

# Adulting on the Spectrum: Being transgender and accepted, hyper fixations and VHS tapes

## **Andrew M. Komarow**

Welcome to "Adulting on the Spectrum," I am Andrew Komarow. I'm an autistic Certified Financial Planner. I co-run "Adulting on the Spectrum," with Eileen Lamb. Hey, Eileen.

## **Eileen Lamb**

Hey everyone, I'm Eileen Lamb. I'm an author and photographer from France living in Austin, Texas. And in this podcast, we want to highlight real voices of autistic adults, not just inspirational stories, but real people talking about their boring life, or not boring. We want to give a voice to people like us. And today, our guests, guest is Seth Garner Ah Seth, do you want to introduce yourself to our listeners?

## **Seth Garner**

Yes. Hello, I'm Seth Garner, and I am an autistic college student who is majoring in radiologic technology. I also have an interest in music theory. In medical science, obviously, since I'm majoring in radiologic technology, and NASCAR. Current hyper fixation is VHS tapes and VCRs and old technology.

## **Eileen Lamb**

These are awesome interest and we're gonna talk about them more because we want to hear more about those VHS tapes and all of that. But before we start, we need to ask you what are your preferred pronouns? And how would you do you identify autistic person, person with autism?

## **Seth Garner**

Um, my pronouns are he, him and I, and I identify as I switch, like just about every single time I say I'm autistic, I'm like, Hi, I'm Seth, and I'm autistic. Hi, I'm Seth and I have autism, I don't have a preference. It's really just a label for a neuro- type. And that's all there is to it. Some scientists Oh, some scientists believe that autism could be the next evolution in human. There could be a world full of autistic people one day, and it could be weird to be neurotypical in 100 years, like, Oh, you don't have sensory issues. That's so weird.

## **Andrew M. Komarow**

That would be interesting. I for the whole host of a whole host of reasons. Yeah. Yeah. So when were you diagnosed with autism?

## **Seth Garner**

I was I was actually undergoing evaluations. As early as when we first noticed my sensory issues which I had quite the medical story from, like when I was born, because I was born a month early, it was, like 34 weeks, I think, is what my mom said. And we noticed in my early life, that I had sensory

issues. And those kind of never went away. So I had therapy for those. And I also had evaluations at Kennedy Krieger the Center for Autism. And because I was assigned female at birth, they didn't really want to give you the diagnosis right away. So they diagnosed me with pervasive developmental delay, which was my diagnosis until I was 15 years old. And a social worker saw my signs of autism, a social worker that was working with my family, for completely different reasons, saw the signs of autism in me and saw that I was transgender, and said, well, how about we go, and I refer you to this doctor at Children's Hospital who is doing a research study, between the length of being on the link of being transgender and the link between being autistic. I've actually been a part of three research studies in my lifetime, and I'm 19 years old. So actually, medical history comes in so handy if you're a trans person, like Like, if you have had, like, my parents, my mom had infertility issues. So she had a lot of testing before she had me. And they were actually going to do artificial, they were actually going to do IVF, or artificial insemination. And so they can get pregnant. And they had genetic testing to on me when I was really, really little like, still in her womb, I think. And there was also like I was assigned female at birth, and my finger, the way my fingers Look how this finger is, like the same height as this one. or longer, it shows signs of prenatal testosterone exposure. And because of my mom's miscarriages, some of them were male. And so we think that the male hormones mixing with my body, were one of the reasons why I turned out to be trans. And there's actually a study going on right now about that, and we won't know for separately for several years, if that makes a difference, but we think it could. My mom actually asked that question to my neuro-psych and she gets full credit for asking that question. But what I'm saying is, I have a very masculine body even though I was born female. And even though I'm not currently on hormones, like, you can see that I have an Adam's apple, and I have some facial hair right here, but you can't really see it on camera, but it's there. And, um, and, you know, it's so cool, but I actually had the answer to the question of, could I be intersex? But the answer is no. My hormones my chromosomes are XX and they aren't XXY.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Do you think you would encourage other people considering transitioning whether autistic or not to look into that history? Or would it...or is it may not be relevant? Or could there be downsides to doing that for other people, if you can imagine that?

