

Chapter 9. Stories of Hope Rewarded

Jonathan's Story

When our son, Jonathan was born in March 2002, he was a perfectly healthy 7 lb., 4 oz. boy with wide eyes and a loud cry. That first night in the hospital, he breastfed all night without any problem. The next day, the nurses took him away to give him the hepatitis-B vaccine. Little did we know that that would begin a difficult life. That night he lost the ability to latch onto the breast. I fought for weeks to help him and saw several specialists until Jonathan relearned how to nurse again at week five. Despite his rough beginning, Jonathan seemed to develop normally. He was very happy and always smiling and engaged. But I came to believe that he is one of those children susceptible to vaccine injuries because each time he got a vaccine, his behavior changed. Often, he got very sick. After the diphtheria/tetanus shot (DTAP), he developed low muscle tone and couldn't control his body well. He crawled at ten months and walked late at fifteen months. At nine months, he developed pneumonia. During his four day stay at the hospital, he received intravenous (IV) antibiotics. A week later, he received a flu shot. Within a few days, he developed a very strong anxiety towards people and did not want to be touched by anyone except us.

When Jonathan turned 13 months, he received the MMR vaccine. That same day, he lost the ability to nurse. He became obsessed with numbers, letters, and Baby Einstein movies. His play skills changed. He had no pretend play. Actually, he didn't seem to know how to play. But he would still connect and laugh with us and had good eye contact, and would point at things he wanted us to give him. At 18 months he became obsessed with numbers and letters in a toy computer. He had no speech.

We took him to his pediatrician who assured us that he was fine. "Boys are normally late," he told us, urging us to be patient and wait. Jonathan first spoke at twenty-three months. His first word was "down." By the time he was twenty-six

months, he was so obsessed with numbers and letters, he had little vocabulary. But he could count until 10, and he knew the entire ABCs. He was obsessed with opening and closing doors, flushing the toilets, and turning light switches on and off, but didn't care to play with other kids.

At twenty-seven months, he received his second flu shot and at twenty-eight months, his language and behavior regressed tremendously. He developed horrific tantrums. They were so severe it was impossible to take him anywhere. No one could touch him. Loud noises would bother him. He became an extremely picky eater. His cute repetitive/odd obsessive behaviors became even more intense. He didn't want to play with other kids and seemed like a loner. He would not respond to his name, nor would he look at us straight in the eyes anymore. But the biggest issue was that he could no longer understand spoken language.

We had lost him. Jonathan was diagnosed with mid to severe autism at thirty months by a pediatric neurologist.

At thirty-three months, we began our journey into alternative medicine following the Autism Research Institute's Defeat Autism Now! (DAN!) protocol. However, Jonathan seemed to be a tough child and was not advancing as fast as we wanted. At forty-two months, a friend of mine introduced me to Dr. Yasko's *Puzzle of Autism* book and I got curious. Particularly because he could not tolerate methyl B12 shots like most kids did and Dr. Yasko's book seemed to have an explanation for that. I decided to do the genetic test and learned from her DVDs as much as I could. I implemented her ammonia protocol before I got the genetic results back. Then the moment of truth: I gave him methyl B12 shots and amazingly enough, he could tolerate it.

Not only did he tolerate it, but a week later, he came to our bathroom and looked at his daddy brushing his teeth and said "Daddy, what are you doing". His dad almost had a heart attack. That day, we became "Yasko" believers and we have been following her protocol since. Jonathan has made huge improvements, particularly with the Strep Protocol, the Ammonia Protocol, the organ support and her Step 2 (detox). Although I did not have the means to do weekly tests, I know by looking at his urine that he was detoxifying (crystal clear for a few days then back to normal) like never before. Early in 2007, we decided to do hyperbaric oxygen therapy. It was a tremendous intervention and has brought Jonathan to yet another level. Jonathan has completed 160 hours in a hard chamber. I am convinced that his positive reaction to HBOT was due to all the detox and healing that his body experienced due to Dr. Yasko's protocol.

Today, he is six and a half years old, attending a public school in mainstreamed first grade with one hour support a day. He is doing great; he is social, happy

and very engaged. He is a purple belt at Tae Kwon Do, he rides a bike, he loves to climb, loves to play pretend with sister, and he is very sweet and loves to give us hugs and kisses. We do things as a normal family: restaurants, friends' houses, parks, amusement parks, movies, and the reading program at the library. He still has language problems and some attention problems that we are continuing to address using Dr. Yasko's methylation support, but I know that he will have a future now.

I could not thank Dr. Yasko enough for giving us her knowledge and understanding. Her protocol is very effective. This protocol requires dedication and patience, and a higher level of biochemistry understanding, but it is the best integrative approach. Particularly for the kids that need more than a diet to recover. Thank you Dr. Amy. We could have not done it without you.

Jonathan's Family

Luke's Story

Luke was our first child, and like all parents, we had so many hopes and dreams for him. We were so excited every time he achieved another developmental milestone—rolling over, sitting, crawling, and walking. I remember purchasing a baseball tee and bat for him, wanting to share my love of baseball with him. At 12 months old, he was a beautiful, happy, giggly little boy. One of my favorite photographs from that time was him peeking his head around a doorway with a big smile on his face. He was playing peek-a-boo with us from the next room.

