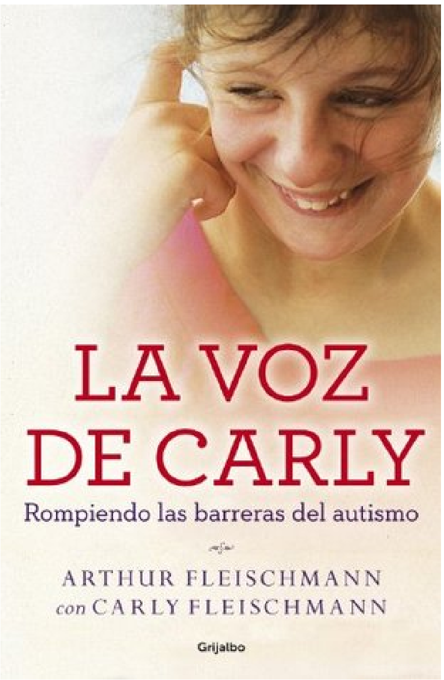

La voz de Carly (e-original): Rompiendo las barreras del autismo

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A los dos años, Carly Fleischmann fue diagnosticada de un autismo severo y de una enfermedad motora verbal que le impedía hablar. Los médicos le pronosticaron que solo desarrollaría las capacidades intelectuales de un niño pequeño.
Durante años, Carly permaneció prácticamente inaccesible. Sin embargo, a los diez años logró un avance espectacular. Para la sorpresa de todos, un día Carly cogió el ordenador portátil de sus terapeutas y escribió: ¡Ayudadme, los dientes me duelen!
Aunque Carly ha seguido esforzándose por superar los síntomas del autismo, desde entonces mantiene conversaciones con su familia y con miles de seguidores a través del ordenador.

En *La voz de Carly*, su padre, Arthur Fleischmann, intercala las palabras de Carly con su historia sobre cómo llegó a conocer a su extraordinaria hija. Este es uno de los primeros libros que exploran de primera mano las dificultades y los retos derivados de la vida con el autismo. Además, nos enseña un mundo normalmente secreto y desconocido de la mano de esta joven excepcional que ha logrado encontrar su propia voz y su misión en la vida.

La voz de Carly (e-original): Rompiendo las barreras del autismo Details

Date	:	Published May 9th 2013 by GRIJALBO (first published March 17th 2012)
ISBN	:	
Author	:	Arthur Fleischmann , Carly Fleischmann
Format	:	Kindle Edition 387 pages
Genre	:	Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Biography, Psychology

From Reader Review La voz de Carly (e-original): Rompiendo las barreras del autismo for online ebook

Mariamilz says

I was looking forward to reading this book to find out how the "family and autistic child" really feels. it was truly enlightening. We see from one end. while they live it daily. Im grateful that the Fleishman's wrote this book and I highly recommend that all families who work with or live with autistic children/adults read this book. We are NOT alone. There are resources out thete, but you need to tee educate yourselves and get the assistance you need. i wush Carly the best of luck in her future endeavors! When is your next book coming out?

Bea Seaotter says

Clearly I am in the minority, but I really disliked this book. I gave it two stars rather than one, only because if you can wade through the thing and manage to take in Carly's story without being bogged down by the tedium or the ablest tone, then perhaps it is worth a read?

The book is a slog, to be sure: filled with trite similes, boring doctor's reports, and a seemingly rote recitation of the sequence of events; it is poorly written and in desperate need of revision and editing. And, while there is no doubt that Carly is a bright, interesting young woman with a story is worth sharing (I’ve followed her story since 2009, moved and enlightened by her ability to articulate her experience as a person with autism), I do feel it would have been better shared by Carly herself or, if not by Carly, then by Howard or Barb; or, perhaps, by anyone other than Arthur Fleischmann, who, through the first half of the book, reads as insufferably self-foccused, resentful, completely lacking in perspective, and shamefully unable to see his daughter's worth.

This quote, from about a third of the way through the book, neatly summarizes Arthur's attitude toward Carly before she is able to demonstrate that she can communicate in a way he values:

> "Carly was autism. Autism, tantrums and neediness. When you raise a severely disabled child, you begin see the flaws above all else."

