

**A Whole New Pathway:
How Strengths with Challenges Can Lead to
Vocational Possibilities and Self-Satisfaction**

**In Preparation for Southwest Center, Training
Louisville, KY.
(for professionals, parents, and caregivers who
assist individuals with ASD and Disabilities).
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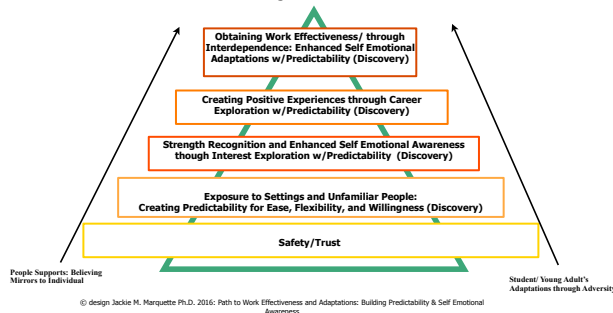
(Short Story)



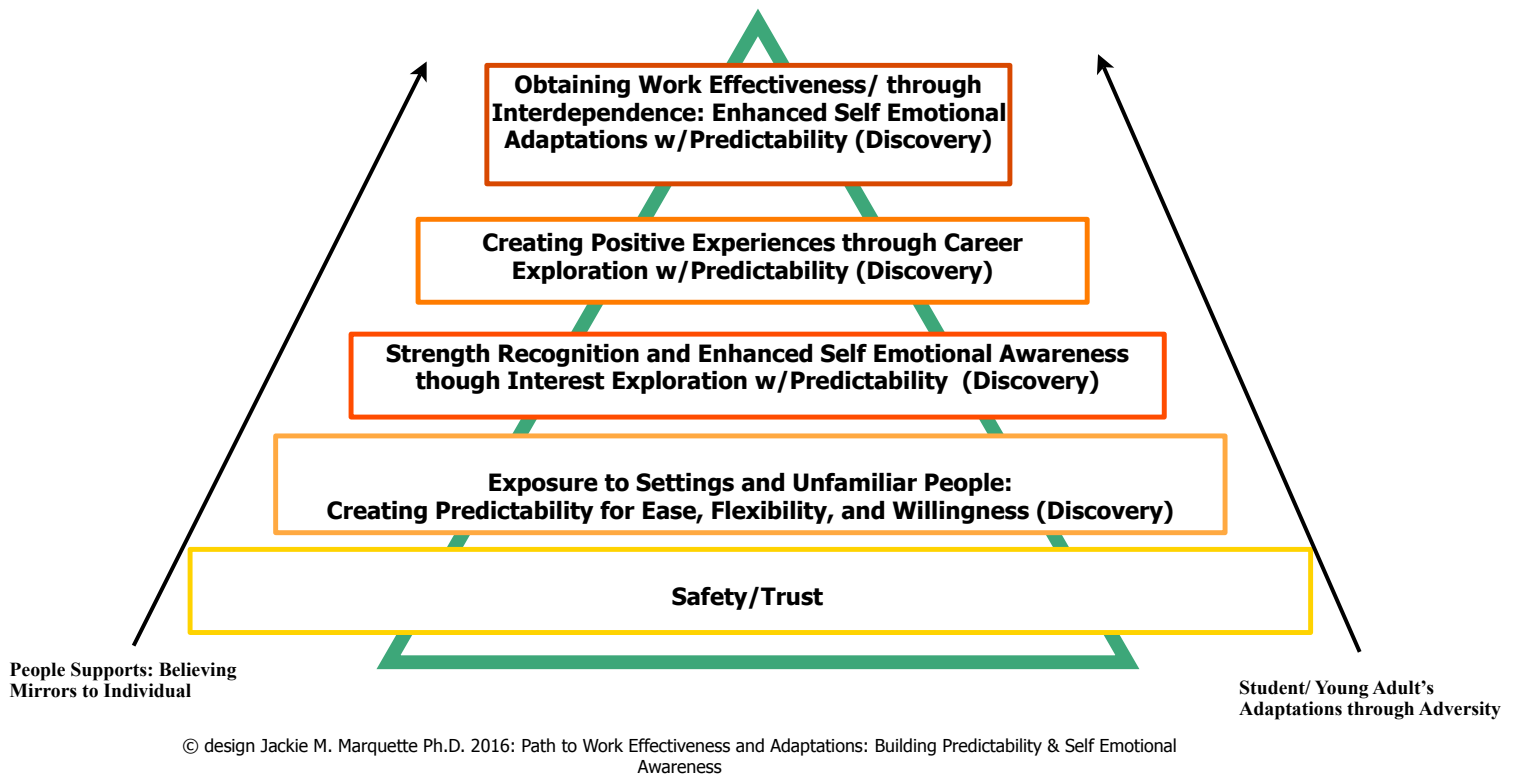
"Believing Mirrors" are people who **mirror** us back to ourselves as powerful, strong, and in our most positive light. Our **Believing Mirrors** are valuable people in our creative lives."
Julia Cameron, The Artist Way



