

Young Adult Cards Joel Shaul, LCSW

(Print-out version)



48 learning cards for young people with ASD age 16 to 22 to explore their future as adults

I designed this set of cards to help young people with autism engage in productive discussions about adulthood.

Each of the six sets of eight cards has die image on it, 1 through 6, so that you can roll a die to determine which pile of cards to select from.

This set of cards is designed to be printed and cut out. A separate free download allows you to display this card activity entirely on computer screens.

I hope this resource is helpful for the young people you work with.

Joel Shaul





ABOUT YOU


Suggestion to the facilitator:

To encourage participation and self-revelation when going over the "About You" cards, consider saying things like:

"Being able to think about yourself and talk about yourself is an important strength. You are probably good at it."

"The other participants in this card activity might reveal interesting and important things about themselves. Be sure to listen closely and encourage them."

©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Suggestion to the facilitator:

The young people using these cards might find it difficult to imagine the thoughts and reactions of other people. To encourage consideration of others' needs and points of view, consider saying something like:

"It can be really hard to imagine other people's thoughts, feelings and needs. You will get better and better at it as you become an adult."

©2020 Joel Shaul

The first set of six cards is for the teacher/therapist/facilitator. Keep these handy for tips on how to lead the participants in using the different card varieties.



ABOUT THE FUTURE

Suggestion to the facilitator:

Be prepared for a variety of responses to these "About the Future" cards.

Participants in this card activity might be apprehensive about their future. They might have grandiose or naïve ideas. They might assume that their future as adults will be a lot like their present life.



©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Suggestion to the facilitator:

One good way to explore the "Help the Person" cards is for you to play the role of the person described in the card. Then the participant(s) can offer advice while you remain in character.



©2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

Suggestion to the facilitator:

Here is a good way to explore the "Fix the Thought" cards.

You can hold the card over your head, and say, *"Let's say I am a young adult having this thought. If I were a friend of yours, how could you help me to find a more useful way of thinking?"*

Then you can ask, *"Many young people get this thought sometimes. Have you?"*



©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Suggestion to the facilitator:

When carrying out the role plays on the "Act it Out" cards, consider really "hamming it up" and getting into the characters and scenarios.

Feel free to improvise and expand the scenarios to add interest.



©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

What is an important life skill you are getting better and better at as you are becoming an adult?

What is an important life skill that you still haven't learned?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

When you were very young, adults did almost everything necessary to care for you. But as you grow up, you take over almost all of the work involved in caring for your body and appearance – washing, hair care, cleaning teeth, dressing properly.

What are some things with hygiene and appearance that you have *not yet* taken over from your parents?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

When we were young children, we did not really understand what it would be like to be grown up.

Think back to when you were much younger. What did you think being grown up would be like, back then when you were little?

Now that you are actually becoming an adult, how is it different?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

If you are doing this card activity with someone who knows you well (teacher, parent or therapist), ask this person:

“What is something about me that shows maturity?”

“What is something about me that shows a need for *more* maturity?”

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

Many people entering adulthood have challenges that can make their day-to-day lives harder. These challenges might be emotional, physical or educational.

What about you?

What challenges – emotional, physical or educational – are you dealing with?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

Free time is great. But many people, after finishing high school, go through some difficult times when they have *too much* free time.

What are some problems that a young adult might encounter with too much unstructured time?

What would *you* do if you had too much free time?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

What is something about being an adult that you are looking forward to a lot?

What is something about being an adult that you are *not* looking forward to?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT YOU

Suppose that someone is writing a book about you. The book is all about your strengths and your problems.

What would be a good title for this book?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

One way that people learn about how to be good adults is to follow the example of adults they admire.

Describe a young adult you know and look up to. What are some things about this young adult that you can try to copy in your own life?

©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Name at least ten important things an adult in your home does to pay for things, take care of the house and care for others.

When you are 18, which of these duties will you help with, or take over?

What about at age 21?

Age 25?

©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Your parents and other relatives have probably told you stories about how they got through some tough problems when they were becoming adults.

Recall one of those stories now and tell about it.

