**[START OF TRANSCRIPT]**

**Interviewer:** Alright, we are recording and I will be asking you questions about your perspective regarding your son’s transition to adulthood in relation to his sensory sensitivities. And I’ll be doing something called a semi-structured interview which means I have my script in front of me with my planned questions but I’ll also be adapting those questions a little bit to actually fit our conversation and to fit you and your family.

**Interviewee:** Okay

**Interviewer:** Alright. Any questions?

**Interviewee:** No.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Cool. And if there are any questions you don’t want to answer for whatever reason, that’s okay and *“I don’t know”* is a perfectly fine answer as well. And if something comes up from earlier, you’re welcome to bring it up. It doesn’t have to be perfectly linear.

**Interviewee:** Okay.

**Interviewer:** Awesome. Could you please start off by telling me about your son’s sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** **[00:00:51]** The only one that we really notice from early on is the hearing sensitivity. He was sensitive to loud sounds, not necessarily as an infant or anything or even, maybe like toddler to around five, loud sounds like sirens and things that bother him and then his first day of kindergarten, first or second day, they had a fire test and he flipped out and we weren’t aware that that was going to be his reaction so we really didn’t prepare him for it either but that seemed to be a pretty significant clue as to what was going on because he hadn’t had a diagnosis yet either so that was kind of our first clue that he’s got something beyond the norm on his hearing so that’s what kind of started the process for us in getting him tested and everything.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. And is he still sensitive to loud noises?

**Interviewee:** He is but he’s able to kind of compensate and regulate I think pretty well. He knows he doesn’t like it, if he notices something’s loud, he’ll move away or put his hands over his ears. He has earphones so that seems to be… **[to son]** hi,is that accurate?

**Interviewee 2:** Yeah, but I suppose I have Asperger’s, not autism and there’s a difference because Asperger’s means my language and intelligence are fine.

**Interviewer:** Awesome. Thank you for clarifying.

**Interviewee:** I know. It’s such a tough thing when they kinda drop Asperger’s and then try to lump it all into autism spectrum and then it becomes almost meaningless to people because then they’re like *“oh, is that like Rain Man? Is that like this? Can he talk?”* and so he kind of feels kind of defensiveabout it, I think.

**Interviewer:** No, he’s entitled to. That’s how he feels. That’s real and that’s valid. But you were saying that your son, he’s able to compensate for the loud noises. Is that accurate?

**Interviewee:** I would say so yes. I mean it’s still there. He’s still aware of it and he still has some sensitivity but I wouldn’t say that it creates any kind of severe reaction in him. He knows he doesn’t like it and he immediately can do something about it.

**Interviewer:** Got you. Thank you. And does he have any sensitivities to other sensory modalities like touch or taste?

**Interviewee:** I think the touch isn’t so much like fabrics or people physically touching him. It’s more getting in his space and with that, he even wrote in the survey that he’s like *“I just tell people I need to move back”* or *“can you move back.”* He doesn’t react like jump or step back immediately so it doesn’t seem to be severe and with taste, he doesn’t like spicy food but he likes regular food and he’ll put a little salt on things, but no hot sauce or anything like that.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. And what about smells or visual stimuli?

**Interviewee:** Smells don’t seem to be a problem. I don’t think he even notices. I said if anyone’s wearing perfume, cologne, he’s like *“I don’t really notice if they are, it doesn’t bother me”* and then with the lights, I think if they were like strobe lights and things, I think it might be bothersome but just regular lights or even flashing lights like back when we used to go to arcades or whatever, he didn’t seem to be bothered by the games and things, I don’t think it was a big deal. If it’s like really up in your face, I think he might step away or move to another room but other than that, I don’t see a big visual issue with him.

**Interviewer:** Got you. Thank you. And you’ve alluded to this in your initial answer but how have your son’s sensory sensitivities changed over time?

**Interviewee:** I think it’s improved. I think it’s less severe and I think he also is able to compensate early not to let it get to a higher level too. And he’s pacing behind us.

**Interviewer:** That’s okay.

**Interviewee:** I don’t know if that’s a vestibular thing, I don’t know if that’s related to our conversation or not but that’s one of the things he does.

**Interviewer:** That’s super fine. And then this change you just described; do you think that’s related to any independence that your son has gained over time?