**Seth Garner**

Well, it's not necessary for everybody, but for me, it um, it kind of, like having that information was really useful for me, because of the way that you know, it's just a really good thing I turned out to be trans because if I turned out to be a female, there are there would be a lot of parts of my body that I wouldn't like. But because I turned out to be a trans male, I actually really like it. I really like the parts of my body that are masculine.

**Eileen Lamb**

That's so great to hear that your family was supportive. From what..

**Seth Garner**

Oh, yes. My mom and my parents, my dad was like, super supportive, and but my extended family took them a while to get used to it. And my dad actually hid the fact that I was autistic from my extended family. And they found out when I was 16. And they had a whole discussion about it. That didn't include me. Because my mom sent an email to my aunt, to my Aunt Bunny. That's what I call her. Her name is actually Karen, ironically. So yeah, she she sent an email to my Aunt Karen about because my Aunt Karen allegedly called me mentally ill at a family gathering. When I was 16. She was just like, aren't you, but aren't you mentally ill? And I was like, I'm autistic, there's a difference. Like, there is a difference between being mentally ill and being autistic. And you can be both, but I am just autistic, and I have ADHD. And those are my two mental diagnoses and anxiety. But I've greatly improved that.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah, I think a lot of people who have autism also have anxiety, I have a diagnosis of a general anxiety disorder, too. And I know a lot of people in the autism community do. I don't know how it's linked, but it is somehow. When did you know do you feel that you? I don't know that the right word. So forgive me if I'm saying something that's not correct. But when did you know you were not a girl that you you wanted to,

**Seth Garner**

Whenever my mom put my hair up, I really liked cars and trucks my entire childhood. And when my mom would put my hair up, I would take it out. And I would, you know, I would throw it and my mom thought that was a sensory issue, but and then she would like be like, Oh, look, it's green. It's your favorite color or look its Christmas red, you have to wear it. And I was like, you know, and you know, I felt guilty. So I would make her put the bow back in there because I was I was pretty, I was a pretty sweet child. I would, I would you know, I'd feel guilty and I would, you know, give it to her to put it back in my hair. And she would put it back in my hair and I would wear it even though I wasn't completely happy wearing it. And when I was eight years old, I finally had the words to like, sit down and talk with my mom like, hey, this isn't working for me. Like I can't. I can't wear dresses. I don't want my hair to be this long anymore. And I want I don't want to do it to look like a boy I want to do it to look like me.

**Eileen Lamb**

Well, how did that go? She was supportive.

**Seth Garner**

Oh, it went amazing. She we um, within the next within, within that same week we had, like, I already had the appointment went to I'm getting my hair cut and I already had all the clothes that were masculine and she didn't gender, my clothing, She didn't gender, my clothing, she didn't gender my hair. She threw gender roles out the window and said like screw that because I didn't want to follow them. I thought they were stupid.

**Eileen Lamb**

That's amazing that you had a supportive family. I know it's...

**Seth Garner**

And that's how all parents are raising their kids. Now my mom was parenting in 2020 in since 2002. And I just think that's amazing.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah, I agree. And I'm so glad you had a supportive, mostly supported family.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Yeah, so I've been waiting for this one. So before we started recording, we were you were saying that something in you said it a little bit when we first started that something wasn't a special interest. It was a hyper fixation.

**Seth Garner**

Yeah, it was a hyper fixation mean, ology is a hyper fixation, because I don't have a special interest in it.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So how do you define the difference? I'm curious, I've just never heard that before. So

**Seth Garner**

My interest is different from the hyper fixation, because a hyper fixation is like, I hyper fixation is

**Andrew M. Komarow**

You can't stop looking at something even though you're on a podcast.

