

Strengths Related to Autism Spectrum Disorders

Individuals with autism spectrum disorders experience many difficulties throughout their lives, however, it is important to recognize that *not all* of the traits associated with these disorders are negative ones. There are many strengths that are inherent to this group of disorders as well, and they are traits to be admired in anyone, even those people without disabilities. These are traits that can be used to the advantage of the individuals who have them, and they will often serve them well in overcoming or compensating for their difficulties.

Individuals with autism spectrum disorders often can:

- Ü Understand concrete concepts very well
- Ü Understand context-specific language (language that can be directly related to an experience)
- Ü Memorize rote material easily and quickly
- Ü Recall visual images and memories easily
- Ü Think in a visual way
- Ü Learn chunks of information quickly
- Ü Learn to decode written language at an early age (called hyperlexia, many kids on the autism spectrum can decode earlier than they can comprehend written language)
- Ü Have extraordinarily good long-term memory
- Ü Understand and use concrete rules and sequences
- Ü Be Perfectionistic in approach to tasks
- Ü Can be very precise and detail-oriented
- Ü Be depended upon to maintain schedules and to be on time
- Ü Have an average or even way above average intelligence
- Ü Be honest, even to a fault
- Ü Be extremely focused, if it is a pleasurable task (and which may be the tasks others do NOT want to do)
- Ü Be charming in their innocence
- Ü Have difficulty being devious
- Ü Have a strong sense of integrity
- Ü Have an excellent sense of direction
- Ü Be very compliant, when expectations are clearly understood
- Ü Be very genuine; may not understand the motive behind trying to impress others, and therefore don't bother

