# Amit Ghose turns personal struggle with Neurofibromatosis type 1 into campaign against bullying



Amit Ghose, a 35-year-old from Birmingham, has faced the profound challenges that come with living with Neurofibromatosis type 1 since birth. This genetic disorder leads to the development of non-cancerous tumours along the nerves, a condition that has not only altered his physical appearance but also subjected him to years of brutal bullying and social ostracism. Recently, he recounted a distressing experience in a London café where he was denied service, with the server taking one glance at his face before declaring, "Oh, we're not serving any more," and walking away.

This incident reflects a larger, troubling societal trend. Individuals with visible differences often endure overt discrimination, as well as subtler forms of exclusion. According to Ghose, the stares and comments have been a constant part of his life; he described a previous encounter in a park where onlookers laughed and mocked him, echoing sentiments of shame and rejection that have often clouded his experiences. "If I had a face like you, I wouldn’t even come out my house," were the hurtful words he heard, prompting Ghose to take action by self-publishing a children's book titled *Born Different*. He envisioned this book as a tool to help children recognise and celebrate their unique identities, something he grasped could have made a significant difference in his own childhood.

Reflecting on his past, Ghose remembers the emotional toll that bullying had on him, especially after undergoing surgery to remove his left eye at age 11. A particularly cruel remark during Halloween by a classmate, “you don’t need a Halloween mask, you’ve got one for life,” solidified his struggle with self-acceptance and led him to conceal his disfigurement for many years. Although he ultimately found solace and friendship through cricket, which provided a sense of normalcy and camaraderie, the scars of his childhood remain palpable.

The journey to self-acceptance was not instantaneous for Ghose. His wife, Piyali, played a crucial role in helping him embrace his identity. She urged him to share his story on social media, enabling him to connect with nearly 200,000 followers in just a few months. This newfound platform provided Ghose with an opportunity to inspire others, allowing him to articulate that acceptance must begin from within. “This is me, take it or leave it,” he now confidently asserts.

As he transitions into motivational speaking full-time, Ghose aims to engage young people facing similar adversities. He plans to launch a podcast discussing experiences of visible differences alongside others who have faced discrimination, such as Oliver Bromley, who was forcibly removed from a restaurant due to his appearance. By sharing these narratives, Ghose hopes to highlight the shared insecurities and challenges that everyone, regardless of ability or appearance, encounters.

Research supports Ghose’s experiences, revealing that children with Neurofibromatosis type 1 are at a significant risk for bullying and its adverse effects on mental health. Studies indicate that children facing such bullying often suffer from low self-esteem and diminished quality of life. These findings underscore the importance of initiatives that promote understanding and acceptance in society, potentially alleviating the distress faced by many.

Ultimately, through his advocacy and storytelling, Amit Ghose stands as a beacon of hope. He inspires individuals not only to confront their challenges head-on but also to celebrate their uniqueness, arguing that true confidence can flourish when one learns to embrace who they are.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: Sources [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o), [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o)
2. Paragraph 2: Sources [[3]](https://nervetumours.org.uk/news/amit-ghoses-story/P216), [[4]](https://www.greatbritishtalent.com/news/best-anti-bullying-speakers/)
3. Paragraph 3: Sources [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o), [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o)
4. Paragraph 4: Sources [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o), [[5]](https://www.ctf.org/news/gaining-knowledge-about-neurofibromatosis-empowered-me/)
5. Paragraph 5: Sources [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o), [[4]](https://www.greatbritishtalent.com/news/best-anti-bullying-speakers/)
6. Paragraph 6: Sources [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o), [[6]](https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9067/10/2/330), [[7]](https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9067/8/2/145)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy4k8l5y5j1o> - Amit Ghose, born with Neurofibromatosis type 1, faced severe bullying during his childhood, including being refused service in a London café due to his facial appearance. Despite these challenges, he has become a motivational speaker, sharing his story to help children embrace their uniqueness and self-acceptance. He also authored a children's book, 'Born Different', to support young individuals facing similar experiences.
3. <https://nervetumours.org.uk/news/amit-ghoses-story/P216> - Amit Ghose, born with Neurofibromatosis Type 1, has experienced years of bullying due to his appearance. He now helps others to 'climb their Everest' and shares his story to raise awareness about the condition and the challenges faced by those with visible differences.
4. <https://www.greatbritishtalent.com/news/best-anti-bullying-speakers/> - Amit Ghose is a disability keynote speaker who was born with a condition called Neurofibromatosis Type 1, which has caused him to look very different physically to his peers. Due to his condition, Amit has experienced years of bullying, throughout his childhood and early adulthood, with people making negative assumptions about him due to his appearance. He believes there is still a lot of stigma around people who don’t look like the norm, and he has taken to the media to share his story.
5. <https://www.ctf.org/news/gaining-knowledge-about-neurofibromatosis-empowered-me/> - Amit Ghose's story highlights the importance of self-acceptance and sharing one's experiences to empower others. By embracing his condition and sharing his journey, he has become a source of inspiration for many facing similar challenges.
6. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9067/10/2/330> - This study examines the impact of symptom visibility and bullying behavior on the mental health of children and adolescents with Neurofibromatosis Type 1 (NF1). It highlights the high rates of bullying victimization in this population and the associated negative effects on self-esteem and quality of life.
7. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9067/8/2/145> - This research identifies risk factors for bullying victimization in children with Neurofibromatosis Type 1 (NF1). It emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to address the unique challenges faced by these children in social environments.