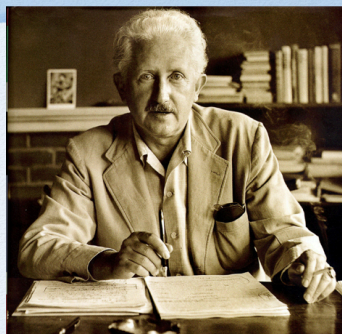
**Enhancing Predictability & Self Emotional Awareness in Individuals with Autism:
Reaching Work Effectiveness**



Enhancing Predictability & Self Emotional Awareness in Individuals with Autism: Reaching Work Effectiveness



**“Life doesn’t make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, the sooner we learn that, the better for us all.”
Erik Erikson**



Erik Erikson, psychologist known for theory on psychological development of human beings.

- “Interdependence is a mutual reliance of each individual’s contribution within a creative employment structure enhancing the whole environment.” Marquette, 2017

Strengths and Support Categories

Power Practices: Explore Careers and Create Your Pathway

Interdependence/ Independent	Job/Career Goals	Strengths and Interests	Supportive Actions
Category I: Interdependence/ Independent	Employment (part time and full time), college degree, certifications, self-employment, hobby, volunteer.	Strengths and interests are known and useful for vocational options, & leisure.	Indirect supports. Individual may rely upon guidance to pursue goal (a mentor, parent, trusted friend, school counselor, vocational counselor). Self-awareness development. Direct supports- tutor/mentor
Category II: Interdependent Supported Category A:	Employment (part time and full time), college degree, certifications, self-employment, hobby, volunteer.	Strengths and interests are known and useful for vocational options, & leisure.	Indirect supports. Individual may rely upon guidance to pursue goal (a mentor, parent, trusted friend, school counselor, vocational counselor). Self-emotional awareness development. Direct supports- Tutor, Employment Specialist, Vocational Counselor, Manager/Coworker Support, Mentor

Interdependence/ Independent	Job/Career Goals	Strengths and Interests	Supportive Actions
Category III Interdependence/ Supported Category B	Supported employment (part time), self employment, hobby, volunteer. Daily Living: Community Access & Leisure	Strengths and interests are known and useful for vocational options, leisure. Self emotional awareness development.	Indirect supports - Relies on assist to pursue goals (i.e., parent, vocational counselor/therapist, mentor or trusted friend). Relies on self emotional awareness development. Direct supports- Tutor, Employment Specialist, Vocational Counselor, Manager/Coworker Support, Parent, Community Coach for daily living, leisure, & self emotional awareness development.

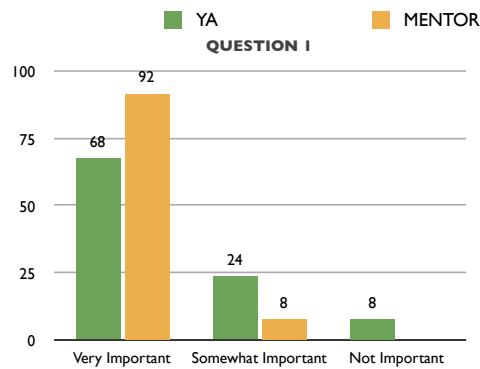
Interdependence/ Independent	Job/Career Goals	Strengths and Interests	Supportive Actions
Category IV Interdependence/ Participatory	Employment, self-employment, hobby, volunteer. Daily Living: Community Access & Leisure	Strengths and interests are known and useful for vocational options, leisure. Self emotional awareness development.	Indirect & Direct Supports (training for coworkers, community coach, and/or caregivers). Direct supports- Provide training and support to engage individual on vocational tasks, leisure, daily living, self-care at home, physical safety, navigating the community safely, emotional self-awareness, & coping support under change or stressful situations.

