



Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter
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Adulting



Sometimes there are NO Words!

After three and a half months I picked up our daughter from college. It was surreal. My thoughts were racing and all over the place. It just seemed unreal that I was coming into town, going to a hotel and waiting for my daughter to finish her final exams. I just could not believe it. As I sat in my room watching the rain I thought how grateful I am for witnessing her reach this point of life.



- Like every other college student she was nervous about exams
- Like every other college student she had a boat load of STUFF to pack
- Like every other college student she was sad to leave but excited to have a hot meal and private shower
- Like every other college student she gave me the biggest hug - saying without words that she loved me.

Adulting is difficult! I think we can all agree on that. According to an article by the American Psychological Association persons on the spectrum experience adulting challenges at the same rate as typical adults.

Although autistic adults face a number of significant challenges when it comes to navigating adult life, “What I’ve noticed, through the years I’ve been working with people with autism, is that they struggle at the same transition points that everyone else does,” said Valerie Gaus, PhD, a psychologist who specializes in working with autistic adults. “They just might have different specific issues.”



How to navigate adulthood on the autism spectrum

[Read All About It](#)

This is not to say that there are not real differences in how persons on the spectrum experience life but there are advantages that are not initially obvious.

Autistic persons thrive on routine and generally adapt well to vocational daily tasks. Many typical teens have challenges rising to route adult daily living, (“ADL”) ADLs like cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, self cleaning and overall responsibility can be daunting. Autistic persons tend to thrive in these areas because they have been encouraged to practice these tasks.

Watching our daughter handle LIFE was inspiring. Sometimes there are NO words!

Service Cliff

It is hard to describe how much work is required to support a loved one in the spectrum as they are aging out of services but the term “service cliff” describes the conundrum. In essence the services a child/teen had in the K-12 environment disappears after the child graduates and services before full adulthood usually age 26 are minimal. Families have no choice but to step in and provide additional support with hopes that their loved one can take advantage of community programs and in some cases Medicaid waiver. A study by Case Western University confirms this.

Examining the 'service cliff' for youth with autism and their family caregivers

[Read the Article](#)



But it is not just the services - it is trying to help your loved one build a life. You know what humans take for granted-relationships. Our daughter is navigating

this space fairly well so far. However we are cognizant that like many persons on the spectrum she will need support and it is important to continue to educate and engage the community to minimize the impact of the service cliff.

Another Step Forward

Our daughters are very different. Anyone who has ever met them, knows they have extremely unique views on life. But what they have in common is beautiful. Undeniable sisterly love! My husband and I are only children and have not experienced the overwhelming feeling of bonding with a sibling but it feels so good to see our daughters in a good space.



This holiday they chose to stay together without us. Well our younger daughter did not give our older daughter a choice. In any event - she was so determined to see her -she took another step forward - and decided to fly on her own. She has flown on her own in the past but with a lot of support. This time as a new adult she had to navigate the airport alone. Although there were a ton of nerves she did just fine. And more than that she had a blast adulting with her sister! We love seeing her in this space.

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kimberlygjackson.com | 200 2nd Ave. South #786 | St. Pete, FL 33701 US

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