

Obstacles to Opportunities

Using Strengths for Opening Doors to Success



The Arc.

Greater Beaumont

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EXAMINING THE PARAMETERS

Questions to ask regarding possible areas of success

How does the s/he spend most of their time?

Reframe

- Communication
- Socialization
- Restricted Interests

Abilities?

Interests?

Kind of Mind?

Characteristics?

Match to Ad/vocational Possibilities

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A little about me...


3

A LITTLE ABOUT ME

Introduction



The Autism Bomb — NOT



Reframing Characteristics — Looking for Strengths

Robert — Transportation information to lost patrons at Penn Station

Characteristics	Employment Implications
Communication	Detailed, factual, data-driven, truthful, repetitive, repetitive, repetitive
Social Interaction	Limited and predictable
Restricted Interests	All information is memorized — his coworkers need references

Because this individual has autism...

He outperforms his typical coworkers

Setting the Stage for Life Long Success

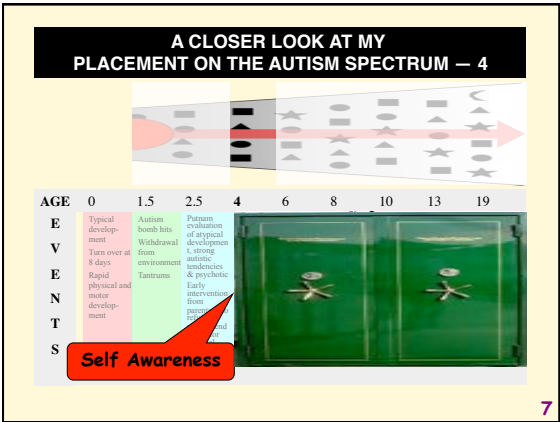
Interdependence

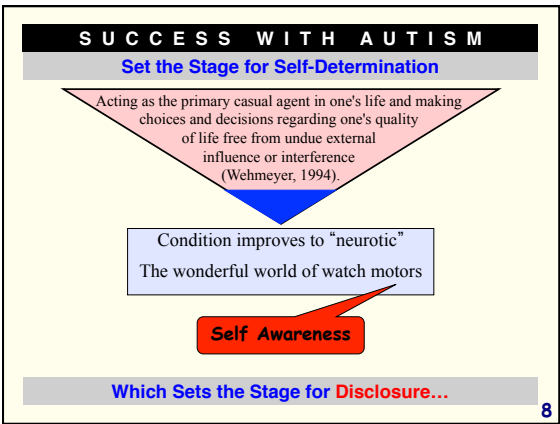
Employment

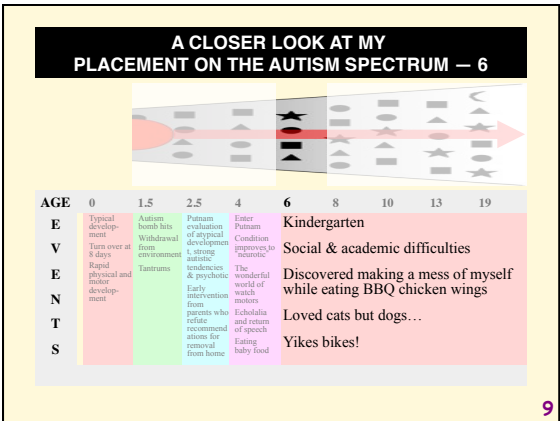
Continuing Education

Relationships

Self-Advocacy







PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

DISCLOSURE & SELF-ADVOCACY

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FOUR STEPS TO DISCLOSURE

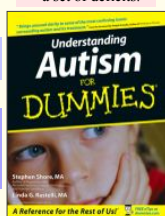
Self-Determination → Disclosure → Self-Advocacy

1. Awareness of strengths and challenges through verbal, pictorial, and other communication.

2. "Rack up" strengths and challenges.

