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Reveal Their Story: How the MIGDAS-2 Process Individualizes Autism Assessments
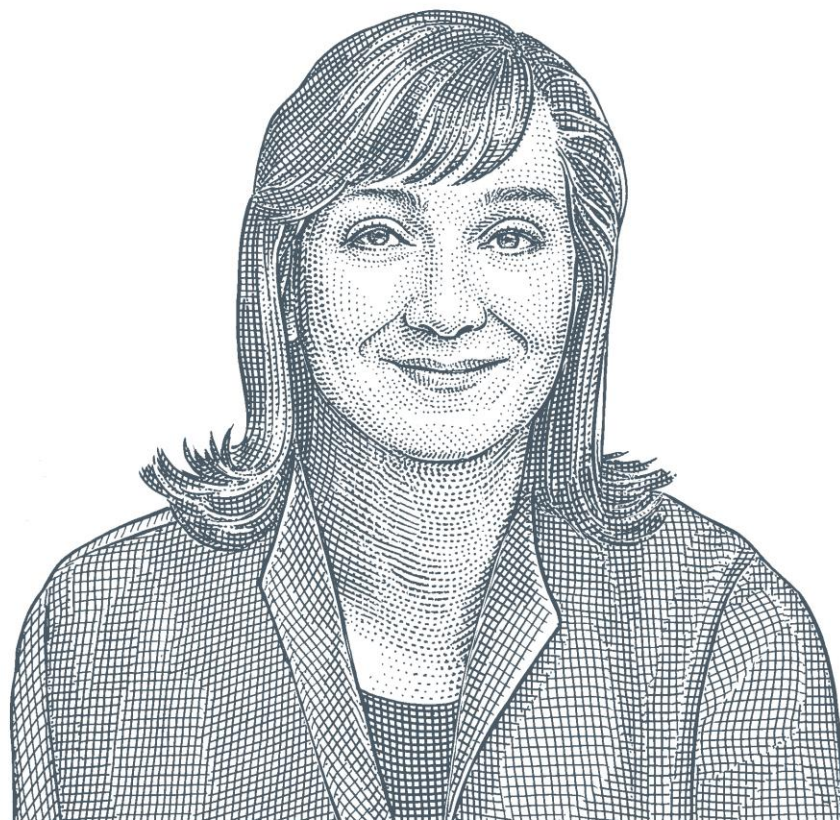
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For over 75 years, WPS has been the leading independent publisher of educational and psychological assessments and related intervention resources in the areas of autism, speech and language, school and clinical psychology, and occupational therapy.

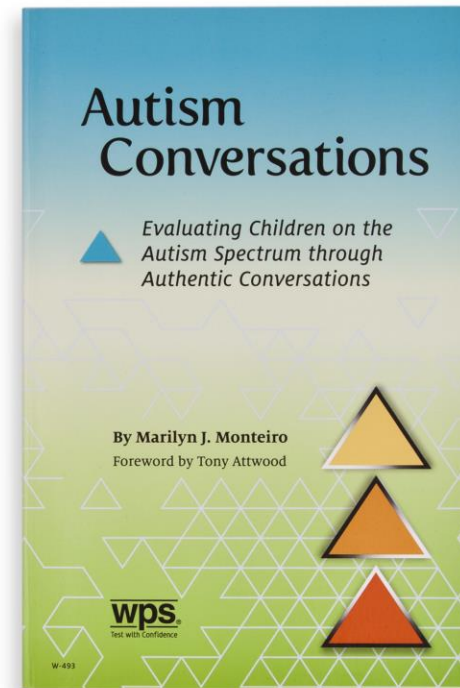wpspublish.com

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Autism Conversations

Evaluating Children on the Autism Spectrum Through Authentic Conversations

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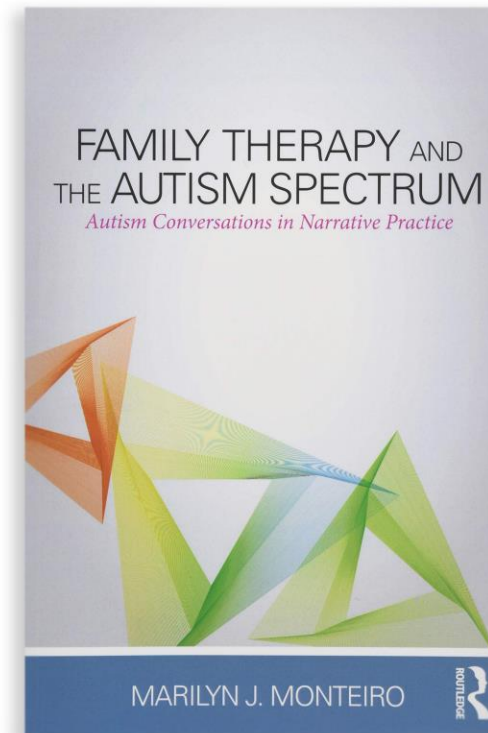https://www.wpspublish.com/autism-conversations

