



Social Success in College and Beyond

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Permission and Comfort



Two Core Features

- **Cognitive/Behavioral**
- **Communication/Social**

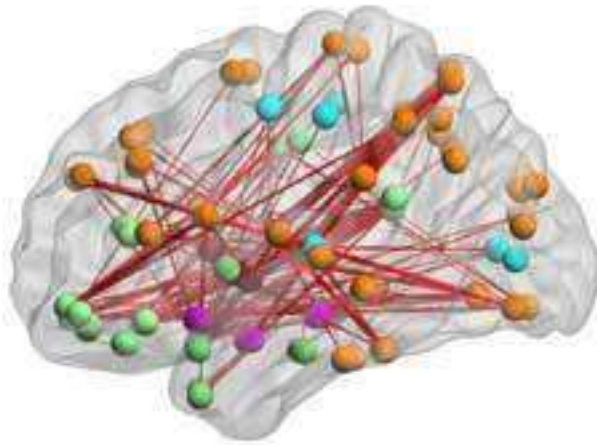
Other Associated Features

- Motor & sensory
- Depression & anxiety
- **Self-regulation**

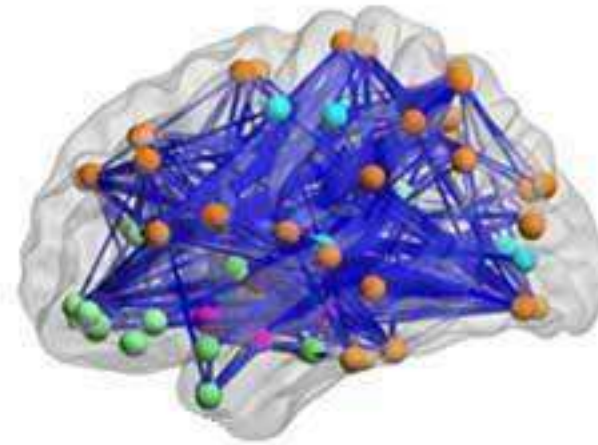
Essentials for Successful Living

- Social communication
- Executive Functioning
- Self Regulation

Typically developing children



Children with autism



<https://www.medicaldaily.com/kids-autism-have-hyperconnected-brain-areas-could-brain-imaging-one-day-diagnose-disorder-262261>

Eye Tracking Studies

- Lack of eye contact is common
- Mouths vs. eyes
- Is it gaze avoidance or passive indifference?
- Lack of meaningful information & reward from eye contact

Executive Function



Regulates, controls and manages
thought and actions



musingsofanaspie.com

<https://musingsofanaspie.com/2014/01/07/executive-function-primer-part-1/>

Self-Regulated Individuals

(see Wolf & Kaplan, 2008)

- Use strategies
- Monitor & allocate resources
- Direct own behavior
- Ask for help
- Exercise personal choice
- Believe tasks are important
- Value self imposed goals

Dys-Regulated People Do Not

(see Wolf & Kaplan, 2008)

- Direct
- Sustain
- Follow through
- Strategize
- Evaluate
- Modify
- Behave

Regulatory Functions

- 2 parallel systems:
 - **Cognitive**
 - **Social Emotional**
- Work together to achieve life tasks