I have two severely disabled children, one of whom has autism (among other encumbrances), communicates using primarily non-verbal means, and has similar behavioural expression to Carly, but I can't relate to this at all. I don't see my kids as flawed, at least any more so than myself or anyone else. They were born with bodies that make their lives far more challenging, but flawed? There is a value judgement in that that I’m not willing to make. Language choice aside, a child with autism, is not autism, full stop, and I feel heartbroken for the child whose parent can't see beyond that and celebrate their strengths as well. Yet Fleischmann—after recounting what he characterizes as sweet, funny childhood moments of Carly's siblings—shares that he can't pick a single moment from Carly's childhood where he felt enchanted by her in some way. It’s also telling that Fleischmann illustrates moments Carly shares with others (Howard and Tarynn, in particular) that show she is able to connect and form meaningful relationships (long before she is able to use her "inner voice”), all the while questioning her ability to connect because *he* feels no connection to her.

I read a wonderful quote recently, attributed to Ellen Notbohn: "When someone says that a child with autism can be hard to connect with, I smile and reply, 'you can be sure she feels the same about you.'" Take a hint, Fleischmann: your daughter is not the problem.

I know first hand how challenging it is to raise a very complex child, but there is so much more to our kids than their struggles. As parents, we need the freedom to share how those struggles shape our experiences, not only to find the sense of connection, belonging and understanding often found only with other parents who are or have been there, but also to help the world at large understand, and value and thus make room for our kids. That said, we owe it to our kids to safeguard their dignity while we do, and I think this book falls short in that regard.

The second half of the book is less problematic: Fleischmann comes to value his daughter once she is able to share her world in a way he struggles less to understand, and as he gets to know her, he becomes less self-centred and certainly more empathetic. His storytelling becomes a little more natural in the second half, and so slightly more readable, but I will confess that by the time I got there, I was ready to skim; and skim I did, pausing here and there to read more reflectively where Carly's letters to Ellen and others were shared.

It was refreshing to finally get to Carly's chapter, and I won't spoil it by sharing any of it here, but the opening paragraph had me laughing **hard**. Carly: you hit the nail on the head. No, I don’t think you are joking; and, yes, I will read your book when you write one.

I was really looking forward to this book, for Carly’s story is an inspiring one, but the lack of a relatable (or even likeable) primary narrator really ruined it for me, as did the framing of the story, which does a great disservice to people who, unlike Carly, cannot use their "inner voice;" the underlying message being that people are not valuable unless they have measurable intellectual capacity. (There is a passage in the book where Carly laments people treating her like she is dumb and here you can see the extent to which Carly herself has internalized this message.)

If you are like me, and you read reviews after you have read a book, and if you happen to be reading this one, stop for a second and consider what Arthur Fleischmann’s attitude toward Carly would be today if she hadn’t found the means to communicate in a way he could understand. I feel reasonably sure he would still be steeped in resentment toward her, and that, I find heartbreaking.

Julie O says

Early reviews of Carly's Voice tout it as a "must-read for those living with autism". I personally place this book amidst the many other great memoirs I have read - and I have no doubt it will eventually become one of the big celebrity memoirs, too.
For me, a huge part of the book is how it depicts a very real and beautiful family story. Picture the Fleischmanns standing together, arms linked in a tight, not always comfortable, circle. Five people looking in at each other with intelligent, compassionate, and sometimes very tired and very sad, eyes. They work to solve the problems at hand and take time to celebrate the joys and blessings under their roof. The miracle is how they then turn their eyes outward to work with and advocate for others in need - and not just those on the autism spectrum, but anywhere help is needed. Carly once wrote about tzedakah because she knew of it firsthand; because it was something she, her parents and siblings had lived.