MIGDAS-2
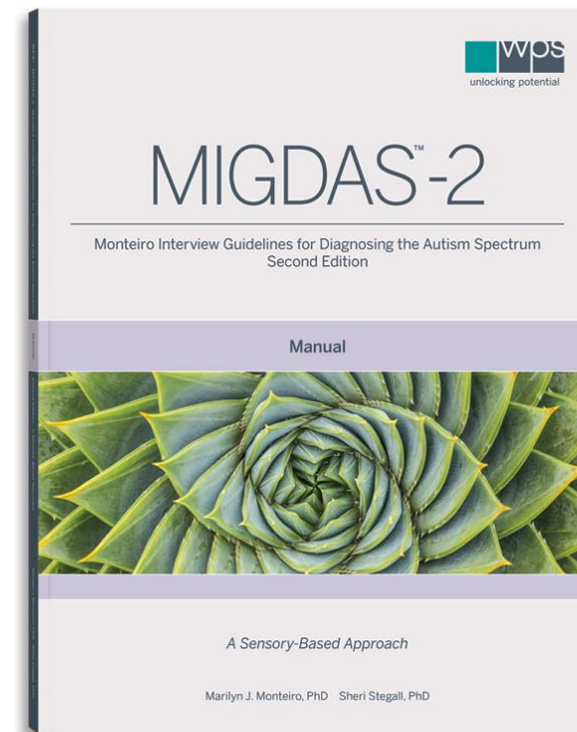
Monteiro Interview Guidelines for Diagnosing the Autism Spectrum, Second Edition

WPS

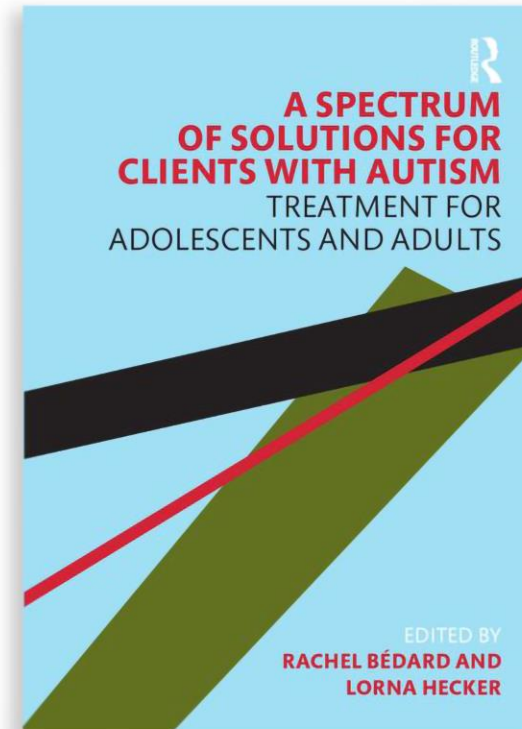# Family Therapy and the Autism Spectrum

Autism Conversations in Narrative Practice

Routledge

The Power of the Autism Spectrum Narrative

A SPECTRUM OF SOLUTIONS FOR CLIENTS WITH AUTISM
TREATMENT FOR ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS

EDITED BY
RACHEL BÉDARD AND
LORNA HECKER

The Transformative Power of the Autism Spectrum Narrative

Chapter in Routledge Compilation

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

- Interviewing children and their parents over the course of thousands of evaluations led to the development of the MIGDAS-2 system

- The MIGDAS-2 qualitative interview process emerged from the application of interview techniques that are in sync with the autism brain style and the resulting use of positive, descriptive language

- The conversational approach provided a way to connect with individuals and their parents in a meaningful way during the autism evaluation process

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?
(cont.)

- It also provided a structure to make the evaluation process enjoyable for the child, adolescent, or adult

- Children and their families were given a way to have a shared experience with the evaluator

- Both the child and the parents leave the autism evaluation experience with a nuanced and positive understanding of the child's individual story

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- This contrasts with the more common experience of being in a setting in which the individual is measured, observed, and scored—and then given a diagnosis or label with negative implications

- Although standardized measures play an important role in the autism evaluation process, they leave us without a compelling way to tell the nuanced story of the individual child, adolescent, or adult

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- Standardized measures like the ADOS-2 provide a solid, structured behavior sample that emphasizes social communication differences, with limited use of sensory-based materials

- The MIGDAS-2 is a qualitative diagnostic interview that is organized around exploring the individual's areas of preferred interest and inviting the individual to explore materials with interesting sensory properties

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- This sensory-based interview process removes the familiar, structured prompts that can mask the individual's underlying pattern of creating and maintaining routines with preferred topics and materials with interesting sensory properties

- Sensory-based routines become instantly recognizable with this process, as the individual's distinctive pattern of autism spectrum neurodiversity drives the approach to the materials and the conversation

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- The MIGDAS-2 qualitative interview process was designed to support evaluators when dealing with making differential and co-occurring diagnoses

