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Progressions Group

We heard you! Starting in September 2009, EvoLibri will be starting a new group focused on providing neurodiverse young adults the **structure, support, and skills** they need to develop, set, and work on goals. This **ten-week, 20 session** program (60 minutes each session) will provide a unique environment specifically designed to help post high school teens and young adults who are struggling to find their path in adulthood. This is the perfect group for those who are looking for employment or volunteer work, trying to find new friends, making it in college, wanting to start taking better care of themselves, get along better with peers or yearning to move out of the family home. *The goal does not matter – it's learning the **process** that counts!*

Progressions Group Methodology

- ❖ **Goal Identification** – Many neurodiverse individuals have life-long issues with figuring out where to start in any situation. Confused and overwhelmed, they need practice and guidance on how to identify what the problem or situation is, clearly and succinctly, before they can plan how to resolve the situation. Students will come up with a list of goals that they wish to accomplish – from finding new friends to finding a job, or anything else that is truly important to them.
- ❖ **Goal Refinement** – Once goals are identified, students will learn how to refine the goals so that they are SMART – specific, measurable, actionable, reasonable, and time-bound. This process helps students realize that not all goals are reasonable (date Brad Pitt) or specific (be happier) or flexible (work the graveyard shift at GameStop) enough to accomplish – this is key for neurodiverse individuals who have a difficult time with specificity, realism, or inflexibility.
- ❖ **Objectives Definition** – At this time, each student will learn different methods to determine which goal they wish to work on first: stack-ranking of relative importance, low-hanging fruit, fastest results, most impact, and so forth, all to help students understand that there are many different ways of objectively qualifying different goals. Once a goal is chosen, students will be led through exercises to define specific objectives to meet their stated goal. Again, objectives must follow the SMART criteria.
- ❖ **Removing Obstacles and Reframing** – Once the goal and its objectives are defined, the students will begin to work on their objectives. The group at this time changes slightly in tone, and becomes less of a leader-led group, and more of interactive and supportive group. Students will report on their progress and any obstacles they have

met, and receive feedback from group members (as well as the leader) as to how to move through the obstacles. This in-the-moment brainstorming teaches students how to better problem solve and come up with workable solutions on their own. When an obstacle is insurmountable, the student will be encouraged to reframe the goals/objectives to fit the reality of the situation, rather than give up, teaching the important lesson of 'regroup and retry'.

- ❖ **Perseverance** – Meeting goals requires perseverance over time as well as in the face of difficulty. Through relaxation and affirmation techniques as well as active encouragement from the group, students will learn to 'hang in there' and keep trying, and to dispel negative thoughts that always lead to failure.
- ❖ **Asking for Support** – One of the issues that many neurodiverse individuals have is identifying when they are stuck and when they need help – AND how to appropriately ask for help! Through this process, there will be ample opportunity for all students to learn that asking for giving help is a blessing for both parties!
- ❖ **Communicating Results** – With a focus on staying on topic, students will regularly communicate results, and receive corrective instruction from the leader as well as feedback from other participants. The group will be instructed on constructive criticism, and why getting feedback – even appropriately negative feedback – can help with reaching our goals. The focus here will be in pro-social communication and anxiety reduction of not being perfect.

Progressions Group Environment

The environment for this group is specifically designed to facilitate the overall process:

- ❖ **Bi-weekly AM Meetings** – Meeting once a week is insufficient to keep many young adults on track. We will meet at the beginning of the week (Monday) to kick off the week's work, and Thursdays to check in on progress, and tie up loose ends before the weekend. We are meeting at 10 am to ensure that participants are out of bed and moving at a reasonable hour!
- ❖ **Group Support** – Adolescents are far more susceptible to peer pressure, as we all know. In group work, this translates into a powerful motivator to stretch and perform. Additionally, it is vital to 'normalize' the struggling each teen goes through as part of growing up, regardless of particular challenges.
- ❖ **Group Accountability** – Again, because groups have unique dynamics, individuals frequently commit to a group process more deeply than to working 1:1 – they don't want to let the group down by failing to do what they have agreed to do.
- ❖ **Group Size** – This group has a maximum of 10 participants because more than this, and the group may have a hard time building trust and 'solidifying' into a cohesive, working unit. Again, it's imperative that 'the group' itself do what work it can to make the individual goals attainable!

When: Mondays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:00 am (9/14 – 12/17)

Where: EvoLibri, 719 Colorado Ave., Palo Alto CA

Cost: \$850 for 20 meetings

Max Enrollment: 10

Questions? Ask Us! info@evolibri.com