STATIC; THEY ARE EVERYWHERE!

MATERNAL ATTACHMENT TO CONTROL AND FREEDOM

CONTROL IS LIKE A DRUG;  
FREEDOM IS THE LIFE FORCE

REWARD AND PUNISHMENT  
DOESN'T WORK; STAYING IN  
CONTROL IS THE GREATEST  
REWARD OF ALL.  
COMPLIANCE MEANS YOU  
HAVE WON > CAPITULATORY  
INJURY

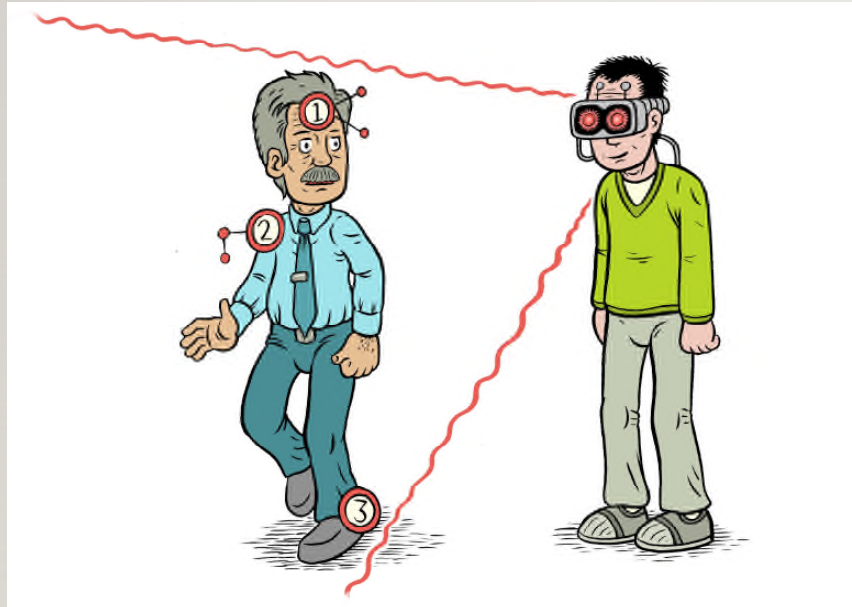
DEMAND COMPROMISES

IMPULSES ARISING FROM  
SITUATIONAL DEMANDS



People can be a conquest - The part of the environment that is the most unpredictable. We are terrified of losing control and are hyper-vigilant  
We scan people - their tone of voice, what they are doing and what they are thinking. WE MUST LOCATE THE ACHILLES' HEEL.

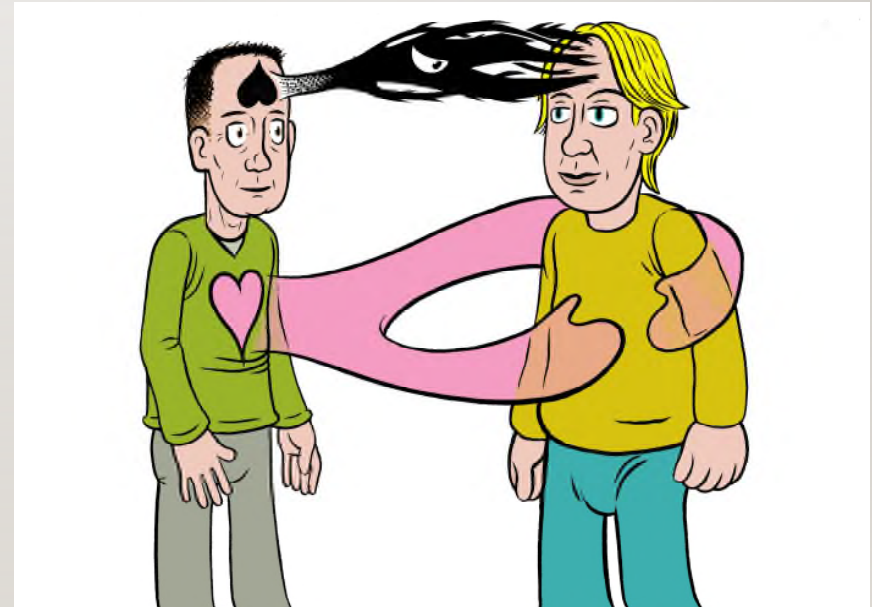
Obsessions with people can be more like autistic obsessions towards an object or a key interest