- Standardized measures make it more challenging to parse out the underlying autism spectrum differences, leaving the evaluator hesitant to add that diagnosis

- This is especially the case with children and adolescents who are verbally fluent, twice exceptional, female, and/or racially or ethnically diverse

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- The conversational structure of the MIGDAS-2, using sensory fidget materials and topics of interest to the individual as the conversational entry points, results in a clear presentation of the autism spectrum brain style across age and ability levels

- The MIGDAS-2 visual framework, descriptive language, and accessible interview protocols were developed to support evaluators in creating the compelling individual story

You play a key role in supporting individuals with autism differences

- When you understand and describe how the individual with autism spectrum brain style differences views the world, you become a key advocate in promoting a positive personal narrative

- Your evaluation story supports the development of resiliency and a positive outlook for the child and the parents

Words We Want to Hear from Parents

"My son is not a label or a category. Having his diagnosis discussed with an appreciation of our son as a unique individual was reassuring to us."

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

Parent responses after the adolescent MIGDAS-2 diagnostic interview:

- Kudos! Biggest compliment you could receive from Sally: "I felt understood."

- Thanks so much. She enjoyed her time with you.

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- Today, we're going to go through an overview of the MIGDAS-2 system of interviews and talk about how to integrate their use into your comprehensive autism evaluation toolkit

- The protocols support the development and use of respectful and accessible language to describe individuals in a way that is instantly understood and recognized

- When discussing the diagnosis

- When writing narrative reports

Why the MIGDAS-2 Process?

(cont.)

- The MIGDAS-2 process is built around a visual framework

- This framework provides you with an organizational system to guide the way you think—