Strengths are anchors to one's contributions and life.

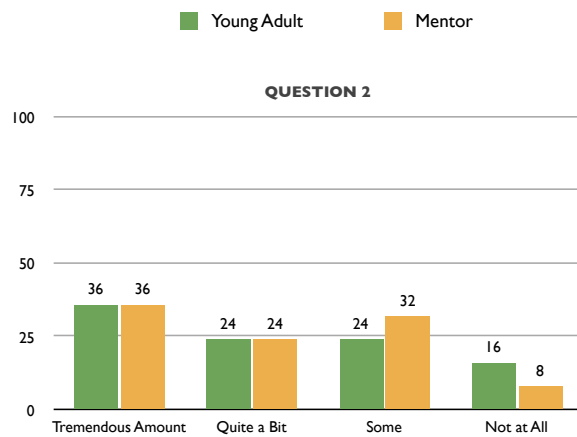
Strengths are opened windows to creating life satisfaction.

What do Young Adults and their Support Advocates say about their Strengths and Their Challenges?

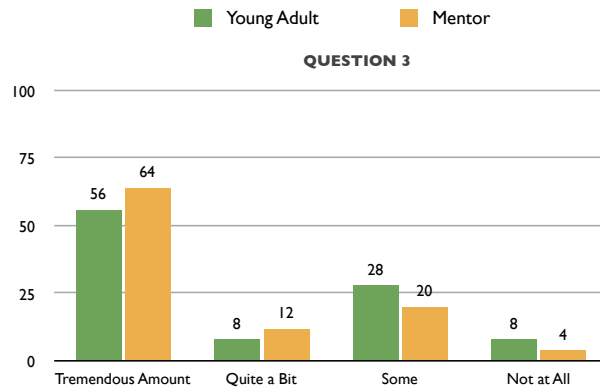
Take a Look at this Independent Study with 90 participants.



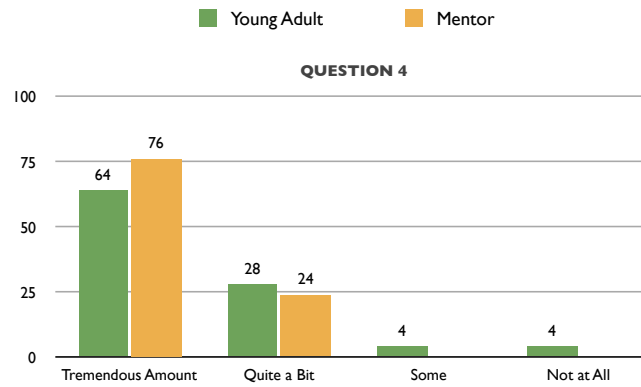
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 1: How important do you think it is to know what your strengths are for a job or a career you want?



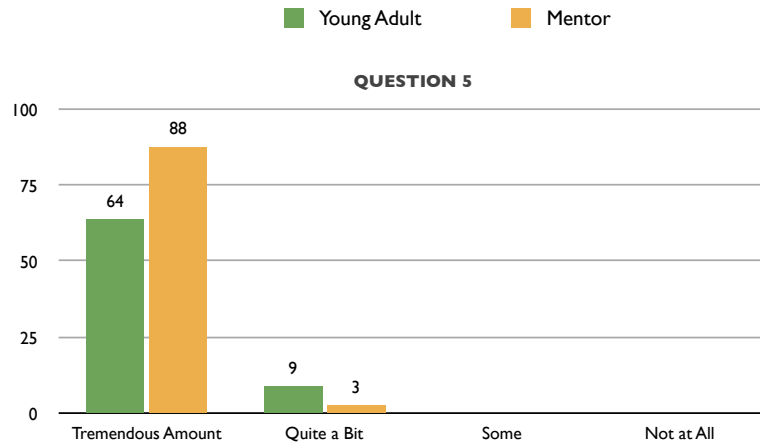
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 2: How much do you think that Section A, Hard Skills (skills you can be trained on) matter to your job or career.