**Seth Garner**

Kind of. (all laugh) Yeah, it's different from special interest.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

For anyone who is just listening, Seth is holding a VHS tape that he just bought today,

**Seth Garner**

I'm holding a VHS tape that I got today. And it is a hybrid fixation of mine, because I was thinking about it. And I was like, I really want to watch your VHS, I really want to watch a VHS. And so my mom said, so I come into my mom's room at like, 10 o'clock at night. And I was like, Mom, I really want to watch your VHS and she said, okay, we could probably arrange that.

**Eileen Lamb**

So she got it for you. Um,

**Seth Garner**

We went to the thrift store and looked for tapes, and I got this one. And I got this one. And I got this, which I'm probably not going to be able to sit through because

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Now, when it comes to something like older technology, is it the technology itself that interests you? Do you like watching the videos on it? So for example, I've met..

**Seth Garner**

It's just a physical object, like, physical object that I can hold. And I'm a very kind of tactile person, I really like to hold stuff and like, like, like, this contains something that I can watch. And it's more interesting than a DVD, because it's, it's a brick. It's a brick that will play a video. And it's just so neat. I don't know,

**Eileen Lamb**

Does being a fast typist relate to being a pianist, does it have something to do with the steam and the title sensation of the fingers?

**Seth Garner**

Oh, and the fact that it has to do with, it's actually three things, the tactile sensation, the fact that I'm a very fast thinker, and like, really, like really want to get my ideas out there. And the fact that I can just type and the letters will appear. And it's just so perfect. There's just something so perfect about typing on a keyboard, and I just love it. And especially, I can't stand when the keyboard is jammed. And like the letters don't work, because I need to type this out. It has to be fast, because I'm thinking, and I'm thinking so fast, because I'm also ADHD and I am very, very, very just, I want to think about this, I want to type it out, and I want to get it out as fast as I can. Especially I'm super excited about something.

**Eileen Lamb**

How did you learn piano?

**Seth Garner**

I taught myself. First part of its math, and it's just notes all about music theory. And it gets way into the nitty gritty stuff that you don't learn unless you're in college for this kind of thing.

**Eileen Lamb**

What's what interests you about it?

**Seth Garner**

It's a way for me to interact with music without having to be around a keyboard. I can still do music just by looking at this. And by reading it.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

What does that mean? I can't even imagine that. And it's not in a bad way, but maybe help our listeners to like, what does it mean to interact with music from a book, can you describe it for us,

**Seth Garner**

Like, you'll know why you can. You can think about all the chord progressions, which is really cool because chord progressions are so neat. And most of your modern chord progressions will be like 1451 or 4156. In modern music, which I don't like modern music, I like choral music, which also has some basic chord patterns, but the vocal technique and the and the music and like the musical elements. And the more is dictated in your music, the less freedom you have to make it your own. Unless you rewrite it and edit it, which I have done. And the lease that's written on you music gives you the more gives more room for improvisation. more room for improvisation,

**Eileen Lamb**

When you read music, can you hear it?

**Seth Garner**

When I read music, can I hear it? Sometimes I actually have more ear training than I give myself credit for. Because I remember sight reading this one piece of music on Instagram at 3am because I woke up in the middle of the night one night, and I was like, the music theory song, I wonder how this looks. And I was like, and I can hear it like in my head and then I pulled it up on YouTube. And I was like, I just was, I wanted to scream. But it was the middle. It was the dead middle of the night. So I held back and I was just like, so I laid there for a good few minutes, just in total shock that I had just read this and heard it in my head, and it was perfect. I'd read it in the exact right pitch and everything it was it was amazing. And then I also gave myself homework, which is in this folder and Oh. I mean this pieces in French.

**Eileen Lamb**

Oh, what is it? leash on? the leash also on the roads?

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Yeah. What you said,

**Eileen Lamb**

What I said

**Seth Garner**

The fifth movement?

**Eileen Lamb**

I can't read music. No, the read the title. Yeah, that's one. Yeah.