3. Non-judgmental comparison of characteristic with others and potential role models.

4. Present the label summarizing a condition rather than a name for a set of deficits.



Making one's needs known in a way that others can understand and enables them to provide support.

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PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

AWARENESS OF STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

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FINDING YOUR OWN SENSORY PREFERENCES

Likes & Dislikes

What types of sounds, tastes, smells, touches, and things you see do you like and make life easier?

What types of sounds, tastes, smells, touches, and things you see do you dislike and make life harder?

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FINDING YOUR OWN COGNITIVE PREFERENCES

Likes & Dislikes

What types of things, subjects in school, or tasks at work do you find easy and enjoyable to do?

What types of things, subjects in school, or tasks at work do you find difficult to do and dislike?

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FINDING YOUR OWN SOCIO-EMOTIONAL PREFERENCES

Likes & Dislikes

What social and leisure activities do you like and find easy to do?

What social and leisure activities do you dislike and find harder to do?

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FOUR STEPS TO DISCLOSURE																					
Planning for Disclosure																					
1. Awareness of strengths and challenges <div></div>	3. Nonjudgmental comparison <div></div>																				
2. "Rack up" strengths and challenges <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Strengths</th> <th>Challenges</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Strengths	Challenges																			4. Present the label summarizing the condition <div></div>
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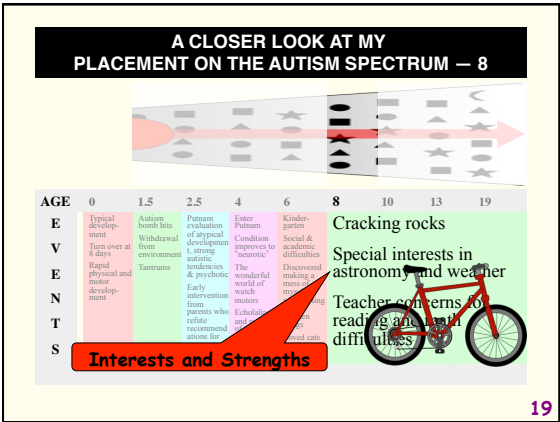
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SELF-ADVOCACY	
You're Lost... And you ask someone for directions...	
<p>"After the 6th light you look for the big tree on the left and take the third right. Then after the second church you see a fire station and go left. After going left you take a right at Tom Street. Drive for 4 blocks and keep bearing right until you see a stream on left which tells you to take a bridge on the right headed towards the water tower. When you pass the water tower take the second left and pull into a parking space in front of International Bicycle Shop and you are there!</p> <p>Wow!!! Too much to remember! What are you going to do?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You suddenly realize there's way too much information for you to remember 2. Hold on a moment! Can you wait a moment while I get something to take this down? 3. I won't remember it all! Thanks for waiting... <div> <div>SCANNED</div> <div>ADVOCATED</div> <div>DISCLOSED</div> </div>

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MY ADVOCACY PLAN Name _____		
SCAN: Where is the challenge? <div> <div>1.Sensory</div> <div>2.Cognitive</div> <div>3.Socio-emotional</div> </div>		
	<div>Perception of the environment</div> <div>How we think</div> <div>Social cues and how we feel</div>	
	<div>Explaining your needs</div>	
	<div>Giving the reason why</div>	
SCAN Challenge What is causing the difficulty?	ADVOCACY Explaining your needs ...promoting greater understanding and in a way that enables the other to provide assistance	DISCLOSURE The reason Partial – Note specific characteristic affecting a situation only Full – Diagnosis

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SPECIAL INTERESTS

An interest of such great intensity that it interferes with daily functioning¹.