Self regulation

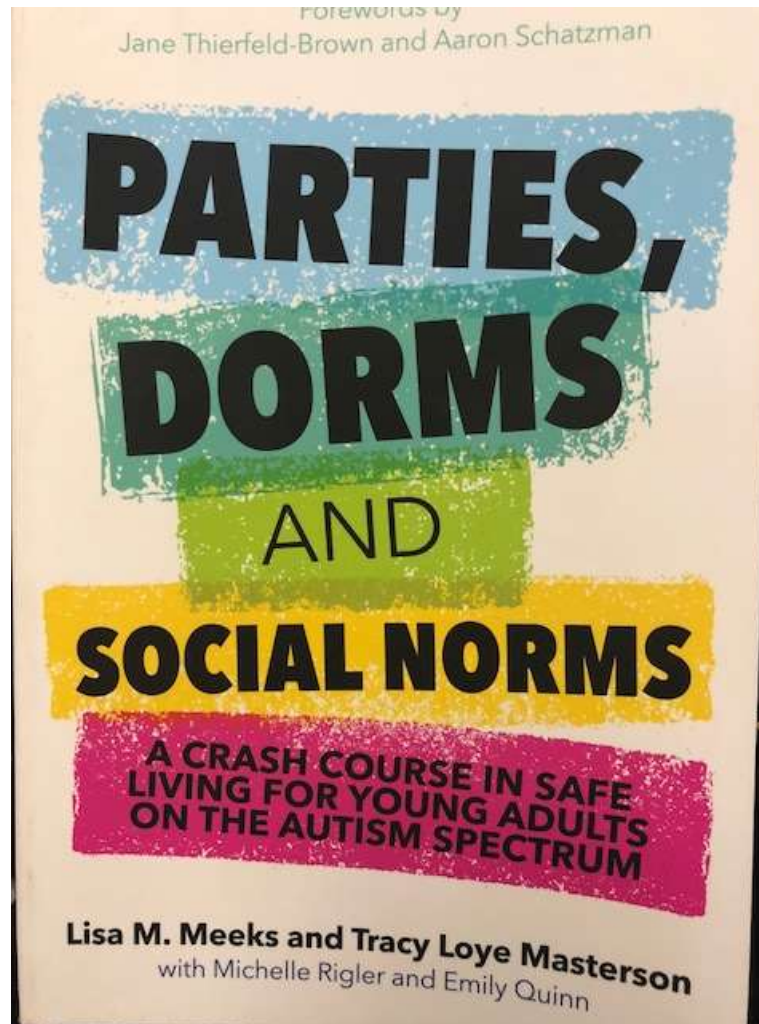
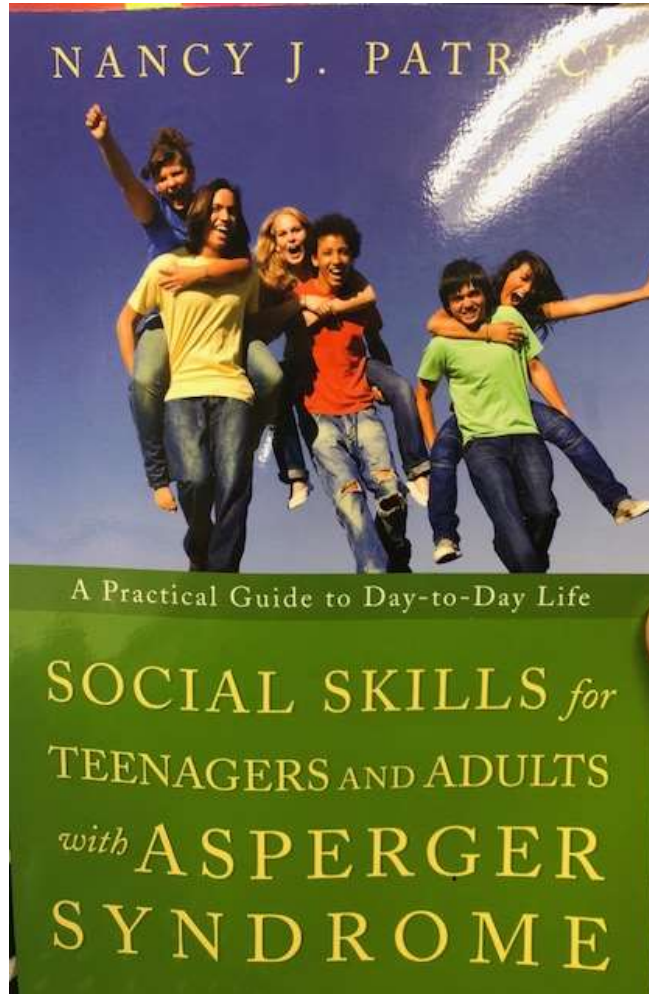
- Self-regulation is the ability to manage your emotions and behavior in accordance with the demands of the situation. It includes being able to resist highly emotional reactions to upsetting stimuli, to calm yourself down when you get upset, to adjust to a change in expectations and to handle frustration without an outburst. It is a set of skills that enables children, as they mature, to direct their own behavior towards a goal, despite the unpredictability of the world and our own feelings.
- The Child Mind Inst. 2018

Strategies

- **Proprioceptive – sense of what the muscles and joints feel**
- **Vestibular – sense of overall movement and gravity**
- **Deep Pressure,**
- **Deep muscle work,**
- **Oral**
- **Tactile Activities**
- **Sensory**
- **Guided Imagery**



References





Living in a Social World

- **What are Inter-personal, social, soft, job readiness skills?**
 - Verbal
 - (small talk, maintaining conversations, gathering and sharing information)
 - Non-verbal
 - Body language, Eye contact, spatial awareness



Why are Soft Skills Important?

