

## – A VISION OF EMPATHY –

Saturday 18 April, 2020

Written and illustrated by a father working to change the world for his son, this groundbreaking anti-bullying book increases acceptance and understanding of people with autism.

‘Empathetic, professionally illustrated and insightful.’

– Anna Kennedy OBE, Founder of Autism's Got Talent

‘This imaginative story builds the bridge of empathy.’

– Dr Wenn Lawson (PhD CPsychol AFBs), Autistic Professional

Ellesmere, UK [18/04/2020]: Working in support services for people with autism for nearly 20 years, David Martin has dabbled as an author ever since a chance encounter with his favourite mini-beast ...

While out skipping stones one day, a bee flew into Martin's face. Finally finishing his flailing about, a funny story about the bee formed in his mind, so he wrote it down and drew the pictures himself. To everyone's surprise – not least his own – he found he was quite good at it. So he turned the bee story (and two others) into children's books.

But when his son Hayden was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder at 3 years old, Martin adapted his skills to teach others about the condition, spending years working on a new book while, at the same time, battling clinical depression brought about by his own experiences of being bullied.

Launched on World Autism Awareness Day, *A Vision of Empathy* tells the story of Noah and Sadey on an adventure at the New View Zoo. Noah does some very strange things. Like flapping his fingers and hitting his head. Sadey thinks there's just no explanation. But with the help of some amazing animals and crazy critters, Sadey gets a glimpse inside of Noah's world and learns that, just maybe, *there's a reason for everything* ...

By following Sadey as she embarks on a journey of discovery, the reader is introduced to several widely misunderstood autistic traits. One by one, the reason for each becomes clear, and when things are clear, they are accepted as 'normal'. The lesson occurs naturally, in a genuinely entertaining story with beautiful illustrations.

Every behaviour is a form of communication, every action connected to a person's emotions, thoughts, values and wishes. *A Vision of Empathy* explores this concept by showing the world as Noah sees it. The results are illuminating for all.

‘As any parent will relate to, it's my absolute passion to ensure a better life for my children,’ says Martin. ‘I am humbled by the response of the autistic community and their support for this book. Inspired by people I have worked with and my own incredible son, in addition to the depression and self-doubt I have personally endured, I sincerely believe this book will make a huge difference.’

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