A few months later, his behavior began to change. He no longer answered us when we called his name. Instead of playing appropriately with his toys, he would assemble them in a line, and then run circles around the toys for minutes at a time. Luke would often throw tantrums, and most times we could not determine the reason. While his little neighborhood friends were talking more and more, he had no language. He seemed to be in his own little world.

During this time, we voiced our concerns to his pediatrician and to anyone else who would listen. Over and over again, we received the same message: He's just a boy, boys develop later than girls, and let's wait and see where he is in six months. I felt so helpless. As a mother, I felt responsible for his delays, and continually wondered what I was doing wrong and what I could do to help him.

It wasn't until age three, after we convinced his pediatrician that he needed some help, that she agreed to refer us to a speech therapist. Finally, he began to use some words on a regular basis. We hoped that he just needed this jumpstart, and that soon we would experience a burst in language. I thought maybe his meltdowns were simply a result of not being able to communicate with us, and that an

increase in language would resolve that problem. But those hopes faded quickly when his language and communication skills failed to develop and were well below normal levels for a three-year old. His younger sister, at seventeen months, was speaking at a higher level.

Luke qualified for our school district's Early Childhood program. He made some small gains in speech, but his inability to handle transitions, play with his peers, and communicate with us drove us to seek help. A neurologist diagnosed him with autism, but didn't give us any direction in how we could help him. After another disappointing doctor's appointment where Luke screamed and cried the entire time, a wonderful neighbor of ours dropped off a couple of books on autism that she found in the "new book" section of our library. One of them was Dr. Amy's book, *The Puzzle of Autism*. After reading it, I was filled with so much hope.

We began Dr. Amy's program when Luke was five and a half years old. While waiting for his genetics results, we began some basic Step One supplementation. After a couple of months, teachers were beginning to make comments about positive changes in Luke's behavior at school. Besides an improvement in his speech, he was calmer, less anxious, and better able to handle changes to the "routine" schedule. The excitement we felt when he took his first steps at eleven months old was nothing compared to the excitement of seeing our little boy taking his first steps toward recovery.

We spent nine months on Step One, regularly testing and tweaking his supplementation based on Dr. Amy's recommendations. Luke was improving, but we knew that beginning Step Two of the protocol would bring some regressions. The detoxification of virus and heavy metals in Step Two, and the associated regressions were very difficult to handle. By testing regularly, however, we were able to see first hand the way his body began excreting metals. It was fascinating to see little to no metal come out of his body at first, followed by increasing levels as the supplementation increased. Associating the metal excretion to the behaviors made the tough times a bit easier. After two years on Step Two, we are now beginning the final phase of the program.

Today Luke is a different child. In second grade, he is learning without the help of a teaching aide. Instead of playing with a stick or staring at passing trains at recess, he looks to the other kids for interaction, socializes, plays team games, and explains what's on his mind both at recess and after school. He joined the Cub Scouts and can't wait to play baseball for the first time in the spring. His speech improves every day.

Dr. Amy gave us the tools to heal our son. She traveled the long and difficult road with us, reviewing numerous test results, answering questions, and leading us down the path to recovery. We are so grateful because today we have a happy

boy whose thoughts and abilities have finally been released from the limitations of autism.

Matt and Marcy Walsh

Lake's Story

I may never be able to find the proper words to express the gratitude I feel towards Dr. Amy and her work. She has truly changed our lives! When my son was three years old, he suffered from a multitude of medical issues, which included vaccine injuries and harmful environmental exposures. I feared that I could never understand enough about the science of the human body to move the mountains and help him. Though sometimes I longed to wake up and discover it was only a bad dream, I realized that I had an unstoppable will to undertake all efforts to make him better.

After a series of local doctor appointments, I recognized that if I wanted him to get better, I would need to take charge of Lake's healthcare. Having neither the time nor energy to go to medical school, I searched for someone brilliant that could supply the healing wisdom as well as the dedication to help me help my son. Dr. Amy was an angel sent to me from heaven above...truly! Dr. Amy's program supplied everything needed to help him with his multiple health issues—both the expertise and the knowledge to heal my son, and the motivation and tools to help other family members and friends. The information, knowledge and encouragement I gained from studying at LNYU (Late Night Yasko University) will be with me for the rest of my life.

Witnessing how much Lake has changed, I still am amazed. At age three and a half, he was non-verbal, had issues with crying, screaming, GI/bowel, eating, gross motor, and social problems. To heal all his issues with Dr. Amy's protocol, we started from the top of his head and worked down to his toes. By the age of five, Lake had entered into a regular education kindergarten class and he has thrived. Today, he is a typical kid in the second grade and he is making A's & B's. He enjoys karate, basketball and Scouts. We continue to support Lake's methylation pathways with Dr. Amy's nutritional formulas, and will forever be grateful to her and her wonderful staff for providing us with the support and the tools to return our precious son to optimal health and healing!

With the utmost gratitude!