SOME SPECIAL INTERESTS²

airplanes	astronomy	bicycles	earthquakes
medicine	chemistry	mechanics	electricity
electronics	computers	hardware	tools
psychology	music	rocks	geology
geography	locks	cats	dinosaurs
watches	shiatsu	yoga	autism

1. Attwood, A. (1998). *Aspergers Syndrome*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
2. Shore, S. (2001). *Beyond the wall: Personal experiences with autism and Asperger Syndrome*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

EMPLOYMENT

OPENING DOORS TO EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

Possible "Jobs" Around the House

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FURTHER PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Repetitive, Do Whether You Want to or Not, Customer Service

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A CLOSER LOOK AT MY PLACEMENT ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM — 10

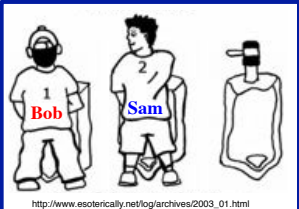
AGE	0	1.5	2.5	4	6	8	10	13	19
E	Typical development	Autism bomb hits	Putnam evaluation of physical development	Enter Putnam	Kindergarten	Cracking rocks	Concern about dropping the letter "e."		
V	Turn over at 3 days	Withdrawal from environment	1. strong autistic tendencies	Condition improves to normative	Social & academic difficulties	Special interests in autonomy and weather			
E	Rapid physical and motor development	Tantrums	& psychotic	The wonderful world of watch motors	Discovered making a mess of myself while eating H&M chicken	Teacher concerns for reading and math skills	My friend says "he feels like a pizza" and I argue with him that he does not look like a pizza and probably does not feel like one either		
N			Early intervention from parents who refuse to remove from home	Echolalia and echos					
T									
S									

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THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM - COMMUNITY
 Peter Gerhardt (personal communication, April 2004)



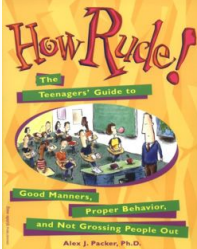
THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM
Practical Solutions for Understanding Unstated Rules in Social Situations
 Brenda Miles
 Melissa Timmon
 Brenda Schellum
 Autism Asperger Publishing Company

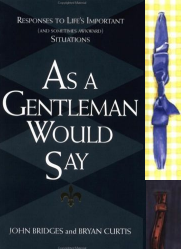
http://www.esoterically.net/og/archives/2003_01.html

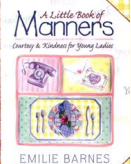
Sam arrives after **Bob**. What two rules did he break?

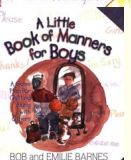
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INCIDENTAL HIDDEN CURRICULUM BOOKS









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SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION

"Brings unusual clarity to some of the most confusing issues surrounding neurotypical disorder and its treatment."

Understanding Neurotypicals FOR DUMMIES

- Learn to decode nonspectrum behavior
- Educate children on radical acceptance of differences
- Successfully communicate without eye contact

A Reference for the Rest of Us!

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A CLOSER LOOK AT MY PLACEMENT ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM — 13

8	10	13	19
Cracking rocks	Concern about dropping the letter 's'	Middle and high school	Finally getting it together but still often in left field
Special interests in astronomy and weather	My friend says 'he feels like a pizza' and I argue with concerns for ending and	Discovering the band room	Time to focus more on people and not their bicycles

N
T
S

Interests, Relationships & Community

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SOMETIMES AN ENDEAVOR DOES NOT WORK OUT

AND A CHANGE IN PLANS IS REQUIRED

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USING STRENGTHS TO DO A BETTER JOB

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MAKING SURE THE JOB FITS

Challenges related to characteristics of...