- And talk—

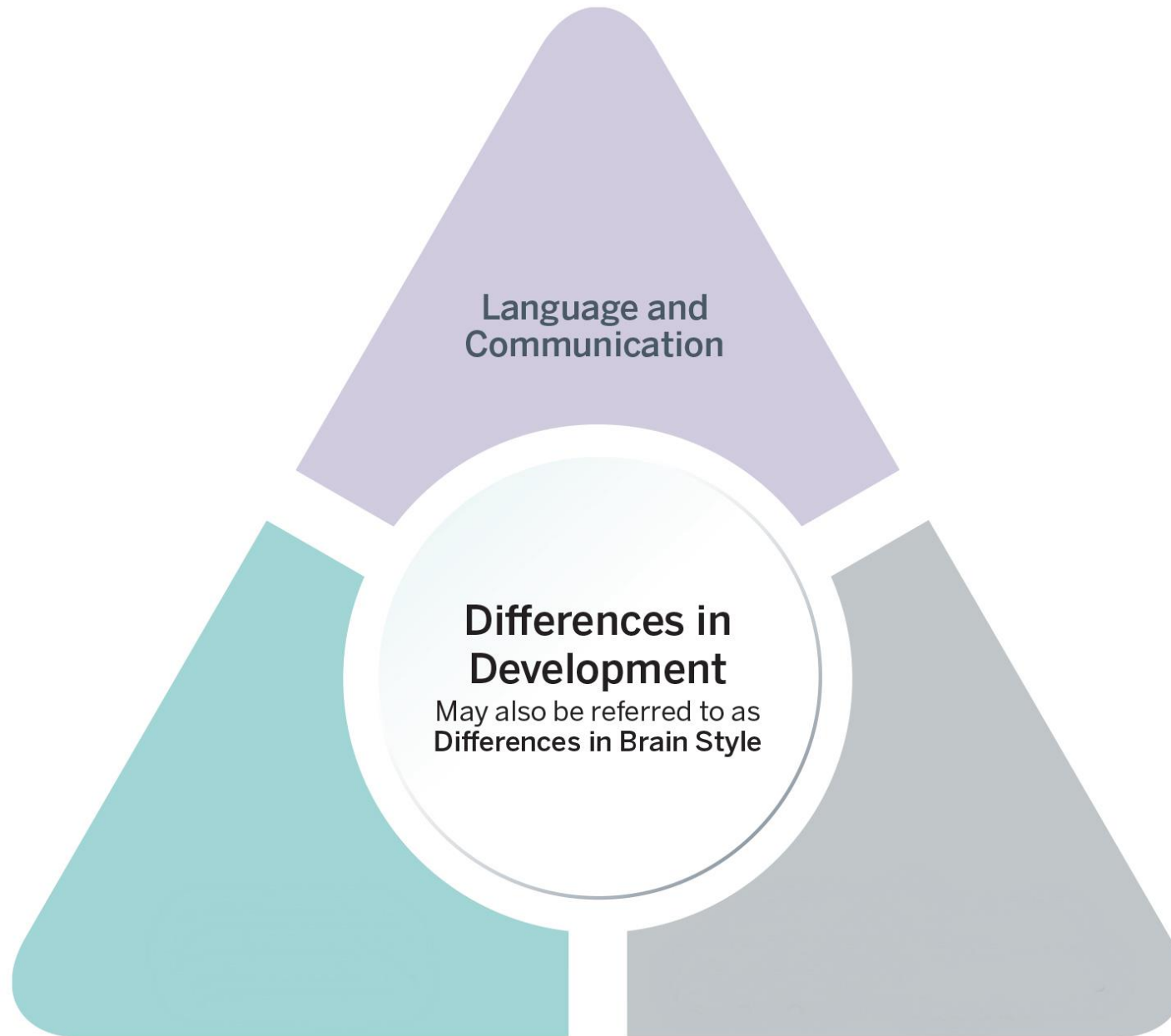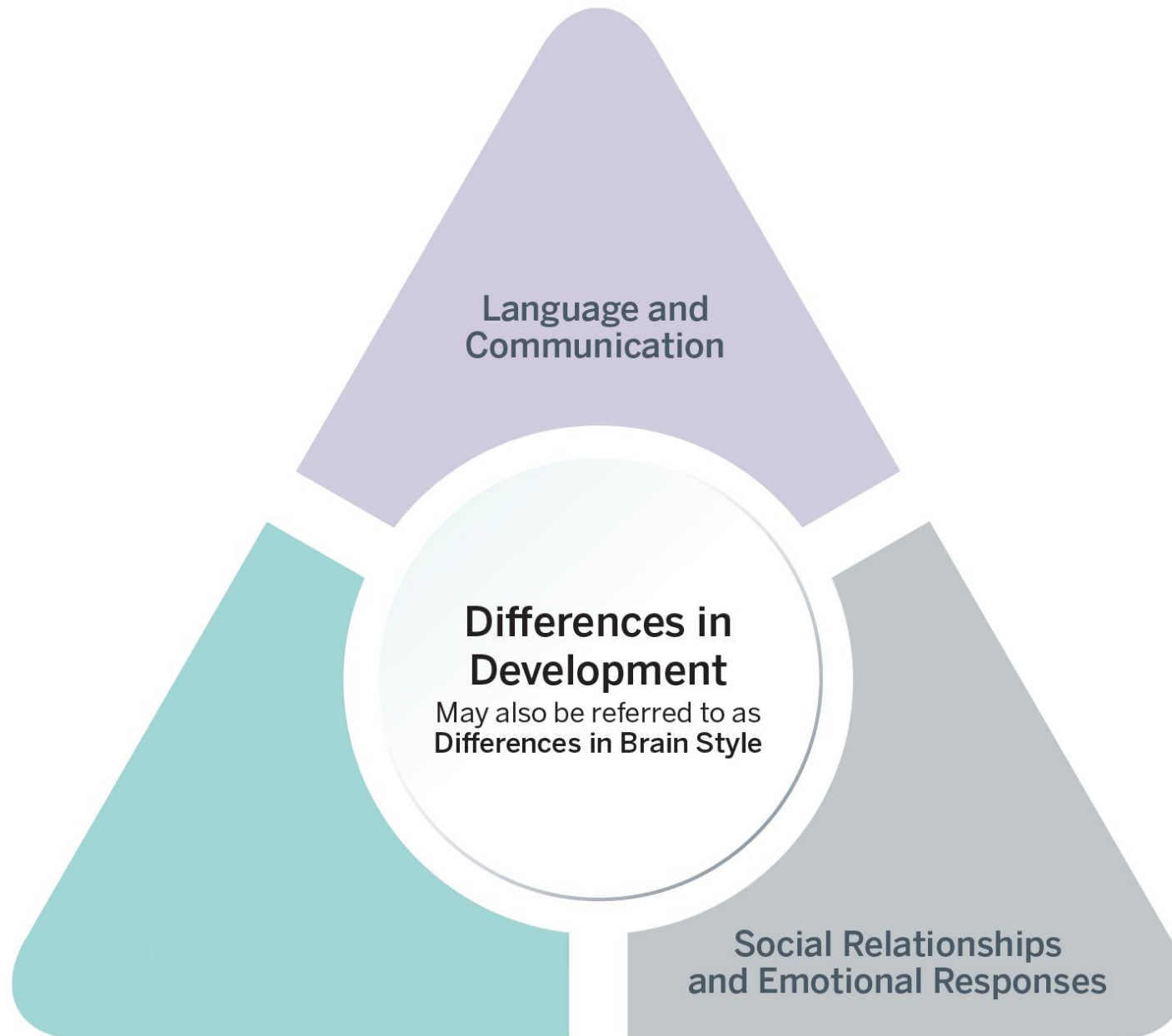- About the individual's autism spectrum brain style profile

The Visual Framework

The Descriptive Triangle

Differences in Development

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Differences in Development
May also be referred to as
Differences in Brain Style

Language and
Communication

Differences in
Development
May also be referred to as
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Language and
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Differences in
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Social Relationships
and Emotional Responses