Marisha Taylor (Lake's Mom)

Heathar-Ashley's Story

My daughter Heathar-Ashley is twenty-two years old, and we have been following Dr. Amy's protocol in the UK for about four years now. Heathar-Ashley

contracted encephalitis when she was just eight months old, resulting in paralysis, hearing loss, and a dreadful seizure disorder. The latter haunted her for such a long time. It wasn't until we started to look at diet and supplements and found the Yasko protocol that my beautiful daughter shed away all those years of hospital visits and doctors surgeries and countless weeks in the abyss of drugs.

She had never uttered a word in her life, and we discovered how to help her type out her thoughts and feelings. Now... after a relatively short period of time in the grand scheme of things, she is at university, loves learning and is learning how to talk, and making amazing progress! My gorgeous daughter has made tremendous strides towards a life of fun and laughter. We need to travel a little bit further on, but I am so happy that we are on the Yasko pathway. “

Sandra Barrett

Alivia's Story

Alivia was born in the States, and received her first vaccines here, but we skipped the hepatitis B, chicken pox and MMR. She developed horrible eczema, but after we moved to Finland, when she was one year old, her skin condition had improved drastically with the natural Scandinavian lifestyle, including the daily sauna routine. For three years, we were just a happy family living a happy life. We were doting parents who were madly in love with our charming children whom everyone adored, wherever we went.

Two months after Alivia's fourth birthday, we moved back to the States. The beautiful, bright, cheerful, thoughtful, sweet, calm, healthy, bilingual child was now a big sister to a two-year-old little brother and I had a third child on the way when we returned and moved into a new home.

As we planned a home birth, I continued to enact the best health and wellness advice for our children. I made all of the baby food, and we ate only organic at home and rarely ate out. We had no chemicals in our home. Even when we got those beloved summer snow cones, I would ask for only a “teensy” drop or no syrup at all.

After we went to enroll our children in the wonderful preschool that our friends' children attended, we were told that Alivia would need to receive the MMR shot. I put it off and made excuses. I just had this gnawing, strange feeling. I told her pediatrician that I was certain she had it in Europe even though I knew that she hadn't had it. I recall that back in Finland, my Finnish pediatrician made jabs and sly remarks about the American vaccine schedule, telling me how happy I should be that I was raising my children in their country.

A month after she started pre-school, I got a letter telling me that Alivia would be kicked out if I didn't comply by giving her the MMR. I took her to the pedia-

trician, expressed my concerns, and asked if there was any way around it.

“Of course not,” he said, adding that I was being ridiculous and irresponsible for not having her vaccinated with the MMR, and so I complied.

When they vaccinated her, she did well and didn't even cry. She thanked the pediatrician and nurse, and spoke some Finnish and Italian. They just loved her and were so happy to have her in their practice. So relieved that she seemed okay in the days that followed, I pushed away my concerns and focused on a normal life filled with play dates, swim clubs, bike rides and ice cream.

Over the next weeks, Alivia started having horrible eczema and other strange rashes all over her body. They appeared constantly and she scratched them until they were bloody. She seemed generally miserable and fatigued. She became spacey and hyperactive. She began acting completely irrational. She would scream at the sight of once beloved flies or ladybugs. She was aggressive with a few playmates—something I had never seen... and we lost a few friends. I just couldn't put my finger on what was going on with this child. Maybe the moving, the new preschool, or the fact that mommy was about to have a new baby.

The baby was born six months after the MMR. It was time for preK to start up again and Alivia needed, of all things, an MMR booster. I explained to the pediatrician that she had just had her first MMR 6 months before—not when she was one year old. The pediatrician assured me that there was absolutely no reason for concern, that it would only offer her the protection that she needed. She stated that she could have a booster today, tomorrow, next week and one next month... even days after an initial MMR.

I wish that I had put some of those initial symptoms together and figured it out then, but I didn't. She had the booster at age four. That booster sent her tanking! Now she was a sick child. She blew up like a balloon; she became ghostly pale, she developed dark, dark circles under her eyes. She broke out in warts that covered her fingers, toes, knees, and elbows. She reacted to every food she ate, either behaviorally, or with rashes, bloating, or discomfort.

I was desperate! I looked everywhere for clues and answers. I read book after book after book. I started biomed immediately. I took basically everything out of her diet and she was a new child after five days. We saw improvements with the DAN! protocol but she still looked sick. Like many parents, we felt that we were in a holding pattern. I was scared that her recovery had plateau-ed.

After reading about it for five months, we began the Yasko protocol. At the outset, I expected that she would recover overnight but it wasn't like that. It was more like the layers of an onion. There are so many layers to these children. There are so many layers of this protocol. It's individualized and fine tuned to the children and their genetics.

Alivia recovered in a way that I had only hoped and dreamed of. She is healthier than before she tanked. She is physically well. She is emotionally, neurologically, and nutritionally well. She is happy! She is a star in every role she takes on. I am so grateful for Amy Yasko—her brilliance, her fortitude, her strength. I wake up every morning feeling infinitely blessed.

