

# Big Apple Ventures

I love apples and I just took a big bite out of the "Big Apple." I have just gotten home from an eight-day exhilarating and most exciting trip for the second time in my life – New York City! I went with one of my best friends several years ago and as soon as I got home I said, "I have to go again!" To me New York City is Disney World, Las Vegas, and Rodeo Drive all rolled into one fabulous place.

As soon as we arrived in Times Square my adrenaline was flooding so swiftly through my veins I was almost giddy. I carried two of my grandsons this trip, along

with their mom and dad.

We stayed at an amazing hotel right in the center of all the action with a balcony that overlooked the jam-packed streets of Time Square. There were so many visitors and inhabitants of this electrifying city that the streets were so congested you could only move a few inches at each step. And, the traffic, Oh my! Before we found our driver, Ishmael, we dared to ride in a Yellow Cab. I believe I surely pressed a hole into the floorboard as I applied my brakes. These drivers must have trained with the Indy 500 drivers. They ride on the bumpers of

cars in front of them, whip around and out into traffic at a high speed, blow the horn constantly and mumble unintelligible words under their breath. All the while one of my grandsons and I are applying our brakes and begging God to deliver us to our destination without the need of an ambulance.

My daughter, the "travel agent" had our itinerary completely organized before we left home, even buying some of our

tickets to different attractions and loading them on her phone. Isn't technology wonderful? We had a destination for each day with places to see, people to meet and great food to taste.

My favorite place was, of course, Sax on Fifth Avenue, Macy's, Gucci, Tiffany's, and the small tavern we found on Sunday that served

Mimosas for brunch. My daughter and I enjoyed these and people watched while the guys shopped for "guy things". And, we especially enjoyed "Chinatown" with all the hawkers trying to sell knockoff items, and eating REAL Chinese food, even though we had no idea what ingredients we were eating. And, Serendipity's Frozen Hot Chocolate, wow!

Of course, we saw all the historical sites that we could possibly fit in to our time and ate at some of the more

famous restaurants. We even had lunch at Trump Tower and felt very secure as there was secret service people positioned at all points along the marbled walls and floors.

Again, I cried the day we visited Miss Liberty in her stately regal beauty. At the base inscribed, "Give me your tired your poor. Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore." I was humbled at the thought of how many people over the course of hundreds of years had stood here, exuberant in their souls at the freedom they had achieved here on her shores.

And Broadway, what a thrill. As we sat in the darkened theatre, the thought kept running through my mind, "I am from Kosciusko, Mississippi, and I am sitting in a Broadway musical. Me, how did I ever in a lifetime get here?"

A lifetime would never be enough time to explore all of this energetic city's crooks and crannies and of something you would never tire. It is truly the city that never sleeps, and you will not want to when you visit.

## Hot Chocolate

- 6 oz pieces of a Hershey Bar
- 2 t. hot chocolate mix
- 1 ½ T. sugar
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 3 cups ice
- whipped cream
- chocolate shavings

Place pieces of chocolate in a double boiler and melt till smooth. Add the cocoa and sugar until blended. Remove from heat and add ½ cup of milk and stir till smooth. Cool. Place rest of milk in blender and add mixture and ice. Blend on high speed until smooth. Add whipped cream and chocolate shavings.

\* Peggy Sims is a life-long resident of Attala County and columnist.



## Peggy's Take

lowing children into rooms with therapists (and I'm a licensed therapist). Labels, which therapists have a bad habit of dispensing, tend to stick. For me to believe in Asperger's (hypothetically) is one thing; for a child to believe he "has" it is quite another thing.

Family psychologist John Rosemond: johnrosemond.com, parentguru.com.



I just came back from a river-fishing trip with a friend. It was a beautiful morning to be on the water. This time of year, the early morning is usually the best because the heat really picks up about mid-morning. This day was no different. By 10:30, our hopes were fried, along with our back and neck. But even before that, the action was minimal at best. We caught a few small ones, but never really got into the smallmouth population we had hoped for. It seems the last few times we have went, we have left with the same results. We have fun. We love the comradery. The outdoors is beautiful. But the fishing has been disappointing. After three times on the same float, discouraging. The thoughts of doing it again? Depressing. And that is the way it works in other parts of our lives as well. More important parts.

