

# Looking Beyond Behavior



BEHAVIOR IS INFORMATION, **NOT AN ISSUE**. DON'T TREAT THE BEHAVIOR BUT USE IT AS A GUIDE TO HOW WELL A PERSON IS ENGAGING WITH THIS DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT.

BEHAVIOR IS A RESPONSE TO HOW YOU ARE THINKING, FEELING, HOW YOU - AS A PERSON WITH A MIND, IS ABLE TO JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD. BEHAVIOR IS CERTAIN INFORMATION THAT IS IMPORTANT, BUT **IT'S NOT THE PROBLEM**. IF WE ARE SEEING BEHAVIOR WE DON'T LIKE, SOMETHING IS GOING WRONG IN THERE.

## ASD a New Perspective

Treating only behavior is not an effective way to produce mental growth! Why? Because behavior is **always** because of something: a response to how the child is thinking or feeling, how she is able to interact, how she (as a person with a mind!) is able to navigate the world. Most interventions still encourage parents not to think or focus on the child's mind but only on behavior. The mind then becomes a mystery and the reason behind the behavior is overlooked. To truly help your child, you must get sense of what is behind the behavior **FIRST**.

### Begin by Evaluating:

- What is motivating the child?
- What is the child's history?
- How is the environment that the child is in?
- How is the environment impacting the child as a unique person (we don't all feel things the same way!)
- What mental resources does the child have right now that would help them be successful?
- Has your child's drive to seek growth been activated?

### What is the Child's:

- Mental state?
- Sense of self?
- Sense of personal agency?
- Sense of influence?
- Sense of competence?
- Perception of herself in the world?

People with autism have “good” behavior and “bad” behavior, just like us. We should never look at their behavior and “treat” it with compensation and rewards to have them behave in a way we think they should. Instead, we look at them (like we would anyone else) and we say, “What is going on here? Is everything ok?”