**Seth Garner**

That's what it is. And it's by my favorite composer Morten Lauridsen who wrote "Sure On This Shining Night," which is one of my favorite songs by him.

**Eileen Lamb**

I love it. Eric Cite. I don't know if you know, you know him.

**Seth Garner**

I've heard of him.

**Eileen Lamb**

He's amazing. You should listen to him.

**Seth Garner**

I will that on my list. I gave myself homework and I completed a good there's still some stuff in here they have to complete. And I wrote all over this paper.

**Eileen Lamb**

What do you write about?

**Seth Garner**

If anyone here listening is a music major. I hope you feel seen by this. Seth's theory. In the third example, the chord could either be a diatonic chord in E Harmonic Minor, or it could be a secondary chord, one slash five, depending on how it's used the cord in the third example.

**Eileen Lamb**

You just like to study it.

**Seth Garner**

Yeah. I do.

**Eileen Lamb**

And to you, that's a special interest, not a hyper fixation.

**Seth Garner**

It's a special interest. Yes.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So question for you. I'm typing in old technology because I know nothing about music, or Well, if I do, I can't, I am paid money not to sing. So it's quite the opposite.

**Seth Garner**

I should start paying my mom to not sing. But I don't have the money for that. Sorry mom, she is in the next room. If you listen to the podcast, you'll know.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Um, so as far as I'm really interested in the tactile sensation of being like stimming and especially with the keyboard and typing side, if I have a two-part keyboard question for you, okay, because I like technology a lot. And I like some older technology, but I also like newer stuff. I like the old though. So question. So what type of keyboard use Do you like a mechanical keyboard see I can't stand the sound? Even if and feel of those like cherry keys to mechanical keyboard? Have you ever tried one of those like that?

**Seth Garner**

They're all right, sometimes, but not all the time. Okay. Can't live with them can't live without him.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

I don't know what you mean.

**Seth Garner**

It's like if that's like the keyboards at school were like that. And as long as they weren't jammed, I like them.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

No, I'm talking about the good ones. Like the fancy ones like the that are made with like the cherry like wooden keys. Like some gamers might use them. You know, they're a little bit more expensive.

**Seth Garner**

Those are okay sometimes, but I prefer the I prefer a laptop keyboard.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Okay. Yeah, the noise doesn't bother me.

**Seth Garner**

Yeah, they are faster.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So you're talking about? Yes. Yeah, that makes sense.

**Seth Garner**

But like, it can't be, but they have to be physical keys that you're able to push down.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Yes. And do you type in Dvorak?



**Seth Garner**

I don't know what that means. So

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So I you know, Qwerty right.

**Seth Garner**

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

And Qwerty for anyone who doesn't know is the first letters on the keyboard. And there was somebody who and I feel like I just have sent sat down a rabbit hole. For the next month or so Qwerty was invented to save either like space slash ink or it was designed with typewriters actually

**Seth Garner**

It was designed to the keys wouldn't get jammed

**Andrew M. Komarow**

I was gonna say I said stick Did I say stick or,

**Seth Garner**

No you didn't talk about how any of the keys get jammed but they would get

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Let me go back so Qwerty was designed so keys wouldn't get jammed on the typewriter but it wasn't necessarily the most efficient for typing so that so they came out with something called Dvorak which you can get an overlay for any keyboard and you could change a keyboard for Dvorak and it's supposedly you know, faster and easier to type with the Dvorak layout verse a QWERTY

**Seth Garner**

Still QWERTY,

**Andrew M. Komarow**

No can't even if it's faster and more efficient.

**Seth Garner**

I my muscle memory is already geared up for QWERTY like my muscle memories already. I don't I don't. Oh my God, have you seen people to type A,B,C,D,E,F,G?

**Andrew M. Komarow**

No, no. And I never want to.

**Seth Garner**

I don't either I don't want to meet those people. Those people sound so scary. Like if you can type on a keyboard like, like how you're supposed to type on the keyboard, and it's laid out in alphabetical order? Who are you? Yeah, stay away from me.