Alivia's Mom

Anne's Story

By the time I ran across Dr. Amy's program, I'd had chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) for fifteen years. I'd lost two jobs because of my health. My life was in the tank. I'd spent the previous couple of years obsessively researching CFS on the Internet. I'd seen a half a dozen doctors, including some pretty pre-eminent ones. I'd flown around the country consulting various specialists. I'd tried a laundry-list of pharmaceuticals. But after all that, I was still housebound, hopeless and so sick I could barely get out of bed or think straight.

I have to admit that at first I struggled to get my mind around Dr. Amy's program, but I was willing to give it a shot, so I started with the essentials. I noticed improvements almost immediately. Within a few weeks of starting on the program, I was able to get off the sleep medications I had become dependent on since getting sick.

For the first time in over a decade, I was getting refreshing sleep again. Hallelujah!

That encouraged me to keep at it, even when I began to experience some of the more unpleasant symptoms of detox. Slowly, I began to experience other gains: My low blood pressure normalized, so did my body temperature. My extremities weren't as cold and my periods weren't so anemic.

It took a lot longer to see improvements in my cognitive function. I sweated that for months. Progress was patchy and often it was a case of one step forward and two steps backwards. But at this point, almost 21 months into this "marathon," as Dr. Amy likes to call it, I feel I've made solid gains there too. I feel cautiously optimistic that the brain can be repaired as well as the body.

It's a tough program, no question, but I'm beginning to feel like my old self these days. I feel an ease in my body that I haven't felt in years, and I feel pretty optimistic about the prospects for a full recovery.

Anne

Drake and Blaise's Story

I have six children ranging from six months old to ten years. Our third and

fourth children, Drake and Blaise, had severe vaccine reactions. Drake disappeared from us after his fifteen- and eighteen-month vaccines. Blaise had a severe, overnight, pediatrician-documented reaction to his six month shots. We followed the DAN! protocol for two years, and both children regained several motor skills and some speech. Still, they had a lot of anxiety and had trouble socializing. Blaise began to regress again because his gut was full of yeast—he was getting skinnier and pale and was covered with fungal patches all over his body. Both were not tolerating DMSA chelation, and they seemed much spacier than before. Despite the chelation, they really weren't excreting many metals anyway.

I cautiously decided to give Dr. Amy's protocol a try for three months. I decided to go "cold turkey" off the DAN! supplements and add in sprinkles of all the "Ora" supports (Ora-Kidney, Ora-Liver, etc.). They began detoxing large amounts of metals just from this! I could not believe that simply supporting their organs and stopping supplements that were excitatory would actually cause mercury to pour out of them!

Today, Drake attends kindergarten at a parochial school with no supports. He is social and very smart. He plays baseball and soccer and he recently began piano lessons. He attends birthday parties by himself, and I can relax knowing that he's "OK." No one at his school has any idea that he was ever autistic.

Drake continues to detox. I still frequently see the cycle of dark, cloudy urine followed by clear urine. As he gets older, I will probably still keep an eye out for social issues, but I know in my heart and mind that he will have every opportunity available to him. I believe he is recovered!

Blaise attends the special education preschool in our school district. His teachers and therapists have witnessed the huge transformation in him. He is still very lean, but not skinny and sickly looking. Blaise is incredibly social at school and at home and is teaching himself to read. He really enjoyed soccer last fall and will be playing T-ball for the first time this spring. All his teachers at school consider him recovered at this point, and so do I. I fully expect him to start kindergarten at the same parochial school my other children attend with no supports.

Dr. Amy's protocol is very comprehensive, but we scaled it down for our two oldest children. Erica and Kelsey were fully vaccinated. They are definitely not on the spectrum, but their immune systems took a big hit. We support their immune system, add some hydroxy B12, and do charcoal flushes to keep down ammonia. I feel like we can help prevent autoimmune disease in their future because of Dr. Amy's protocol.

My children would not have recovered without Dr. Amy's program. I feel that God led our family to Dr. Amy, and we are so grateful! Thank you so much, Dr. Amy!!!!

Cheaney (& Mike, Erica, Kelsey, Drake, Blaise, Britta, and Joel)

Mit's Story

My precious Mit came into this world neurologically different. Although outwardly “healthy” at birth, he emerged from the womb with that all-too-familiar blank stare in his eye. Developmentally delayed from the beginning, Mit began therapy at 11 months. At 12 months he was hospitalized for “suspected meningitis” ten days after his MMR and thus began his “failure to thrive.” In the following 12 months, Mit went from robust 50th percentile on weight to a sickly 5th percentile.

At 18 months, Mit was diagnosed with autism. We moved to get Mit into an intensive ABA program at 23 months and put him on a strict gluten-free casein-free (GFCF) diet. We crisscrossed the country from Texas to New Hampshire to California consulting with experts in Autism, ABA and Verbal Behavior gurus, DAN doctors, and chelation specialists.

We tried Sara's Diet, the Body Ecology Diet, Raw Milk, the SCD Diet. We studiously followed the DAN protocol for several years. We did DMSA chelation, transdermal DMPS, glutathione, allithiamine, and methyl B12 shots. You name it, we did it.

Each seemed to help initially, then progress would stop, and the brain fog would return. Although Mit was obviously bright, his ability to learn in therapy was diminishing right before our eyes and more than one renowned ABA and verbal behavior consultant gave up on him.

