

00;00;00;00 - 00;00;34;09

Rose Lawrence

People said that I inspired them, that they know somebody who's autistic or like the child or somebody, and they want them to get into performing arts or creative arts. And it was really awesome for them to see another up to 6% pursuing it.

00;00;38;09 - 00;01;00;08

Eileen Lamb

Welcome back to *Adulting on the Spectrum*. In this podcast, we want to highlight the real voices of autistic adults, not just inspirational stories, but people like us talking about their day to day life. Basically, we want to give a voice to a variety of autistic people. I am Eileen Lamb, an autistic author and photographer, and I co-hosted this podcast with Andrew Komarow.

00;01;00;17 - 00;01;01;06

Eileen Lamb

Hey, Andrew.

00;01;01;24 - 00;01;31;16

Andrew Komarow

Hey Eileen, I'm Andrew, an autistic entrepreneur, software engineer, co-host of this podcast and have the world's largest balloon collection. Today our guest is Rose Lawrence. Rose was featured on *Autism Speaks* social channels and got very positive feedback. So she wanted to share her story more intensively, extensively on this podcast because who wouldn't? Rose is an autistic actor and she is passionate about creative arts and inspiring others to follow their creative dreams.

Rose also gets into character and role playing different mascots. Rose, thank you for joining us today. We like to start off each podcast by asking the guests how they prefer to identify. And we don't mean pronouns such as she, her, they, them, although you're welcome to share those as well. What we mean is autistic, Asperger's, as Eileen likes refer to herself on the spectrum or have no preference at all.

00;02;02;03 - 00;02;03;27

Andrew Komarow

Do you have a preference? And if so, what is it?

00;02;05;05 - 00;02;07;25

Rose Lawrence

Autistic

00;02;07;25 - 00;02;22;21

Andrew Komarow

Yeah, we we, I the majority. Come on. And it's they do not care. So and I know that's highly

avored answers. I like different answers for no other reason than Eileen likes a certain answer. So they're all valid though.

00;02;23;16 - 00;02;24;23

Rose Lawrence

Yeah.

00;02;24;23 - 00;02;31;18

Eileen Lamb

So can you tell us about your autism diagnosis journey? How did you learn you were autistic?

00;02;33;03 - 00;02;56;25

Rose Lawrence

Well, I started seeing mental health professionals at quite a young age, and at first they thought I was ADHD or had ADHD. And then as an adult, I was officially diagnosed as bipolar, which didn't really feel right for me. So some more years went on and I finally found the right person who assessed me as autistic, which was just this year in February.

So it took quite a long time for me because I'm an adult and I spent the majority of my adolescence and childhood just not knowing.

00;03;07;11 - 00;03;16;23

Eileen Lamb

What was it like for you, like the the the process? Was it stressful not knowing? Did you feel really relief after you heard the diagnosis?

00;03;18;08 - 00;03;43;05

Rose Lawrence

I felt relief, but I also experienced a lot of I don't want to say shame, but like I didn't want to be autistic. So I kind of went back and forth. But now I'm in a good place with it and I embrace it. It wasn't that stressful of a journey. It kind of happened quickly. Once I decided to get back into looking into mental health, it was like within four months.

00;03;44;24 - 00;04;01;22

Eileen Lamb

That is quick. Yeah. Go about finding someone to evaluate you because something that we hear a lot from adults when they go through their diagnosis journey is that it's really difficult to get a diagnosis as an adult. So if you have any tips to share, that would be awesome.

00;04;02;17 - 00;04;19;16

Rose Lawrence

Well, for me, I was seeing somebody pretty consistently and they wrote me a referral. So then I went on to Google and found a specialist. It was kind of a drive. It was like a four hour drive for

me. But I drove out to see the specialist and they are the ones who diagnosed me.

00;04;20;02 - 00;04;28;04

Andrew Komarow

That's awesome. And did you find them on your own or your therapist recommended somebody? And did you have a list to go through?

00;04;29;01 - 00;04;45;04

Rose Lawrence

No, I found them on my own. I just had a general referral to get an assessment, so it took me, like I said, about a couple of months to find them and then I was able to see them like two months later. So in total, it took me about four months to get my diagnosis.