Cognitive and Emotional Empathy

Cuddly psychopaths

"Cottage" and "Spider's Web"



**OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PEOPLE**

# THE MELTDOWN



# WITHDRAWING INTO FANTASY AND/OR ROLE PLAY AS AN ELABORATE, MENTAL STIM

- Behaviour simulation



# PDA AND THE NEED FOR 'FAIR EXCHANGE'

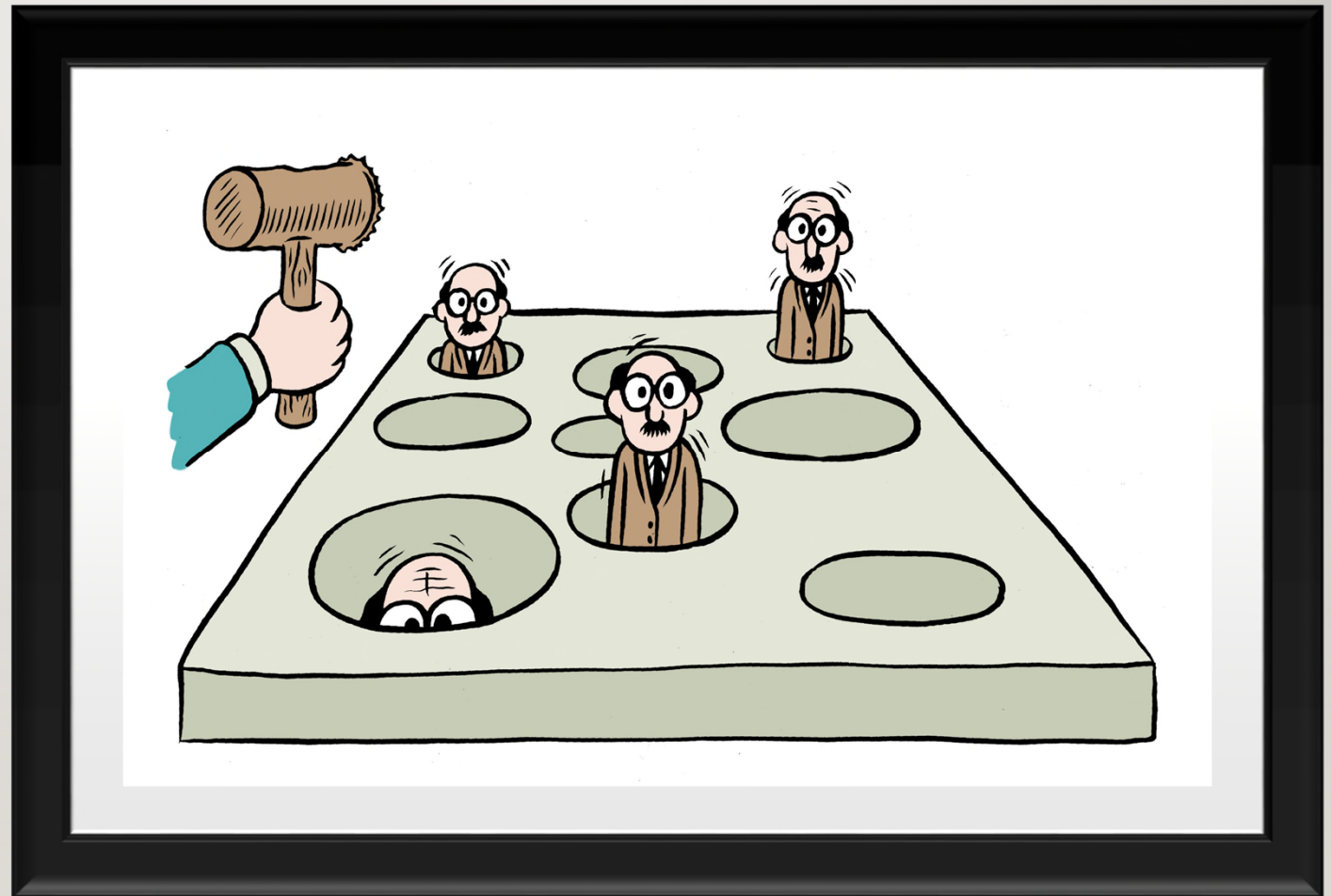
WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO  
COLLABORATE