**Eileen Lamb**

Even worse than the what is it that you were talking about Andrew?

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Dvorak. Dvorak.

**Seth Garner**

Like I can live with those people. Sure, as long as they respect that. I am a man who likes the QWERTY.

**Eileen Lamb**

Sorry, I'm back. So how is it being a young autistic in the current social and political climate?

**Seth Garner**

I just continue to advocate I continue to help parents, I continue to, like I've actually been reached out to by parents of autistic children. And that just makes me so happy that I'm able to help. Yeah, because I'm, I'm a 19 year old man in today's society who I don't talk about politics or religion on the internet. But that doesn't mean that I don't have them. People often assume that just because I don't talk about politics and religion on the internet, it means that I don't have them and it's like, that's not true.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

How do you, how are you able to still be a good advocate without fighting everyone on the internet and staying, you know, and avoiding all of those discussions? How are you able to ignore it? A lot of us don't find it so easy. And well, I'm looking up to you. I am curious if you can help others.

**Seth Garner**

I mean, I don't get hate on the internet and is one thing I mean, I have when I had religious queer in my bio on TikTok, I got an endless comments of God doesn't love you and, and stuff. So that's another reason why I don't talk about religion. But um, or I have been told, you know, I've been told once or twice don't say person with autism don't say you're a person with autism. And I'm like, what's the big deal? There were there are a lot of people who weren't very nice to me in school.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah. How was that growing up for you being?

**Seth Garner**

Oh, very hard. Um, eighth grade was the worst. I thought I was just making a big deal out of it. But when I told my mom about it, like a few years later, she was like, Why didn't you tell me all that was happening? And I was like, I thought I was being a baby about it. And like, the school wasn't doing anything for me.

**Eileen Lamb**

What was he saying to you?

**Seth Garner**

Your dirty faggot, your dirty queer you. And you're not a real boy. And you never will be.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah, you know, I think it's important that we talk about these things because it shouldn't be happening.

**Seth Garner**

Exactly like he. Um, I remember it started in seventh grade around the end of the year. He spoke only Spanish and someone was translating for him. But whenever the translator had to repeat something for him, and they wanted me to repeat what I said. I said no, because he was kicking me under the table. The Jose was kicking me under the table that was the boy's name. And he only spoke Spanish at first and someone was translating for him. And when they wanted to hear what I had to say, on the science stuff that we were working on, because we were in science class, when this was happening, I said no, I'm not going to repeat that. He's kicking me under the table. So why would I repeat it? So he understands the assignment? Why should I help him when he's kicking me under the table?

**Eileen Lamb**

Did you get in trouble for that? Was there anything there?

**Seth Garner**

It's good, nobody got in trouble for anything, he didn't get in trouble for kicking me under the table and I didn't get in trouble for not helping him.

**Eileen Lamb**

Do you think the school could do more.

**Seth Garner**

Oh way more for me, they should have. They, they saw me as a burden ever since I got my IEP, they saw me as a burden. And they were like this, let's just get him to high school. And he's not our problem anymore. And they did. And I was put in a science class for kids who didn't know how to act. And I was bored and having, I was butting heads with my science teacher every single day, because I was way too smart for that class. But this science teacher actually didn't hate me. As I, as I advanced

through high school, I would come back into his classroom in the mornings and say hello to him a few times out of every month, and he would always be really happy to see me, which surprised me because I was like, I butt heads with you every single day and you and you don't hate me over it. Like, he didn't tell me to go away. He was like, he was like, yeah, we all know you're brilliant. Like and I think she used that to help people. Which I did my classmates sitting next to me who are nice. I help them and I help them out a lot

**Eileen Lamb**

That's really nice. You know, I did the same thing when I was in high school I was terrible. I was so mean to teachers. I would talk back, I can we get in trouble I got expelled for suspended isn't where you say,

**Seth Garner**

Oh, yeah, that's some of the stuff that happened to you in school. I'm really sorry. But I laughed so hard at one part in your book. Sorry, that happened with Oh my god, that was so funny.

