

STRATEGIES TO HELP INDIVIDUALS WITH ASD DEVELOP INDEPENDENCE AND ADAPTABILITY

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TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Obstacles to Overcome

Supports and interventions may actually be one of the biggest obstacles in the way of individuals developing independence. We should not routinely do for others what they can do for themselves. And, we should break tasks down and teach individual chunks of a task, allowing individuals to complete at least those small chunks on their own.

Start Transition Planning

- In high school?
- In elementary school?
- In pre-school?
- Early intervention?

Start Transition Planning

- At diagnosis, with the first intervention
- Remember to ZOOM

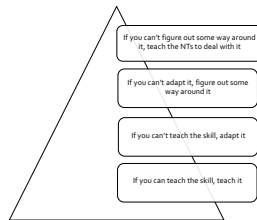
Priorities of Instruction for Transition

- Suggested in Wehman, 1992 *Life Beyond the Classroom*
- Student and family input (1 year, 5 year, 10 year)
- Survey current and potential future environments based on the above desired outcomes
- Assess skill needs in potential environments in terms of production, social, and navigation skills

Priorities of Instruction for Transition

- Prioritize skills that occur across multiple environments
- Attend to safety skills
- Attend to skills that reduce dependence
- Attend to skills NT cohorts will need to be taught

Gerhardt's Shortcut



Ultimate Criteria

"If the student does not learn to do the task, will someone else have to do it for them?"

Lou Brown, 1985

Focus on Functionality

- When developing treatment plans
- Include the phrase "in order to _____"
- Include a sibling or trusted NT peer
 - Or get feedback from a trusted NT peer

FROM PEDIATRICS TO ADULT

Transition Between Worlds

- Varies from organization to organization/provider to provider
- Do some research
- Ask some questions
- Speak up
- Gain consent

Ease the Transition

- Develop a handout/timeline
 - Include treatments, medications, set backs
- Anticipate background questions
- Suggest authorizing communication and have contact information ready

SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-ADVOCACY

Goals

- Individuals recognize and understand how and why
- Individuals recognize and understand what helps
- Individuals can communicate to others their needs and desires
- Individuals can structure their own environments to meet their needs and desires
- Individuals ask for help when needed
- Individuals use problem solving skills

How Do We Get There?

- Involve individuals in goal planning as early as possible
- Reinforce when individuals advocate for themselves
- Take time to reflect on what is working, make note of it
- Self-Monitoring
- Teach a process (and focus less on outcome)
- Scaffold and fade
- Recognize "natural" supports
- Technology

Advocacy (In All Forms)

- "Non-compliance"
- Resistance
- Aggression/self-injury
- Disruptive Behavior
- Escape/Avoidance
- Repetitive questioning
- Changing topics

Areas of Advocacy

- Personal safety
- Leisure and recreation
- Service, supports, and interventions
- Social relationships
- Romantic relationships
- Legal and civil rights

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Motivation

- Help individuals see who the work is for (ahem: not us)
 - Treatment planning
 - Social Behavior Maps
- Teach motivation directly – what it is, why it's hard to find, *everyone struggles* at times
- What's getting in the way?
 - Feeling overwhelmed
 - Wanting control?

Basic Concept Taught in SBM



Time Management

- Predicting time
- Passage of time
- Sense of urgency – time limits and deadlines
- Contingency planning

TECHNOLOGY

“Bug in the Ear”

- Teach and practice a skill
- Use Bluetooth and fade proximity to therapist/instructor
- Allows for practice with layers of complexity

In their Pocket

- Reminders, prompts
- Apps
- Schedules
- Notes
- Relaxation/regulation
- SOS texts

360 Thinking Time Tracker App



ON THE ROAD

Resistance to Driving

- What is scary about it?
- Unexpected situations
- Responsibility, Control
- Increased levels of complexity
- Dynamic, fast paced situations

Lots of Practice

- Time
- Place
- Person
- Master then move on

Driving Time

Time management pops up here, too!
 Being late to work can get you fired
 Being late to appointments, meetings, social events are problems, too
 - Taken from www.efpractice.com Sarah Ward, MS CCC-SLP

Travel Factors	Describe	Estimate Time
What place am I going to?		
What time do I need to be there?		
How long will it take me to get there? Are we driving there?		
What Obstacles can I anticipate might effect how long it will take us? (Traffic, need to stop on the way, finding parking, detour, bad directions, etc.)		
Will we need to make a stop on the way? (to get gas, snacks, rest, to run an errand, or visit a friend, to get money, to get a gift/food/flowers, etc.) How long can I guess these stops will take?		Total Time:
So what time do we need to leave the house by?		
What do I need to do before I go? Change my clothes? Gather some materials? Get the house ready? How much time will I need?		
By what time do I need to start getting ready to go out?		