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Language and Communication

Differences in Development

May also be referred to as **Differences in Brain Style**
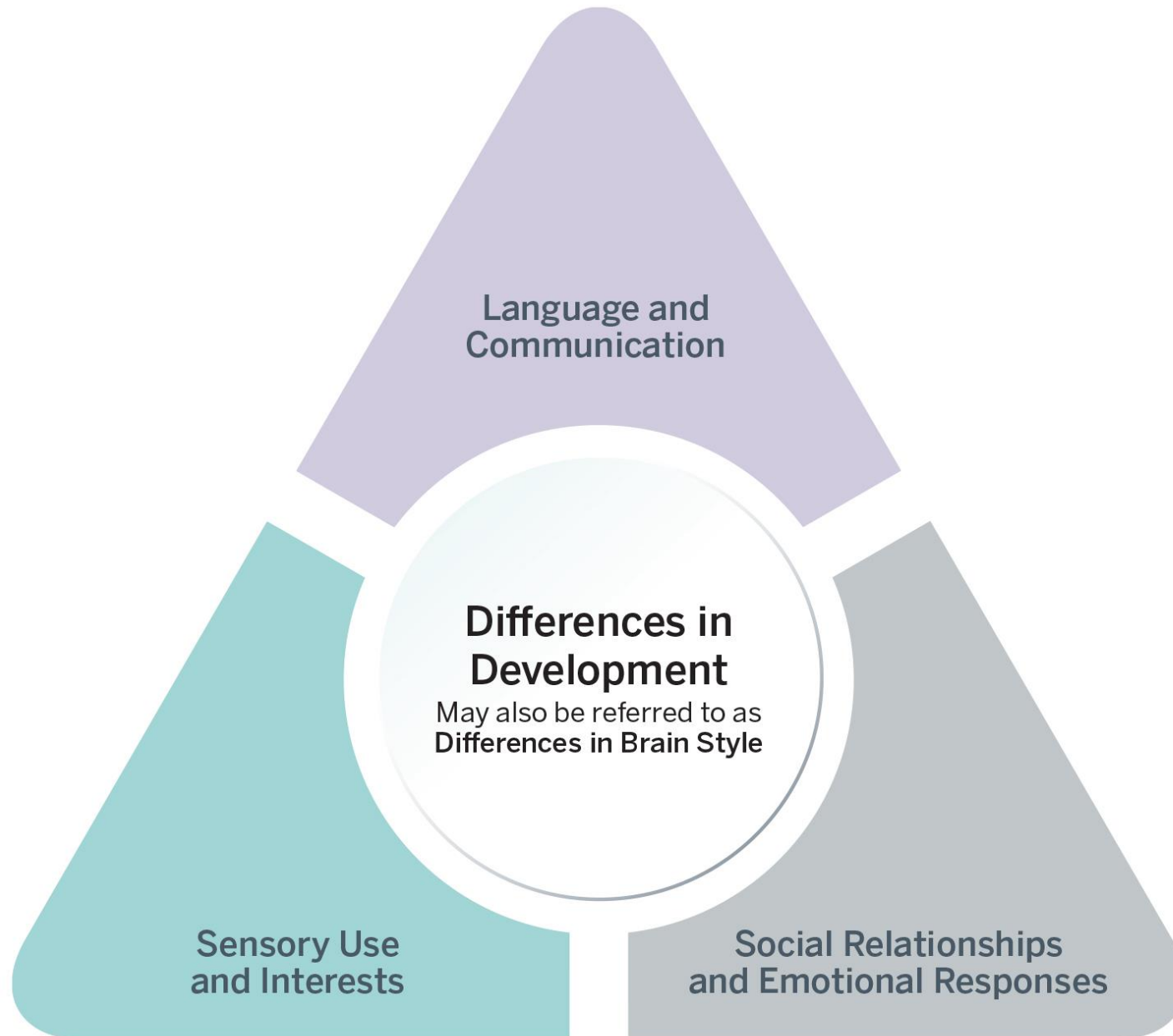
Sensory Use and Interests
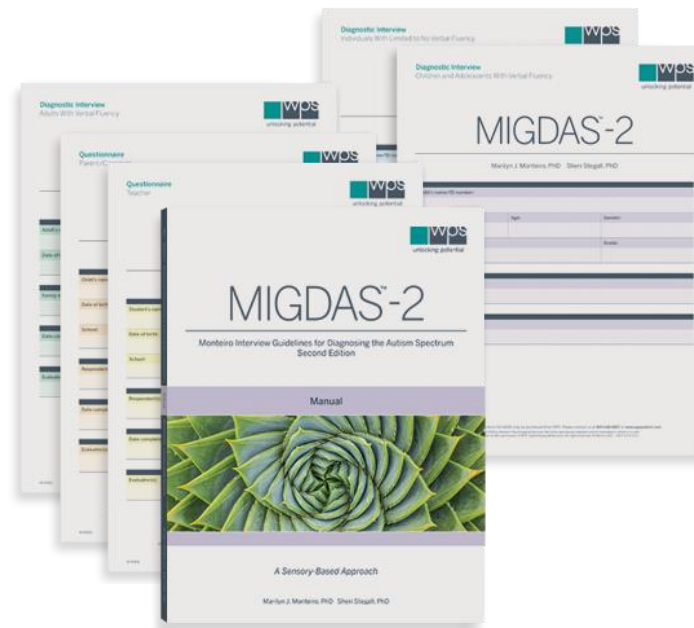
Social Relationships and Emotional Responses