Andrew Komarow

So although you are not the first autistic actor or the first public autistic actor, I always find, you know, in my perspective, you know, art, acting and autism almost don't seem to go together in some ways. I mean, obviously they can, and there's very successful people who are. But, you know, it's I have a hard time pretending that to be exactly who I am all the time.

00;05;17;01 - 00;05;26;06

Andrew Komarow

So can you share a little bit about just how you get into character and why you think maybe the autism might be a strength for acting?

00;05;27;24 - 00;05;57;03

Rose Lawrence

Well, in terms of a string, they basically spent the majority of my life being a parent. So I learned socializing and communicating by watching other people. And I kind of apply that to my acting as well. To get into character, I really have to go through a whole list of experiences and kind of puzzle them together so I can relate the situation, relate to the situation and find exactly what emotion needs to be shown.

00;05;58;02 - 00;05;59;01

Andrew Komarow

You have an example.

00;06;01;09 - 00;06;13;20

Rose Lawrence

Like if I have to be like really excited, I have to go through my memory log and find moments where I actually felt excited and kind of replay that so that I can genuinely appear excited.

00;06;16;01 - 00;06;32;01

Eileen Lamb

You got a lot of private messages following you, sharing your story on the Autism Speaks Social media channels. Like what? What was it like to get those those messages? Did you get nice messages and you mean messages?

00;06;33;07 - 00;06;55;28

Rose Lawrence

No mean messages. It was actually really it was really nice. It made me feel inspired to speak out more on it, I guess, because a lot of people said that I inspired them and that they know somebody who's autistic or like their child or somebody and they want them to get into performing arts or creative arts and it was really awesome for them to see another autistic person pursuing it.

00;06;57;05 - 00;07;02;19

Eileen Lamb

So that it's inspired other people to do what what you're doing.

00;07;02;19 - 00;07;06;11

Rose Lawrence

But yeah, it's something down to the creative line at least.

00;07;07;07 - 00;07;25;24

Eileen Lamb

Yeah, I know. And you hear a lot that autistic people are not creative and you know, it's nice that we were able to to break the stigma. Like, I'm not very good at math. I mean, I'm not terrible, but definitely not fitting the cliché of, you know, the autistic person who's like super good at science and math and not creative.

00;07;26;06 - 00;07;28;15

Eileen Lamb

Andrew is like that. He's very cliché.

00;07;29;23 - 00;07;35;10

Andrew Komarow

It extremely cliché, and it bothers me a lot, actually. I really wish I was in cliché.

00;07;35;14 - 00;07;46;15

Rose Lawrence

Oh, yeah, There's a lot of talent in the spectrum and I would like to see more people highlight for that.

00;07;46;15 - 00;08;04;00

Andrew Komarow

So you mentioned, I think on your IMDB, assuming you're right, by IMDB, which I hope otherwise this question won't make sense that you were a national TV commercial. What brand was it? What was the commercial? Can you share?

00;08;04;29 - 00;08;14;23

Rose Lawrence

Oh, yeah. My national commercial was with Wyler's Light. They were like a powdered drink for water. I don't know quite like a supplement.

00;08;15;10 - 00;08;17;05

Andrew Komarow

But okay.

00;08;17;23 - 00;08;21;16

Rose Lawrence

Yeah, it was super fun. And then I did a statewide commercial with the Oregon Lottery.

00;08;23;09 - 00;08;24;15

Rose Lawrence

With what state lotto?

00;08;25;08 - 00;08;25;23

Rose Lawrence

Oregon.

00;08;26;10 - 00;08;27;12

Andrew Komarow

Oh, okay, cool.

00;08;28;10 - 00;08;31;20

Eileen Lamb

What was your your role in the commercials?

00;08;32;28 - 00;08;53;08

Rose Lawrence

Oh, Wyler's like, I was like a business lady, but it was really cool because we got shot with cannon powder with a bunch of colors. So we were, like, all dressed in white, and we just got shot with all these colors, and it was really fantastic. So that was my favorite. And in the Oregon Lottery, I was like a teacher guide for kids out in nature.