During these years, I heard of the “new Yasko protocol” but failed to understand it. Unfortunately, we were slow to make the switch. Finally, as Mit approached his tenth birthday in June 2006 basically at the same point he had been at approaching his 5th birthday, I began to study Dr. Amy's protocol.....and the light bulb started to go on.

We started Mit on Step One in October 2006 and have seen remarkable improvements. We layered in the glutamate/GABA balancing supplements followed by organ supports (including the awesome pancreatic protocol), general nutritional support, neurological inflammation reduction, and then the aluminum protocol. We tackled bacteria and began to see phenomenal aluminum excretion.

His Nutrigenomic tests explained why the other approaches did not have lasting effects. It helped me choose appropriate supplements in all areas—and most importantly let me know what types of supplements and foods will be problematic for him. Thanks to Dr. Amy's brilliant work, the Nutrigenomic panel is Mit's lifeline to health.

His health has improved dramatically.....and he gained 25 lbs in 24 months (up to a whopping 80 lbs!). His brain fog and hyperactivity are greatly diminished.

His attention span is improved His gut is healing. His body is excreting metals and toxins are a regular basis. What's more, every single day, Mit is connecting with the world in new ways.

On his own, Mit can fasten his seat belt. He can now follow two-step directions with ease. The development of his fine motor skills has been amazing. He's mastered the “childproof” switch on the fire starter. For the first time in his life, he has started playing—driving his red pedal car and his Gator, running to the swingset to swing after teaching himself to pump his legs, and playing with a toy fire truck he has had (and ignored) for years!

Mit has also developed new emotional attachments in recent months. Occasionally, he now even prefers Dad to me—a bittersweet milestone but an important one. His communication is becoming more purposeful—signing, the occasional verbal approximation after years of silence, and the ability to use a new communication device. As we approach his thirteenth birthday, I am stunned at the amount of progress he's made since we began this protocol.

We have a long journey ahead of us and for the first time in many years, we have hope. Our goal is recovery, and we celebrate each small step in the emergence of our son from the dark veil under which he has lived. Mit has many mutations that will have to be bypassed. He has years of built-up bacteria, viruses, and metals to be “peeled back.” But we know we can navigate that journey, using the Nutrigenomics and health testing as road maps, with Dr. Amy as a brilliant guide.

Thank you, Dr. Amy, for your dedication to our children. You're making a world of difference to children throughout the world.

Mitt's Family

Cameron's Story

Cameron was diagnosed with what is referred to as “autism” in April of 2004. Through our research and discovery, my husband and I believe that Cameron suffers from an inability to detoxify heavy metals and control viral loads due to a genetic predisposition in an increasingly toxic environment.

Like most parents, when I first heard the diagnosis, I felt numb and complete despair. It was very surreal and painful. I was eight months pregnant at the time with my next child, and it was all I could do to keep the stress away from the developing baby inside. During that moment of devastation, I slumped over in my chair and buried my head in my hands and began to sob. Seated at a doctor's office in a very sterile and cold room, with all eyes on my reaction, my son, walked over to me and began to stroke my back.

Later, one of the therapists would tell me that his reaction is something that you would not normally see on the spectrum. This is where I would have my very first

experience of professionals placing these beautiful children in a limited box. This only reinforced our deep belief that there was something else was going on and there began our search for something else, something that addressed his needs, and offered answers and recovery.

That very day, I made a conscious decision to cry at night and get busy researching during the day. I spoke to so many wonderful and strong mothers about their protocol, to include therapies, schools, diet and resources. We followed all of the recommended therapies and, at just twenty-four-months old, enrolled Cameron in a therapeutic school for children on the spectrum. Simultaneously we put Cam on a GF/CF/SF/Sugar Free diet.

As Cam progressed on the diet, we started him on the DAN! Protocol and followed it for over a year. The same mother (who I call my angel) who told me about the diet also shared a very cutting edge protocol by Dr. Amy Yasko. For the last three years, we have followed this brilliant protocol for our son and have seen stellar results. We look back on videos and are amazed at how far he has come without drugs, but only natural supplementation, in a customized protocol designed to accommodate his genetics.

Cam has entered into our world because of Dr. Amy. If it were not for her brilliance, her compassion, and dedication combined with extremely dedicated parents, Cam would not be in recovery.

When we first started the protocol, Cam's language was very limited. In addition, he struggled with transitions. He'd have load and physical tantrums both in public and at home. These were anxiety-producing for all of us. When I posted my experience on Dr. Amy's support forum, I immediately received many incredibly supportive emails with wonderful ideas on how to remedy the situation for Cam. I was able to add more supplements to Cam's protocol and the very next day, we saw the behavior completely disappear. So far it has been sustainable and we have been able to go anywhere with Cameron without a tantrum. This has been an incredible experience for us, and I am so thankful for the advice I received from those many supportive mothers and from Dr. Amy.