WE CAN COPE BETTER WHEN  
WE FEEL ABLE TO EXPERIENCE  
A FORM OF 'SHARED  
LEARNING'

LEVELLING OUT AND  
EQUALISATION

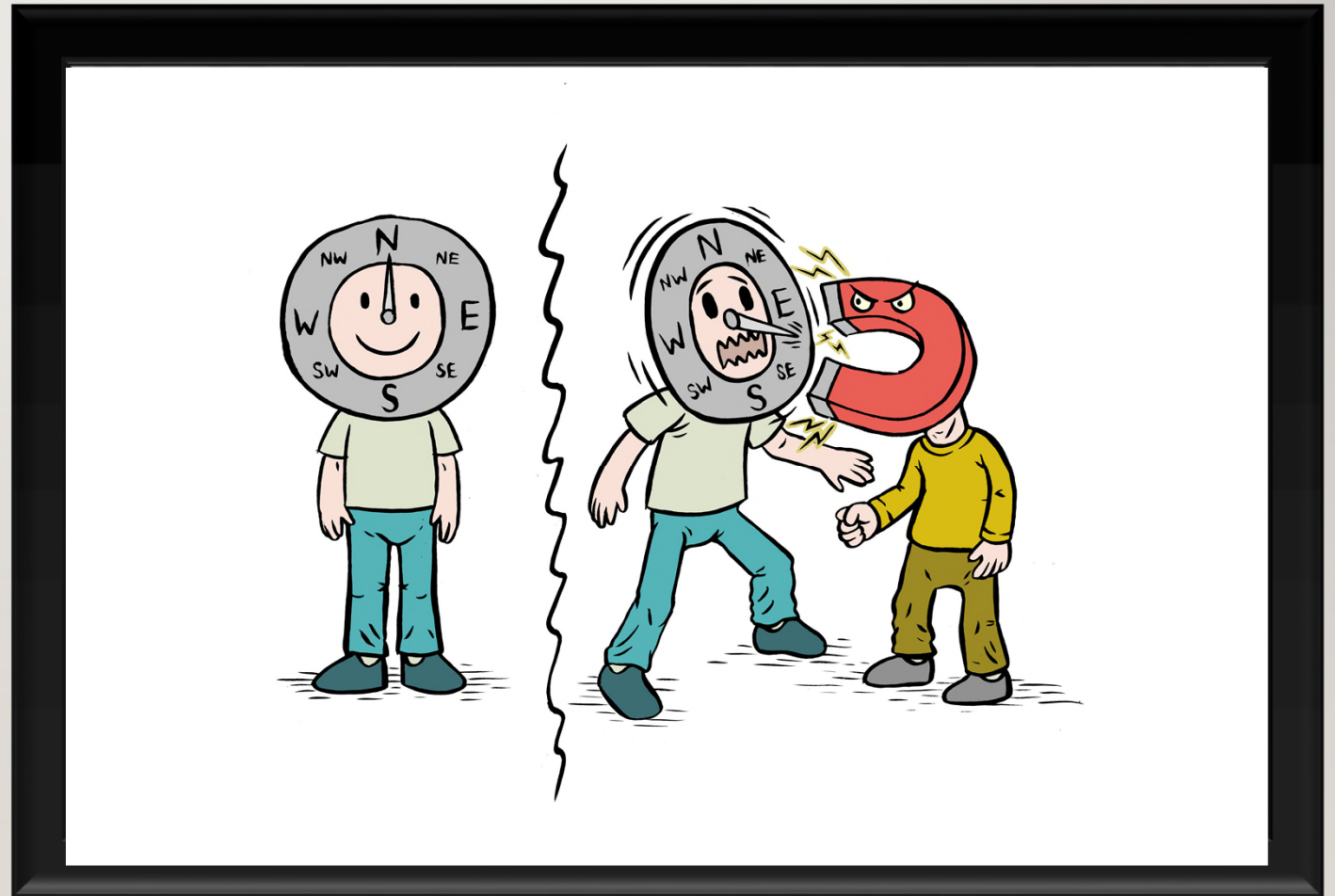
THE WAY THE TEACHER  
HOLDS THEMSELVES CAN BE  
A DEMAND IN ITSELF

WE ARE TRIGGERED BY THE  
FACT THE TEACHER IS NOT  
WILLING TO SHARE THE ROLE  
OF TEACHER



**THE FIRST  
STEP IS  
TAKING NO  
STEP**

---



PARENTING - THE NEED  
TO PROTECT AND PARENT  
BUT ADAPT TO THE  
INDIVIDUAL CHILD

SEASONAL HOLIDAYS -  
MOMENTS WHEN WE ARE  
SOCIAALLY EXPECTED TO  
BE JOYOUS FEELS LIKE WE  
ARE BEING FORCED

SCHOOL - IMPLIES  
LEARNING BEGINS NOW  
AND WILL BE  
PRESCRIPTIVELY FED BY  
TEACHERS - WE ARE LED  
BY OUR NATURAL  
CURIOSITY AND LEARN  
THROUGH DIRECT  
EXPERIENCE

THERAPY - THE PDAER  
WILL DERIVE THERAPY  
FROM WHAT THEY ARE  
DOING AND NOT FROM  