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System

- Manual

- Parent/Caregiver Questionnaire

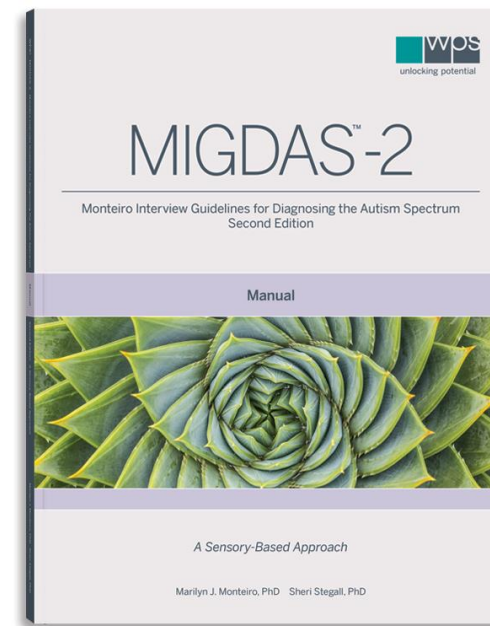- Teacher Questionnaire

- Diagnostic Interview Protocols

https://www.wpspublish.com/migdas-2-monteiro-interview-guidelines-for-diagnosing-the-autism-spectrum-second-edition

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Manual

- Provides completed protocols for cases across age and ability levels with autism spectrum differences as well as rules out cases (ADHD without ASD; intellectual disability without ASD; language disability with ASD)

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Parent/ Caregiver Questionnaire

- The questionnaire booklet is for the clinician to either have a face-to-face conversation with the parent or have the parent complete the booklet and then have a follow-up conversation

- Conversational prompts are organized to start with areas of present concern and include prompts for parents to discuss positive qualities and attributes

- Prompts are provided for parents to tell information about the child's areas of preferred interest as well as sensory preferences and sensitivities

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Parent/ Caregiver Questionnaire

(cont.)

- The questionnaire booklet is designed to provide parents and caregivers with a structured way to tell their unique and singular narrative about their child

- The autism spectrum narrative can be clearly identified as the narrative unfolds

- The questionnaire provides an organized way to record and report stories that highlight the individual presentation of Autism Spectrum Disorder

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Parent/ Caregiver Questionnaire

(cont.)

- As a clinician, the questionnaire provides you with a structured opportunity to establish a relationship of trust that rating scales do not provide

- The interview booklet is designed so you can transcribe the responses given by the parent or caregiver—

- Including their story details—

- Into a compelling narrative for your assessment report

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Parent/ Caregiver Questionnaire

(cont.)

- The interview booklet is designed as a qualitative narrative tool to be used along with standardized autism-specific behavior rating scales

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Teacher Questionnaire

- The teacher questionnaire is designed for teachers to write their narrative responses to prompts about the student in the school setting

- When given several days to complete the conversational prompts, teachers tend to report more detailed and nuanced behavior information than they provide on behavior rating scales

- Designed to be given to teachers along with standardized autism-specific behavior rating scales

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Teacher Questionnaire *(cont.)*

- The MIGDAS-2 teacher questionnaire prompts teachers to describe positive qualities of the student, along with describing behavioral differences

- The interview booklet is designed so you can transcribe the responses given by the teacher—

- Including their story details—

- Into a compelling narrative for your assessment report

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Diagnostic Interview Protocols

There are three interview protocols:

- Individuals with limited to no verbal fluency

- Children and adolescents with verbal fluency

- Adults with verbal fluency

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Diagnostic Interview Protocols

(cont.)

Each interview protocol:

- Is organized around the three areas of the Descriptive Triangle

- Provides descriptive language that contrasts behavior descriptions

  - Consistent with ASD

  - Not consistent with ASD

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Diagnostic Interview Protocols

(cont.)