- **Society views/judgements** (Patrick, 2008, 42)
 - Appropriate social skills= competent and successful
 - Inappropriate social skills= inept
- **Important for**
 - Friendships
 - Relationships
 - Interviews
 - Maintaining a job

Goal: To be social for 2 hours/day



3 Basic Elements of Socializing (Patrick, 2008, 43)

- **Social intake**

- Seeing and understanding: words, inflection, body language, eye contact, posture, gestures, and other cultural behaviors

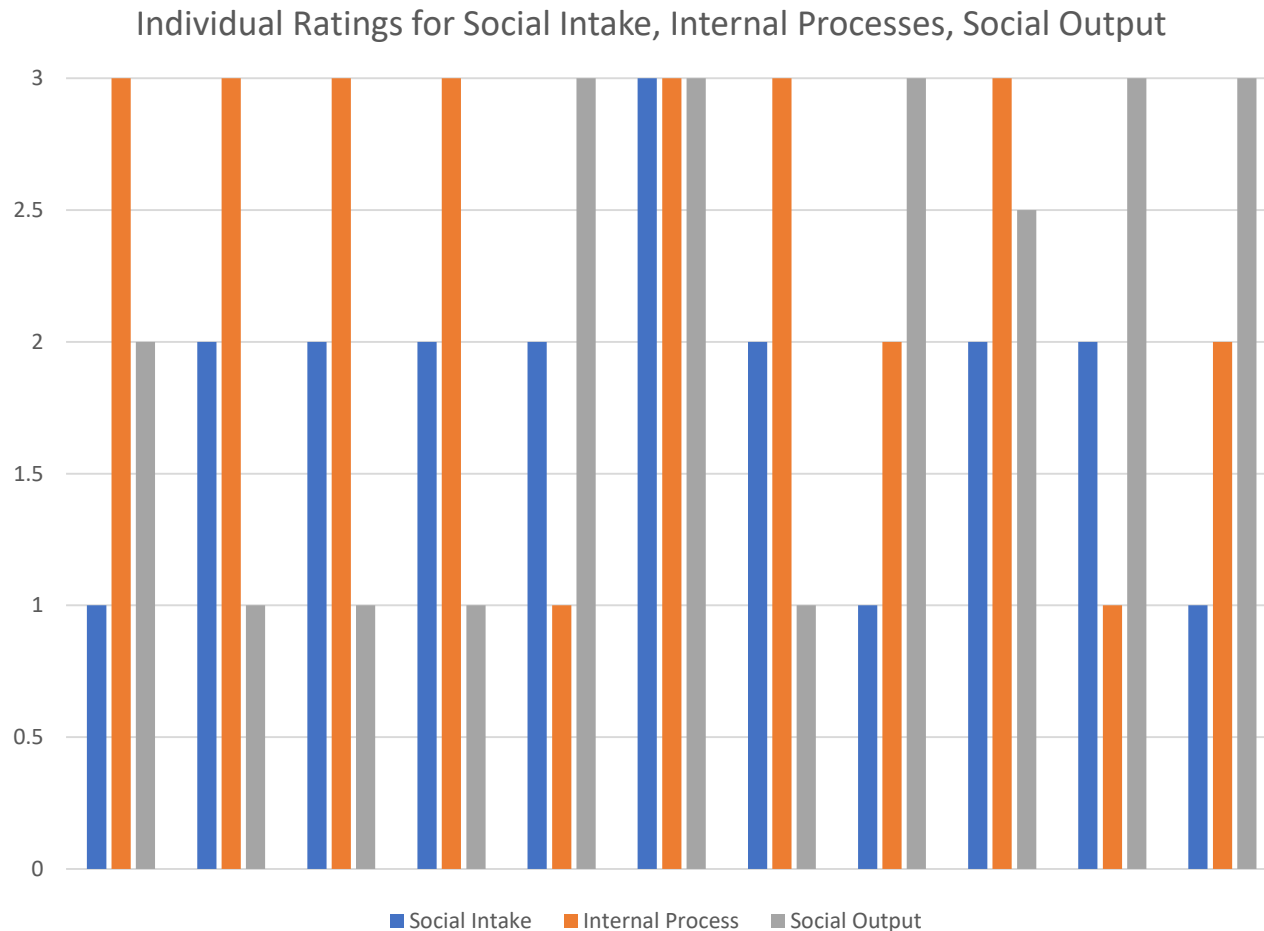
- **Internal process**

- Interpretation of social message
- Recognizing and managing own behavior (emotions/reactions)

