

An abstract graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a network of light blue lines and small circles, resembling a circuit board or a neural network, set against a dark blue gradient background.

AUTISM, SOCIAL NEEDS AND ANXIETY: MAKING SENSE OF AN OFTEN ILLOGICAL WORLD

DEAN BEADLE

SOCIAL SKILLS???

- Debate over whether they should be taught at all
- Teach social knowledge honestly
- Make it real, make it transferable

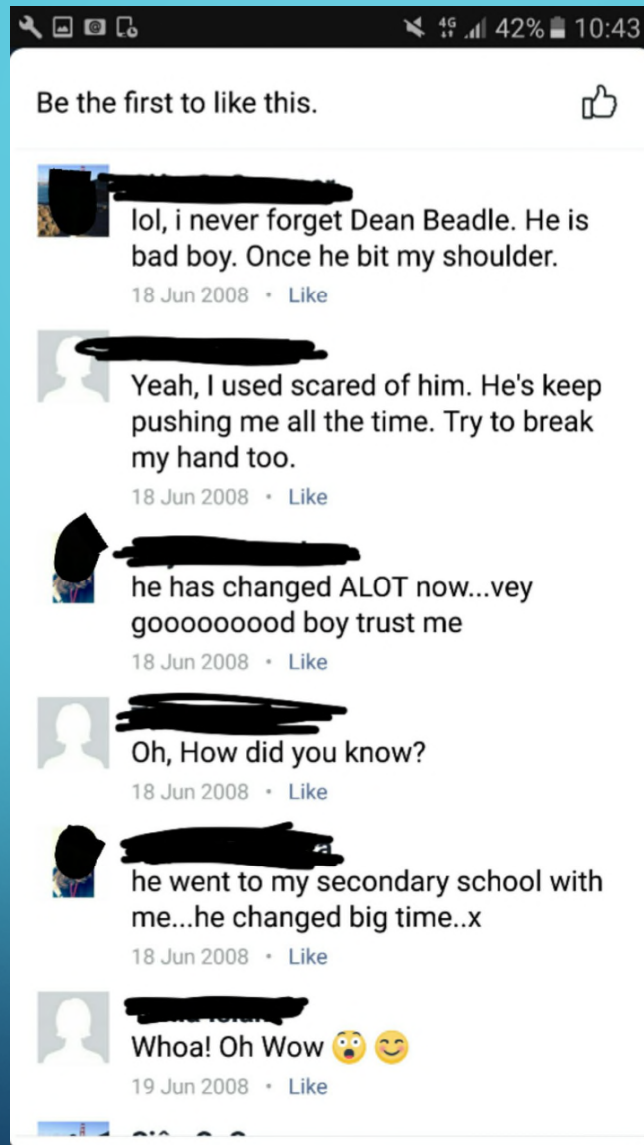
THE MODERN WORLD

- Social media blurs all boundaries
- Can also provide a sense of community
- Each platform has its own unwritten 'rules'
- What is a 'friend'?
- The social world is now not just in the outside world but in our pockets

FRIENDSHIPS

- In childhood- I'd latch on to one person and become possessive
- In order to get attention I would grab at people
- Other children were wary of me....





FRIENDSHIPS CONT.

- Secondary school – how do you make friends?
- Bullying/banter – struggled to know the difference
- Adulthood- still confusion as my definition of friend is very different to most people it seems

DATING

- Dating was a social minefield
- I want certainty/definites
- Couldn't/wouldn't play the 'games' that others did



RELATIONSHIPS

- Make sure your definition of relationships is same as your partner's
- Inheriting your partner's social world
- Whilst they build you up they also shine spotlight on Social challenges
- Sex- a lot of it is about body language which can confuse me- asking is best policy for me
- Your partner's boundaries
- How well will they be able to understand you?

ANXIETY

- Too much imagination
- Less ability to filter threat?
- Context
- In my case, I'm only reassured by defيناتes
- As a black and white thinker, the grey areas of life induce anxiety
- Meltdowns & Shutdowns

ANXIETY cont. WHAT HELPS? FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

- Take it seriously- its real for us
- Golden duo: fact backed up with evidence
- Reduce social pressure when discussing anxiety
- Child will often wait until you are at your busiest- no coincidence- less social focus when you're busy
- Find other ways for child to communicate anxiety- art, music etc- outlets are important
- DONT let child google their anxieties unattended
- Inject the day with predictability to balance out grey areas
- Be careful when using humour with a child who is in the midst of anxiety
- Say little but mean more- few words, maximum meaning
- Try to be clear and explicit with requests etc
- Give time to process

A FEW CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

- Alexithymia
- Do I HAVE to socialise?
- You have the right to define what social is for yourself
- Being patronised is unfortunately a regular occurrence
- Deficit model sadly still prevalent in society
- Damian Milton's 'double empathy' problem
- Myths and stereotypes

The background is a blue gradient with white circuit-like lines in the corners. These lines consist of small circles connected by straight lines, resembling a stylized electronic circuit or network.

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