**Eileen Lamb**

People started a petition in science class, actually, there was an adult piece of paper being passed around in class and at some point, the teacher got it. And he read it in front of the class and it said, petition to get Eileen to start wearing a bra.

**Seth Garner**

But okay, someone who really helped me come out of my shell and the, like social, someone who really taught me about, there are a few important people that have taught me how to be social. And they did that. Just because they love me so much. And those people are Maisie, Atlas, Michael, and Caroline. All of my friends are older than me, too. Like,

**Eileen Lamb**

You're too mature for your age?

**Seth Garner**

I am too mature for my age. Yes. And sometimes, like, what I've noticed, as an autistic individual is, sometimes when you're legitimately trying to be nice to somebody, people still make fun of you. Like, this girl was playing piano, like out of her piano book, cuz she was in the piano class. And I was like, hey, that sounds really good. You should keep trying. And um, her friends were like, this boy believes in her. And I was like, of course I do. Like, she wants to learn, I believe in anybody who wants to learn it just. And they just thought that was so funny. What's funny about that? What's funny about me giving a genuine compliment to somebody who I see is really trying to learn how to play an instrument. Like she's playing an instrument, why would they make fun of her? Why would they make fun of me? Like, I didn't understand. But um, that girl thought it was really nice. That's good. And you know, you're really nice. And I said, Thank you. I try. And there's a whole list of reasons why I'm kind.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah, well, we need more people like you because there are a lot of those other people.

**Seth Garner**

I find it very easy to ignore people that don't agree with me, because although I had a really difficult time in choir class when we got a new director, because these freshmen thought it was cool to pretend to be trans. And they were like, I'm trans I can, I'm like, and I said, Excuse me, that's very offensive, because you probably don't know this, but I'm an actual transgender man. And I fought very hard for my right to sit here in the tenor section. But it wasn't all about gender equality. It was also about what's right, because, I mean, obviously, you can listen to my voice and hear that it is not feminine. And granted, I've worked hard to it's androgynous even without me like doing my own vocal training. And it was always androgynous. It was never was never either way. But you know, now it's masculine.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah. And you don't take hormones. You said, How do you?

**Seth Garner**

I'm actually getting back on hormones July 7, you're gonna get I'm gonna do androgen gel, and I'm very excited. Testosterone round two. Actually remember the first week on T. What was my voice was changing. No, it wasn't. I ended up getting a cold from someone at driving school. Most people actually it's the other way around. They're like, they think that they're getting sick, but it's their voice changing. And um, I was so disappointed. And I still I remember this so clearly, because, but then the next week made up for it, because I discovered some little facial hairs. And I was like, Oh my god, it is working. Yeah, injections just weren't working for me because I would forget my mom was doing the injections for me. Oh, I should probably talk about how amazing my mom is.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah, that was the last question actually. How were you raised? Tell us.

**Seth Garner**

Oh my god, I was raised in the best possible way anybody could ever be raised. Mom, you're amazing. And I'm telling everybody listening. So my mom is amazing. And she she threw gender roles out the window as soon as she saw I was uncomfortable with them. She said I'm never gonna make you wear a dress ever again. And I ended up putting on a dress to have fun experiment when I was eight years old. And you know everybody was like, Oh my god, you look so great. You know, I looked like a little boy in drag. I just had, when I was little, I had this hairstyle that was kind of a cross between a bowl cut and a mullet. It looked really cute on me at the time, but like I changed it when I hit 13. Because I change it to be something like this when I hit 13 because it was like, you know, I'm a teenager now I got to not look like a little boy anymore. But I still looked like a little boy until I was 15 or so. still kind of do. But everybody likes it.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So what is the one piece of advice you would give to either newer moms or moms looking to be as amazing and supportive as you have described your mom to be because I think, again, growing up autistic and trans. Those are two things where