Two years ago, when I took Cam to his four year health check up, it was a very difficult experience for both of us. Due to his screaming and kicking, the doctor was unable to get his vital signs. He wanted to escape the situation and I had to restrain him. It was a common but painful experience. A year later, for his five year health checkup, Cameron went to the same doctor's office. With total joy and pride, I can say that Cam was totally engaging, happy to be weighed, measured, poked, and prodded. He fully cooperated and was quite silly with the nurses and the doctor. In fact, our new doctor entered into the office and did not know that Cam was diagnosed with autism. He only realized this when I mentioned that Cam was taking about 55+ supplements. Then he paused and

referenced his chart. He told me that he was quite impressed with Cam and that he wanted to learn more about Dr. Amy's protocol. He indicated that he had his reservations about biomedical and its effectiveness. Once he saw Cam, he wanted to know more about Dr. Amy's approach. This was one of the proudest and most exhilarating moments I have had in a very long time.

In addition to the doctor's visit, Cam had a perfectly flawless experience at the dentist's office the prior week. These appointments are fun now. We, especially Cam, have worked very hard to get to this place and it has been worth every tear, tantrum, and struggle.

Our family, friends, educators, therapists, and physicians marvel at his progress. When they see him, they often say things like, "I am amazed at his progress," "He looks and sounds so good," "He is so great at transitions now," "He is a gentle soul," "He is initiating conversation with his friend during breakfast," and my favorite, "Why was he diagnosed with autism?"

In addition to behavioral successes, Cameron has surpassed all of his IEP goals and this year Cameron successfully transitioned to Kindergarten. He has joined his Neurotypical peers in a very progressive mainstream school. His principal pulled me aside the other day to tell me how much they love Cameron and how happy they are to have our family at the school. She also added that Cameron is a "rock star" and that he is the most popular kid in the class. It only took a few minutes for the principal to share this with me and the impact it had on us is immeasurable. His teacher and his paraprofessionals continue to tell me that he is initiating play with his peers, he follows the daily routine, he works hard to do his work, and he is on track for first grade.

The last four years have been an incredible and emotional journey. My husband and I believe that our son, Cameron, chose us as his parents because he knew we could not only recover him, but also be a catalyst for new and alternative thinking and recovery in the world of autism.

Dr. Amy, Erin Griffin, and many of the forum members have been instrumental in Cam's beautiful progress as well as serving as a critical support system for me during this journey. It is truly a testament of teamwork. We, as parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, are totally dedicated and committed to recovery. No matter how much we feel we don't understand, we work together to see each other through the journey to recovery.

My husband and I and are witnessing a biomedical transformation in Cameron. We are experiencing a success story that can not be compared to any other personal accomplishment. He is high functioning and on his way out of this disorder. He has worked so hard and I am so proud of my six year old. He is a wise soul with a sweet and compassionate disposition. As we were moving fast along the journey, my husband reminded me to enjoy every minute of our son for where

he is at that moment of his life. I love the journey we are all taking together. We all have a role and I am grateful for that.

Thank you Dr. Amy. You have given Cameron a chance to fully experience this world and you have helped us get our son back.

Victoria Roberts

Joey's Story

If I had to choose my own quote to describe our journey on Dr. Amy's protocol, it would be this one by Carl Sandburg, "Life is like an onion. You peel away the layers and sometimes you weep." This protocol is not a quick fix, it's a slow process, peeling away the layers of virus, heavy metals, bacteria that accumulated to result in our son's state of neurological inflammation. The weeping is of sadness when we experience the behavioral and social regressions that accompany the detoxification process. However, the weeping is also of joy when yet another missing piece of our beloved little boy emerges. This is the push/pull, the yin/yang of life. Nothing good comes without time, patience, hard work and tears... there is no magic bullet.

Both of my children were bubbly as babies. In fact, we nicknamed our Joey, "Joey Tribiani" after the flirtatious character on the TV sitcom, *Friends*. He would look at you and smile as if to say Joey Tribiani's famous line, "How you doin'?" He developed normally, achieving milestones until his eighteen-month vaccinations. With these he ran a high fever and was hospitalized on IV antibiotics. We would later learn that our son had a severe immune deficiency that likely contributed to his decline.

Our little boy was gone. We refer to the next year in our home as the "dark ages" as we achingly watched the bright flame of love, desire, and personality dim in our little Joey. He went from calling me in the mornings to get him out of his crib to completely silent and huddling in the corner of the crib when we would go in to get him out.

Finding Dr. Amy's protocol was nothing short of a miracle for us. I admit that I was overwhelmed at first. The following is a quote from one of my positive posts only weeks after starting the protocol:

You even find yourself on autopilot from time to time, both mind and vision blurred from fatigue and worry...you find yourself at a stoplight getting honked and pointed at by the man in the truck next to you, only to look down to realize that the shirt you "threw in the dryer" is still in the dryer and you are cruising off to occupational therapy wearing just a bra, and not a nice one at that.

This was definitely different than anything I had ever read about, in fact I had never even seen the word nutrigenomics. It even took me six months to be able

to say it correctly! Dr. Amy's phrase, "It is a marathon, not a sprint," couldn't be more true. We were in Step One of the protocol almost seven months before moving on. The amazing thing about this is that I did not have to understand "everything" when we started. I only had to focus on the beginnings of Step One. By the time I had a good handle on the basic glutamate/GABA balance and vitamin/mineral supports, the structural foundations of the protocol, our nutrigenomic results arrived. At this point there was more to layer in as part of Step One and more to learn. We were advised by members of the forum to go "low and slow" with our addition of supplements. A sprinkle of a new supplement every three to four days at best. The nutrigenomics and biochemical tests would now serve as our guide for unpeeling the layers of damage and they still serve this role today.