**Interviewee:** Oh, I think so. Definitely.

**Interviewer:** How so?

**Interviewee:** I think he has learned how to self-regulate when things are uncomfortable for him and sometimes, it’s fine and regular and sometimes, he overstimulates like walking too much, jogging. Luckily, he’s a runner so a lot of his energy just gets out in a more normal way, he just goes for a run and kinda regulate that way. But if he’s kind of in a closed space or in a group, sometimes he’ll have to go to the back and do a little pacing and then kind of settle down again.

**Interviewer:** **[00:07:18]** Got you. And so you talked about pacing, does he use pacing when he is anxious because of the auditory environment?

**Interviewee:** I think it’s more mental, emotional and I don’t necessarily think it’s anxiety per se. I think it’s just a higher level of energy so I don’t think it’s necessarily negative every time, sometimes it’s positive, he’s excited or he’s thinking about something that makes him happy or whatever it is that energy level then ramps up and then he has to do something to kind of regulate that.

**Interviewer:** Got you. If your son though is in a scenario where it’s too loud or the auditory environment is just not pleasant for him, does that cause anxiety?

**Interviewee:** I don’t think so. He hasn’t really said. **[To son]** Liam, are you still around? Yeah, come here for a sec. If there’s a lot of noise and crowds and stuff, do you feel anxious about it? Do you feel like you need to get out or do you just kind of pace a little bit?

**Interviewee 2:** I don’t know. I haven’t really kept track.

**Interviewee:** Just kind of think back to high school.

**Interviewee 2:** I usually try to…I do a little bit of both. I try and pace around and try to wait and try and get out of it.

**Interviewee:** If you can leave, you leave. And if you don’t, you just kinda…

**Interviewee 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewee:** …adapt.

**Interviewee 2:** Yeah.

**Interviewee:** Okay.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. Perfect.

**Interviewee:** He’s just not the type to be like *“I’m stressed”* and express things verbally and, on his face, I don’t notice it and then when I see him move around, I’ll ask what are you thinking about? Are you stressed out? And he’s usually like no. So I’m like okay.

**Interviewer:** Yeah and has that always been the case where it seems like sounds haven’t really caused anxiety?

**Interviewee:** Other than an immediate, like if it’s a surprise, but beyond that, not really.

**Interviewer:** Got you. Thank you. And again, you’ve alluded to this in your previous answers, but how does your son manage or cope with his sensory sensitivities for sound?

**Interviewee:** For sound, it’s primarily getting away if it’s too loud, putting in earphones, listening to music or just, I think that’s basically it. Getting away, covering the ears, putting earphones in.

**Interviewer:** Do you do anything to help him in that scenario, above and beyond what he already does?

**Interviewee:** Not really. I mean he’s pretty self-sufficient on that so he usually can do it himself.

**Interviewer:** Awesome. And has he received any specific therapies or interventions to help him with his sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** I think early on, there was probably **[00:09:57 inaudible]** with OT and speech when he was younger. In elementary school, I think but by middle school, he was done with OT and he seemed to be just focused on social speech and things like that.

**Interviewer:** And when he was receiving OT, do you think that helped him?

**Interviewee:** I think it did. I think it was more sensory integration more than anything. I think his handwriting was okay. I think fine motor skills were fine, I’m a PT so I kind of know that world a little bit and, so, I think his main issue with OT was posture, sensory integration and that kind of energy management, either too high or too low. Sometimes he’d kind of slouch and almost like wanna lie down and then sometimes he was moving too much so that seemed to be the bigger focus on that side.

**Interviewer:** And the focus for sensory integration, do you think that helped him ultimately?

**Interviewee:** I think so. I think it definitely gave him more strategies to manage it for sure.

**Interviewer:** Absolutely. And then thinking a little bit more broadly, what goals or hopes do you have for your son in regards to his sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** I think just being as proactive as possible to avoid having to do something all the time to manage it, if he can kind of learn to avoid certain things or be vocal about *“I’m kind of sensitive to this sound, do you mind if I do X”* so that he can kind of prepare other people for what he might need to do rather than just all of a sudden standing up and moving around or being like *“oh, that’s too loud”* I think. Just more of a mature, sort of getting in front of it kind of tactic that I think he sometimes does do but maybe not consistently.