Dimension	Strengths	Challenges
Cognitive style <small>Grandin, T. (2009). How doofy visual thinking work in the mind of a person with autism: A personal account. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, 364, 1437-1442.</small>		
• Photo-realistic	Geometry, trigonometry	Algebra
• Pattern	Music and math patterns	Reading, writing
• Words-facts	Verbal facts	Drawing, visual thinking
• Auditory	Sounds (words or otherwise)	Drawing
Some Other Attributes		
Sensory	Type of input → Seeking <—→ Avoiding	
Communication	Means → Verbal, keyboard, other assistive devices	
Socialization	Style → Chatterbox <—→ Shy	

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DIFFERENT WAYS OF PROCESSING INFORMATION

Word Contrasted with Photo-Realistic Thinking

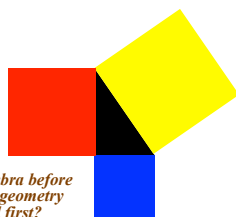
Algebraists

Think this formula

Geometrists

Visualize this figure

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$



*Why require algebra before
geometry when geometry
was invented first?*

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ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

Matching Needs to Possible Positions

Personal Characteristics	Preferred Job Attributes	Possible Positions
Challenges in verbal and nonverbal communication	Few communication requirements	Stock shelves
Challenges in socialization	Limited contact with public, more solitary job duties	Filing, sorting, stapling, paper shredding, after-hours cleaning
Unusual response to sensory stimulation	Provider of preferred sensory input, ability to avoid noxious sensory stimulation	Hanging clothes, washing cars (for those enjoying that type of tactile input)
Difficulty with change and transition	Few changes, stable work environment, little staff turnover, same work task all day	Small business, family business, assembly line

Adapted from Shore, S. & Rastelli, L. (2006). *Understanding autism for dummies*. New York: Wiley. 34

ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

Matching Needs to Possible Positions

Personal Characteristics	Preferred Job Attributes	Possible Positions
Strong visual-motor skills	Requires good visual-motor skills	Small-parts assembly, manufacturing, printing
Behavior challenges	Few antecedents to challenging behaviors, with situations where possible problems don't endanger others	Situations where behavior doesn't cause dangerous situations; avoid factories or jobs using heavy machinery
Savant skills	Responsibilities capitalizing on these strengths	Matching stock numbers to packing lists, mathematically oriented positions for those with good math skills

Adapted from Shore, S. & Rastelli, L. (2006). *Understanding autism for dummies*. New York: Wiley. 35

ACHIEVING EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS

Matching Needs to Possible Positions

Personal Characteristics	Preferred Job Attributes	Possible Positions
Rituals and compulsions	Attention to detail and order	Positions with repetitive tasks that must be done with high accuracy, such as counting items to be placed into packages or looking over products for defects
Asperger Syndrome at work: Success strategies for employees and employers Coulter Video www.coultervideo.com		

Adapted from Shore, S. & Rastelli, L. (2006). *Understanding autism for dummies*. New York: Wiley. 36

SUCCESS WITH AUTISM

A CLOSER LOOK AT MY PLACEMENT ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM — ADULT

Sheltered Workshop for People with Asperger Syndrome

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Reframing Characteristics — Looking for Strengths

Burton — Professor of Mathematics

Characteristics	Employment Implications
Communication	Detailed, factual, data-driven, truthful, preview, subject, review
Social Interaction	Limited and predictable
Restricted Interests	Area of focused interest

Because Burton has autism...

He outperforms his typical coworkers

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A PEEK INTO WHAT IT MAY BE LIKE TO HAVE AUTISM

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DISABILITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Now... Let's tell a story in a round-robin fashion

Instructions:

All you need to do is relate your sentence to the previous person's sentence.

Adapted from: Lavoie, R. (1989). *Understanding Learning Disabilities: How difficult can this be?* (Videotape) Greenwich, CT: Peter Rosen Productions.

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DISABILITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Now... Let's tell a story in a round-robin fashion again
EXCEPT

- This time... no words can contain the letter "n"
 - No "n" at the beginning, middle, or end

Adapted from: Lavoie, R. (1989). *Understanding Learning Disabilities: How difficult can this be?* (Videotape) Greenwich, CT: Peter Rosen Productions.

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TURNING AWAY FROM CLOSED DOORS TO OPEN ONES

Defining Success



Thanks for your participation!



Stephen Shore
www.autismasperger.net

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