- **Social output**

- How respond: words, inflection, body language, eye contact, posture, gestures, and cultural behaviors

Data from College Autism Readiness Retreat



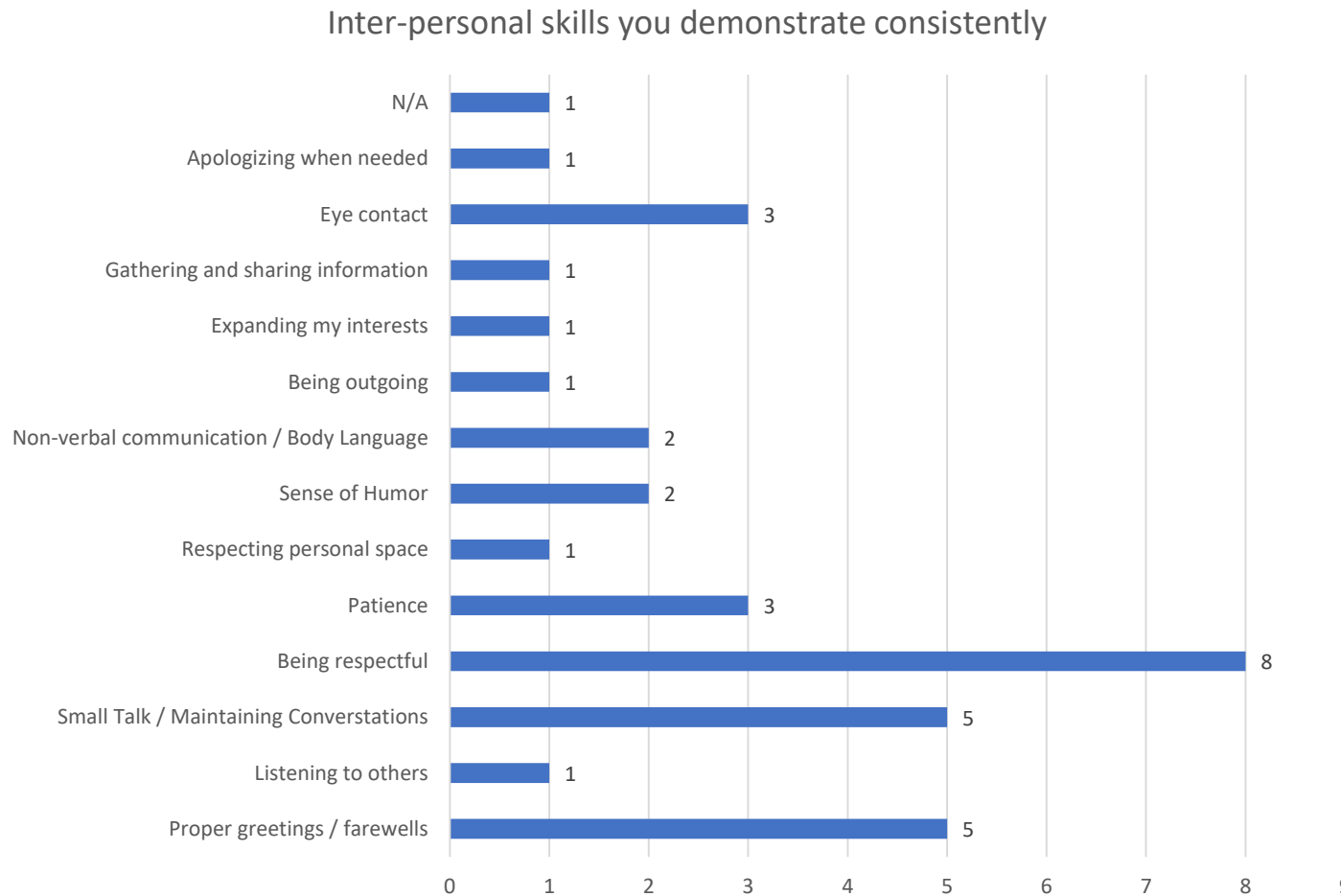
- 11 students
 - 9 high school
 - 2 community college
- Most difficult
 - 7/11- internal processing
 - 6/11- social output
- Least difficult
 - 4/11-social output
 - 3/11 social intake