A year into the protocol our son was on his way back to us. He started calling us in the morning to come and get him, attending a typical preschool with an aide, verbally expressing his wants and needs, sleeping in a big boy bed, and potty training. Gone were the days of the little boy who would scream violently if I did not drive the car in a straight line or if I dared to go into a grocery store with him. We were well on our way. This is an excerpt from a positive post just over a year into the protocol:

Joey started summer school this week with my neurotypical daughter, Emma. We are sending an aide with him because he is not ready to be on his own, but I wanted to share a few of the high points from the week.

As they went in on Tuesday morning, my stomach ached. I thought for sure there would be screaming—new environment, new children and difficulty with transitions. However, there was no screaming. According to his teachers he "went with the flow." He is finally sitting nicely during story time.....something we spent all of last year working on in school....Joey had a hard time sitting still period, let alone for a story. Today was the absolute icing on the cake. A year ago Joey could not be without socks (only a few exceptions, like in the tub/pool.) For instance, if his sock came off after we put him to bed, he would scream violently until we put it on him. He would never even consider walking on grass, even with shoes on, until last summer. He has, or should I say had, huge sensory issues. Today he took his own socks and shoes off to let the teachers paint his feet for a Father's Day gift. Not only did he not cry, he did it voluntarily and was used as an example for the children who were scared to do it. I want so badly to share this with my husband, but I think it will make a better gift if I just enclose this positive with his gift.

Our gains have been slow and steady. We've had lots of ups and downs, twists and turns—and I am sure we will have many more. We have been working hard at increasing our B12 and SAME (up to 1/2, yeah!) and have to do this slowly

because it triggers detox/illness for us. We are also addressing clostridia issues and continuing all of our Steps One and Two supplements. It's a long journey, and we have a long way to go, but weeks like this really help to keep me going when the times get tough."

The following is input from Joey's teacher for his Kindergarten transition meeting:

Joey is a very engaging boy. He is quick to smile. He has been observed to identify the emotions "happy, sad, surprised and angry," when presented with photos or pictures of people. Joey uses feeling words when prompted. He has demonstrated empathy towards a peer during class. He asked, "What happened?" as he handed a crying peer a tissue. Joey demonstrates curiosity, asking many questions in class. He demonstrates a sense of humor and looks to see if others share his understanding of the situation. Joey names most of the peers in class.

So much has changed for our family over the past few years. We kept some friends, we lost some friends, we made new friends. Our family did not have autism, then we did, and now we still do, but somehow everything has changed. Things are better now than they have ever been. I never thought I would see it this way and, if I could have a "do over" I still would not choose autism, but if we had to have autism, I see the meaning and the value in the path we have taken. When we started this journey over three years ago, we were working primarily on acquiring language and eye contact amidst a myriad of behavioral and attention issues. We did many therapies in addition to this protocol, including ABA, OT, ST, DT, vision therapy, listening therapy, chiropractic...I'm sure I am forgetting some. We were meant to do all of these and Joey has/does benefit from all of these therapies. As we heal his body with this protocol, his therapists work to catch him up socially, academically, and behaviorally. Joey has responded very well to Dr. Yasko's protocol and because of this, his therapists are grateful for the benefits that biochemical healing has brought to their work with Joey. Today, Joey has recently begun attending his "typical" preschool independently. He regularly engages in "arguments" with me about where he wants to go and what he wants to do...real verbal back and forth exchanges. I've actually caught myself getting annoyed with the barrage of "w" questions that he asks of anyone who will continue to answer...and as I catch myself in that annoyance, I am overcome with joy. At this point in the protocol, his detox is very predictable and quite easy to identify. As a family we handle the flow and adjust accordingly. I don't push him as hard now as I used to. It isn't because I don't want him to "recover" it's just because we are really enjoying *now*. I never dreamed that we would get to where we are and so, for me, this is a "recovery," even though we still have the diagnosis. He evolves daily and I am constantly overjoyed by his progress. The slow and steady detox is bringing him to where he was intended to be. He is a quirky kid, but the difference between mommy back then and mommy now is that I realize the amazing effort and work that it took for him to be who he is today.

We can live our lives now as a family. We can eat out and go to play dates and walk into Target. A huge part of Joey's therapy for awhile was to not tantrum violently upon entering a store. Now he pushes the "kid cart" at Trader Joes. The changes have been life-altering...I can live with quirky...in fact, I love it. I am grateful to Dr. Amy, Erin, Joey's therapists and teachers, and our family and friends. We have all worked tirelessly as a team to bring Joey where he is today. He is having a wonderful life. He is happy, playful and articulate. These are the moments I thought I would only live in dreams. Hold on to your dreams...healing is possible.

