

Matt George ([00:00](#)):

Today's episode of the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast on the Unsettled Media Podcast Network is brought to you by Sensory Friendly Solutions. Discover sensory friendly solutions for daily life. To learn more head to [Sensoryfriendly.net](http://Sensoryfriendly.net).

Speaker 2 ([00:22](#)):

Unsettled.

Matt George ([00:24](#)):

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to a very special episode of the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast, it's a bonus episode. As we come to the end of our series, as we come to the end of season one, we wanted to bring you a very special episode of the show with someone who needs no introduction, Dr. Temple Grandin. Dr. Temple Grandin is well-known to many for her trail-blazing work as a spokesperson for people with autism and her lifelong work with animal behavior. Dr. Grandin has been with Colorado State University for over 25 years. Grandin has been referred to as the most famous person working at CSU by her peers. Her life's work has been to understand her own autistic mind and to share that knowledge with the world, aiding in the treatment of individuals with the condition. Her understanding of the human mind has aided her in her work with animal behavior and she is one of the most respected experts in both autism and animal behavior in the world. For a very special bonus episode of the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast, we're pleased to give you Dr. Temple Grandin.

Matt George ([01:55](#)):

Hello listeners, and welcome back to a very special episode of the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast. You've been with us so far for 10 episodes, our very first season. We've talked to some real industry pioneers, and I feel like I've had the real good fortune to have conversations with all of those folks. And we wanted to bring you a very special bonus episode with Dr. Temple Grandin. Dr. Temple Grandin certainly needs no introduction. She's been on far larger stages than this, but we thank her so much for giving us her time. Nonetheless, Dr. Temple Grandin, welcome to the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([02:39](#)):

It's really good to be here today.

Matt George ([02:42](#)):

Thank you so much. Where do we find you right now physically? Am I going to guess? Are you in Colorado? Is that right?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([02:48](#)):

I'm in Colorado at home and due to COVID all my travel has been canceled since March 1st. I have not been on a plane and I have not been out of the state of Colorado just gone to a few driving things. And that's it.

Matt George ([03:02](#)):

Does that make you feel a little cooped up because I know you're a big flyer.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([03:06](#)):

Well, haven't done any flying.

Matt George ([03:08](#)):

Yeah.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([03:09](#)):

I'm one of the ones who stayed home during Thanksgiving and I plan to not travel during Christmas either.

Matt George ([03:14](#)):

Yeah. Dr. Temple Grandin. I said in the beginning, you don't need an introduction. There's lots of folks who know you, but I'm curious, when you do a talk or when you do a podcast, do you simply introduce yourself by name or do you put some qualifier on the end? Author, speaker, researcher or do you just say, "It's Dr. Temple Grandin?"

Dr . Temple Grandin ([03:36](#)):

No. I'll just tell you what I'm going to do. I'm Temple Grandin. I'm a professor of animal science at Colorado State University. Author, I've written books on animal behavior books on autism.

Matt George ([03:47](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([03:48](#)):

And when I was little kid, I had all the full-blown symptoms of autism, no speech til age four. And from a sensory standpoint loud noises hurt my ears. Sudden loud noises, like a dentist drill, hitting a nerve. When the grownups talk fast, I thought grown-ups actually had a special grown-up language because it just sounded like, [inaudible 00:04:08]. So my speech teacher would slow down and she'd hold up a cup or some other thing. And she'd say, "Cup." Get me to say it. And then she'd say, "Cup." And she'd go back and forth between saying it very slowly and enunciating it because when people slow down, then I can hear. Now I still have got problems with hearing when it's a lot of background, like in a noisy restaurant, I'm basically functioning deaf, which makes some of those places just not very much fun.