**Seth Garner**

Don't put limits on your kids. My mom never told me I was different. She never said Oh, you can't do this. You're different. She, She just raised me. She accommodated all of my needs, behind the scenes. But that was just so unique. Like,

**Andrew M. Komarow**

How do you think she balanced that accommodating your needs without being what's the term helicopter parent? Yeah, or overbearing, because you're obviously you know, you're in college, you're going to school for something that you're passionate about, you know, it looks like you have a future career ahead of you. So how, how I think a lot of even myself as a parent, you know, have trouble finding that balance of,

**Seth Garner**

I have no idea how she did it. She just, but she, oh my god, and plus, I've such a limited diet too. And she would always cook something different for me. And I always appreciate that. But now I'm old enough to do that for myself.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So if I were to summarize, and I apologize for summarizing for you in advance. It sounds like she was accepting of who you were. She was supportive and encouraging and believing in you. That pretty much sums it up. Would you agree?

**Seth Garner**

She she believed in me and she was just she's amazing. And I I can't imagine life without her and like she accommodated my needs behind the scenes without telling me that I was different. I remember when I figured out that I had ADHD I went and this leads me to how I found my identity as an autism advocate. Because when I figured out I had ADHD, I was like, time to advocate for myself time to know about this. So I would research all about like every single thing. And when researching and on my ADHD led me to researching about autism, I was like, these are words people use to describe me. And I remember just repeating to my mom, autistic children often avoid eye contact. Like I would say that to her a few times. And I was like, and then I remember talking to my fourth grade teacher about a spelling test that I had totally passed like, passed with 100% flying colors. Because I was really good speller still am because my mom gave me all the tricks to spelling

**Eileen Lamb**

What do you like to do to relax?

**Seth Garner**

Um, I like to play my Switch and watch cartoons at the same time and sometimes I'll play my Switch watch medical documentaries at the same time. I like to watch medical documentaries

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Like what I like what type of medical documentaries like

**Seth Garner**

Mostly on rare diseases. I'm fascinated by rare diseases.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

So "House" must be one of your favorite TV shows then, or do you hate it because it's like not as accurate?

**Seth Garner**

Ok, I hate "Gray's Anatomy."

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Okay, well that's okay.

**Seth Garner**

Sorry, I hate "Grey's Anatomy." For me, I just don't like "Grey's Anatomy," is more about drama than it is about actual medical stuff. However, "The Good Doctor,"? Yeah, I am the ginger Sean Murphy. And my mom agrees. I am the ginger Sean Murphy. Hello, my name is Seth Garner. I'm a radiology tech here at Shady Grove Hospital. That's what I'm gonna say to people one day.

**Eileen Lamb**

I hope that happens for you.

**Seth Garner**

I do not want to work in the ER.

**Eileen Lamb**

Oh yeah,

**Seth Garner**

I am terrified of the ER there are too many germs. And I do not like germs.

**Eileen Lamb**

What's your favorite food?

**Seth Garner**

My favorite food? I don't know probably um, I really like. I really like chicken nuggets and french fries and cereal, and popsicles. And I like Mountain Dew. That's my favorite drink. Mountain Dew Baja Blast. Always. This is a commercial for Mountain Dew Baja Blast.

**Eileen Lamb**

This is not sponsored.

**Seth Garner**

But I would love to be an aid in like a special needs classroom for kindergarteners.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yes. It's like you're the right personality.

**Seth Garner**

I love little kids like I remember. Oh yeah. And the interoceptive system. I was going to talk about that because I don't know if anybody else has talked about that. But autism and getting signals from your body is oh my god. So difficult. Sometimes, like I'm under sensitive, my internal sensory system is under sensitive, my external is oversensitive. So it's it. Autism is essentially an imbalance in your sensory system. Like that's the cleanest way I could possibly provide it, but you still leave a lot of stuff out even then. But um, for me, I have a very hard time telling when I'm hungry because I don't really feel it. I also have a hard time telling when I'm sick, which has led me to overworking myself on many occasions. I remember one time, especially when I was a junior in high school. And I remember I had a headache and some dizziness and some body aches. And I was like, I probably didn't sleep good last night. That's probably what this is, even though it felt different than that. And then it turns out I actually had strep and an ear infection and a cold at the same time. And it was terrible.

