

EMOTIONAL STORYTELLING



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Epiphany

The whiteboard was awash with shapes and colours. I was transfixed. My mouth hung open as if I had a broken jaw and couldn't close it. The lecture room had vacated but I had no idea. My head tilted to one side, eyes still puzzling over the drawings, then he was in front of me.

“You understand this, don't you?” came a voice from afar.

My focus changed to the voice only because I could no longer see the board with this body in the way, and a slow “Um,” emerged followed belatedly by “I think so. Can it be that easy?”

Some questions followed; I answered, apparently correctly, then the big one. The fog continued in my brain as eyes were drawn back to the board – the brain was somewhere else – I was autistic – immersed in the drawings and notes – nothing else mattered for those moments, but the big question finally made it through the haze.

I'm sure I heard, “Do you want to write a paper with me about this?”

I'm sure my delay was to let the amnesia subside – I'd forgotten where I was, perhaps who I was. I'm sure I'd been Tasered. Maybe I wasn't sure about anything. My mouth still hung open, unable to answer for hours as the happiness rose.

‘I get it at last.’ said some echoing voice in my head, *‘At last!’* The mouth formed a smile, eyebrows raised, a slow-nodding head emitted something that sounded like, “Sure, I'd love to”, though I didn't quite know who said it.

That was the beginning of my passion to understand how people really think; the end of the feeble quest for knowledge about people, and the beginning of years of intensity for learning more.

I was hungry and the Professor fed me challenges and we co-wrote some papers and developed some more models. For a full third of my adult life I read and wrote. I regularly sent further interpretations and models until one day he said, “I can't keep up with you.”

A puzzled smile returned; I'd been Tasered again.