Matt George ([04:36](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([04:38](#)):

And one of my top priorities research is sensory problems. And you can have them in autism, you can have them in ADHD. You can have them in sensory processing disorder. A lot of dyslexics have sensory problems. It would be my number one research priority, but one of the problems we've got on studying this, is that one person may have visual sensitivity, another one touch sensitivities, another one, auditory sensitivities. And when you study these, you got to separate them out. You can't just mix them all together, because you're just not going to get any results. And that's one of the mistakes that's been made in research.

Matt George ([05:11](#)):

So with that added research complication, you've already got me thinking. With that research complication, are you focusing on teaching other researchers how to break this down by category to better get your results?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([05:24](#)):

Well, one of the problems is they use the category of autism, dyslexia, sensory processing disorder. They would be better off if they use the category of, "Well, this person has auditory processing problems and they're not hearing auditory detail clearly." And there's tests for these auditory processing. And I was mixing up lifeboat and light bulb for example. Especially when I just had to listen with one ear. Most of the time I have to figure those words out, to context. I had a student who had very severe visual scrambling. Her visual system would pixelate. I don't have this problem. You need to take people that have this problem and study it. And a lot of these people that have this visual problem will complain that the print jiggles on the page. And I've had several students and I can tell when they have this problem because they absolutely cannot draw, if I tell them to draw a circle, they draw a squiggle. And they'll complain about the print jiggling. So I've had to go out and try some light blue paper, try some tan or gray. There's real pale pastel papers.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([06:28](#)):

And I've seen that in some cases, save our college career. Tan paper in the printer, lavender paper in the printer, but it's got to be the pale colors. And the person has to choose a color that works for them. And nobody knows how it works. All that's known is, in the back of the brain, you have to assemble a graphics file. The eye works like a camera, but the brain seems to split it up into color, shape, motion texture. And those circuits have to work together. And when strokes break these circuits, you get strange things like losing color vision, or not having smooth motion vision. You might have stopped motion, coffee pouring, something like this. It's going to make vision, probably not your most favorite sense. A lot of these people prefer auditory.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([07:16](#)):

And I was at a meeting where a lady had a head injury and I had a book with some pastel pages in it. She happened to look at light yellow and she goes, "I can see the print. This is just saving me." And it's such a simple thing to try. And some people might say, "Well, that's not evidence-based." Well, if something's really safe and cheap like colored paper, I'm going to just go ahead and try it because sometimes it just might work. It doesn't explain all dyslexia, only a subtype, but there's some people where the print jiggles on the page, this can really help them out.

Matt George ([07:51](#)):

And I'm already getting ahead of myself here, but this is so fascinating. Am I right in saying you had a specific unique ability to think about this visual set and setting? In your Ted Talk, you said how much this helped you in designing materials for the animal research world, like cattle pens, for example, because you had a unique ability to visually see what set and setting would be the most impactful.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([08:17](#)):

Now this is types of thinking, which is different than types of sensation. I'm what's called an object visualizer. All my thoughts are pictures. Like when I started talking about the colored paper, I'm not just

seeing the book table where I showed the lady the book and she was just so pleased. Object visualizer, my thoughts are in pictures. Then you have the visual spatial. This is your more mathematical thinker and in designing things, you have the industrial designer side, that's the visual thinker like me. Then you have the more mathematical engineering side, programming side of things. Then you've got people that are strictly a word thing. Everything they think about is in words.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([09:01](#)):

Now, people that have visual processing problems tend to not be visual thinkers because the visual systems is just kind of too distorted, especially when they get tired. Students that I've had, if they got this problem, they tend to be auditory thinkers. They'd much rather just listen to the podcast, they could care less about the video.

Matt George ([09:21](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). And we're going to get into the types of thinkers, when we get into what is a really interesting discussion around education in students with different kinds of thinking. But before that, with your permission, I'd like to dig a little bit deeper into COVID. I was listening to you on the MEAT+POULTRY Podcast and you mentioned how, it was March 12th, I believe when you knew you were officially grounded, is that right?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([09:48](#)):

Yep. And I didn't really think I was going to still be grounded, almost practically on December 1st.