All of us get disappointed. To be disappointed means that an appointment has been missed or lost. This simply means that some things we expected to happen, didn't. As long as we have any expectations whatsoever, we all will have disappointments. Being disappointed continually can lead to a deeper problem. Discouragement. It is the loss of courage. It's saying, since I have been disappointed so much, I am no longer confident in anything good happening. I have lost the courage to continue down the same path I've been going. If one remains without courage long enough, he becomes

depressed. Depression is when life has seemingly been squeezed out. Life has been pressed from us. Many of us know what each of these feels like. Some linger longer in discouragement and depression. Some suffer in ways that the rest of us cannot imagine. That's why it is so important for us to encourage one another. Because, while disappointments are universal and even come from strong faith, discouragement comes from its lack. That's why throughout the scriptures, we are continually told to "be of good courage." And that is also why we are to be people of "Encouragement." The "en" means to cause. It simply means we are to cause courage in other people. The temptation to lose courage can come from a lot of things, but it always starts with fear of the unknown. It can be the unknown about a job, a sickness, a death, or the next move. This is the predicament of everyone around us. And while I may not have the answer they need, I can choose to cause courage to come into their lives by my words and actions. When you think of the favorite people of your past – the teachers, friends, family members, neighbors; they are your favorite because they believed you could do anything. They instilled courage. They didn't ignore your problems or difficulties, they just believed the greatest partnership known to man was you and God.

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## Living With Children

By John Rosemond

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I am perennially asked whether I do or do not "believe" in autism. I suspect that on most occasions, it's a test. Nonetheless, it's a fair question that usually takes this form: "I know you don't believe in ADHD; but do you believe in autism?"

To be clear, it would be absurd of me to deny that there are children – plenty of them, relatively speaking – who frequently exhibit behaviors associated with the bogus diagnosis of ADHD (attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder). Those kids are problematic, for sure. But no one has ever proven that they "have" something. Childhood behavior disorders like ADHD are constructs; they are not realities. Leukemia and nearsightedness are realities. The spurious claim that these kids "have" something – biochemical imbalances being the number one "have" – is used to sell various therapies, including drugs that have yet to reliably outperform placebos and involve the very real possibility of dangerous side effects.

But ADHD and classical autism are horses of different colors. I have no way of proving it, but I am convinced that autism in its classical form is a very real, "have" thing, albeit researchers have yet to discover the nature of its reality. They are handicapped in doing so by the fact that autism is classified as a psychiatric/psychological disorder. What, pray tell, is psychological about a two-month-old baby who doesn't want to be held, doesn't smile, and seems pained by eye contact? What unresolved issue is at work here? The answers to those questions are "nothing" and "none."

The symptoms of classical autism appear much too early and much too randomly to think of it as anything but a yet-undiscovered physiological malfunction of one

sort or another. Taking it out of the realm of psychology/psychiatry – that is, removing it from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – would be a boon to research as well as a boon to the kids in question and their anguished parents. The roadblock to that has much to do with the fact that autism is producing a significant income stream for lots of mental health professionals. And yes, I proudly admit to cynicism.

The further problem is that one can't talk in general terms about autism without consideration of the so-called "spectrum" that includes, most prominently, something called Asperger's Syndrome. I say "something" because this Asperger's something is about as ill-defined as something can be. The common denominator among kids who are hung with this label or are said to be "on the spectrum" seems to be "odd" and/or "quirky." Personally, I think children should have the right to be at least slightly odd and quirky.

Without exception of which I'm aware, once a mental health diagnosis begins to gain traction – that is, it begins to sell – the mental health professions begins expanding it – explicitly or implicitly – such that it captures more and more people (i.e., paying clients) over time; thus things have gone with "the spectrum" and Asperger's.

I don't deny that some kids who are said to have Asperger's may need help. Equally likely, their parents need help managing and disciplining them. The many anecdotes I've been told strongly suggest that most of the somewhat odd kids in question, however, grow out of it, whatever "it" is.

My long-time readers know that with some conservatively-defined exceptions, I'm not in favor of al-

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## PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The City of Lexington is considering applying for rehabilitation funds from the Mississippi Home Corporation (MHC) HOME Investment Partnerships Program- Homeowner Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Program. The State of Mississippi has allocated approximately \$3 million that will be made available to cities, and counties, on a competitive basis to undertake homeowner rehabilitation /reconstruction activities.

The activities for which these funds may be used are in the areas of affordable housing for low and very-low-income persons. The City of Lexington proposes to apply for grant funds through the (MHC) HOME Rehabilitation Grant Program. More specific details regarding eligible activities, program requirements, and the rating system will be provided at a public hearing which will be held at the City of Lexington City Hall located at 112 Spring Street, Lexington, Mississippi on Monday, July 25, 2019 at 5:00 pm.

The purpose of this hearing will be to obtain citizen input into the development of the application. The location for the hearing is a handicapped accessible facility. All comments are welcome and must be submitted in writing. If a translator is needed for non-english speaking persons, please contact John Wiggers at (662)283-2675 at least 5 days prior to the meeting in an effort to accommodate this request.

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