Another amazing thing about this book, about this girl, is how by the time Carly finds an outlet for her voice (I can't say "finds her voice" because she too clearly was born with that intact) she expresses herself without hesitation, without neuroses, without the guile and self-deprecation so common to those her own age. It's not that Carly isn't aware of how the majority of teenage girls communicate, it's just that she eschews it in her own form of self-expression. This is a girl on a mission and Carly instinctively knows how to be persuasive and how to get a point across.
Carly also knows how to make you laugh, how to explain complex things, and how to lay bare an inner life in almost poetic terms. One of my personal favourite things is the way she signs her letters - so revealing, so impactful, and just so freaking cute. Arthur's style is straight-shooting, engaging, and witty. Anyone with a family can relate to and learn from their experience. Don't miss this treasure.

Susan Hatch says

OH MY GOODNESS! This was probably the best book I've read in a long time.

I was lead to a YouTube video on Carly by a friend and that lead me to this book. This book is about a young girl, a twin in fact, who suffers from autism. And not her twin, sadly. Her parents were amazing supports to her and tried every type of education they could get. The dad often lay beside Carly at night to keep her calm but she was so disturbed in her sleep patterns that he got little sleep. She had no verbal skills but one day at 10 years of age, she suddenly goes to some sort of typing machine and types out HURT TEETH HELP. Suddenly everyone was aware at how much she knew and could communicate.

she has this amazing ability to hear EVERYTHING around her, assimilate it, and act like none of this is effecting her. Her vocabulary is incredible. Her humor was something I'd like to have. She needed a voice and for her bat mitzvah she asked Ellen DeGeneres to be her 'voice' and read her speech. She's been interviewed my Larry King and probably others.

I came away with a total different view of autism. Not that I could handle such a child but I now understand them so much better. I suggested it as a summer read to our book club as well. I would highly recommend this to everyone.

Joan Graves says

Arthur Fleishmann's treatment of Carly is disgusting at best. Carly is an amazing young woman who deserves better parenting. I had to stop reading after Carly was abused (presumably sexually) at a home her parents sent her to & rather than tend to the needs of their daughter the parents immediately began searching for a new home for Carly. After being home only 3 weeks the parents decide they can't handle it & put Carly in the home of a complete stranger.

The book is filled with hopelessness & depression as Fleischmann can not find anything positive about his daughter. Even after the miracle of her demonstrating her intelligence it is not enough for him.

The only reason I gave the book 2 stars was for Carly. She is quite remarkable despite the poor parenting inflicted on her. As the parent of 2 special needs sons who are similar to Carly & one actually worse, I am horrified by the selfish way the Fleischmanns respond to Carly's needs. And my personal opinion about how they handled the attack on Carly was abusive within itself.

Bob says

I wasn't looking for this book, it just caught my eye one evening as I was walking in Chapters with my kids. The book seemed inspirational, and I was in the mood to be inspired. I don't know anything about autism nor do I know anyone who has autism, yet I couldn't help but read through this book so quickly. I looked forward to every page as the Fleischmann family took on the challenges of living with Carly. I also enjoyed Mr. Fleischmann's honest writings, his descriptions of personal feelings, the struggles of his wife. I found the story and the writing style kept me glued to the book until I could finish it. I loved the story of Ellen DeGeneres reading Carly's letter and yet the story of Carly being abused was heartbreaking. The sections where IMs from Carly are mixed in here and there in the story, a nice touch. Also, I liked that Carly wrote the ending chapter, and her writings are insightful yet humourous. If you deal with autism, I suspect this book can be quite useful. But even if you don't deal with autism, you can't help but be touched by this story.

Emilybrooks89 says

This book reaffirms what I already believe as an educator working with children on the spectrum--that they are smart and capable and that we have to encourage them to get their voices heard. Carly's story isn't remarkable because she is the only smart nonverbal person with autism. There are many smart people whom we underestimate because of their differences. However, she is one of the few to whom people are listening. hopefully her father's story will inspire people to listen more carefully to other children with disabilities instead of relying on outdated stigma-filled interpretations of their realities.

Valarie says

Although this isn't the most well-written book, it is definitely a must-read for anyone interested in autism. The first half is a bit of a slog, but we need to read through the tedious medical testing, psychologists' visits, and hours of therapy in order to understand how amazing Carly Fleischmann is. The sections she wrote are hilarious and insightful, and I commend the entire family for being brave enough to share their story with the world. Carly's father Arthur, who wrote the majority of the book, is honest about the times he lost his temper, and Carly (presumably) allowed him to share her more embarrassing behaviors such as bedwetting and tantruming. The honesty is necessary for readers to comprehend the daily struggle of autism, and we can then share in their triumph as Carly finds a way to communicate.

