Critical Review of The Reason I Jump

The essay you write should be typed, 3-4 pages, double-spaced, and using a 12-point font.

Be sure to respond to ONE of the prompts below, to cite sources in the body of your text, and to include a stand-alone works cited page.

Though it is not necessary that you sources other than the assigned reading The Reason I Jump, you might find it helpful to do so.  But, remember, part of the evaluation of your essay is based on your demonstrated command of the assigned reading.

Prompt #1:  The Covid-19 isolation orders have generated stress, anxiety, and reminded us about the importance of routine in our lives.  For children on the autism spectrum, and for parents and educators of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, recognition of “sticking to a routine” is already a daily organizing principle. Perhaps, then, the Covid-19 moment offers us a chance to understand and empathize with those with ASD in greater ways.  Drawing from at least two specific examples from Naoki Higashida’s book The Reason I Jump, discuss the links you see between the author’s description of the way he sees the world and the ways in which you are processing your own isolation and disruption in routine during the state-mandated shutdown.  Has the shutdown at least offered us a chance to re-think our understanding of ASD?  If so, how?  If not, why not?

Prompt #2:  The title of the book – The Reason I Jump – refers to a specific aspect of Higashida’s understanding of the world.  How do you relate with this concept?  To put it another way, what’s the reason you “jump”?  Have you found yourself in a position “as if struck by lightning” if not regularly, then at least once?  If jumping allows Higashida a sense of release, then perhaps this is a concept with which all of us can connect.  Compare your form of “release” with Higashida’s “jumping.”  Then, draw from at least one other concept in the book that helps you understand his situation.  How might this book lead to more effective interaction between those with autism, and those without, whether in the classroom or elsewhere?

Prompt #3: In a review in The New York Times, author Sallie Tisdale, herself the parent of a child with autism, contends that the translation and reception to The Reason I Jump might be problematic.  Tisdale says we “have to be careful about turning what we find into what we want.”[1]  Considering that this book was written and released to raise awareness about autism, pick up the challenge Tisdale is setting for us.  What is your gut feeling about this book, its relevance for understanding autism, and – for those in education – for working with children with autism?  Build your response and analysis around two specific examples from the book.