

## Keeping it 'Strong'

Click this link to view Video #2: *A Strength Based Perspective*

<https://vimeo.com/74210923>

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Discussion questions for professionals working with students with autism:

### Discussion questions:

1. Stephen explains, "The problem with labeling interests as restrictive' is in the word itself." What is some of the language that you have heard used to describe students' special interests? What is the implication of using such language?
2. Stephen lists language such as "deep interest" and "passion" as alternatives to "restrictive." How does it affect our thinking and perspective to use more strength-based language?
3. Stephen points out Temple Grandin's expertise in cattle processing. How has she leveraged her own special interests to pursue a career? What can we learn from her?
4. Stephen identifies special interests as "a gift... provid[ing] the educator a key towards expanding the life of an individual on the autism spectrum." As educators, how could you incorporate and leverage the power of your students' special interests in order to "expand their lives"?
5. Many students' special interests are wonderfully unique: washing machines, leafy green vegetables, and waste management. How can we appreciate the value in these more obscure interests and find creative ways to incorporate these genuine passions into our students' school days? What about for long-term employment opportunities?