**Job Description**

**Personal Assistant**

I am a 38yr old lady with learning disabilities and Autism and I also have some physical difficulties. I require the support of a caring, patient and bubbly personal assistant to;

* take me out and about,
* to help me develop my confidence and interact socially with others and
* to help me engage in fun and interesting activities.
* Work with me to develop a regular 4-week plan of activities so I know what I will be doing and it will help to ease my anxiety,

I love to go out and love chatting to others, but only once I know them very well. I am very shy around most people so an important part of your role will be to, not only engage and interact with me socially, but also to support and help me to interact better with others too.

As I am shy around people I don’t know, it can take me time for me to open up so I need lots of help and positive encouragement. This could include things like;

* Leading the conversation and asking me lots of questions,
* Involving me in conversations and other things when we are interacting with others out otherwise I can feel left out.
* Encourage people to interact with me, and direct conversations to me rather than over me or to my carer or personal assistant.

This will make me happier and help me to interact better with you as my Personal Assistant and other people.

I will need my Personal Assistant to be aware of my needs and support me by taking a genuine interest and continually engaging with me.

I can get distracted and bored easily and need to be kept in focus and some different things to do thorough out our sessions, will help with that; Otherwise I get bored and upset If I feel I am being ignored.

Importantly I would like to build a genuine friendship with my Personal Assistant.

**The Main Tasks Include:**

1. **Communication and Core Needs**

* I have autism and learning disabilities, so I like things done in a certain way please go with me on things.
* I like things in a certain order, I like things that match, I like to have generally have two of things, When I buy things or take things this isn’t me being greedy I just like to have two.
* I don’t like certain loud sounds and shouting, so please help me by understanding this when you take me out and noticing if I am distressed or not happy despite what I may say.
* Help me by offering two options only where possible and being clear about options or things you ask me to choose. I get confused and forget if I have to choose between more than two things.
* Remember whilst I can talk to you, often times I will not have fully understood what you have said to me, I good at mimicking. So always have that in the back of your mind and safeguard me accordingly. Even If I answer correctly I might be saying the words without understanding what they fully mean.
* I work better with visual ques, so please show me things or use pictures where possible to help me understand.
* I need patience and time to process things. I get overwhelmed if I feel under pressure. Please be gentle and give me time to make my choices.
* **Please keep an eye on my facial expressions if I go red or look agitated, I may need to leave or need the loo, or something is too loud or I may be frightened and need some support.**
* **I don’t always tell you correctly how I am feeling or what I am thinking, I say I am fine when I am not.**
* I want to try to please people, for example I don’t want to say something is hurting me and I need to stop, I am scared to say no often. So I need help safeguarding myself and not do things that are too much for me.
* **You can help by building in extra rest breaks without asking, so I don’t overdo things:-** 
  + **help me by offering your hand up and downstairs**
  + **making sure walks aren’t too long with no rest, and**
  + **keep eye on me moving around especially getting in/out of the pool. Remember to do this even if I say I am ok and I don’t want a rest.**
  + **I need help picking stuff up from the floor if I drop something. Can you please pick this up without asking, or if you see me try to pick it, please stop me and do it for me because I am too scared to ask for your help.**
  + **I can’t be left alone so please keep your eyes on me all the time and take me with you if you go to the loo. I will get frightened if you leave me on my own.**
  + **NO ESCALATORS PLEASE DON’T MAKE ME TRY AND USE THEM**
* Please don’t push me to do things as I will not be happy, often times I am not doing these things because I am frightened, pushing me to do something will make me anxious and upset. It may mean I will not want to do things again with you.
* I like to know what’s going on or what the plan is, so planning things is an important part of the job. Please tell what the plan is for the session as soon as you are able.

1. **Eating and Drinking**

* I will need support making good healthy food choices and drinking tap water on most occasions.
* I like going for a coffee or for lunch and I like to drink Green Tea, I need you to add some cold water to it before giving it to me.
* I do not eat pork.
* I only eat halal meat.
* I do need support to choose halal options and I often go for fish or vegetarian food when out.
* I do need support to cut up my food, so please, please ask me and cut up my food when you see me struggle or think it may be a food that is hard to eat without cutting it.