**Interviewer:** That makes total sense. Thank you. And then shifting a little bit, as your son has grown up and aged, how has his and your community reacted to his sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** I think once people kinda get to know Liam, they just accept him for who he is. They’re not going to get a long conversation about something that he doesn’t wanna talk about with them. But he’s always been the general friendly kid, he’ll say *“hello,”* he’ll ask *“how are you doing.”* There may not be a lot of conversation after that but he really hasn’t had a lot of issues with bullying like no one like tries to scare him all the time or anything like that I think it’s generally been accepted that he’s a good kid and they wanna kind of protect him. He was in a catholic school for high school and they really gave him kind of a nice balance of protection but also giving him a bar to reach to say *“this is the behavior we expect from you.* *You have to sit still in class, if you want to move round, you gotta wait until break time”* and things like that. They wouldn’t just send him to the office to get something just cause he would feel a little more energy they’d be like *“sit down.”* So I think that was a really good environment for him to develop through high school.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. That’s wonderful. And then thinking back, was your community more or less accepting of him and his sensory needs when he was younger?

**Interviewee:** I think they were pretty accepting but it was more structured and *“let’s address this, this, this”* in the symptoms and not so much *“let’s see how you can behave in a certain situation.”* But I mean I think they did a good job and there was more to address earlier so it was more prioritized to like *“can he sit in a seat, can he get the work done with homework and the schoolwork, can he ask questions in class”* and things like that so it was much more about school and structure and then as we got further along into high school and afterwards, it was more like *“can you be more independent in what you need to do for yourself.”*

**Interviewer:** So, it sounds like they were always accepting. What it looked like changed a little bit.

**Interviewee:** Right. I think in the beginning, it was much more they were telling him what he needed and then by the end of high school, it was *“you need to tell us what you need and we will assist you with that”* so I think it was more giving him the responsibility to *“tell us what you need, show us what you need.”*

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Absolutely. Thank you. You’ve talked a lot about school. Were there other aspects of the community like different spaces or places that were more or less accepting of him?

**Interviewee:** Well, when he was in a couple lessons, he did horseback riding which was really fun for him early on and the instructor was very accepting of him; it was a very safe space for him, just they got on great and then in high school, he kinda had to drop that, he went into cross country running. That was another really supportive group with him and he got to compete and be a part of a team even though he wasn’t necessarily talking a lot. He was in the group and was a part of things and we did karate and that was another nice fit for him because it was kind of individual but he was also with other kids and the instructor there was also very good with him.

**Interviewer:** That’s wonderful. What about places he’s worked or your family or his family?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. He just got a job this summer at **[00:16:18 crosstalk]** on the carts and some bagging and I think it’s been really positive. He shows up on time, he just started, he got his driver’s license in the fall and so we’ve just started having him drive himself on the weekends. The closing time, I’m still picking him up but during the day, he’s driving to and from. His managers are really supportive of him, he works hard, he doesn’t show up late, he doesn’t take too many breaks, he’s [got a] pretty good work ethic so I think they appreciate that.

**Interviewer:** That’s wonderful. That’s great. And so again, thinking a little bit more broadly, do you have hopes or worries for how the community will continue to react to his sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** I think so. I think so. As people age, I think the expectation is higher for behavior and I think pacing as a 30-year-old may not be accepted as pacing as like an 18–20-year-old because they may not understand that he’s on the spectrum and that this is part of his activity and so I think it may be more challenging for him to integrate his reactions and sort of tamp down some of the more unusual things that he might do to stabilize himself. That’s something we’re definitely working on and that’s something that is always gonna be a challenge for him cause I think it’s a part of the neurological makeup of what he’s doing.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. For sure. Thank you. And now shifting again, in the quote-unquote transition to adulthood, where do you see your son?

**Interviewee:** I mean our main thing is we hope that he can finish his schooling and what he wants to do. He’s doing digital media so he loves television and movies and so he’s learning how to do camerawork, lighting, audio, like all the technical aspects of it and I think he’s becoming really interested in it. We’re going part-time right now so hopefully he can continue with that and get his degree and then get a job in what he likes to do. But even if he doesn’t, employed in something and self-sufficient, independent.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. That’s awesome. Could you talk a little bit about his stage of independence and think about what are some things he’s able to do independently versus what are some things where he still needs a little bit of support?