WHEN SOMEONE IMPLIES  
IT IS TIME TO HEAL



# THE IN-BUILT CURRICULUM

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# THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN USING PDA STRATEGIES

DEVELOP SELF-AWARENESS  
THROUGH DEPERSONALISATION

THE PARENT NEEDS TO BE THE  
MODEL OF THAT WHICH THEY  
WANT THEIR CHILD TO BECOME -  
IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO  
SHOWER THEN YOU TAKE THE  
SHOWER FIRST

INSPIRATION OVER INSTRUCTION

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE OUR  
LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE BY USING  
REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY

MICRO TRIGGERS BUILD UP AND  
WE HAVE AN INNER TRIGGER  
METER



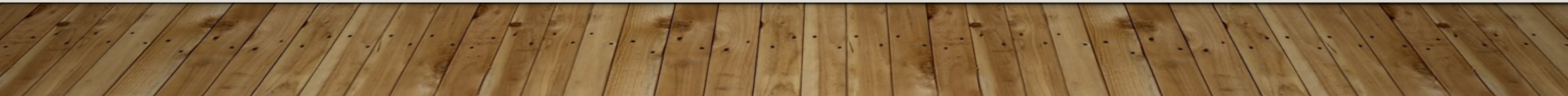
# **THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR TEACHERS**