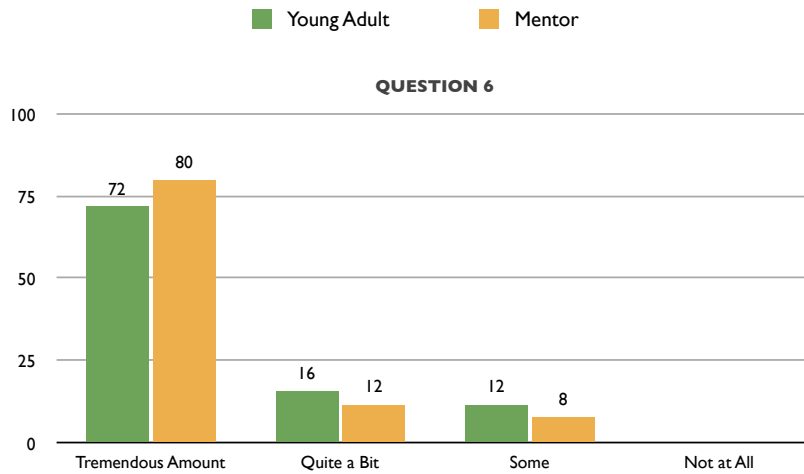
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 3: How much do you think that Section B, talents in the arts or specific skills in self expression matter to your job or career?



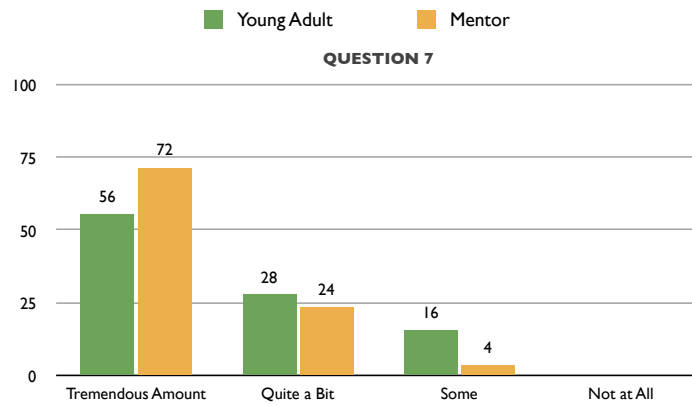
YA = 25 M= 25 Q4: How much do you think it matters that a supervisor notices your strengths on a job or in a career?



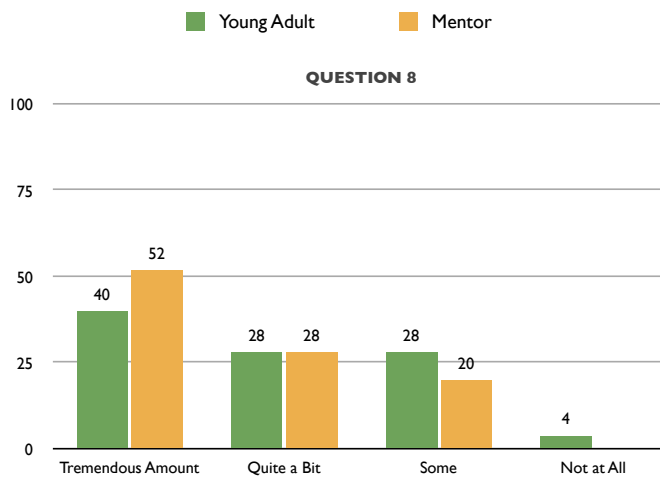
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 5: How much does it matter to you that you have a job or a career in an environment you feel capable to do your best on a job or a career?