**Interviewee:** I would say he is very independent in most activities of daily living; he gets up by himself, he goes running by himself, getting out the shower, getting dressed, all that. There might be a few things like if he gets dressed for a certain event, I want to make sure he’s appropriate that way but other than that, he’s independent there and same thing, like getting ready for work, he’s always ready, he’s got the schedule down, he can do that and then with the driving, that’s sort of intermediate, sometimes we’ll let him go on his own, sometimes I feel like I need to drive him if it’s bad weather, or late, something like that. But I think the thing he’s gonna need the most help on would be if he wanted to go full-time to school, living at school and everything that entails, that’s something that he’s never had to do before.

**Interviewee 2:** I want to tell you **[00:19:57 inaudible]** I need to go to the bathroom now.

**Interviewee:** Did you hear that?

**Interviewer:** Not quite.

**Interviewee:** He said he only paces when he feels excited or when he drinks too much water and has to go to the bathroom.

**Interviewer:** Excellent. That’s great for clarification. How is he with helping out with the household chores and things like that?

**Interviewee:** I mean he’s good, he doesn’t always do it without being asked but the dishes he’ll always do, he’ll always empty the dishwasher, get things cleaned up, that’s fine. His room, not so much but the other two do the same thing so… **[stomping in background]** oh, that’s the younger one. They’re all running around today.

**Interviewer:** That’s perfectly fine. It’s a Friday.

**Interviewee:** Exactly. On vacation.

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. So, you talked about him having a job, how is he with money management, things like that?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, we just moved him from just a savings account to having a checking account. He got his ATM card, he hasn’t used it yet but he mostly likes to save his money and then have you spend it. It’s pretty good but, yeah, he really hasn’t had a lot of experience yet. We just started that with him.

**Interviewer:** Does he understand money in terms of you need to save for things and then you can buy them later. Does he understand budgeting conceptually?

**Interviewee:** I think he understands budgeting conceptually but practically, I don’t know. We haven’t gotten to the point where we’re like *“okay, if you wanna live on your own, this is what it’s gonna look like moneywise.”* We sort of touched on it basically, but we really haven’t gotten into the nitty-gritty of that yet. And his father likes to joke *“we’re gonna charge you rent”* but not yet.

**Interviewer:** Fair. Does he ever express interest in wanting to live on his own one day?

**Interviewee:** I think so. I think so. But he definitely does say *“I wanna be close, I don’t wanna be too far away from you.”* He’s like *“I still wanna see you guys.”* And we’re like *“yeah, okay, sure.”*

**Interviewer:** That’s good though. That’s nice. And how is he with preparing meals for himself or snacks?

**Interviewee:** He can do the simple stuff. **[00:22:22]** He can do the toaster; he can do the microwave. He does do things on the skilly, I don’t think that’s necessarily his favorite type meal. We’ve done tacos, he can brown the meat and put in the sauce and make that fine but anything beyond that, he’s not great with knives. I haven’t really pushed him to do any heavy chopping or mincing but as far as the basics, he's fine.

**Interviewer:** That’s awesome. And what about perhaps pre-COVID but helping you with shopping for things for your house?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, it’s fine. I mean he would definitely go for things that he likes to eat versus what do we need but we’ve gone to the grocery store before with him and if I asked him to do everything, I haven’t done that. That would be an interesting experiment to see what he would do and not do.

**Interviewer:** Got you. And does he manage a social life to some extent with some friends?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. He since high school doesn’t really have a social life. Obviously with COVID, it’s tough but he can communicate and it’s usually either through texting or an occasional phone call but he doesn’t have a big social life as far as like an everyday friend that he talks to all the time but he seems to feel comfortable when he feels like doing it, he does it, just not all the time.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. Perfect. Thank you. And do you think your son will be able to achieve more independence in the future?

**Interviewee:** If past is prologue, I think he definitely will. He’s grown a lot in the last four years so we expect him to continue doing it. I mean we weren’t sure if he was gonna get that driver’s license and he worked and he got it so I think that was a big milestone for him and he’s still moving along with it so I think there’s definitely a good chance of more growth.