Lisa says

"...Carly's affliction was like a blob of mercury: visible and dense and real, but try to grab it and it jumped from our grasp."

Every now and then I decide to read a book about autism. Sometimes I pick a book to learn new strategies or methods, while other times I pick a book that I know I will find inspiring. *Carly's Voice: Breaking Through Autism* fell into both categories. I was definitely inspired by Carly's plight; however, I also learned a surprising amount of information. Even though the majority of the book is written by Carly's father, Arthur Fleischmann, the parts where Carly is the narrator were extremely insightful. There is something to be said when a person with autism is given the means to communicate. What an effective way to get an important message across.

"I hate or maybe a better word is dislike the way so called experts try to explain the world of autism. If a horse is sick you don't ask a fish what's wrong with the horse. You go right to the horse['s] mouth."

*****

"My mom asked me a question that no one ever asks me. What do I want? I want not to feel what's happening in my body. I want to stay at home. I want to be like every other kid."

This book is definitely an encouraging read for those families who live with autism. I am the mother of a 4 year old boy who has been diagnosed with autism. While my son is not as severely autistic, and does not have nearly the behavioral issues that Carly has, there are many similarities between the two. Like Carly's parents, my husband and I have so many questions regarding our son. All these why questions without any answers. We know our son is intelligent and are always trying new ways to break through. These kids work harder than any other children. They fight just to get through the day. The fact that my son, at 4 years of age, has countless hours of therapy, is a credit to his amazing strength and fortitude.

While reading *Carly's Voice* I also found many similarities between my family and the issues this family writes about such as the plethora of therapists and specialists, the constant demand of our attention and care while worrying about neglecting our neuro-typical daughter, and so forth. No matter where a child falls on the spectrum, autism is a difficult condition to live with, whether you are the one with the diagnosis, or the family trying to help and cope with it. Autism drains a family in every way, but with support of family, friends, and the specialists who have a passion for working with those afflicted with the disorder, life can become manageable and hope for progress and improvement remains strong.

Overall, this is a wonderful read and definitely a must read for those living with autism.

Laura says

My feelings are always a little torn about books like this one -- the "autism miracle" memoir. I've read many, many of them and to me, as the parent of a severely autistic boy, they can be both encouraging and hugely discouraging. It's great to see the enormous strides that kids can make with the right intervention. However, not all kids respond in the same ways to the same treatments. It is to the Fleischmanns' credit that they do not suggest otherwise in this book. Unlike some other books of its type, they do not evangelize for any particular diet, medication, alternative treatment, ABA, whatever ... They only explain what helped Carly. They don't make sweeping claims of "cures" that will work for any autistic kid. As a mom that has tried many of these "cures" with limited success at best, I appreciate that.

Part of the value of this book is the unsparing look it gives into the life of a family with a severely autistic kid, specifically one who is doing intensive ABA. The mysterious and violent tantrums, the sleepless nights, the broken furniture -- it's comforting in a way to know that there's someone out there who's living in the same chaotic conditions that you are. Fleischmann describes the social isolation these families endure on the one hand--you feel overwhelmed, afraid and just generally unwelcome when you try to engage in public activities with your kid--and the extreme lack of privacy on the other. Intensive home-based ABA and the necessity of homeschooling kids with severe behaviors means a constant stream of therapists, tutors, consultants and others in and out of your house, pretty much nonstop for years, and lots of times it feels like parenting by committee. I really, really appreciate that Fleischmann describes how exhausting and dispiriting this can be, instead of casting himself and his wife as Perfect Superparents. Again, it's nice to know that I'm not the only one who has felt this way. If you want to know what life is like for the family of a severely autistic and behavioral kid, read this book.