Anticipate

- Car trouble
- Trouble with other drivers
- Roadblocks
- Weather conditions
- Getting pulled over

Speeding, Autism and No Ticket Issued!

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In the past few years I have had two encounters with the police while driving my car. The first time I pulled into a school parking lot, answered an email on my Blackberry, gummed my shift together and let out a little scream, so I didn't expect to see a police officer standing at my car about

"Good afternoon officer. How might I help you?" I inquired, knowing that it is very important to always be polite to a police officer.

"Do you know why I am stopping you?"

"No, I do not," I replied honestly.

"Do you know the speed limit on this road in front of the school?"

"Yes I do," again, my honest reply.

"And what might that speed limit be?" questioned the officer.

"It is 25 mph," I responded confidently.

"I clocked you at 33 mph. Is there a good reason you were speeding?" the officer asked.

I was getting increasingly nervous, but knew I needed to tell the truth. I said, "No, I do not have a good reason for speeding."

"Are you coming to pick up a sick child?" asked the officer.

"No, my children do not go to this school." I did not know why the officer was asking me this question as it didn't seem to have anything to do with speeding.

"Perhaps you are in a hurry returning from your lunch break," the officer offered. It seemed this officer was trying to be friendly with me, which was a bit weird to my way of thinking.

Judy Endow

Aspects of Autism Translated

Being as polite as possible in light of my increasing nervousness I responded, "No, I am not late. In fact, I am early. That is why I was answering an email and didn't notice you standing at the door."

Acting a bit annoyed with me the officer asked for my driver's license. While I was fumbling it out of my purse he asked one more time, "Do you have any good reason for speeding?"

I know exactly how this officer felt because I too was becoming a bit annoyed. Again, I tried to give my explanation in the very politest voice I could muster. "Officer, I have no good reason for speeding. I am not coming to pick up a sick child. I am not coming back from lunch. I am a consultant to this school district. I come here every month. I always arrive early. I am aware of the speed limit. I have no good reason at all for speeding, but do in fact have a good reason for speeding. I simply wasn't paying close enough attention. I know that is bad of me as a driver and I totally deserve a speeding ticket because I disobeyed the law. I am very sorry. Will you please direct attention from now on?"

The officer took my license and after a few minutes returned telling me I had a clean driving record and he saw no reason to issue a ticket. He admonished me to pay closer attention in the future especially when driving near schools.

I said, "Are you sure? I did break the law. I will gladly pay a fine."

Ignoring me the officer told me to have a nice day and to drive carefully. I was very pleased over his behavior, even though I was glad that I didn't get a speeding ticket. That night I asked a friend who explained to me that the officer likely didn't want to issue me a ticket if I could tell him a reasonable explanation for my speed. She said given my situation, even though many people would have the same explanation, they would never go to the police officer. Some that most people make up a story - they actually lie about speeding and the police officers are used to it.

I know my autism gifts me with Social Thinking and a kind of honesty most others in the world do not have. I know this doesn't always work out well for me, but I do not understand why people do not consider this that a deficit it regards to me as an autistic person. I shouldn't believe it's a bad thing to lie, especially to a police officer. In this instance, sticking to the saying, honesty is the best policy, worked well for me. End result: No speeding ticket.

REFERENCE

Endow, J. (2012). *Learning the Hidden Curriculum: The Odyssey of One Autistic Adult*. Shawnee Mission, KS: AMPC Publishing.