Specific Inter-Personal Skills (Patrick, 2008, 44)

- Proper greetings and farewells
- Taking turns
- Being patient
- Being polite and courteous
- Being kind
- Being respectful
- Listening to others
- Waiting turn to speak
- Praising others
- Knowing what jokes to tell
- Knowing what topics of conversation are appropriate for which audiences
- Respecting personal space
- Refraining from making negative comments about people
- Refraining from being negative
- Refraining from calling other people names
- Refraining from swearing and making obscene gestures
- Using good manners

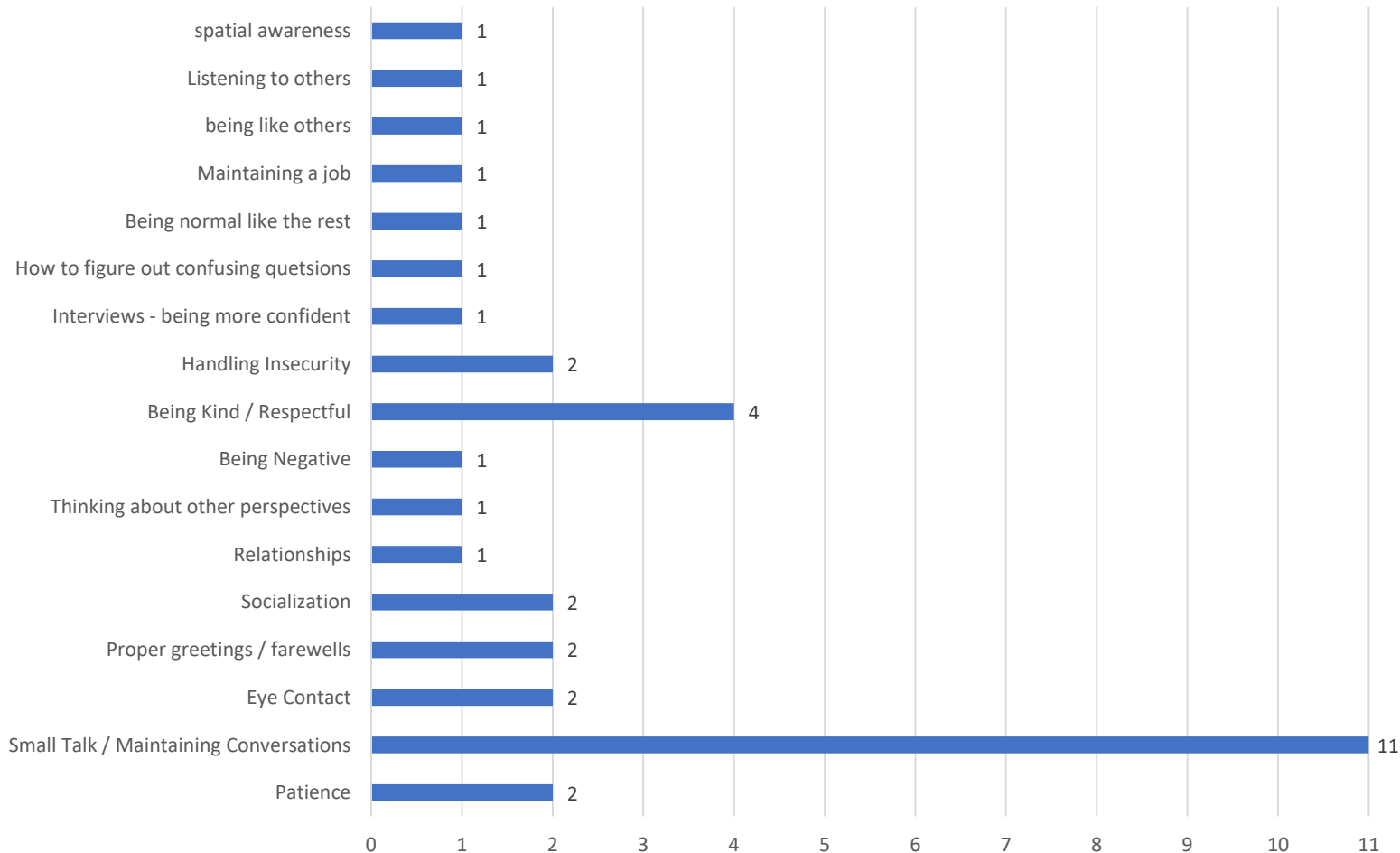
Data from College Autism Readiness Retreat



- 11 students
 - 9 high school
 - 2 community college
- **Demonstrate consistently**
 - 73%- being respectful
 - 45%- Small talk/maintaining and proper greetings/farewells

Data from College Autism Readiness Retreat

Inter-personal skills you need to improve



- 11 students
 - 9 high school
 - 2 community college
- **Need to improve**
 - 100%- small talk/maintaining conversation
 - 36%- being kind/respectful



The 10 Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships

(Patrick, 2008, 47).