**Interviewer:** That’s awesome. And what do you think will help him move into adulthood a little bit more?

**Interviewee:** I think the thing that seemed to work the best for him is sort of stating a goal and saying *“this is what we expect you to do”* and he has to want it. But these are expectations, *“this is what you need to do and then this is how you go about getting it”* and he seems keen to just go after it as best he can and sometimes you have to kinda break it up into smaller bits and that’s why we started with the part-time in college cause AANE recommended that and it makes sense because it is such a challenge to start from super structured to zero structure. But I think he’s done really well. Even in class, he seems to be one of the most vocal kids asking questions but I don’t think the problem would be sitting in the back, getting lost and not understanding anything, it might just be having to juggle a lot of classes together and keeping organized on that side.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. I mean it’s hard. It’s not a trivial task for anyone.

**Interviewee:** No, no, exactly.

**Interviewer:** Do you think beyond this goal setting you just described, do you think there are any particular services or interventions that you think might help him gain more independence into adulthood?

**Interviewee:** I think, I don’t know if it even exists outside of a college setting or something like that but I think some kind of social group or almost like a Council on Aging situation, where you could kind of pop in a few groups, appoint [a] person to kind of consult with if you’re like *“I’m having trouble with this or I don’t know what to do.”* I think that would be ideal for him if he had and I know in schools they have that kind of thing but beyond that, I just don’t know if there are too many places that serve adults for social issues other than *“oh, join a social group”* and right now it’s not even face-to-face, it’s online so I don’t know. In some ways it’s good because it’s less pressure but in some ways it’s bad cause it’s really not full social interaction.

**Interviewer:** Absolutely. It’s definitely not the same as it normally would be. So now putting these two things together, your son’s sensory sensitivities and his transition to adulthood, how do those intersect for him?

**Interviewee:** I think because it’s fairly mild and because he’s been able to integrate it pretty well into his life, I think as he’s grown, he’s been able to handle it better and it doesn’t handle him. It’s not debilitating, it doesn’t keep him in the house. It doesn’t say *“oh, I can’t go here, there because I’m afraid it’s gonna hurt my hearing or I don’t like it.”* I don’t see his sensitivity as holding him back in any meaningful way except for maybe if it gets too high of a level that he would have to remove himself but other than that, I think he’s at a moderate level, he can compensate for it and handle it.

**Interviewer:** Thank you. And then relatedly, do you view his sensitivities as an obstacle, a vehicle, a bit of both or neither towards his independence?

**Interviewee:** I think it’s an obstacle in that he may avoid situations that are noisy and a lot of those are also social so I think that might be a problem. I think it could be a vehicle in that if in his job, if he’s doing audio editing or other things, he may be more sensitive to it and may be able to integrate that into his job so that may also help. He’s got good pitch, he can sing. He understands music so those are parts with the sensitivity that could be helpful to him. I think it just depends on what we’re talking about.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. Thank you. And again relatedly, what do you anticipate as being challenging for your son as he does gain more independence in relation to his sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** **[00:29:15]** I think more just communication about it to others so that it doesn’t isolate him or ostracize him from others. I think he knows what he likes to do and what makes him comfortable. I don’t think that’s a problem, he’s good at that. But as far as in relation to the public and the community to kind of educate them and give them an idea of what he’s doing and why he’s doing it so that it doesn’t put up a barrier between him and others, I think. That’s probably gonna be again like a life-long challenge probably for him because he’s got this issue and he deals with it the way he knows how which is great but others may not understand what he’s doing and so it’s gonna be his responsibility if he wants to continue to be part of the greater world to kind of let them in and say *“hey, this is why I’m doing this, I don’t mean to put you off by pacing but this is why I do it,”* things like that. *“I really don’t like being in a setting that’s too loud so I would prefer to be in a quieter environment to have a conversation”* and I think if he was able to do that regularly, I think it would make it much easier for him going forward to be an independent adult.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. Thank you. And maybe you’ll have the same answer to this next question but do you think there’s anything that could help your son at this intersection of sensory and transition?

**Interviewee:** Can you explain intersection?

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah. Sorry. So this whole chunk of questions is asking how you think your son’s sensory sensitivities impact his transition to adulthood and my question is what do you think will help him where these two things meet?