Matt George ([09:54](#)):

And I could tell because you said-

Dr . Temple Grandin ([09:56](#)):

I thought we'd be back up in the air way before now.

Matt George ([09:58](#)):

Yes. You were talking about your engagements in September that had been canceled and we're now almost December. I wanted to ask you Dr. Grandin, we've heard a lot as a theme throughout the course of this podcast about the importance of routine in the autism community and with routine disruption. This was from Maureen Bennie of the Autism Awareness Center. There can be side effects to that routine disruption. During COVID, have you set yourself on a routine? You mentioned being up ready for work 8:00 AM.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([10:32](#)):

Yes. Every day, you have to do it. And I suggest that people might want to look at life on the International Space Station. You've now got seven people up there right now, living in a very confined space. And one thing that NASA has learned is, they have to have a schedule and they have their scheduled work, exercise time, they have a midday meal, they're all expected to get together for the mid day meal. They also have scheduled time off and Scott Kelly who spent a year on the Space Station said that the schedule was really, really essential. And when they first started Space Stations, they didn't do this and they had problems. Like crews getting mad, turning off mission control, clearly not acceptable.

Matt George ([11:11](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([11:12](#)):

But NASA is learning some stuff and having a schedule. I get up, I'm working on new book on visual thinking. I've got to have things to do. I've got some other writing problems lined up, a chapter on animal welfare auditing. I'm going to do another paper on COVID and animal welfare. And I've just got to have stuff to do.

Matt George ([11:40](#)):

Have you thought about-

Dr . Temple Grandin ([11:40](#)):

So when I get up in the morning and I do a lot of writing in the morning.

Matt George ([11:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Have you thought about the interpretation of why routine disruption or maintaining a routine can be so beneficial? Is it a sense of control? Is it a sense of, I know what's coming?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([11:56](#)):

Well, if I don't get up in the morning and take a shower, like I feel noticeably better when I get out of that shower and then have a couple of days I slouched around in my sleep wear and it was a big mistake. I've got to get up, make myself do it. And then we're going to sit down and do the really difficult writing and the hard work in the morning. I do a walk in the afternoon. I try to schedule a lot of these conferences in the afternoon.

Matt George ([12:20](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([12:20](#)):

And you've also got scheduled stuff to do and you can't just be laying around.

Matt George ([12:28](#)):

You mentioned your afternoon walk. I'm always curious about the daily rituals that people can't miss. Do you have a daily ritual you can't miss?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([12:36](#)):

Well, the most important thing is the getting up in the morning, not sleeping in.

Matt George ([12:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([12:41](#)):

And now I never switched over to the ... I just stay on the summertime time. Now it's ready for work at seven o'clock because I use light to extend my photo period, and that's helped a whole lot on depression. So I get up, I do have my sleepwear on, I get breakfast and I'll sit and read for an hour with sleepwear on. Then shower, dressed for work. Now it's a seven, o'clock not eight o'clock. And I'm finding if I don't do that, then I really don't feel very good. And you've got to find stuff to do. I mean, these are good times to teach a lot of social skills and Home Depot, a company that sells lumber and stuff like that. They're doing just great. The gardening people did just great. Get other things started.

Matt George ([13:26](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([13:29](#)):

You're going to have to make a new schedule.

Matt George ([13:30](#)):

On your website in big, bold print, I read the words, too much screen time has a bad effect on child development and during COVID we've always wondered, is there a societal effect of all the things that are going on right now? Obviously we're doing this via Zoom. There's lots of technology being used. Is too much screen time for child development, a negative thing?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([13:54](#)):

Well, I'm very concerned about little kids being out of school, kids under 10. Just this week, I was visiting with a teacher, I went and visited a little small horse show just to get out. We socially distanced. Really fun little horse show.

