

Einstein, Newton displayed autistic traits

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Albert Einstein and Isaac Newton displayed symptoms of psychiatric disorders that may have been a key to their genius, a Dublin psychiatrist said.

Michael Fitzgerald, Professor of Psychiatry at Trinity College, Dublin, said characteristics linked to autism spectrum disorders such as Asperger's syndrome are the same as those associated with creative genius, The Daily Telegraph said.

Fitzgerald, author of the book, "Genius Genes: How Asperger Talents Changed the World," said Enoch Powell and Charles de Gaulle both appear to have had Asperger's syndrome.

Speaking at a meeting of the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Academic Psychiatry, Fitzgerald said De Gaulle's Asperger's syndrome was critical to his success. He was aloof, had a massive memory, lacked empathy with other people, and was extremely controlling and dominating.

Isaac Newton was known to work non-stop for days and Einstein worked in a patent office because he was too disruptive to get a university job, the newspaper said.

"Psychiatry tends to focus almost exclusively on the negative side of different forms of mental illness," Fitzgerald said in statement. "I want to show that psychiatric disorders can also have positive dimensions."

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