©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Describe some ways you may be able to help your relatives in the future:

*Grandparents

*Aunts or Uncles

*Younger relatives – cousins, nieces, nephews

©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Imagine that two people you know are having a conversation about you.

They are talking about things you are doing and saying these days that are *good examples* of your maturity.

Describe what these two people are talking about.

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Imagine that two people you know are having a conversation about you.

They are worried about some things you do or say that seem *immature for someone your age*.

Describe what these two people are talking about.

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

The adults you grow up with – parents, grandparents and teachers – remember you when you were a young child. Sometimes, these adults might forget that you, too, are becoming a capable adult. They might “baby” you without realizing it.

Do adults you know sometimes treat you too much like a “little kid?” Give an example.

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT OTHERS

Most adults get romantic thoughts about other people. People might get romantic thoughts about *you*.

What are some things about *your appearance* you can work on to appear attractive?

What are some things about *the way you talk* that might help others to consider you attractive?

© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

Using your imagination, but also being realistic, describe what your day-to-day life might be like in...

...one year from now.

...three years from now.

...five years from now.



©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

During adulthood, most people hold on to some childhood interests but then replace many of these with interests that are more like those of other adults.

Which of your "young" interests might fade away over time?

What are some "grown-up" interests that might matter more to you as you get older?



©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

The world we live in is going through all kinds of changes. Some of these make the world a better place. Some changes can give us more problems.

What are some things happening in your country and the world that will make your future world better?

In your opinion, what things might make your future world worse?



©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

When we are young, most of us spend some time imagining very fancy futures for ourselves in which we are wealthy or famous. Almost everyone, however, ends up doing mainly ordinary things, without being very rich or well-known.

Have you ever had "fancy" dreams about the future that others might find unrealistic? Do you still?



©2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

Most of us have "bad habits" that we need to keep an eye on.

As adults, we need to monitor these harmful habits on our own.

What would you say is your worst habit? As you become an adult, what is your plan to control this habit so that it does not cause a lot of trouble for you?



© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

In the future, people might admire you.

Imagine ten years from now. What might the following people admire about you?

*A relative

*A friend

*A person you live with

*A co-worker



© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

There are all kinds of jobs that adults do. Some kinds earn money and other kinds are volunteer jobs.

What are some kinds of volunteer work that you might try doing as an adult?

What are some kinds of paid work that you might try as an adult?



© 2020 Joel Shaul



ABOUT THE FUTURE

People's relationships with family members go through all kinds of changes during adulthood.

Think of a parent, sibling, aunt or uncle you are close to. Now, imagine your relationship with this person ten years from now.

What things will be the same? What things might be different?



© 2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Lisa, age 17, is at school in Careers class learning about the kinds of work young adults often get in their first part-time jobs. As she hears about typical jobs such as fast-food and cleaning, she feels bored. She imagines the job she really expects to get in a year or two: being a video game designer.

What advice would you give to Lisa?



©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Sara, age 20, feels very close to the people she has gotten to know online. Sara feels confident and accepted with her online friends.

In her face-to-face life, Sara feels like she does not fit in at all. She knows few people's names and feels little connection to most people.

What kind of advice would you offer to Sara?



©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

David, age 18, was often unhappy in high school because some students were unkind to him. David thought he would be glad to finally graduate and get to know nicer people.

During the summer after graduation, David spends lots of time worrying. He can't stop thinking about the mean people from high school. What if people are still just as mean *after* high school?



©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Jacob, age 16, feels so happy while he is playing video games. When he is away from his games at school and when he does homework, he thinks about the games constantly.

Some of Jacob's online gamer friends are young adults who seem to have more gaming time than Jacob. He can't wait to be an adult so that he too can have more game time.



©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Ana, age 17, has a younger brother, Todd, who has accomplished a lot. He gets good grades and even has a girlfriend. Ana is good at some things, but she has always struggled in school and has never had a boyfriend.

Ana has just started a part-time job bagging groceries. Ana's dad is so proud of her. But Ana compares herself to Todd. She doesn't feel so proud.