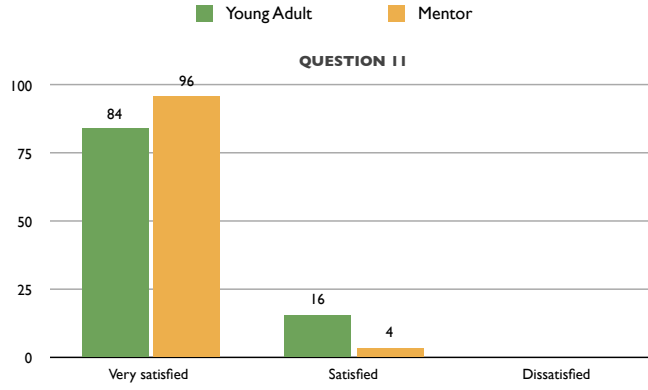
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 6: How much do you think your personal preferences for structure matters so you can do your job? [some examples, structure to prepare and get ready for work, time of day to work, task structure, pace (fast or easy)]



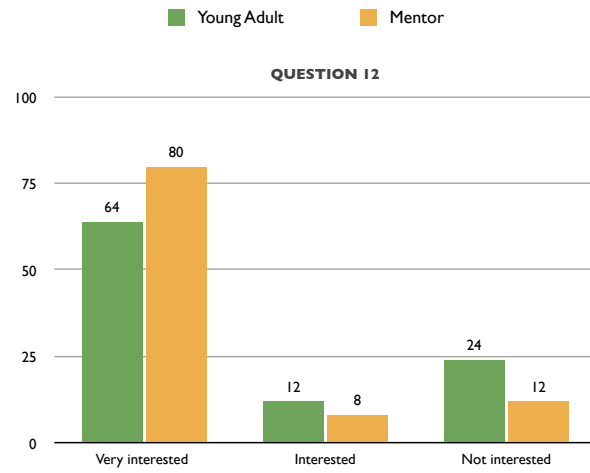
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 7: How much do you think it matters that you have a manager or coworkers who understand your strengths and capabilities as well as your challenges on a job or in a career?



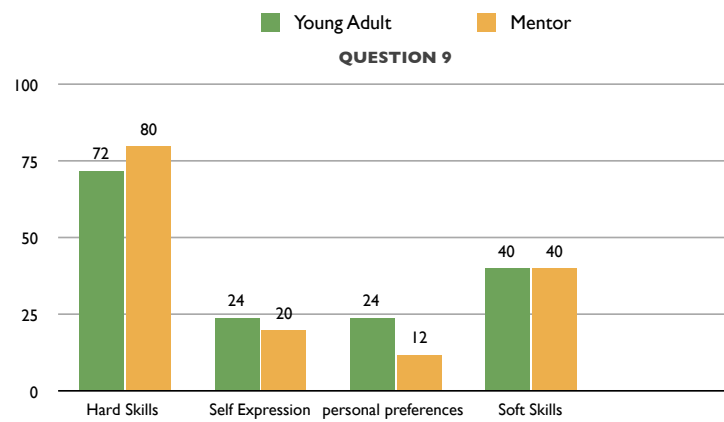
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 8: How much do you think it matters that you are able to get along with and communicate effectively with your manager or coworkers on a job or in a career?



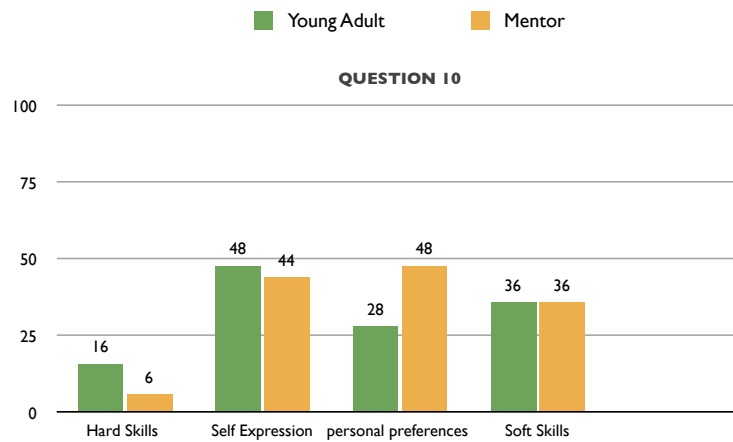
YA = 25 M= 25 Q 11 How satisfied were you that this tool highlighted your best strengths?