- Each page in the interview protocols provides:

  - Prompts to guide the evaluator in structuring the conversation or nonverbal sharing of sensory materials

  - Observations with descriptive language

  - Space for notes to record specific and memorable things the individual says and does

- Let's look at a few items taken from the diagnostic interview protocol for children and adolescents with verbal fluency

Items from Language and Communication
Item Number 2: Content of Preferred Topics

Speaks in a narrative that has a sensory, self-directed quality (focused on details of his or her narrative to the exclusion of the participation of the evaluator) Repetitively manipulates one or more of the sensory items throughout the conversation	Conversation focuses on conveying information to the evaluator Acknowledges evaluator by responding with joint attention comments, eye contact, head nods, or other social communication gestures
Maintains focus on preferred topics Uses recurring phrases (e.g., "well, actually") to regain control of the conversation and direct it back to a preferred topic	Discusses a variety of topics; engages in a reciprocal exchange of information with the evaluator regarding the topic of discussion and displays equal interest and engagement in the conversation regardless of the topic

- The left-side descriptors are consistent with ASD

- The right-side descriptors are not consistent with ASD

- These descriptors help you as the evaluator to identify what your experience was with the individual during the diagnostic interview

Items from Language and Communication
Item Number 2: Content of Preferred Topics *(cont.)*

Speaks in a narrative that has a sensory, self-directed quality (focused on details of his or her narrative to the exclusion of the participation of the evaluator) Repetitively manipulates one or more of the sensory items throughout the conversation	Conversation focuses on conveying information to the evaluator Acknowledges evaluator by responding with joint attention comments, eye contact, head nods, or other social communication gestures
Maintains focus on preferred topics Uses recurring phrases (e.g., "well, actually") to regain control of the conversation and direct it back to a preferred topic	Discusses a variety of topics; engages in a reciprocal exchange of information with the evaluator regarding the topic of discussion and displays equal interest and engagement in the conversation regardless of the topic

- The descriptive language helps evaluators recognize their experience after the interview as they read the contrasting language

- The language provided not only describes autism specific behavior patterns in the three key areas but also describes the neurotypical behavior patterns one might expect to see

Items from Language and Communication
Item Number 2: Content of Preferred Topics *(cont.)*

Speaks in a narrative that has a sensory, self-directed quality (focused on details of his or her narrative to the exclusion of the participation of the evaluator) Repetitively manipulates one or more of the sensory items throughout the conversation	Conversation focuses on conveying information to the evaluator Acknowledges evaluator by responding with joint attention comments, eye contact, head nods, or other social communication gestures
Maintains focus on preferred topics Uses recurring phrases (e.g., "well, actually") to regain control of the conversation and direct it back to a preferred topic	Discusses a variety of topics; engages in a reciprocal exchange of information with the evaluator regarding the topic of discussion and displays equal interest and engagement in the conversation regardless of the topic

- This language highlights goals for the individual, as the wording in the right-hand boxes is designed to help evaluators identify goals for intervention, teaching, and coaching

- The protocols shape the process for the evaluator to systematically identify the descriptors that fit their experience, building a pattern of observations that lead to a diagnostic outcome

The MIGDAS-2 Protocol System: Diagnostic Interview Protocols

(cont.)

Pattern of Observations:

- With the MIGDAS-2 diagnostic interview process, no score is derived

- The pattern of descriptors is summarized under Pattern of Observations

- Let's review the information that goes into the Pattern of Observations for verbally fluent children and adolescents in the three key areas

Pattern of Observations

PATTERN OF OBSERVATIONS			
	Consistent with ASD	Not consistent with ASD	Unclear
Sensory Use and Interests			
1. Response to materials that have visual and movement properties			
2. Response to materials that have auditory properties			
3. Response to materials that have tactile properties			
4. Response to introduction of preferred topics			
5. Body movements and mannerisms			
Overall for this section			
Language and Communication			
1. Intonation and inflection			
2. Content of preferred topics			
3. Quality, clarity, and relevance of speech			
4. Reciprocity			
5. Idioms and colloquial expressions			
6. Jokes and riddles			
Overall for this section			
Social Relationships and Emotional Responses			
1. Eye contact and eye gaze			
2. Facial expressions and overall quality of emotional responses			
3. Perception of self in relation to others			
4. Anxiety or agitation level			
5. Self-awareness of anger and agitation triggers			
6. Feelings and description of wishes, self, and ways to make school a better place			
Overall for this section			
Overall pattern (all sections)			

Pattern of Observations

(cont.)

- Each protocol provides a Pattern of Observations summary page to facilitate the systematic collection of observations prior to determining the diagnostic outcome

What Materials Are Needed to Use the MIGDAS-2 Protocol System?

- In addition to purchasing the manual and sets of protocols, you will need to collect sensory materials that contain visual, tactile, movement, and sound qualities

- A list of suggested sensory materials are available on the WPS website

What Training Is Needed to Use the MIGDAS-2 Protocol System?

- Participating in a full-day workshop will prepare experienced autism evaluators to begin using the MIGDAS-2 system as part of their autism evaluation toolkit

- Online training workshops are currently available once a month through my website: www.marilynmonteiro.com

- WPS will be offering MIGDAS-2 online trainings on their platform starting in 2021

- You can also request that your state professional organization or school district sponsor a full-day MIGDAS-2 training workshop

What About Using the MIGDAS-2 Protocol System During the Pandemic?