Rules are not absolute. They are situation-based and people-based

Not everything is equally important in the grand scheme of things

Everyone in the world makes mistakes. It doesn't have to ruin your day

Honesty is different from diplomacy

Being polite is appropriate in any situation

Not everyone who is nice to me is my friend.

People act differently in public than they do in private.

Know when you're turning people off.

"Fitting in" is often tied to looking and sounding like you fit in

People are responsible for their own behavior



How do Social Skills affect me? (Patrick, 2008, 57)

- **Positive Consequences**

- Satisfying work
- Greater independence
- Improved relationships with others

- **Negative Consequences**

- Unemployment
- Underemployment
- Overly dependent living
- Isolation



Do I Need to Improve my Social Skills?

(Patrick, 2008, 58)

1. Am I have difficulties making or maintaining friendships?
2. Do I feel that I am frequently misunderstood
3. Do I have trouble understanding the social behavior of others?
4. Am I having social problems at school/work?
5. Am I having trouble in a relationship as a result of social problems?
6. Do I think that my social behaviors are inhibiting my success or progress in any area of life?
7. Are my friends and family pestering me about my social skills?



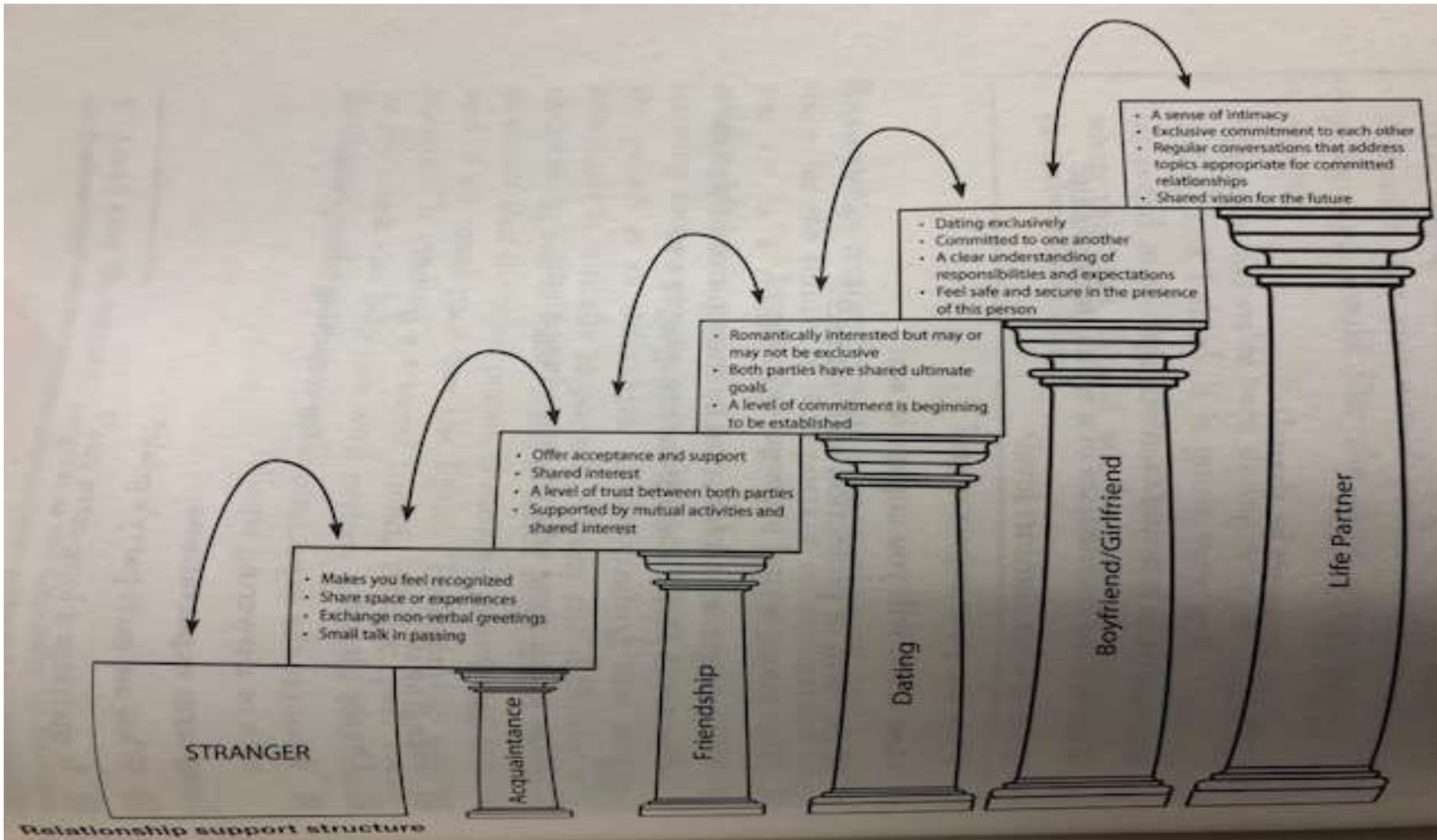
Acquaintances vs Friends

- **Acquaintances** (Patrick, 2008, 60-63)
 - **Casual** connection
 - Largest group of people we interact with
 - Simple communication: greetings/farewells, simple requests, small talk
- **Friends** (Patrick, 2008, 73-76)
 - **MUTUAL** love, respect, trust, and unconditional acceptance
 - Supportive and cooperative with each other
 - Ask each other about well-being and listen intently
 - Help each other, even if inconvenient
 - Understand mistakes and difference of opinions
 - Loyal to each other
 - Place each other's interest over their own
 - May have 1 friend or a group



Relationship Support Structure

(Meeks and Masterson, 2016, 70)





Would I Make a Good Friend? (Patrick, 2008,176)

Am I Cooperative?	Am I a good listener?