**Eileen Lamb**

That sounds pretty horrible.

**Seth Garner**

Yeah, it was. And I didn't know until like, two days after the symptoms started. And I was like, Oh, this is gonna be fine, but it wasn't fine. I have multiple stories like that, because and like, I can go a really long time without eating too, which is not ideal. That's a daily struggle for me. Sometimes I won't know when I'm thirsty either. And temperature perception is also I really am over sensitive to like feeling cold, and I really don't like it. So I wear a hoodie literally all of the time. Air conditioning too high. I will wear a hoodie. Plus. Yeah, it's just my security blanket after all these years. And I just love my hoodie so much.

**Eileen Lamb**

Yeah, I was just talking a few days ago about how even if I'm too hot at night, I still want to be covered by a blanket or something. It's



**Andrew M. Komarow**

Absolutely 100%.

**Seth Garner**

I saw that. I have a weighted blanket to I use a weighted blanket at night

**Andrew M. Komarow**

For I think it was the holidays or for one for one holiday. Jessica got me a a weighted blanket from a company called Hush. That was it wasn't cheap, but it's like cool. So it's like a cool weighted blanket so I don't get overheated. And I also have a texture issue with cotton satin. So also finding one that didn't have like that type of texture was very difficult, but she went above and beyond and it's an amazing weighted blanket. So

**Eileen Lamb**

All right, last question. What is your favorite movie?

**Seth Garner**

Oh my god. I don't watch movies. I don't watch movies. I don't watch movies.

**Eileen Lamb**

But you watch TV shows because you talked about, I love my TV shows, yeah. Tell us about your favorite TV shows then?

**Seth Garner**

Um, okay, so I don't sit through movies. But actually my favorite movie would be Akron. It's a gay movie about how two gay men had this unimaginable. It reminds me of like it's just it's amazing. It's It was the first game movie ever watched and I'm gay. So Oh, the representation but um, my favorite TV shows are the Simpsons, Bob's various Family Guy, Arthur and a few other like kid shows. Because I watch and medical documentaries like every single thing, but every single little specific thing like oh, and Malcolm in the Middle is probably my favorite show of all time.

**Eileen Lamb**

That was fun one. Okay, actually I have one more question around. Yeah, since you're artistic and good at acronyms. What old technology does POTS stand for?

**Seth Garner**

I actually don't know.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Plain old telephone system.

**Eileen Lamb**

Seth, do you want to tell people I don't know if your you want them to follow you or to find you online. Is there anywhere they can find you?

**Seth Garner**

Oh yeah, they can. Instagram is @seth.the.tenor and my service dog autism. Instagram is the dot tauran like t-a-u-r-n as in my zodiac sign, because being a Taurus is also a part of my identity. I was supposed to be a Gemini. I would have it's a joke that I would have failed my gender reveal and my Zodiac reveal. We had one. I also attended my own baby shower. Yeah, I was born entire month early and decided I also busted out of the hospital way early to like, they're like, oh, we're gonna keep him here for a whole month. And I was on a ventilator for like, a day and a half or two days. Total fighter.

**Eileen Lamb**

Thank you so much for joining us today. It was so great to,

**Seth Garner**

It was an honor.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Thank you so much for joining us on the podcast. This was so much fun. Thank you.

**Seth Garner**

It was an honor. Thank you so much may be sure to send me the link so I can send it to people watch and listen to.

**Eileen Lamb**

We will.

**Seth Garner**

Thanks.

**Andrew M. Komarow**

Thank you. Bye.

**Seth Garner**

Bye.