And then of course there is Carly. I think she will do a lot to dispel the idea that severely autistic individuals have nothing to offer the rest of us. And she gives neurotypical people valuable insight into what it is like to live with her condition. The fact that she began communicating with her parents at a relatively late age, and that it was a long process to get from those first few words to where she is today, is also encouraging. My son Sam is 12, and has limited expressive verbal abilities, but he is getting better at it, tiny step by tiny step. Thanks to his homeschooling and ABA program, Sam's behaviors have improved dramatically. I may never be able to have a conversation with him, but I'm not going to give up hope that his verbal abilities will get stronger.

Kerry says

My rating is for the storytelling more than the writing. As the parent of a nonverbal child with autism, so much of these experiences mirror my own. And Carly's breakthroughs and progress give me hope for my own daughter. This book is honest, and because of that, it was hard to read at times, but it's a better book for the lack of sugar coating.

Luanne Ollivier says

There have been many fiction books released that feature an autistic protagonist - The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time, Memoirs of an Imaginary Friend and just recently Love Anthony. I've read all three and really enjoyed them. Each author has brought their own 'version' of Autism and Autism spectrum to the written page.

But Arthur Fleischmann and his daughter Carly Fleischmann bring more than an imagined protagonist to the written page. Carly's Voice is an absolutely riveting memoir recounted by a father and his autistic daughter.

Arthur and his wife Tammy are overjoyed when they give birth to twin daughters. With son Matthew their family is complete. Taryn meets her milestones and thrives.....but, Carly doesn't. Carly is non verbal and severely autistic. What follows is an exhaustive tale of appointments, diagnoses, therapies, frustrations, and more. (Mom Tammy is fighting cancer as well.) I just could not even begin to fathom what the Fleishmanns went through. Arthur and Tammy are tireless advocates; determined to do whatever they can to help their daughter.

"Carly has autism. Three short words must suffice to explain a tome of weird behaviours and limitations. It's a shorthand for Carly-is-different-she-acts-in-odd-ways-she-loves-taking-off-her-clothes-especially-if-what-she-is-wearing-has-a-spot-of-water-on-it-she-likes repetitive-motion-like-that-of-a-swing-she doesn't speak. We didn't know what Carly knew and what she was incapable of knowing. She made odd movements and sounds and covered her ears when it was noisy. She cried often. And she never, ever stopped moving. Never."

And, in one of those 'what if we hadn't' moments....Carly types...Help Teeth Hurt. Although Carly was able to point to pictures for what she wanted, no one had any idea that she was able to communicate in this fashion. And at last Carly has a voice - she is finally able to 'speak'. But Carly's story doesn't end there - her fight to control her body, her desire to live like any other teenage girl, her family's dedication to helping Carly be the best she can be is an ongoing, uphill battle. And you won't believe the places it's take her....so far.

"What keeps us moving forward? Sometimes its just inertia. But we keep sight of Carly's dream to be accepted. She wants to live life fully, accomplish great things, and not be pitied. She just wants to be understood. What else can we do? We get up in the morning when the alarm goes off. And never accept 'no' or maybe."

I really couldn't put the book down. I was so humbled and inspired by Carly. As I type this up using all of my fingers, I am struck by the image of Carly labouriously typing one letter at a time with one finger while trying to control her body's spasms.

Carly is an inspiration to all, but especially to those who are living with, coping with or touched by autism. For those who haven't got a clue - it's an eye opener. Highly recommended.

"I am an autistic girl but autism doesn't define who I am or how I'm going to live my life." Carly.

Lydia LaPutka says

This book was hard to rate because the information was great but the delivery was not so great. Carly's story is certainly one written to inspire and give hope to other parents who have children with autism, particularly those children who are non-verbal. I absolutely admire and honor what this family has accomplished!

The message, "Don't give up . . . ever!" is great. I do believe that oftentimes the abilities of disabled students are underestimated. It's a tragedy, really. I enjoyed the fact that Mr. Fleischmann was willing to explore his failings, doubts, etc. of being a parent. All parents have flaws. I can't even begin to understand what these parents went through in rearing Carly. The fact that they stayed together was incredible. I loved that they were very realistic in how much they could handle. Carly full-time? Nope. Sounds like too much for ANYONE to handle. But whatever they pursued for Carly, they did it full-force. Awesome.