Matt George ([14:06](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([14:06](#)):

And there was a second grade teacher there. It was just this Monday and she was working with low-income students and she's told me, that half of her second grade students that would be eight year old students, are not logging in. And she calls the parents and they don't do anything. That's really atrocious. And these real young kids, these are the ones who need to get back into schools. And I was reading how Germany was doing it. They put them together like eight students in a class and a teacher and that's a pod. And then somebody gets sick, then they just quarantine that pod, not the whole school.

Matt George ([14:37](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([14:39](#)):

And that's what they're doing. We got to get these little ones back in school. They're the most important and that's just atrocious. That's a teacher I just talked to just within the last week.

Matt George ([14:49](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). You mentioned that Home Depot, things like gardening, people doing that building project, they were neglecting because they're at home now. And in your Ted Talk, I always fascinated to hear how you are concerned that taking skilled trades, those tactile trades out of schools would potentially have negative knock on effects for unique thinkers or thinkers who were on the autism spectrum.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([15:15](#)):

Well, it's going to have a negative effect on losing skills too. There's two parts of engineering, there's the object visualizer like me that design really clever things. Then you have your degree engineers. Now I've worked on construction projects, every major meat company, including in Canada on great, big, gigantic new plants being built. There's a very, very interesting division of labor. The mathematical engineers do the boilers and the refrigeration, but all the very intricate, clever equipment that goes inside, we're having to import it now from Europe because we're not making it anymore. And that goes back to taking skilled trades out, 25 years ago.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([15:49](#)):

And I was just reading an article in one of my magazines. In New Yorker Magazine about a carpenter, the super high-end carpentry work. Real fancy houses, beautiful carpentry work. Well, that's a very, high-end skilled trade but I'm seeing kids growing up today that have never used tools. And that's why I came up with my little book, Calling All Minds. It's my childhood projects because we've got maybe 25% of all kids today, at least outside of Denver have never made a paper airplane. That's just ridiculous. They're not making things. And I'm concerned that our education system is screening out us visual thinkers that like to build stuff and you need us. You need us a whole lot.

Matt George ([16:35](#)):

When I was thinking about that, it resonated so much with me because as a technology oriented person, I noticed I started to lose the ability to manipulate things in my head in 3D, because I wasn't one of those tactile people that you're describing. And I wonder, have you considered, is there ... I know you're a very thoughtful person. Is there some use of technology that would allow us to still leverage those abilities? Like for example, what if we used VR for on the job training? Or is it just not the same as really getting dirty with your hands and making stuff?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([17:09](#)):

You got to just do it. You've got to just do things. I was using tools when I was eight years old. I learned how to use them carefully and I was using a little saw when I was about 10 years old. And you just learn how to use it carefully, but I'm seeing kids that are really good with Legos. Nobody thought they could use tools and they're becoming their label. They're not learning shopping, they're not learning bank account. Just basic, basic things that they need to be learning, they're not learning. And let's look at something like Zoom. The reason why Zoom took over everything is because the interface is easy to use. You see, that's the object visualizer. If somebody like me would have designed the interface, then the programmers have to make the programming work. You see, you have to have both. They are both important. And then you laid that other program on me that didn't come up easily at all, the little techie program.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([18:03](#)):

And then one time I was doing a Zoom conference to Brazil and the entire server for Zoom crashed in Brazil. So they sent me another link, something called Streamyard.com. I can tell you right now, it's a good interface. I used it with no training. That's the kind of interface I like. I figured out how to get on it and it worked just fine.

Matt George ([18:24](#)):

I love this idea of diverse thinking, because you mentioned Silicon Valley more than once in your Ted Talk and it makes me think like exactly as you're saying. There's a type of engineer that writes the software.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([18:36](#)):

That's right.