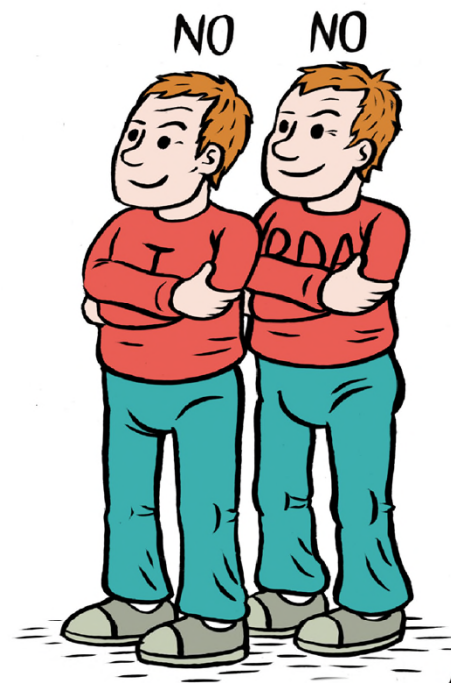
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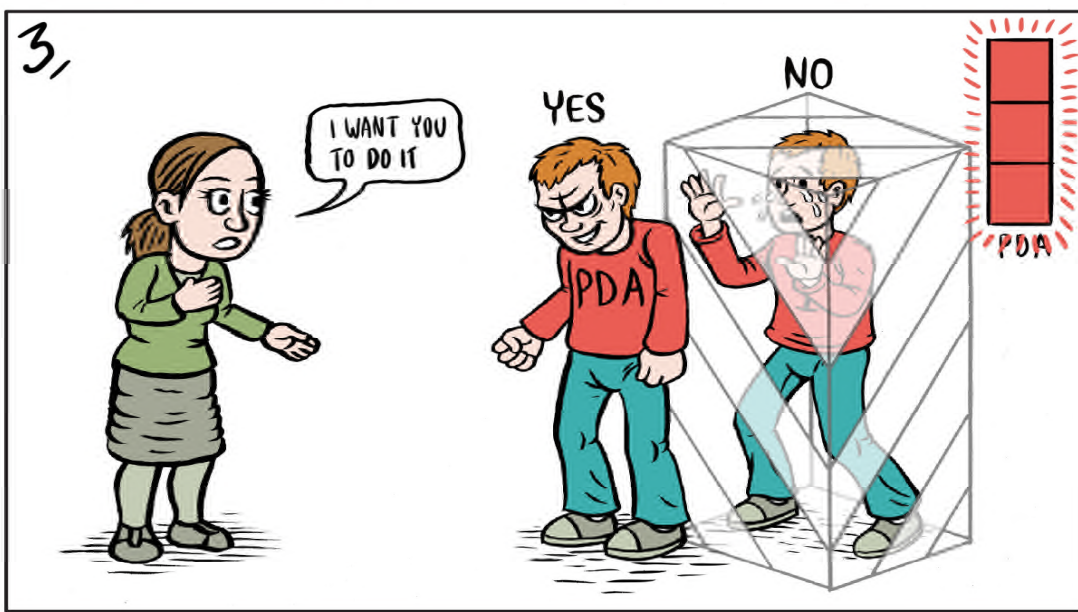
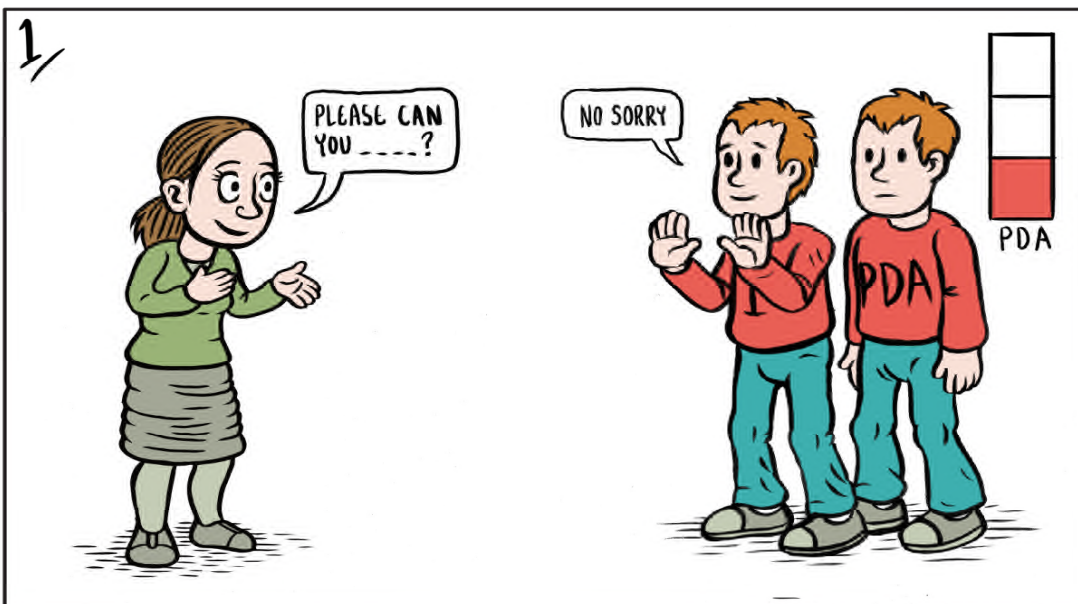
## **THERE IS ONLY SCHOOL REFUSAL:**

