



Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter | December 2020

Purpose and Passion



Finding one's purpose is our life's mission. We often do this with trepidation as it is difficult to truly know why we are here. For some it comes easy, for others it is quite a journey and then there are those who have a gift but they are never quite able to shine.

Young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder have a purpose and a passion but they are often overlooked. As they transition into adulthood the employment opportunities become

limited. According to the [2015 Drexel University National Autism Indicators report](#), Transition into Young Adulthood, autistic adults are significantly underemployed.

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There are many families who create economic avenues to support their loved

ones with ASD. From coffee to popcorn to bakeries, you see many families navigate unique entrepreneurial pathways.

[Popcorn For The People](#)
[Beloved Bath](#)
[GiveGood For Autism](#)
[Autism Biscotti](#)

[Jewelry have an Autism Employment](#)
[Yes She Can and Girl Power on the Autism Spectrum](#)

While many responsible businesses (Publix, Home Depot, Walgreens, IBM) make an effort for inclusivity, the reality is statistics do not lie- long term successful employment is a continual obstacle to independence.

When people ask me what our plan is I generally take the approach of saying I am searching for her center of excellence and mindful not to place a ceiling on her capabilities. With that being said - I also look forward with keen but cautious optimism.

Our family recently began this difficult discussion to create a plan moving forward with our daughter's speech therapist, Vanessa Fox of Movement with Meaning. She carefully navigated questions addressing where we see our daughter finishing high school; when we feel it is appropriate to discuss age milestones for example sex, drivers education, discussing alcohol and drugs; whether we should consider guardianship; should something happen to either parent who will we ask to handle her needs; have we placed ourselves in an appropriate financial situation to handle her needs as she ages out of k-12; and do we think she can live on her own and/or attend college.

The conversation was indeed difficult but it was a start! As a parent - at least for right now I am taking the path of many others with Aspy children and forging our own way. That means actively helping our daughter find her purpose and passion. Dr. Mark Scibano and his esteemed team allows our daughter to volunteer weekly at Pets in the City. Thanks to his patience we are learning more about our daughter's talents.



Random Act of Kindness

As we close out the year I would be remiss if I did not mention how our family benefits from continual Random Acts of Kindness. These acts come from no where- as they should. I genuinely meet people from all walks of life who share my challenges. These kind souls give because they believe in inclusivity.

This year was our daughter's fifth year in the Nutcracker. I remember when she came to the [Academy Ballet of Arts](#) she was timid and frustrated and generally not accustomed to inclusion. However Suzanne B. Pomerantzeff - Artistic Director along with a host of other angels truly brought out the best in

her. **Thank you!**



Speaking of gratitude, the costume designer, Sharon Davis encouraged our daughter's love of costumes. She has altered or created countless beautiful gowns for our daughter for the nutcracker and beyond. **Thank you!**



As an ASD parent my schedule is quite hectic and often unpredictable. Our daughter had a special request that we did not believe was possible on a tight time line. Yet- **Bearer of the Bling** came to the rescue with a beautiful Random Act of Kindness. The owner Aimee Matsko generously gave a beautiful Belle gown courtesy of Santa just in time for Christmas. With one day to go she revitalized yellow taffeta and engineered a corset for comfort. We are forever grateful for your contribution. **Thank you!**

Lastly, my newest angel and Mary Poppins nanny had our family's eternal gratitude for helping us cope with COVID. Every week our daughter's caregiver with over 30 years of experience with working with children on the spectrum brought love and life activities, ideas and a spoon full of positivity. She accepted good days and bad and knew exactly the amount of interaction I could handle on a particularly challenging day. She gave the gift that has no price tag for Aspy families- grace and a judgment free zone to breathe. **Thank you!**



As I reflect this last week of 2020 I am full of gratitude for our

daughter's resilience. Cheers to a prosperous and purposeful New Year!

In case you missed it ... [November Newsletter](#)

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