**Interviewee:** I think similar to what I said before, I think he understands what he feels and what he can do to integrate that. I think it’s much more about others’ reaction[s] to what he’s doing and why. I feel like he’s got a pretty good handle on integrating his own sensory issues. I think it’s more making it palatable I think to the community and the public so that maybe tamp down the pacing a little bit, do a little more hand squeezing or a little more side to side rocking if you don’t have the space to do it or take a little break, go to the bathroom, go to the drinking fountain, whatever it is that’s a little bit less obvious or distracting to others. I think that would be my answer for that.

**Interviewer:** And kind of beyond helping other people understand his reactions a little bit better, do you think there are any specific services or interventions that could help in this area?

**Interviewee:** I’ve never done ABA but I think that that is probably something that I should look into and I know it’s very particular so it’s not my thing so I think I’d have a hard time with it but Liam actually might do better with it and he might be able to do it for himself but I’ve heard with other kids that it really is a good tool to use to kind of pare down certain behaviors that you want to minimize or regulate so that would be my first thought.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Totally. And then do you think there are any gaps in the available services and interventions?

**Interviewee:** I think so. I mean I think outside of the school system, it’s difficult to find those services and I honestly haven’t looked at it too much because I don’t feel like he’s needed it so much. I mean I think we’ve done okay by ourselves but if I got to the point where I was like *“oh, we need something,”* the first place I would probably go is AANE, the autism association in this area that’s been very, very good for any needs that we’ve had. But we haven’t done a lot of things in person, even before COVID just because it’s up in Watertown and we just don’t get up there very much so that would be the only obstacle. We’re close to Rhode Island so sometimes Rhode Island might be a better choice for us but I really haven’t gone into a lot of investigation on that yet.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. That makes sense. And then again, thinking a little bit more broadly, how have your son’s sensory sensitivities impacted your goals, hopes and expectations for him as he does navigate adulthood?

**Interviewee:** It’s kind of a tug of war between having too much expectation and not wanting him to stress out and feel like he’s failing and having too little and not allowing him to push the envelope and do what he maybe thought he couldn’t do so I think we just try to keep our expectations like *“try it, let’s see how it goes, keep going, we’re here for you but we want you to try something new”* and I think he’s been really positive about it. He’s generally a positive kid so he’ll try anything. The hardest thing for him is like sit down, have a conversation, then he’s up and out but as far as practical things, he seems to be really enthusiastic for doing what he can.

**Interviewer:** That’s awesome. And thinking about what you just described in terms of expectations, is that related in general to like just who he is and as an individual his overall development or is that more specific to his sensory sensitivities?

**Interviewee:** I think it’s a more general thought. I don’t think at this point the sensory sensitivity is getting in his way so much because I think he has compensated for a large part. **[00:35:45]** I mean when we get in the car, we turn the radio off and that’s just it. It’s better to have little distractions when I’m in the car and he’s driving, I try not to talk at all because I can distract him when he’s driving so I don’t talk so I think we’ve just gotten to the point where we know what to do to manage it and just go from there.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. Thank you. And then moving onto our last chunk of questions. So, finally, as a caregiver, as a mom, as a parent of someone with, as he identifies, Asperger’s but also sensory sensitivities, what does transitioning to adulthood mean to you?

**Interviewee:** I think it really means taking on as much of the responsibilities of adulthood as possible, whether it’s financial, whether it’s physical, whether it’s organizational. I think even if he continues to live under the same roof as we do, I think he will definitely need to transition to driving himself places, having his own schedule, having his own bank account and expenses and getting those underway and we may even give him a goal and be like you need to have one social activity a week with another person and it doesn’t have to be in person but it needs to be some kind of communication where you’re talking to another person about something.

**Interviewer:** That makes sense. Thank you. And has this perspective changed over time?

**Interviewee:** I think he’s gotten more confident. Definitely. And I don’t think he’s ever had that kind of anxiety, depression issue that some kids have on the spectrum. I think he’s always been pretty content with himself. I don’t think he’s ever felt bad about himself but I think the things that make him uncomfortable, I think his main defence is avoidance and I think that’s where we come in and try to give him the push to kind of get into those things that are uncomfortable but are good for him so I think that that seems to be the biggest challenge for him is that he knows that he can avoid things he doesn’t like so that’s what he likes to do but I think it’s kind of our job to get him in there a little bit.