00;08;53;24 - 00;08;55;10

Andrew Komarow

Did they give you free lottery tickets?

00;08;56;10 - 00;08;59;16

Rose Lawrence

I wish they did

00;09;01;23 - 00;09;27;18

Eileen Lamb

So you describe your autism as a superpower. And, you know, for some people it definitely is a superpower. And for other people like my son, who is almost 11, though, in a severe, challenging behaviors, it's not necessarily a superpower, you know, because it comes with a lot of of challenges, some of which are life threatening. Can you tell us a little bit about why you see your autism as a superpower?

00;09;27;28 - 00;09;44;18

Rose Lawrence

I think it's just my perception of the world is different. And in being in the creative industry, it kind of gives me a unique perspective and when I collaborate with people, my ideas can be unique, and I really like that.

00;09;45;22 - 00;10;07;12

Andrew Komarow

So you say you worked as a mascot. What is so a couple of cultures? What's the difference between a mascot and like, role play or like cause playing? Is there a difference or referring to something else, like a mascot? Like, I think of like a like a football game, like a mascot, like a big suit, but it seems like it's a character. Explain the difference and a bit about that.

00;10;10;10 - 00;10;31;16

Rose Lawrence

So it's kind of like the football mascot. The mascot character is a big suit that you put on, but it can be like the Easter Bunny is a mascot character and there's a lot of holiday ones like Christmas Bear and Trolls, like from Disney. So I used to do that. I kind of upgraded from that with the company that I'm with and I refuse to do mascots anymore. It got really difficult for me.

00;10;35;13 - 00;10;36;26

Andrew Komarow

Why was it difficult.

00;10;38;24 - 00;10;49;19

Rose Lawrence

Being in the confined space of the mask? And then it's also heavy and it gets really hot and I don't know, I don't do well with being overheated.

00;10;49;19 - 00;11;03;12

Andrew Komarow

I can now I can see it being extremely uncomfortable. So. Okay, So, so. So the mascot is more in the character you mentioned. It's more a job, not like a hobby or for fun. Right. And it doesn't sound like it was terribly fun.

00;11;04;03 - 00;11;19;00

Rose Lawrence

It's not terribly fun, but it kind of falls into my passion. The company I work for and the woman who runs it I absolutely love. So that was in the very beginning of my career with her, but I still work with her. But I do more like Disney Princess stuff now, which is super fun for me.

00;11;20;10 - 00;11;22;23

Andrew Komarow

Well, what Disney princesses?

00;11;23;21 - 00;11;25;22

Rose Lawrence

I mostly play Mirabelle from Ecanto.

00;11;26;29 - 00;11;31;20

Andrew Komarow

Okay. Yeah.

00;11;31;20 - 00;11;53;06

Eileen Lamb

So I would be interested to hear your thoughts on. I'm asking because, you know, masking is a big thing for autistic people. And I feel like especially for for girls and, you know, acting part of it is, is masking. So do you have any sort on masking and acting and how they live together?

00;11;54;00 - 00;12;13;00

Rose Lawrence

My thing for me is weird because sometimes I can be super aware of it and then sometimes I won't even, like, be conscious that I'm doing it, but I'm pretty aware when I'm working. So I've questioned if I'm kind of just like pulling out masks that I'm used to for the moment that I need in terms of acting.

00;12;13;00 - 00;12;13;24

Eileen Lamb

That makes sense.

00;12;14;26 - 00;12;17;17

Andrew Komarow

Sounds like a description of acting in general. Right.

00;12;17;20 - 00;12;30;04

Rose Lawrence

Yeah. It's almost like it's a fine line. The difference between acting and masking and it's I don't know. It's a journey for me. I love acting. It grounds me, but it gives me lots to think about. And I'm learning a lot about myself while doing it.

00;12;30;18 - 00;12;47;15

Andrew Komarow

If you could just. If you had, like, a dream acting role, like whether it's something that you know, already exists and it likes rebooted or doesn't exist, or just it dream world wave a magic wand acting role, what would it be?