YA = 25 M= 25 Q- 12: How interested are you in attending a workshop with others to learn more about how to use your best strengths so you can do your best on a job or in a career you want to have?



YA = 25 M= 25 Q 9: What areas have been **mostly** part of your training or education for a job or career? a. Hard Skills, teachable abilities, b. physical self expression, art, c. learning patterns and preferences, d. soft skills (emotional capabilities)



YA = 25 M= 25 Q 10: What areas have been **least** part of your training or education for a career?

Our youth can accomplish great things, but we must see the best in them.
 Your Strengths, Your Career <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRVB-IH8VKs&t=1s>



Meet Nicholas



Congratulations!

Nicholas Littrell



There is some great news for you! You have many strengths that make you a good person for a right kind of job! Your strengths can be used for enjoyment and learning new things. Your preferences are shown in this book that reflects you and your best.

This book is especially for you. The ideas in this book came from your room. So go ahead and feel how awesome you are. This book also has ideas for jobs that may be just right for you. When you notice these strengths, you can practice them too so you can improve.

The next time you are introduced to a new job byout, volunteer work, or a paid job, know that you have many strengths to offer.

This book will also give ideas to the people who want to help you get a job and to advocate on your behalf. The different areas of strengths are shown below. Enjoy reading this book all about you. I wish you much success in getting a job that is just for you.

Dr. Jackie Marquette



Hard Skills are specific teachable abilities that may be required for a job or career and University Studies



Multiple Intelligence: innate and self expression in artistic, musical, visual spatial, or linguistic applied to a career or hobby.



Learning Preferences: best ways to understand and express that is unique to you.



Soft Skills: are abilities associated with your emotions.

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Your Enjoyment in Activities - These bring out 'you' as a unique person and one who likes to have fun too.



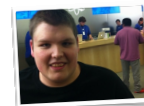
You Enjoy Having Fun at an Autism Group Party



You have fun playing video games.



You Enjoy Traveling on Vacation



You Enjoy Shopping at the Apple Store

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Nicholas these are your successful work experiences.



Congratulations on your first paycheck in working with plants at the Kelly Autism Center



You enjoy entering numbers and other information in the computer.



You enjoy helping your mom in stocking items in your booth at the Peddler's Mall.



You enjoy cutting the grass in Spring or Fall, when the weather is nice.



You enjoyed your job restocking travel brochures.

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Your Hard Skills



Nicholas these are skills that you are good at that make you ready for a job.



You can read well and like looking up information on the internet. Some of your interests are places to travel and visit.



You enjoy reading about reptiles.



You have an interest in working with plants.



You have a good understanding in how to read a map. You are helpful when travelling on vacation.

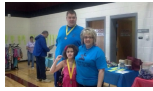


You have a good memory.

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Your Self Expression



You like to participate as a citizen: voting and autism advocacy.



You have enjoyed taking photos.



You like to create by painting.



You appreciate all kinds of music.



You have a unique way of looking at things.

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Nicholas these are your personal preferences that enable you to do your best on a job or a task.



You would do best to work in a quiet area. That is, settings with no bright lights and no loud disturbing noise.



You do best when you work indoors. You don't do well working outdoors in extreme heat or cold.



You learn how to do a task when you see a video or when someone shows you. You also learn best when you have time to practice.



You adapt well when you have a structure or you day and tasks listed on checklist, iPad or cell phone.



You do best with someone to guide you in work exploration and in learning a job task. You do best when that person sees your best strengths and acknowledges your challenges.

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Nicholas These are your Personal Capability Emotional Strengths

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Nicholas This is How you show Self Awareness



You show independence in taking care of your bathing and other hygiene.



You understand sarcasm and laugh at jokes on TV comedies and movies.

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Nicholas This is How you show Self Control



You do best with an easy going pace, not rushed.



You use a calendar for daily schedules or checklists.



You manage to do daily errands with your mom.

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Nicholas this is how you are adaptable.



You can accept change to new settings. Remember it is ok to prepare for change too so that you accept it.