Matt George ([18:36](#)):

There's the visual thinker, that's going to do the user interface, the user interaction and that visual sense, that visual talent is what you have. Does standardized education not do us justice because we're not standardized thinkers?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([18:53](#)):

Well, the problem is the algebra requirements are screening out a lot of these kids. I cannot do algebra. I've never passed algebra. I managed to get out of it because thank goodness in 67, it wasn't a required math class. They had this thing called finite math. It was statistics, probability and matrices and with tutoring I got through it because I was a bit more visual. But the thing is, we need the different kinds of minds and you have engineering, but the other fields, industrial design, and that is the art side of designing things. And these skills can be complimentary and you need to have both. And I didn't realize how bad this until a last year, I went to beautiful brand new state-of-the-art poultry plant, and we had done the boilers and refrigeration, the building. Make sure the roof doesn't fall down. That part of what we did, all the equipment came over from a 100 shipping containers from Holland, beautiful equipment. And I stood there on this catwalk and I screamed, "We don't make it anymore. And I am going to go back and I'm going to really blast educators about this."

Matt George ([19:55](#)):

Yes.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([19:55](#)):

And we need to stop sticking our nose up at high-end skill trades. And I just read this article in the New Yorker Magazine about this carpenter that's doing this very high-end, fancy carpentry work, and he's got a great career.

Matt George ([20:10](#)):

Yeah. I would like to read something that I believe you wrote. It's very quick, but there's a point to me reading this. And so I'll read it and then I'll ask my question. Rigid, academic and social expectations could wind up stifling a mind that while it might struggle to conjugate a verb could one day take us to distant stars. And I'm a writer, and one of the things that I love about that is it's so beautiful. It makes a



point, but it's beautifully written. Do you see progress in that regard? Are those rigid expectations loosening or do we still have a lot of work to do?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([20:52](#)):

We still have a lot of it. And I did my book, The Autistic Brain. I'll hold it up here for the people that will be watching the video. And I present the science for the two kinds of thinkers, the object visualizer, and then the visual spatial math visualizer. That book was published in 2013. There's now been a bunch more studies. And one of the newer studies is showing that you're not going to find a super good object visualizer and a more mathematical visual-spatial visualizer in the same person. They're actually kind of opposite skills. And the thing is we need our visual thinkers to prevent messes like Fukushima. I don't know how they made that mistake. How could you put an electrically driven emergency cooling pump in a non waterproof basement where there's tsunamis and that pump's not going to work when it gets flooded. Watertight doors would have saved it. See, the engineers don't see it.

Matt George ([21:41](#)):

So that's potentially what we lose-

Dr . Temple Grandin ([21:43](#)):

[crosstalk 00:21:43]. I see it. I see the water filling the basement and this pump is not going to run an electric motor. And when I need that emergency cooling pump, I really need it. Well, it failed to work.

Matt George ([21:54](#)):

And that's potentially an example of, if we lose diversity of thought, we could run into a scenario such as that.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([22:01](#)):

Well, I found out, there was actually a second Fukushima plant and their manager managed to save it. It was on a little bit higher ground, it had some watertight doors but some of it got flooded. And the plant manager knew every nook and cranny in the place. And he basically got giant extension cords from a single operating generator over to two reactors that were getting really hot, really fast.

Matt George ([22:25](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([22:26](#)):

I think there's a good chance, he was a visual thinker. And when I told my student about it, she says, "Oh, that's just giant extension cords, real thick ones."

Matt George ([22:37](#)):

In the description of the Ted Talk, the three distinct types of thinkers and this really stood out to me was visual pattern and verbal. Is that also how you characterize?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([22:49](#)):

Well, that's the way I characterize them originally, but now in the scientific literature, they're now characterizing a visual thinker as the object visualizer. So if you want to look at some of the research, you've got to use search word object visualizer. The pattern thinker in the scientific literature is called visual-spatial. And the problem with an awful lot of studies is they're mixing, when they do the study, object visualizers and the more mathematical thinkers together, all under visual-spatial. They are not the same. See, in your brain you have circuits, [inaudible 00:23:20] is something? That's the picture thinking, that's me. And the visual-spatial is, where are you located in space? That's the more mathematical thinker. And the research is really clear. And then a lot of people are kind of mixtures of these things. And then you've got people that are totally word thinker, absolutely word thinker. Think completely in words.