©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Jose, age 17, really likes girls. For the past couple years, most of the females he feels especially attracted to are the ones he sees in photos and videos online.

Jose also likes watching a few of the girls he sees at school. But he notices that they are not as perfect as the online girls. Besides, it makes him nervous talking to them. So he mainly avoids them.

©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

When Diana, age 19, was still in school, she had to spend lots of time around other people. After graduation, she now gets to spend lots of time alone. This makes her feel calmer.

Lately, when she needs to go somewhere with her mom, Diana feels nervous and uncomfortable. She has started to refuse to go out. This makes Diana and her mom argue.

©2020 Joel Shaul



HELP THE PERSON

Sam, age 18, feels very grateful to the adults who have helped him over the years. He has overcome his anger problem and he is now the most experienced programmer in his Robotics club.

As Sam enters adulthood, he wants to be helpful to younger people the way others helped him. But he doesn't know where to start.

©2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"Adulthood looks scary to me. Lots of work and a lot less fun than being a kid."



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"The older I get, the fewer people there are to help me. I don't think I will be able to cope."



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"They say I am grown up now, but I don't really feel grown up. I am just a kid in a grown-up body."



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"I need lots of time to do my special interest activities. I will never be able to deal with all this work and stuff."



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"Growing up is giving me too many hard changes to deal with. My best days are all behind me now."



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"As I enter adulthood, I know I have some emotional challenges. What if these stay the same or get worse?"



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"I have never fit in very well. That will probably get even worse as time goes on."



© 2020 Joel Shaul



FIX THE THOUGHT

"I am an adult now. I am NOT going to let my parents and other grown-ups tell me what to do anymore!"



© 2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Imagine that *you* are a parent of a 19-year-old daughter, Allie.

For the past several months, you have been trying to get your daughter to stop eating in her room. But today, you notice in her room that under her bed there is a half-eaten bowl of cereal!

In your role play, play the parent. Your teacher/group leader can play the role of Allie.

©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Imagine that *you* are the parent of an 18-year-old son, Elliot, who has recently graduated from high school. Elliot is having a lot of anxiety about taking a class over the summer at a local college.

In your role play, play the parent. Your teacher/group leader can play the role of the son, Elliot.

©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Imagine that you are the 25-year-old friend of an 18-year-old, Cal, who is about to have a first job interview at McDonald's. In your role play, play the 25-year-old. Tell Cal how to answer these job interview questions:

**Why did you apply here?*

**What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses?*

**Why should we hire you instead of someone else?*

©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Think of a high school teacher that you like talking to. Now, imagine that you are 24 years old, and returning to the school to visit with this teacher! The teacher wants to know all about what you have done the past six years since graduation.

In your role play, play the role of yourself, and the teacher/group leader can play the role of the teacher.

©2020 Joel Shaul





ACT IT OUT

Imagine that you are 60 years old. You are being interviewed for a podcast about people's memories of growing up. The interviewer will ask you:

"Which high school teacher taught you the most about preparing for adulthood?"

"Tell us about a hard experience you had as a teen that ended up helping you as an adult."

"What advice do you have for today's young people?"

©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Imagine that you are a school guidance counselor trying to convince a high school senior, Alex, to get job training to work in a grocery store. Alex is afraid to try it. He is only interested in jobs with computers or animation.

The teacher/therapist with you will play the role of Alex. You play the guidance counselor persuading Alex to consider a training job at the grocery.

©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Imagine that you are 23 years old. Your friend, Maria, age 22, has come to you for advice. Help Maria with this problem:

"My mother's Dad has been sick lately, and Mom has been spending almost all her time over at his place looking after him. Mom comes home really grouchy, saying, 'Why can't you help around here? Can't you see how busy I am?' So – what can I do to help Mom?"

©2020 Joel Shaul



ACT IT OUT

Imagine that it is several years in the future. You have a part-time job. You have a boss at this job named Ms. Jones.

Playing the role of Ms. Jones, describe how the future you:

*Talks to customers

*Talks with co-workers

*Deals with frustration on the job

©2020 Joel Shaul