- Masking or Withdrawing into Fantasy; if the PDAer masks, they return home and explode
- Being ourselves but at a cost
- Classic School Refusal

## **THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IS BASED ON REWARD AND PUNISHMENT**

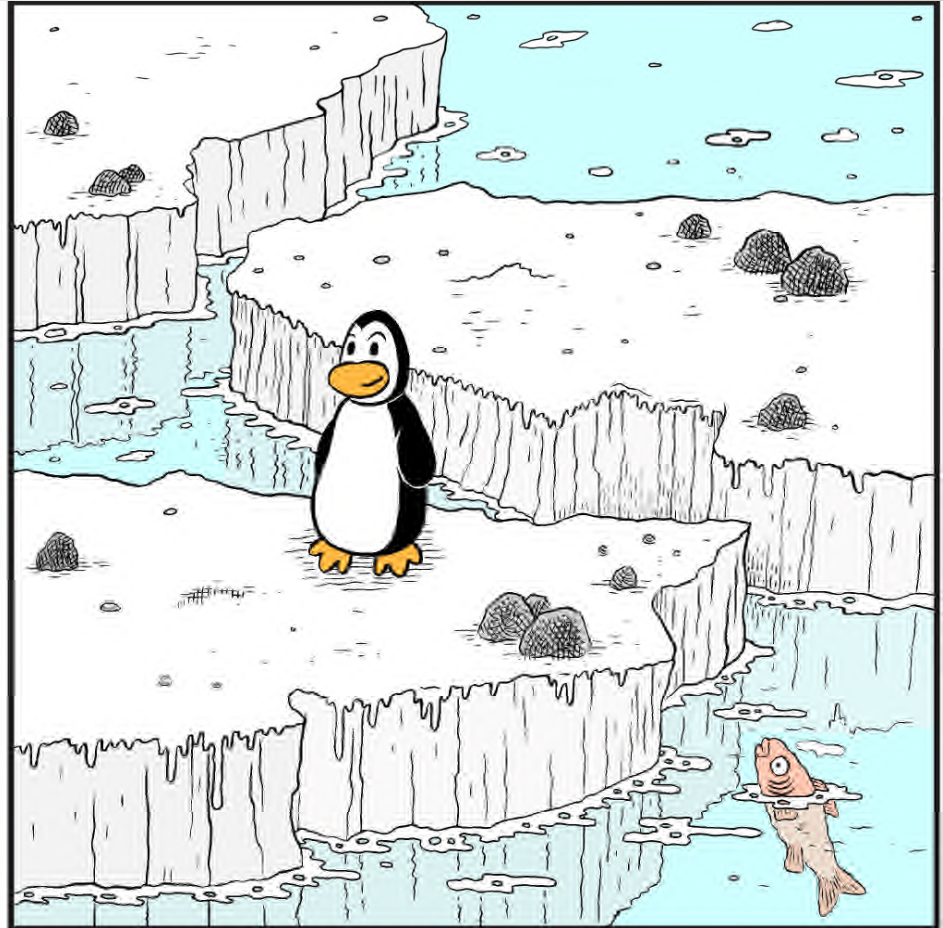
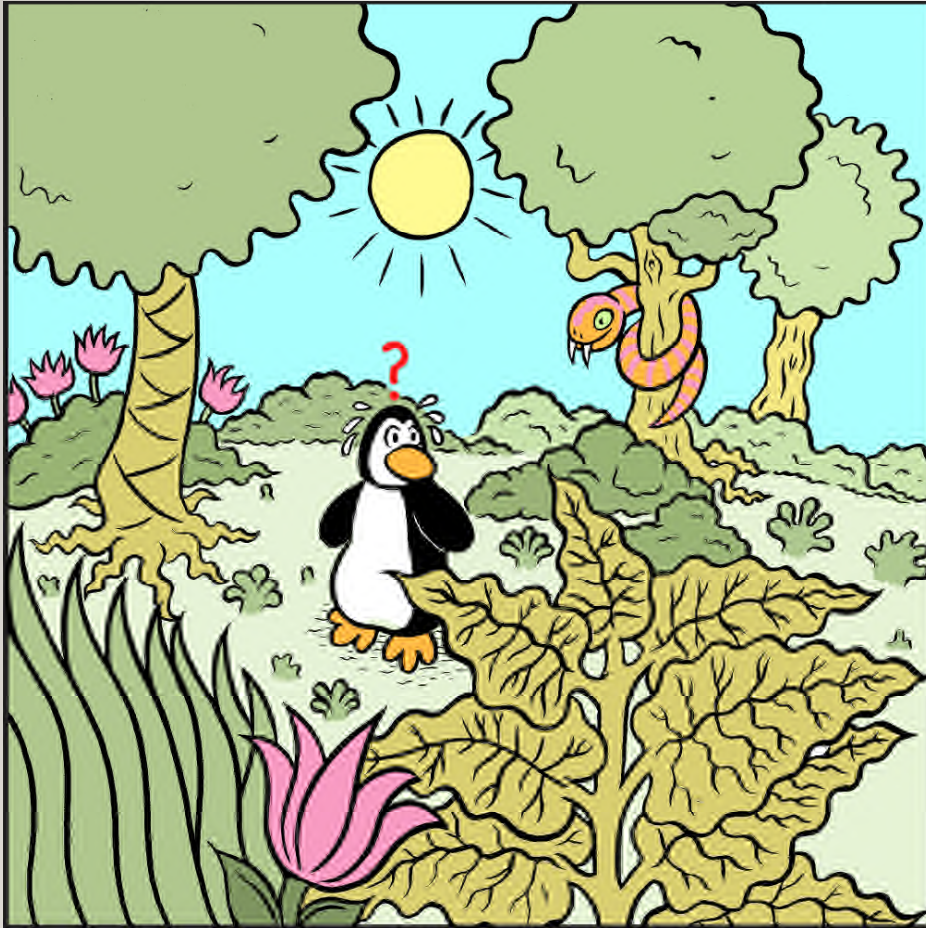




