

# TRANSITION TO COLLEGE ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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1

## INCREASING RANGE OF OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD REFLECTS IMPROVING OUTCOME FOR MAY

- VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS
- SUPPORTED (TRANSITIONAL) PROGRAMS
- JUNIOR COLLEGES
- TRADITIONAL COLLEGES
- THE SECRET GOOD NEWS!



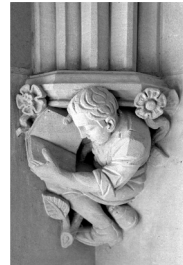
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2



## COLLEGES GREW OUT OF MONASTERIES!

- PROVIDE ORDER AND STRUCTURE
- USE ROUTINES
- MANY THINGS AVAILABLE
  - FOOD, BOOKS, ENTERTAINMENT
- YOU CAN MINIMIZE SOCIAL INTERACTION!
- BUT! THERE ARE IMPORTANT RULES!
- BEING A SELF ADVOCATE AND IN CHARGE IS IMPORTANT!



3

3

## HIGH SCHOOL VS. COLLEGE

- CLASSES: 4 TO 5 HOURS A DAY VS. 4 TO 5 CLASSES A WEEK
  - MUCH UNFILLED TIME!
- FREQUENT TESTS/HOMEWORK VS. OCCASIONAL EXAMS
  - THIS PROVIDES MUCH STRUCTURE FOR LEARNING
- TEACHERS PROVIDE MORES STRUCTURE AND SUPPORT
  - EXPECTATION FOR SELF-ORGANIZATION AND LEARNING
  - MAX CLASS SIZE 25 TO 30 VS. UP TO SEVERAL HUNDRED
- ONE BUILDING (FOR 4 YEARS) VS. MANY BUILDINGS (FOR 4 YEARS)
  - TRANSPORT ISSUES, KNOWING WHERE TO BE ARE IMPORTANT
- GROUP PROJECTS PRESENT SPECIAL ISSUES

4

4

## SUPPORTS FREQUENTLY AVAILABLE

- ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION
  - UNTIMED TESTS, TUTORS, NOTES, ETC.
- SOCIAL
  - AWARENESS OF ISSUES FOR/WITH PEERS, NEED FOR LONG TERM ("LIFE COACHING") SUPPORTS
- MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS
  - PLAN IN ADVANCE ESP. IF STUDENTS NEED OR HAVE HAD LONG TERM COUNSELING/MEDS
  - STUDENT MUST GIVE PERMISSION FOR FOLKS TO WORK TOGETHER

5

5

## WHAT ARE THE ACADEMIC CHALLENGES?

- TIMED/UNTIMED TESTS IS EASIEST!
- PROBLEM AREAS:
  - ESSAY QUESTIONS
  - ENGLISH COURSES/PAPERS
  - GROUP WORK/LABS
  - CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR
- JUDICIAL AFFAIRS
  - STRICT CONDUCT CODES PARTICULARLY RELATIVE TO SEXUALITY ISSUES!

6

6

## IN COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTS THERE ARE:

- FEWER CONTACTS WITH INSTRUCTORS
- EXPECTATIONS OF HIGHER ACADEMIC CAPABILITY
- FEWER TESTS COVERING A LARGER AMOUNT OF MATERIAL
- CHANGES IN SUPPORT SYSTEMS THAT STUDENTS PREVIOUSLY HAD IN HIGH SCHOOL
- HIGHER EXPECTATIONS TO ACHIEVE INDEPENDENTLY
- CHANGES IN SOCIAL AND INDEPENDENT LIVING DEMANDS
  - DOING YOUR LAUNDRY CAN BE A CHALLENGE!
- CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE IS IMPORTANT!