Matt George ([23:41](#)):

In episode nine of the podcast, I really was excited to ask you this question, because I was curious as to what you meant. On your website, you have written, have high but reasonable expectations. And in episode nine of our podcast, we spoke to a woman named Trish Hamilton. She's the mother of a young boy with autism, and she talked about the need to push her son sometimes. Even when it might be uncomfortable, to get him out there into the world, what did you mean by have high but reasonable expectations?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([24:11](#)):

Well, don't try to go from a crawl to running a marathon overnight.

Matt George ([24:16](#)):

Right.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([24:17](#)):

What my mother did with me, she stretched me just slightly outside my comfort zone and gave me choices. And there's a tendency to overprotect and a lot of these kids need to be gotten out. I had a choice when I was 15, go to my aunt's ranch for a week or I could go all summer, not going wasn't a choice.

Matt George ([24:35](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([24:36](#)):

I got out there and I loved it. And if I hadn't gone to my aunt's ranch, I wouldn't have been in the cattle industry.

Matt George ([24:41](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([24:43](#)):

We've got to just stretch. Now, I'll tell you some things we don't do, multitasking. This is a problem because basically, a person with a sensory processing disorder doesn't process quickly. So super, crazy,

busy takeout window at McDonald's be a bad choice for a job. That's chucking into the deep end. We don't do that.

Matt George ([25:03](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([25:05](#)):

Multitasking also, I cannot remember long strings of verbal information. So if I have to take apart some machine, and when I worked at a dairy, I had to take apart dairy equipment, set it up. They actually had a pilot's checklist on the wall. Set up steps, cleaning steps. And if that pilot's checklist hadn't been there, I would have been in trouble. I cannot remember long strings of verbal information. Also, I'm slow processor. So a lot of people with sensory processing problems are going to be slow to respond. Imagine if you're a computer, you're the Intel 286, tiny processor but you got huge memory. You've got the Microsoft or Amazon cloud for memory.

Matt George ([25:45](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). That's a great description. I was interested about Mr. Carlock. Can you tell us about Mr. Carlock and who he was in your life?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([25:56](#)):

He was my science teacher and he was the one responsible for getting me from being an awful student who had no motivation to study, to study. And he started out giving me a really interesting projects and the HBO movie showed the optical illusion room and all of the projects I did. I loved that part of it. And what he did for me, is he made studying not something just to please the family, but studying became a pathway to a goal. If I wanted to become a scientist, I would have to study. So he did things and he showed me how scientists read scientific journal articles. I didn't know what a scientific journal article was. And of course there was no internet then. So he took me to the great big library down in Boston and looked at scientific journal articles. And then they had these big indexes, like the psychological abstracts, the Index Medicus. And we didn't even have a copy machine in the library. You had to copy abstracts onto cards and stick them in recipe boxes.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([26:52](#)):

I remember I was two years into college and we got a five cent copy machine. I thought, "Oh, that was the best thing that ever happened." I would have never have dreamed when I was in college, back in the late '60s that I could have the library in my pocket. That was beyond my imagination. Our future, like in our library's time capsule, they put a telephone dial on it, for dial access material.

Matt George ([27:21](#)):

Does your experience with Mr. Carlock speak to the importance of mentors?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([27:25](#)):

Yes. Mentors are very important. I had a great teacher in third grade. My speech teacher was excellent. My mother taught me reading and I learned with phonics, not with sight words.