Sam, Melissa, Emma, and Joey Higgason

Chris's Story

As I was running today, I composed a letter in my mind that reflected all the feelings I have felt on this journey of healing, truly the marathon of all marathons. There are so many parallels between this marathon of healing our children and a physical marathon. I know because I have trained and run in the New York City Marathon.

I began running this marathon because of my son. Running gave me a purpose, plan, and goal. I learned how to pace, how to train with sprints, long distance stretches, and rest. I learned to accept help from complete strangers, and to train with like-minded positive people. It also became crystal clear to me that you really need a supportive spouse/family structure behind you, with the understanding that "No, you are not crazy when you go out in the pouring rain, sleet or snow to run." Running the 26.2 miles of the New York Marathon was one of the happiest days of my life. The finish time I made was simply the icing on the cake. It truly is about the journey.

During this same time period, my son was diagnosed with so many different labels, I couldn't keep them straight, much less the library of books I had collected about these subjects. As soon as I felt I understood all about Aspergers, it was onto another label that certainly explained why my son did the things he did. I tried the mainstream approaches, and I went down the path of mainstream medication. Nothing ever felt right, and most certainly we never got the results we were looking for. This was a dark, dark period, in which running was my only escape to normalcy.

Fortune had it that I met a woman whose son was one of the first patients of Dr. Amy's. Like me, she is a very private person. I felt safe speaking with her and I felt truly inspired by what she told me about Dr. Amy's approach. I blindly and naively dove into the protocol. Like sprint training, I stayed up all night, and spent days, weekends, studying everything I could about the process, about the layering. Initially, I felt lost and confused; however, I kept digging away, because

for the first time in nine years I knew this was the right, holistic approach for my son. Like I do for a marathon, I paced myself. Even with this in mind, I encountered so many obstacles that brought me and my family to places I never signed up for. Like a runner that has been injured, I cried and screamed and yelled. However, with the help of this safe website, and the incredible, unrelenting, unwavering support of Erin Griffin and others I was able to continue, albeit, at a walk.

Like training for a marathon, taking a break is so important. We have taken a break for the entire summer, and I don't plan on resuming the protocol until Thanksgiving. This is our third year, and I can't emphasize enough the need to pace yourself, to peel the layers away slowly.

I want to share with you some highlights of my son's progress. He is completely mainstreamed, he is on the football team this year, his grades have never been better (he's in sixth grade), and after four years of running for student council he won this year. I know there will continue to be those thunderstorms and bumps in the road. I know there will be another marathon after this one, however, with people like Dr. Amy and the other parents on this website, I will find the support and strength I need to continue.

Just remember this—stay the course. Know that this journey will challenge your relationship with your spouse and will only make you stronger. Remember your other children and give them the support they need. Surround yourself with positive, encouraging people that support what you do—and stay the course.

Chris' Family

Brendan and Kyle's Story

Our first son, Brendan, was born in 1992 and received all the standard vaccinations including Hep B within hours of birth. He was diagnosed with autism in 1996 and at that time we were confused and relieved. Confused about what autism was but relieved to know that this was not just our imagination. Being first time parents we were clueless - we didn't know what to do for him or how to help. When our second son, Kyle was diagnosed with autism in 1998 after a period of regression following his 15 month vaccinations, we were devastated. We tried some of the same traditional interventions that we used with Brendan and thought that what helped him would be good for Kyle (Speech, OT, ABA therapies). But what worked for one didn't work for the other. They both were verbal but not communicative and had little interest in each other. We prayed every night that they could be *normal*.

After attending the DAN 2002 conference in Boston, we found a local doctor to help us get started with the biomedical stuff. We saw some initial changes from

the GFCF diet and several rounds of DMSA chelation, but both boys were on almost identical supplements and there was still no social talking or sharing of thoughts and ideas and not much pretend play. Their communication was not purposeful; our lives were still being controlled by autism.

In January of 2003 we found Dr. Yasko and we were filled with hope and optimism but leery when she would say this is a 'Marathon not a sprint' because we wanted solutions yesterday. We were sprinting!

Through the protocol we learned how to control exposure to toxins in their environment, how to properly support their organs and how to individualize their supplements. We learned the tools that we needed to heal them. We did not have a magic bullet but we were seeing great strides. We talked about how close we were to the end of the marathon and thinking that this is it, this is how life is going to be for our family. We were lucky to be where we were and the progress they each had made. We were jogging!

In the spring of 2005 we customized their supplements according to their genetic mutations; slowly but steadily we made more progress. Still no magic bullet, but closer to the end of the marathon. Brendan and Kyle were now able to make friends, fight over the front seat, have a sense of humor and personality, make the honor roll, play ice hockey, have conversations, talk about girls, and talk, talk, talk.

In 2007 we did the add on panel of genetics including SHMT, BHMT etc, and began addressing more specific gut bugs. We continued to see the excretion of heavy metals from their bodies along with the personal gains this fostered. This past fall Brendan played football for his High School team and recently passed his drivers license permit test. We dream of them being happy, healthy, and independent. We are enjoying them for who they are and who they will become. We are now walking!

It truly is a marathon! Thank you, Dr. Amy for walking with us to the finish line.

Michael and Erin Griffin, Parents of Brendan age 17 and Kyle age 14