00;12;47;24 - 00;13;10;25

Rose Lawrence

I don't have anything specific, but the role would have to be. I just want something consistent. I would want to be like a recurring character in a series that ran for a long time and did well, not even like the main character. Just, you know, it would be cool to just be part of something that lasted and you know, the connections that people make on set, like you basically build a family. So I really want to experience that. Yeah.

00;13;14;07 - 00;13;19;10

Andrew Komarow

That's that's interesting. I wasn't expecting that response, but it's a really good one. Thank you.

00;13;19;27 - 00;13;22;19

Rose Lawrence

Oh, thank you.

00;13;24;14 - 00;13;32;04

Eileen Lamb

As the strike affected you at all with what was going on in Hollywood the past months, years.

00;13;32;16 - 00;13;52;11

Rose Lawrence

So I work in the Portland, Oregon market mostly. Sometimes I go up to Seattle, but our market here is really small. And yeah, the strikes totally slowed us down. I, I rely on my agent for auditions and we barely we didn't have any auditions this year. For the most part. Things were picking back up a little bit, but it was detrimental. So I took a trip to New York City.

00;13;56;22 - 00;13;57;12

Eileen Lamb

Did that help?

00;13;58;06 - 00;14;04;07

Rose Lawrence

Yeah. I went to the American Academy of Dramatic Arts for two weeks and that was an amazing experience.

00;14;05;00 - 00;14;06;20

Eileen Lamb

Just like to to learn?

00;14;07;22 - 00;14;14;27

Rose Lawrence

To learn and to get some acting in. Since it was such a slow year.

Eileen Lamb

So I'm going to ask you some quickfire questions. So basically, I ask you some questions and you tell me the first answer that comes to your mind.

00;14;25;13 - 00;14;25;22

Rose Lawrence

Okay.

00;14;27;07 - 00;14;35;21

Eileen Lamb

What is your favorite mascot that you've ever played?

Rose Lawrence

Christmas Bear

Eileen Lamb

Your favorite Disney Princess.

00;14;36;16 - 00;14;37;11

Rose Lawrence

Princess Jasmine.

00;14;38;19 - 00;14;45;23

Eileen Lamb

Your favorite artistic actor, whether it's fictional or otherwise.

00;14;45;23 - 00;14;47;12

Rose Lawrence

The Extraordinary Attorney Who.

00;14;49;19 - 00;14;55;12

Eileen Lamb

Favorite film genera.

00;14;55;12 - 00;14;59;16

Rose Lawrence

Hmm. Coming of age.

00;14;59;16 - 00;15;04;10

Eileen Lamb

The worst movie ever made.

00;15;04;10 - 00;15;11;24

Rose Lawrence

Oh, Gremlins 2

00;15;11;24 - 00;15;13;03

Eileen Lamb

Andrew, what do you think about that?

00;15;13;03 - 00;15;22;12

Andrew Komarow

Answer I'm asking me because I assume she's never seen Gremlins. Yes, it's. It's a respectable answer.

00;15;22;20 - 00;15;23;00

Rose Lawrence

Yeah.

00;15;23;24 - 00;15;34;13

Eileen Lamb

Anyway, back to you, Rose. Our last question is for you to like, you know, self-promote and tell people where they can find you on social media. If you have social media.

00;15;35;25 - 00;15;41;28

Rose Lawrence

Oh, yeah. Instagram Roses, Sunny Day. That's the only one I have.

00;15;43;20 - 00;15;50;07

Andrew Komarow

Good enough. And do you have anything like coming up? Any movies commercial? Anything?

00;15;51;26 - 00;16;00;04

Rose Lawrence

Just auditions. I'm up for a role in a movie right now. I'm still waiting to schedule my callback, so nothing official.

00;16;00;22 - 00;16;05;04

Eileen Lamb

Well, good luck and thank you so much for coming on our podcast today and talking to us.

00;16;05;20 - 00;16;07;00

Rose Lawrence

Yeah, thank you for having me.

00;16;07;22 - 00;16;14;26

Eileen Lamb

Thank you.