



Inclusive, Independent, Invaluable

CASE STUDY

Strengths coaching for an autistic client

Jan – March 2021

CLIENT NEEDS

24 year old autistic law graduate & LPC student. Driven and ambitious, with clear career aspirations. Caught in cycles of difficulty relating to executive functioning, inconsistent energy levels, and anxiety that have persisted for years. Struggling to meet ordinary demands of daily life and academic study independently. Lacks independence in managing certain routines. Limited understanding of own profile and needs.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- To have an improved understanding of how autism has shaped & influenced many of his strengths & needs.
- To have explored strategies for managing barriers that typically pose a challenge.
- Where possible, to have experimented with & identified useful strategies and form a bank of these to access independently when faced with challenges.

PROGRAMME CONTENT

- 10 x 1 hour weekly coaching sessions conducted remotely via video call.
- Session 1 **captured a full picture** of life as it is & has been: **positive chapters & main challenges**.
- Session 2 illustrated **executive functioning & spoon theory**. Identified **3 strategies to trial**.
- Sessions 3-5: reviewed experiences & strategies; addressed **self-concept & expectations of self**.
- Session 6-8: **supported pressured exam period** with daily 'sponsor' **calls to support executive functioning** & small **adjustments to daily routines to minimise stress**.
- Session 9: addressed **growing awareness & acceptance of own needs**, certain **capacity limits**, willingness to self-advocate & the importance of wellbeing to be able to flourish & perform.
- Session 10: **cemented learning and shift of focus to prioritise self-respect & wellbeing**.

Area:	Starting score /10:	Ending score /10:
Recognition of strengths & abilities	6	7
Confidence in using strengths to support day-to-day life	4	5
Knowing which aspects of life present a challenge	7	8
Understanding why these experiences are a challenge	3	7
Feelings about strengths & coping strategies for managing challenges	5	6

FEEDBACK SCORES

Personal Value: **5/5**

Rapport: **5/5**

Delivery & Content: **5/5**

Overall Quality: **5/5**

CLIENT: "I was very happy with the morning calls: they were **definitely helpful** with the morning routines and had an impact on my sleep, too. I **was able to maintain more regular and consistent routines**. And because of putting limits on the time I spent on things, I was **achieving things and had more energy**. The coaching has been helpful in **supporting me to work things out for myself**. I tried new things and **learned that a slow approach is effective**, because it takes a few weeks for a new habit to anchor itself. Till now, I think I expected myself to behave like a gas, trying to 'fit' whatever environment I'm in. This has made life very hard. I can see now that it has been the environment presenting challenges; I need to treat myself as a solid – or at the very least as a 'tough fluid', and focus on **finding environments that suit me better**."

PARENT: "He has **definitely learned and felt supported by you**, and **is always enthusiastic** after his sessions. You give him much more guidance and example than his counsellor, who always reverted to "what has worked for you in the past" which put the onus on him to find answers. This created circularity when he had not managed to cope in the past.

One thing I really appreciate is your focus on the autism-related aspects of his anxiety, providing positive and practical strategies for looking at his issues and dealing with his challenges; **making his wellbeing the centre of the advice** without giving him an opt out; **helping him to recognise that he does not have to strive to deliver & live up to society's expectations or gain approval** – that he can use his skills and talents in an environment and at a pace that suits his needs; **your willingness to provide 'add on' support** (daily calls; emergency calls and advice in crisis); **the easy relationship that you have built with him and his appreciation of your support and advice**; your willingness to involve me where necessary has been helpful to him and me. And your support to me!"

[This client consequently booked a second programme to continue building on our initial work.]