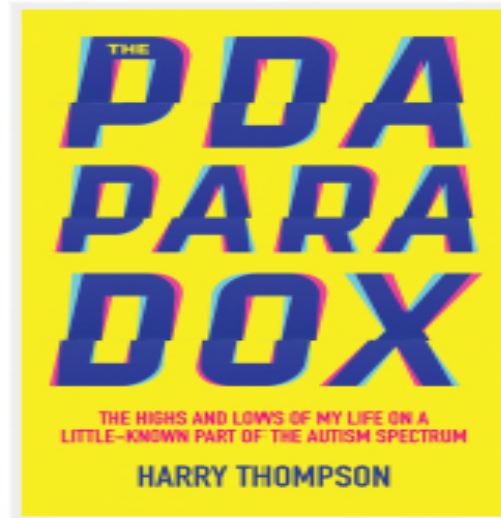




# THE NATURAL HABITAT



# Time for Q&A with Harry Thompson



# HARRY THOMPSON

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- Author, Public Speaker, YouTuber, PDA Emissary & Consultant
- YouTube:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUOrWY2IW8NL4vfYslkGgGlg?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUOrWY2IW8NL4vfYslkGgGlg?view_as=subscriber)
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- Email: [info@harryjackthompson.com](mailto:info@harryjackthompson.com)
- Book: The PDA Paradox – The Highs and Lows of My Life on a Little-known Part of The Autism Spectrum