1. **Social**

* I would love it if you would talk to me and ask me lots of questions, to get to know me.
* BUT make them simple because I get confused and I don’t understand everything you say, even though you may think I do.
* I like for people to be patient and take time with me when communicating.
* Often time’s people can ignore me after saying hello. Please involve me in conversations that might happen whilst we are out and try to encourage me gently to interact with others.
* Please do not take me to pubs.
* I like being taken out and about to do some of these but happy to try some new things too:-
  + Arts and Crafts, if you can come up new projects to do I would love this,
  + Outdoor activities but being mindful of my abilities both mental and physical,
  + Gym or Sport sessions,
  + Archery,
  + Bowling,
  + Cinema,
  + Day Centres,
  + Parks – I need regular rest and not too much walking.
  + Family Fun Days, Fairgrounds - but don’t like the rides.
  + Playing Games – card games and Ludo etc
  + Museums and Galleries
  + Shopping
  + Theatre
  + Day Trips and Outings
  + Outdoor Events
  + Swimming
  + Pottery
* I can’t swim and I am scared of the big pool and I will only stay in the shallow end. I prefer the small pool. Please encourage me to do exercise at the side of the pool if I prefer to do this and don’t push me to go into the middle of the pool away from the side if I don’t want to. Please assist me in and out of the pool.
* I like playing a game called ‘you like’ where you give me two choices of things and I have to choose one that I like best. E.g. “Do you Like Makeup or Cinema?” I will choose one answer. This can be hard when you make me choose between two things I like. We take it in turns to ask each other.
* I would like you to research and make suggestions for social activities, events or projects we can do so we can keep our sessions fun and interesting.
* I would need you to plan out with me and my mum the sessions we are doing so I know what is happening, I like to have a plan.

1. **Financial**

* I will need support paying for things and please request a receipt for anything I buy and be mindful of the cost of things.
* I may want to buy something because I want to buy something and don’t understand the price of things, so suggest going somewhere else if things are expensive in a place.

1. **Restrooms/ Bathing / Dressing**

* Please prompt and take me to the loo regularly, and build in regular loo stops. I can’t communicate if I need the loo. Some useful signs if I need to go I go red, I shake my leg or move around a lot, I say I want to go home, or I don’t eat my food properly. Sometimes there are no signs.
* I will say I don’t need to go to the loo when asked, but often times I actually need too. For this reason just take me regularly. Try saying that you need to go to the loo instead, to ensure I get to the loo, If I am being stubborn. Once there encourage me to go into the loo too check to see if I need the loo.
* I get scared so I need you to be close by, with foot under the door when I go to the loo.
* If I go into a disabled toilet I get frightened on my own in there. I need you to come in with me and turn you back for some privacy.
* I will need you to check my clothes are pulled up correctly and adjust my clothes if needed once I have finished.
* I will need assistance with during my period changing sanitary items.
* I also get nervous when I am on my period, that I may stain a chair when I sit down. Can you please place my jacket on my seat before I sit down to calm my anxiety.
* I will need support changing and washing if I go swimming and you will need to wash, dry and dress me and need help put my shoes on and off.

1. **Pain and Overdoing**

* I am not good at communicating pain I will tell you I am fine when I am not.
* I can be in pain and want to carry on, please keep an eye on me and test activities, building them up in stages even if I want to rush ahead.
* Sometimes I get excited and storm off and walk to fast but I end up being in pain afterwards please make sure I walk slowly and take rests.
* I had a recent foot operation so please be mindful and make sure you tie my laces securely if they come undone when out.

**Name …………………………………………………………………..**

**Signature ……………………………………………………………..**

**Date……………………………………………………………………..**

**Person Specification**

* A personable, chatty, friendly person – Essential
* Be sociable and enthusiastic – Essential
* Have an understanding of an Autism and Learning disabilities - Desirable
* Have experience of working with people with disabilities - Desirable
* Have experience of working as Personal Assistant – Desirable
* Have some experience of working with disabled children or adults - Essential
* Have some experience of working one-to-one as Personal Assistant – Desirable
* Be perceptive have the ability to read people, expressions and body language - Essential
* Be willing to learn about Autism and Learning Disabilities- Essential
* Have an interest in Arts and Crafts – Desirable
* Be Caring and nurturing - Essential
* Not to discuss my household and domestic circumstances with others, other than with my specific permission - Essential
* Be willing to work under my direction - Essential
* Have a positive attitude towards disability - Essential
* Be flexible, reliable and punctual - Essential
* Not smoke in my home/presence - Essential
* Not drink alcohol when working for me - Essential
* Have good general health - Essential
* Be clean and tidy to my specification - Essential
* Be able to work in different settings - Essential
* Keep information gained in the course of your employment confidential - Essential
* Respect my privacy and dignity and that of my family and friends - Essential
* Be able to accept responsibility and work on your own initiative - Essential
* Be patient when doing repeated tasks - Essential
* Be able to respond appropriately in an emergency
* Have at least basic reading, writing and number skills - Essential
* Must be willing to drive me if required - Desirable

**Name …………………………………………………………………..**

**Signature ……………………………………………………………..**

**Date……………………………………………………………………..**