7

## COLLEGE RESIDENTIAL LIFE

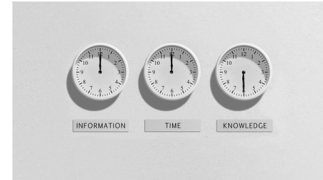
- COMMUTER VS. RESIDENTIAL
- RESIDENTIAL ISSUES
  - FRIENDS AND SOCIALIZATION, FREE TIME
  - COPING WITH ROOMMATES AND SHARING
  - LAUNDRY AND PERSONAL HYGIENE
  - SLEEP PATTERNS
  - RELATIONSHIPS
  - UNDERSTANDING 'THE RULES'

8

8

## TOOLS & SUPPORTS COLLEGE STUDENTS

- **TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING**
  - USE A DIGITAL PLANNER – FILL IN EVERYTHING! **NO WHITE SPACE!**
- **USE TECHNOLOGY**
  - NOTES, OUTLINES, REMINDERS, ETC. ETC.
  - USE INTERNET RESOURCES, BE CAREFUL ABOUT WRITING!
  - TEXT TO SPEECH/SPEECH TO TEXT
  - TALK WITH COLLEGE IT
- **ORGANIZATION SOFTWARE**
  - GOOD FOR HELP WITH PAPERS AND PROJECTS
- **GET A MENTOR**
  - COLLEGE WILL OFTEN PROVIDE A TUTOR
- **THINK ABOUT A JOB/INTERNSHIP – IN AN AREA OF INTEREST**



9

## FINDING A COLLEGE PROGRAM!

- **GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS**
  - THERE ARE A LOT OF PROGRAMS - >5500 COLLEGE PROGRAM IN US
  - ABOUT 80 TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS
    - VARY CONSIDERABLY
  - YOU HAVE TO DO YOUR HOMEWORK
  - THIS INVOLVES WORK OF VARIOUS TYPES
    - ON LINE
    - ASKING FOR MATERIALS
    - VISITING PROGRAMS
  - THE DECISION OF WHERE TO GO MUST FOCUS ON THE STUDENT NOT THE PARENT!

10

10

## IMPORTANT STRATEGIES

- START EARLY – THIS SHOULD START EARLY IN HIGH SCHOOL
- USE ON LINE SEARCHES
- ASK FOR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
- TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUMMER PROGRAMS
- VISIT THE PROGRAMS
- ENGAGE THE STUDENT IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS
- ASK LOTS OF QUESTIONS
- HAVE THE STUDENT INVOLVED
- “GOODNESS OF FIT” ISSUES

11

## WHAT ARE THE QUESTIONS TO ASK?

- WHAT IS BEST TYPE OF PROGRAM?
- HOW INDEPENDENT CAN THE STUDENT BE?
- FULL OR PART TIME?
- RESIDENTIAL OR LIVE AT HOME?
- IF RESIDENTIAL THEN...
  - VISITING THE COLLEGE IS CRITICAL
  - WHAT OPTIONS FOR SUPPORT EXIST?
  - MEET THE LD OFFICER
  - LIFE DETAILS
  - CURRICULUM DETAILS!

12

12

## THE “VISIT”

- DO YOUR HOMEWORK IN ADVANCE!
- MEET SUPPORT STAFF
  - WHAT IS THE ‘TRACK RECORD’
  - SUPPORTS AVAILABLE
  - HOW RESPONSIVE ARE THEY?
- REMEMBER COLLEGE IS NOT A RIGHT
  - STUDENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR BEHAVIOR, WORK TIMELY COMPLETION OF ASSIGNMENT, INDEPENDENT STUDY, ETC.
  - STUDENTS ARE READILY EXPELLED FOR BAD BEHAVIOR!

13

13

## GOODNESS OF FIT FOR STUDENTS

- “FEEL OF CAMPUS” (GET OUT OF CAR!)
- ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDENTS WITH LEARNING ISSUES
  - SOPHISTICATION OF DISABILITIES OFFICE/OFFICER
  - WILLINGNESS TO MAKE APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS
- AVAILABILITY OF ANCILLARY SERVICES
  - MENTAL HEALTH, SPEECH-COMMUNICATION, ETC.
  - POTENTIAL NEEDS FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT
- OTHER PARENTS/STUDENTS GOOD INFO SOURCES!

