

MILESTONES ON HIS OWN TIME

A FAMILY STORY ABOUT DEVELOPMENT, OBSERVATION & DIFFERENT PATHS

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NEURODIVERGENTLY.

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A DIFFERENT TIMELINE

Some kids hit milestones like they're checking boxes on a to-do list. And then there are kids like Chris—the ones who take the book, toss it over their shoulder, and say, “I'll get there when I get there... and probably not the way you expect.”

Every milestone with Chris was delayed. Not just “a little behind,” but delayed to the point where his Dad and I would look at each other and wonder if we should call in professional help. And then, right when we were gearing up for intervention, he'd do something completely off the wall.

HE NEVER CRAWLED

He never crawled. Not once. Instead, he rolled. Everywhere. We joked he was going to roll all the way to college. One night we were watching a movie and suddenly Chris walked past the screen, just casually strolling by like he'd been doing it for years. We both froze, staring at each other in disbelief. No practice steps. No cruising along furniture. Just... walking.

NO WARM-UP ACT

Talking was the same story. He didn't babble. He didn't say “mama” or “dada.” He spent hours staring at the ceiling fan, absolutely riveted. While other parents were debating whose name their baby said first, ours proudly announced his first word: fan. And shortly after that? Full sentences. No warm-up act.

THE INSIGHT THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING:

His mind wasn't missing the point. It was working differently—deeply, precisely, neurodivergently.

WATCHING WITH LASER FOCUS

He wouldn't touch a tricycle or big wheel. Not interested. But one day he walked outside, climbed onto the two-wheeler we had waiting for him, and just rode off, no training wheels, no hesitation, no explanation. It took me a long time to understand that Chris wasn't “behind.” He was observing. Studying. Watching the world with laser focus while typical toddlers learned through trial and error. Chris waited until he could simply do the thing.

THE GYMBOREE MOMENT

When he was about three, my mom and I were at Gymboree with all the overachieving moms convinced we were raising the next Bill Gates. The teacher had the kids lie on their backs and pretend to look at the night sky.

“We're all lying under the beautiful night sky,” she said. “Tell me, what do you see?”

One little boy said, “Stars!” Another said, “The man on the moon!”

Then it was Chris's turn. In a perfectly flat monotone he said, “I see a vent”

The adults cracked up. It was adorable, hilarious, and—if you were paying attention—profoundly revealing. While everyone else was imagining a sky full of magic, Chris was noticing the real, literal, functional detail above him. His mind wasn't missing the point. It was working differently, deeply, precisely—neurodivergently.