**Interviewer:** And this increased confidence you just described, has that changed how you think about his transition into adulthood?

**Interviewee:** I think so. Definitely. I mean there were times when my husband wasn’t sure if he was going to graduate high school. I was the main person teaching him how to drive, I was like *“I don’t know if this is gonna happen”* but I never said that to him. I was always like *“let’s see how it goes, keep going, you’re doing great”* and when he would do it, he didn’t seem to me to be like *“oh, I didn’t think I could do that,”* he was just like *“okay, I finally did it.”*

**Interviewer:** That’s great. And what do you see happening in your son’s future?

**Interviewee:** I definitely see him becoming more independent. I don’t know how far on that spectrum it’s gonna go as far as living on his own or having a relationship with the peer or anything like that that’s gonna go further than friendship, I don’t really know just cause that’s his main challenge I would say is socially, but I definitely have a good feeling about his adulthood.

**Interviewer:** That’s great. Do you see him finishing schooling even if it is on a part-time basis?

**Interviewee:** Yeah. I think more likely in a part-time capacity than full-time, but I definitely see him getting a degree.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. Do you see him having a job after that degree?

**Interviewee:** I think so. I think it’s kind of a type of job in the technical world that I think he’d be accepted to kind of do what he needs to do and he likes structure and he likes doing his own thing and so I think that job would be perfect for him. Some would have collaboration but I think for the most part, it’s more like independent work so I think he’d be able to do either one.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Absolutely. And then last formal question, and I think I know the answer given your previous answers, how have your son’s sensory sensitivities impacted this perspective you describe in terms of what it means for him to transition into adulthood?

**Interviewee:** I think it has affected him in that it gave him something that he needed to process and then work through but I think once he figured out how to manage it, it became kind of second nature. He just did what he needed to do to integrate and move forward I think, as I said before, I think the social pieces is far more challenging because it’s not just him, it’s somebody else and that relationship and the give and take that you can’t control, you just try to work with it and so I think, in some ways, the sensory is easier because it’s just within himself, that’s all he has to control.

**Interviewer:** **[00:41:30]** Mm-hmm. And so, but how’s it impacted how you view him in transitioning? Does that make sense?

**Interviewee:** I’m not sure. I think do you mean like do I view him more advanced now that he’s compensated well and he’s sort of moving forward through transitioning into adulthood.

**Interviewer:** Like when I initially asked you what does it mean to you for him to transition, you talked about taking on as many responsibilities as possible, did his sensory needs impact that perspective?

**Interviewee:** Partially, I would say. I think in some ways, it really doesn’t have a big effect, and, in some ways, it does. I think with certain activities, I think staying on focus and eliminating distractions but I think he’s able to manage that pretty well. So if he continues to manage it and kinda get in front of it, I have confidence in transitioning further.

**Interviewer:** Absolutely. So that’s actually it. That’s all I have. Would you like to add anything else?

**Interviewee:** No, no, it’s been a great experience so far and good luck with the study and anything else, let me know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Do you know anyone else who might wanna participate?

**Interviewee:** I might know one family that might wanna participate. I think he might be in music school though and I think his parents are still here but I haven’t talked to em in a while. Since COVID, it’s like you can’t.

**Interviewer:** It’s hard. Super hard. No worries. I ask everyone cause we just need a handful of more people. Do you remember how you heard about our study?

**Interviewee:** I got an email. I think that’s the first I heard of it.

**Interviewer:** Mm-hmm. Awesome. And then I think last night I sent you a bunch of studies, did you get that email?

**Interviewee:** Yes. We looked through it **[telephone rings]** and Liam said he might be interested in **[to son]** is that your father?

**Interviewee 2:** No, it’s Chanam.

**Interviewee:** And he might be interested in the first one about dating and romance, I was like *“okay.”*

**Interviewer:** I know the coordinator so if you need help connecting with her, let me know. I’m happy to set that up. She’s lovely.

**Interviewee:** Great.

**Interviewer:** But truly, thank you so much. This has been a pleasure to learn from you and I so appreciate it.

**Interviewee:** Alright, thank you so much.

**Interviewer:** You’re welcome. Bye.

**Interviewee:** Bye.

**[END OF TRANSCRIPT]**