14

14

## PROS/CONS OF A 2 YEAR COLLEGE

- PROS:
  - OPEN ENROLLMENT
  - GAINING COLLEGE CREDITS AND EXPERIENCE BY TAKING FEWER COURSES AT A TIME
  - ESTABLISHING A TRACK RECORD OF SUCCESS
  - GAINING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AT A FRACTION OF THE COST OF A 4 YEAR COLLEGE
- CONS
  - ACADEMICALLY MAY BE LESS CHALLENGING
  - MAY CONTRIBUTE TO DEPRESSION!

15

## TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS

- TYPICALLY HAVE SEVERAL COMPONENTS
  - SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT & WORK SKILLS TRAINING
  - ADULT LIFE SKILLS TRAINING (E.G., FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, GROCERY SHOPPING, LAUNDRY, AND HOME MAINTENANCE)
  - SOCIAL AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS COUNSELING AND TRAINING
  - ENCOURAGED SOCIAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

16

16

## “LOCAL” TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS

- MANY SCHOOLS SAY THEY HAVE SUPPORTS
  - THE REALITY IS PROBABLY QUITE VARIABLE
  - HERE AT SCSU WE HAVE AT LEAST 40 STUDENTS WITH ASD, WE ARE WORKING TO PROVIDE MORE SUPPORTS
- SELECTED SPECIAL PROGRAMS
  - CHAPEL HAVEN
  - THAMES ACADEMY
  - LANDMARK COLLEGE

17

## COMMON PROBLEMS

- STUDENTS UNWILLING TO ASK FOR HELP
  - HELP CAN RANGE TREMENDOUSLY FROM ACADEMIC TO NONACADEMIC SUPPORTS
  - COLLEGES MAY BE MORE WILLING TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORTS
  - THE STUDENT (NOT PARENTS) MUST ASK FOR HELP
  - A RANGE OF OTHER SERVICES MAY BE NEEDED (AND MAY WELL BE AVAILABLE)
- CHECK OUT AVAILABILITY OF MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS
  - SET THESE UP IN ADVANCE OF SHOWING UP ON CAMPUS IN THE FALL

18

18

## CHALLENGES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

- STRESS MANAGEMENT
  - CBT TYPE APPROACHES CAN HELP WITH ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, ANGER MANAGEMENT BUT ADOPT LIFE COACHING MODEL
- NOTE DISCLOSURE/CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES CAN BE COMPLEX
- HELPING COLLEGE STAFF BE AWARE OF NEEDS AND SUPPORTS
- COMMON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
  - DEPRESSION, ANXIETY
- IF YOU ARE ON MEDICINE STAY ON THE MEDICINE!!!!

19

19

Handwritten mathematical work on a grid background, showing complex algebraic manipulations and calculations. The work includes several quadratic equations and their solutions, often involving square roots and fractions. The calculations are dense and cover multiple columns of the page.

Key equations and steps visible include:

- Quadratic equations in the form  $\frac{1}{4}x^2 - \frac{1}{11}x + \frac{1}{7} = 0$  and similar forms.
- Discriminant calculations:  $\Delta = b^2 - 4ac$ .
- Solutions for  $x$  using the quadratic formula:  $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{\Delta}}{2a}$ .
- Intermediate steps involving large numbers and fractions, such as  $\frac{1}{4} \left( \frac{81}{484} + \frac{27}{242} \sqrt{\frac{42}{7}} \right)$ .
- Final results and simplifications, including  $x = \frac{1}{4} \pm \frac{\sqrt{121} - \frac{9}{63}}{2}$  and  $x = \frac{1}{4} \pm \frac{\sqrt{121} - \frac{9}{63}}{2}$ .

20

## IN SUMMARY

- MUCH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE
  - STUDENTS COME IN OFTEN WITH MANY ACADEMIC STRENGTHS
- AREAS OF DIFFICULTY
  - DIFFERENCES IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
  - NEED FOR SELF ADVOCACY, SELF LEARNING, ORGANIZATION
  - REAL LIFE SKILLS – THESE ARE TEACHABLE!
- **DO YOUR HOMEWORK!!!!**