IN THE DORM

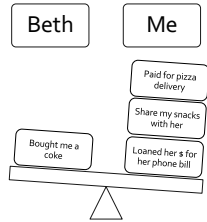
Perspective Taking

- Recognize others' thoughts and feelings
- Adapt behavior if necessary
- Open the door for being direct
- Recognize your rights and be able to advocate
- Communicate your requests

General Guidelines to Follow

- Do not use, borrow, or take any of your roommate's belongings without permission
- Do not sit or lay on your roommate's bed
- Even though it's your bedroom, you can not masturbate or have sex with your roommate in the room
- If your roommate is sleeping (day or night), be as quiet as you can when you come in and get your things
- If something routinely annoys you, consult with someone and make a plan

Keep Track and Keep It Fair



Reciprocity

- So much of a focus on individual with ASD's ability to share, pay attention to the other person
- Teach that others should bring their share to the table, too
- Protect against being taken advantage of
- Give permission to say "no"
- Encourage consultation with _____ when needed

IN THE APARTMENT

Skills to Address

- Safety, security, emergency planning
- Health issues, when to seek help
- Responsibilities – bill pay
- Rights and how to advocate
- Leisure time
- Regulation
- Who's your go-to?

Consider

- Location, location, location!
- Access
- Neighbors
- Roommate?

Don't Worry About

- Making the bed
- Laundry
- Fruits and vegetables at each meal
- ...basically, what you wouldn't have much "control" over anyway, and what you would "control" for a NT adult

IN THE WORKPLACE

Gaining Employment

- Motivation and initiation
- Awareness and understanding
- Job search
- Applications
- Interview

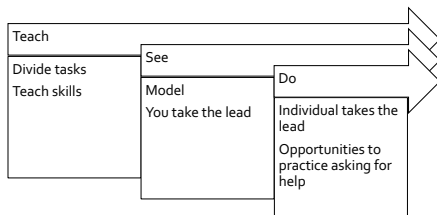
Job Match

- Is this job a good fit?
- Challenge
- Interest
- Skills
- Comfort
- Hours
- Pay, benefits
- Requirements

Consider

- Does the individual match the job requirements/description?
- Adequate training
- Interests
- Areas of strength/deficits
- Experience
- Social demands
- Physical space
- Navigational demands
- Logistical demands

"See One, Do One, Teach One"



Possibilities

- Support services for finding employment
- Training co-workers

At Work

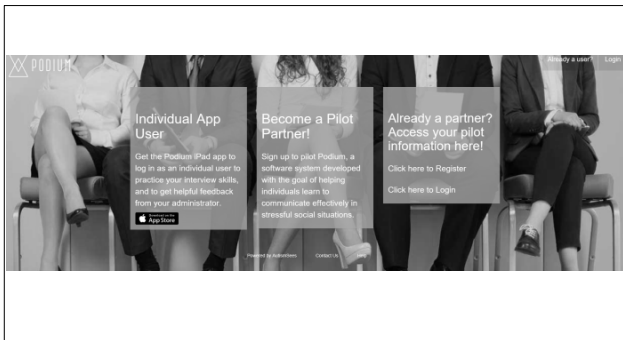
- Expected Behaviors
 - Arrive on time
 - Small talk
- Understand role of manager
 - And sometimes they are wrong, irrational, moody
- Collaborate with co-workers
 - What are their roles
 - How do you work as a team

At Work

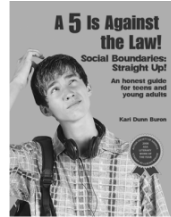
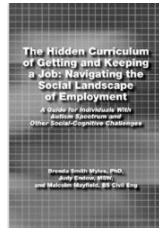
- Understand your roles and responsibilities
 - Ask for help, guidance
 - Gain clarification
 - Respect the learning curve
- Communicate effectively
 - In person
 - On the phone
 - Over e-mail
- Accept Feedback

At Work

- Take breaks
- Emotion regulation
- Stress management
- Frustration tolerance and perseverance
- The Hidden Curriculum of your workplace and finding a go-to



Resources for Adults



Resources for You to Find

- Familiarize yourself with government agencies that can provide support
- Find local or area non-profits that can help with job skills, job training, job search
- What internships or employment opportunities are nearby?


Resources For You to Find

- Find local or area non-profits to help with housing, independent living
- Are there relatively nearby resources for independent living?
- What do Universities offer for students with disabilities?
- Summer programs?

And If They Don't Want Help?

- Motivational interviewing
- Social Behavior Maps
- That's their choice
- But I'm going to try my hardest not to be someone/something to be avoided
- And it might not be their final choice

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