You can adapt to new people when you are introduced to them. If you understand the connection. For example, a job coach, a coworker, a doctor, a dentist.

Nicholas this is how you are motivated.



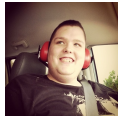
Nicholas you show motivation to do job tasks at home, and in your community volunteer work.



Nicholas you show motivation to be part of your community, enjoy movies, festivals, and in your church. You are a big help to the church by changing out the bulletin boards with your brother and mom.

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Soft SKILLS



Nicholas, these are your Social Capability (Emotional) Strengths

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Nicholas this is how you show empathy.



Nicholas you show empathy. You show concern when your mom or another family member is happy or sad or sick. You can tell your mom when you have happy or sad feelings too.

Nicholas this is how you are an influence to others.



Nicholas you are positive influence to your family. They enjoy you being part of everyday and holiday events. Yes you are an influence.

Nicholas you vote in elections, and contribute to gets elected into office. Yes you are an influence.



You take part in Autism Advocacy. By going to Autism Walks, you show people how valuable and amazing people who have autism are.

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Nicholas This is How You Communicate



You can express joy for something good that is about to happen.

You can express sadness for something that disappoints you.

You can say and ask for something you wish or something that is important to you.

You can understand when your mom or other family members have happy or sad faces.



You understand how people feel by their body language or gestures.



When another person greets you and says, 'Hi or Good Morning' or 'Goodbye' you are friendly and respond.



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Now that many of your best strengths were found and noted, here are some job ideas that might work for you Nicholas.



Grocery Clerk: Nicholas you could sort and separate food and goods that are big and small for the different holidays throughout the year.



Restaurant Kitchen: Nicholas you could explore jobs that may be suitable for you in the area of preparing food. Perhaps you could scrub potatoes, other vegetables in a restaurant kitchen, or hot cloth napkins. The job would be ideal if you could work early in the day, when there is less noise, confusion, and less

You could set up tables, with table cloths and silverware before a banquet is held.



Retail: K-Mart, Wal-Mart, T.M.A.X. There are retail settings where you could feel comfortable doing these: categorizing, sorting, with 3 or more items in completing a task. You could open merchandise from boxes that have been unloaded from the truck in back of the store and prepare merchandise for display. These tasks might be a good job fit for you.



Nicholas you could prepare the pizza store for large orders by filling pizza boxes ahead of time or for the next day.

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Nicholas you could be an assistant in a greenhouse. You could water plants, pick off weeds, replant plants, and move big plants and trees around for display.

Ask your mom or job coach to help you find ways to use your best strengths in a job task. You have many strengths to use.

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Nicholas here are some ideas to keep you active and living with purpose. You don't have to do any of the ideas I offer. They are for you to consider. These volunteer activities can help someone who is less fortunate.



These ideas might be fun and keep you active. You could do some of these while your advocates are searching for the right job for you. These activities will allow you to do something valuable, helpful to someone else who is in need or sick. Sometimes people feel good when they help other people. You might like trying these ideas.

Nicholas you could:

- Paint colorful posters to beautify the walls of homeless shelters.
- Make colorful funny cards for children who are sick in the hospital. Then deliver them.
- Make Easter Baskets with treats and personal items for kids in need, such as the homeless shelters.
- Gather Teddy Bears from yards sales and wash and clean up. Deliver them to the police departments for children injured in accidents.
- Fun hats. Collect hats for sick kids going through chemotherapy who have lost their hair.
- Game Kits. Make a game kit for hospitals to offer children in bed.
- Make humorous birthday cards for the elderly in nursing homes. Call the nursing home and get a list of residents and their birthdays. Deliver the cards in person during their lunch. Play a happy birthday song or better yet, sing the song to the residents who have a birthday that month.

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Good Luck Nicholas.
Enjoy Your Life. Stay active. The world needs your best Strengths. You are awesome.


**SUCCESS
IS THE SUM OF
SMALL EFFORTS,
REPEATED
DAY IN &
DAY OUT.**
-R. Collier

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Meet Sarah

Meet Trent

**Now it is your turn,
Choose a client you know well.
Use the SCI to Identify Strengths**