Do I like to talk to other people?	Am I helpful?
Do I share my possessions with others?	Do I share my time with others?
Would I help a friend, even if I would rather be doing something else?	Do I allow my friend to have their own opinions without getting mad?
Can I keep secrets?	Can I give helpful advice, without being bossy
Can I take advice from a friend without getting mad?	Would you support a friend if they had a problem?



What are Warning Signs that Someone May Not be a Good Friend to Me?

(Meeks and Masterson, 2016, 49)

Pressure others to do things that are wrong or illegal

Want money or access to personal accounts

Seem too good to be true (most popular guy in fraternity wants to be friends expectantly, after ignoring you or mistreating you for months)

Mistreats or insults others

Physically or verbally abusive (should seek help from family or professional if this happens)

Does not follow through with promises or obligations

Always “takes” and rarely/never “gives”

What are the social requirements at D-CAP

- 4 participation levels (more intensive to less intensive, based on skill level)

Most intensive level of support:

- 1 hour group a week
- 1 hour social gathering
- 1 hour meeting a week



How does Behavior change based on Environment



Social Gatherings

- **Set Expectations**
 - RAM
- **Activities (structured vs unstructured)**
 - Games
 - Parties
 - Hosting (host vs guest)
 - Hanging out
 - Community
 - Community involvement
- **Progress monitoring**

D-CAP Social Expectations

R.A.M

R: Ready

- On time
- Have \$\$ if necessary
- Dressed Appropriately
 - (If outdoor activity- sneakers)

A: Active

- Walking with the group
- Socializing with one another
- Engaged during the activity

M: Mindful

- Accepting others opinions
- Being patient when necessary
- Understanding that all activities may not be your choice

Meeting

- **Set goals**

- Student driven
- weekly and annual goals

- **Skill development**

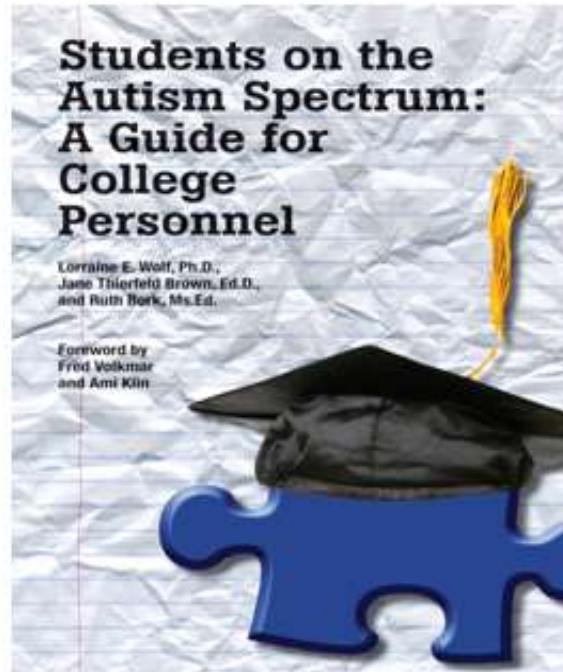
- Video modeling ([friends](#) vs Stranger things)
- Task analysis
- Role playing
- Graphic organizers
- Generalization