Matt George ([27:37](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Dr . Temple Grandin ([27:37](#)):

I was one of those. There also was a very good contractor who was just starting his business and he'd seen my drawings and he seeked me out to design jobs. He was a former Marine Corps captain and he put together a really diverse team to get his small company started. And he built those projects that were shown in the movie and he'd seen my drawings. And just today, somebody emailed me about how do we get jobs to people on the spectrum? The way I used to do interviews, lay the drawings out on the table, show the work, show the photos. If the person's a programmer, they should put some code out there to show. Not too much stuff, you want a 30 second wow. But I learned to sell the work rather than myself. I also built up a reputation of being a really good livestock editor for our state farm magazine.

Matt George ([28:25](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). At the end of your Ted Talk, Chris Anderson asked you what you're passionate about and I loved your answer. And I was wondering, has the answer changed at all or does that passion remain? And maybe if it does remain, you could reiterate what you responded to Chris.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([28:44](#)):

Well, I'm interested right now and I want to see kids that are different and adults, I want to see people get out and be successful.

Matt George ([28:50](#)):

Yeah.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([28:50](#)):

That's what I want to see. It makes me really happy now, now at the age of 73 years old, I'm way past retirement age. Somebody writes to me, "Will your book help my kid go to college or my kid got a job because of something you said on a podcast?" I kind of want to help the younger ones to get out there and be successful. And I've been doing a lot of thinking about identity. Autism's never been my primary identity. When I started out in the cattle industry, back in the early '70s, being a woman was 10 times the barrier than autism, 10 times the barrier. I had to be much better than the guys. And for me, scientists, designer, animal behavior, that comes first. Autism is an important part of who I am. I wouldn't want to change because I like the logical way I think.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([29:43](#)):

And I'm saying too many people becoming the label. Now, I think that's great to get out there and do activism, but you're going to be a better activist, if you can show what people can do. I really like things like these companies that are deliberately hiring people on the spectrum, like Aspiritech, for example. They test websites, they test fancy headphones. I can't tell you what brand of headphones, there a very fancy high end headphones to make sure they'll work with every possible combination of devices because they don't leave anything out. And they saved one company thousands of dollars because they found that when a website got updated, that a phone number had been transposed in one region. Well, you see that's attention to detail.

Matt George ([30:32](#)):

Right.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([30:33](#)):

That's something that autistic people can do really well. In Israel right now they're using autistic people to analyze satellite photos.

Matt George ([30:41](#)):

Wow. Because of that attention to detail?

Dr . Temple Grandin ([30:45](#)):

That's right. That's taking advantage. And then I've been out to Silicon Valley, half those programmers were on the spectrum and they avoid the labels. I remember going to this great big room, it was only about a year and a half ago. They had a 100 programmers in a big long bench desks, totally silent, headphones clapped on, different stuff going on, on their computers. Each one was working on something different, totally engaged in it.

Matt George ([31:08](#)):

Dr. Grandin, let me tell you, this is an absolute pleasure. I feel really, really lucky to have had the chance to virtually be in your kitchen. I know from all the listeners here at the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast, they're going to be really excited about this bonus episode. And I thank you for being you. I thank you for the opportunity and I thank you for being on the Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast.

Dr . Temple Grandin ([31:29](#)):

Thank you for having me.

Matt George ([31:34](#)):

Thank you to our sponsor, TakingITGlobal. Ensuring that youth around the world are actively engaged and connected in shaping a more inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world. As part of their RisingYouth initiative, they're looking for young people who are inspired with ideas and ready to take action through youth led community service grants. Head to [Risingyouth.ca](#) to learn more and to become the next RisingYouth grant recipient.

Matt George ([32:02](#)):

The podcast is also supported by New Brunswick Community College as part of the community resource awareness during and after COVID-19 applied research project. Funded by the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation. Learn more about NBCC's efforts to transform lives and communities at [Nbcc.ca](#).

Matt George ([32:21](#)):

The Sensory Friendly Solutions Podcast is produced by me, Matt George. It is engineered by the great Zachary Pelletier and is part of the Unsettled Media Podcast Network.