What made the reading difficult was the lack of a timeline. It seemed to bounce around, and I would get confused as to how old Carly was when different things were happening. This could have been solved easily by including a timeline with age, school, etc. Or, maybe the chapters could have been broken down that way.

Some parts in this book were simply unbelievable. But I guess that is part of why the story has been told. To have a non-verbal autistic child with extreme behavior suddenly begin typing at 10 and able to communicate. But what made it questionable is how she would never type for family, only for certain therapists. Doesn't that beg the question could they be doing the thinking and typing for her? I know I could do extensive research online and on youtube about this, but I simply don't have the time. I felt the book left that open to debate which is very odd!

SPOILER ALERT (Do not read past this point)

The part about the alleged sexual assault was strange too. How can parents of a minor receive so little information about what happened? And then, while explaining her allegations, the dad decides to mention that Carly has been known to lie before. Why wasn't that brought up much earlier? Again, doubt seeps in, and Fleischmann did little to prove the case. Could the accusations have been Carly's way to guilt trip her parents into keeping her at home more?

Another unclear aspect was if any of Carly's typings were voiced. It only mentioned a machine at the end that would speak what she typed. Did she use it often? If so, when?

I will probably be raked over the coals for stating these things, but I am just writing my reactions, how I felt as the reader. The author needed to make a more powerful case for Carly's ability. It all seemed so vague. By the end of the book, was she typing in front of her family members? If everything in the book isl true, then I'm an idiot. But then, the father should have been more convincing in his writing and left me absolutely certain about who Carly is, what she has been through, and what she can do.

I would love to hear from Taryn now. What was her experience as the sister of Carly. That's a tale worth reading!

Holli Keel says

I wanted to like this book more than I did. Carly's story is amazing, and it should definitely be told. But something about her father's telling of it didn't work for me.

He went on and on about how horrible and difficult their lives were because of Carly's condition (autism). While I sympathize (and empathize a bit, too), it bothered me for two reasons. 1. I'm sure Carly doesn't enjoy knowing that her father complains about her for an entire book. 2. This family appeared to have a nanny and therapists who were on the clock practically 24/7. When did Mr. Fleischmann actually have to deal with Carly? Most parents of children with autism get little to no respite. So it was hard for me to relate to their predicament, since it seems they got so much more help and support than anyone I know of. (Though I admit, I don't know the severity of her condition nor have I lived their life, so it could be as bad as he implies.)

Though frankly, it sounded like the mom was the one who dealt with Carly while the dad went off to work every day, anyway. So, I just didn't understand why he hit that point home so hard. I think it would have been more genuine if the mom had written the book instead.

And the book could have used a more diligent editor. There are parts that get repeated in multiple chapters that could have been fixed by an editor quite easily.

With that said, Carly's story is inspiring. That her family, therapists, and Carly herself stuck with things so long to get to the point where she could communicate is amazing. She went through a lot of heartache (In fact, there's a heartbreaking chapter that deals with a parent's worse nightmare - sexual abuse.), and her triumph is all the more impressive because of it.

I would say that it's definitely an inspiring story worth reading, despite my general criticisms of the book.

Kristy Trauzzi says

I thought the book was co-written. Or that it had more from Carly. But it didn't. And that kinda sucks.
For some reason when reading it I really didn't like the Dad. And I can't put my finger on why. It wasn't because he tried to play "super dad" or that he got frustrated and yelled at (because of) Carly. I almost felt like he was writing it more for a financial gain than to try and promote either autism awareness or the AWESOME accomplishment that Carly was able to do. But, I can't really find a good reason for thinking that way, that's just how I felt.
The one thing that was odd for me and I am tempted to tweet Carly to see if there is a response (I probably won't) . . . .In her speeches she thanks her Dad, but not her Mom. And I'm not sure why she didn't. Was it an oversight? Her Mom did lots, plus she's "Mom" and I don't know. It was weird.
To sum it up, what Carly did was AWESOME and it's amazing what determination and money can bring you. It's sad that children with special needs (whatever they may be) don't live to their full potential because their parents can't devote themselves or they simply can't come up with the finances to make it happen.