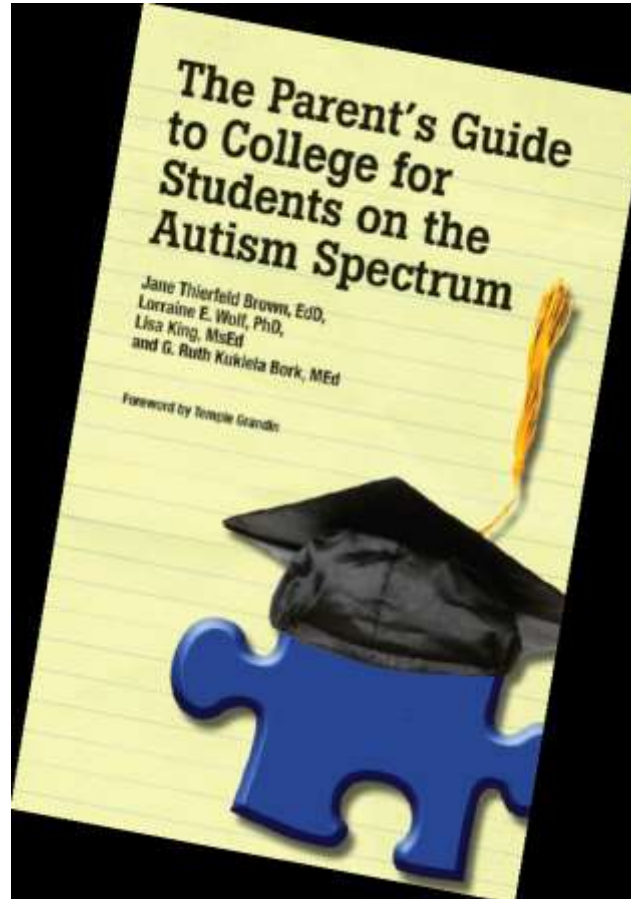
- **Reinforcement**

- Attention
- DRL

- **Progress monitoring**

- Self assessment
- Self-monitoring





College Autism Spectrum Do Not
Reproduce

Social Behavior and Self-Management

5-Point Scales for Adolescents and Adults

This award-winning tool now expanded for adults!

The image shows two overlapping 5-point scales. The top scale is titled 'Scale to Rate Common Roommate Issues' and the bottom scale is titled 'Scale to Monitor the Need for Support'. Both scales have a 5-point rating system with corresponding colored boxes (5: red, 4: orange, 3: yellow, 2: blue, 1: green).

Scale to Rate Common Roommate Issues

Rating	This is How It Might Make Me Feel and Think	This is What Would Probably Happen
5	This is a deal breaker.	I won't move out. (Please never do that!)
4	This is very upsetting. Maybe I should find a new roommate.	I would only move out if...
3	This would irritate me, and I would have to say something to my roommate about it.	I might...
2	This would bother me.	I might...
1	This wouldn't bother me at all. I am very comfortable with this.	I might...

Scale to Monitor the Need for Support

Rating	I Feel:	You Will Be Able To Tell Because:	This Is the Level Of Support I Need:
5	I feel the most I have ever felt.	I will leave. I might go without saying a word. I will avoid people.	I really need support from you about this. Please do not talk to me.
4	I'm feeling pretty bad right now.	I might not go to sleep. My hair and clothes might be dirty.	Please see a note to ask what is wrong. Give me more time.
3	I'm feeling OK, right now, but a little down.	I'll stick around, but I'm upset. I might be awkward.	Ask me if I want to talk. Keep talking to me, but don't crowd me.
2	I'm feeling pretty relaxed right now.	I can go to work or class.	No extra help needed. Maybe check in from time to time.
1	Right now I'm great!	Happy with a life and share.	Nothing extra. I am just fine.

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Questions and Comments



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