

# **JIM C – HEALTH TERMS**

## **MONDAY - 09/13/2009**

### **HOW DID THE TERM “*AUTISM*” ORIGINATE?**

***Definition (Encarta):*** A disturbance in psychological development in which use of language, reaction to stimuli, interpretation of the world, and the formation of relationships are not fully established.

***Online Etymology:*** German Autismus, coined 1912 by Swiss psychiatrist Paul Bleuler (1857-1939) from Greek *autos*- "self" (combination form) + *-ismos* suffix of action or of state.

- **1747 –** The Scottish court case to annul the marriage of Hugh Blair of Borgue was the earliest well-documented case of autism.
- **1938 -** The word took its modern sense in 1938 when Hans Asperger of the Vienna University Hospital adopted Bleuler's terminology *autistic psychopaths* in a lecture in Germany.
- **1943 -** American psychiatrist Leo Kanner described the disorder

***Wikipedia:*** It is not known whether autism is a few disorders caused by mutations converging on a few common molecular pathways, or is a large set of disorders with diverse mechanisms.

***Cause:*** The cause of autism is not known, and it lasts throughout a person's lifetime. There is no cure, but treatment can help.

***Conventional Wisdom:*** Autism = Impaired social interaction

***Zen:*** Males are four times more likely to have autism