- It is possible to complete the parent and teacher interviews through a secure online platform, and they lend themselves well to this necessary distancing

- The diagnostic interviews for children and adolescents with verbal fluency can be modified for use remotely by having the individual share objects and topics of interest in their familiar home surroundings while speaking with the evaluator

- The diagnostic interviews for children with limited to no verbal fluency can be modified for use remotely by having the parent and the child interact with preferred materials at home and noting the social communication and sensory patterns of behavior

- The adult diagnostic interview protocol works well remotely, as information is collected regarding the individual's behavioral profile both currently and by history

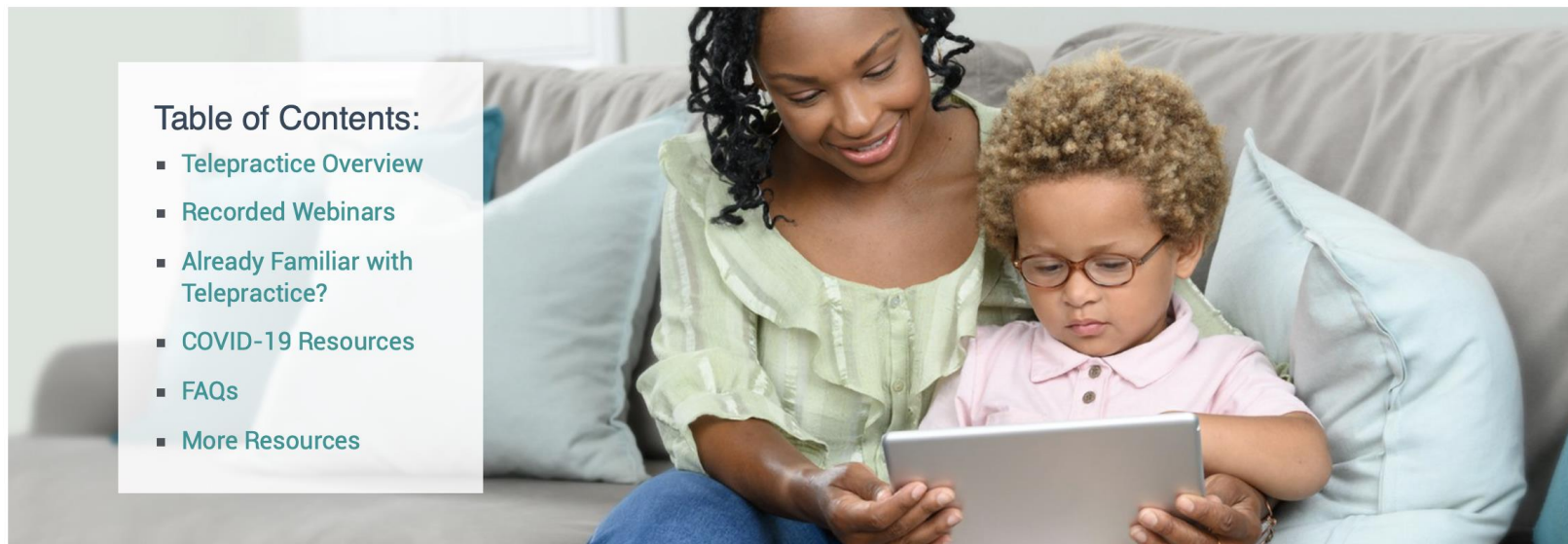- https://pages.wpspublish.com/telepractice-101#faq

Thank You

- I hope this answered some of your questions about the MIGDAS-2 system

- Stay safe and healthy, and in the words of a child with whom I've had many autism conversations:

  ## Keep up the good work!

WPS Telepractice 101
https://pages.wpspublish.com/telepractice-101

Table of Contents:
- Telepractice Overview
- Recorded Webinars
- Already Familiar with Telepractice?
- COVID-19 Resources
- FAQs
- More Resources

Assessment Telepractice Overview

The well-being of you and your clients and students remains at the forefront of our concern during this world health crisis. Our hope is that this time with our families becomes an opportunity to build stronger relationships, both at home and with others remotely. A practitioner conducting remote evaluations for the first time needs support.

You are invited to read the WPS:

- Remote Assessment Guidelines
- Statement on Tele-assessment
- Assessment Validity Considerations during COVID-19

News and Product Updates

New WPS Digital Easels now available for:

- CASL-2
- OWLS-II
- PPA Scale
- OPUS

Get valuable support from professionals you can trust:

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Resources

WPS Online Evaluation System:
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WPS YouTube Channel:
• How to Use Digital Easels
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• What You Need to Know About the Arizona-4 Assessment

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ASRS™
Autism Spectrum Rating Scales*

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Childhood Autism Rating Scale, Second Edition
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CASL™-2
Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language, Second Edition
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DP™-4
Developmental Profile 4*
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MIGDAS™-2
Monteiro Interview Guidelines for Diagnosing the Autism Spectrum, Second Edition*
Available Online!

PDDBI™
PDD Behavior Inventory

SCQ
Social Communication Questionnaire*
Available Online!

SRS™-2
Social Responsiveness Scale, Second Edition*
Available Online!

Spanish Forms Available

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Questions?