



## **A Time to Run - Stuart & Sam**

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### **Book Club Questions & Reflections**

#### **For each Chapter:**

1. Complete a "Professional Reflection" that includes:
  - a) The page number(s)
  - b) A direct quote from the chapter that struck you as interesting or informative in some way regarding the student(s) you are currently working with.

#### **For the Book:**

1. Create a running document listing all the strategies considered best practice in supporting individuals diagnosed with FASD. List according to those used by each character, for example Stuart's Mom used a visual timer (Ch. 3, pg. 26).
2. List the Primary Disability characteristics of FASD that Stuart demonstrates.

#### **Chapter 1- Stuart**

1. Consider how Stuart responds to sensory input of the basketball game in the gym? As educators how can we be mindful of these types of situations for our students?
2. How is Stuart functioning in the social world of his peers? How does he feel about his current social connections?

#### **Chapter 2 -Sam**

1. How does Sam describe Stuart? Who do you think shared Stuart's diagnosis with Sam? Is diagnostic information carefully shared with classmates and staff that interact with your student(s)? Do you think it is beneficial? If so, please provide more details.

#### **Chapter 3 - Stuart**

1. Explain Stuart's feelings about the dark. How do his parents help him with this?
2. Reflect on Stuart's need to punch his bedroom walls? How could his family assist with this (environmental, visuals, etc.)?
3. Share an example where Stuart's understanding of expressive language caused frustration with his brother Declan.
4. What time does Stuart typically fall asleep?
5. What were the possible triggers for Stuart running away from his Aide? How did the Aide respond? Do you agree or disagree?



#### **Chapter 4 - Sam**

1. Consider the reference made to “stalking” at the beginning of the chapter. Have you supported students where their unexpected behaviors elicited similar responses by staff or students? What was the outcome?

#### **Chapter 5 - Stuart**

1. When you hear why Stuart and his brother were apprehended does it provide further insight into his day to day functioning?
2. Comment on Stuart’s response to the confusion between his school and his Mom regarding repairing his bedroom walls? What traits of FASD do we know explain Stuart’s response?
3. Why do you think Stuart runs? Please explain.
4. Declan declares that he hates his mother because she drank alcohol while she was pregnant with him and Stuart. He says, “She made me stupid.” Have you heard similar comments from the students you work with? Reflect on the potential emotional impact and attachment concerns that may arise.

#### **Chapter 6 - Sam**

1. Have you supported students that struggle with impulse control? Explain/discuss the possible social repercussions of large amounts of texting.
2. Peer relationships can be very positive and powerful. Consider how Stuart went to class with Tony, his Aide, due to what Sam said and did (pg.55).

#### **Chapter 7 - Stuart**

1. Consider how Tony blocked Stuart from leaving the class and how he chased Stuart when he ran. For those of you with Non-Violent Crisis Prevention training is this considered practice? Please share your thoughts.
2. Stuart jumps into Donny’s car twice. Reflect on Stuart’s train of thought throughout their first two meetings and how it demonstrates his vulnerability.
3. Executive functioning can be difficult for those diagnosed with FASD. Find an example.

#### **Chapter 8 - Sam**

1. “Stuart was happy with who he was. Why shouldn’t he be” (71). Do you think this statement is accurate? Why or why not?

#### **Chapter 9 - Stuart**

1. Consider Stuart’s perspective-taking regarding Sam’s sadness. Did he understand what Sam was feeling? Explain.



2. What common trait(s) of FASD led to Stuart seeing Donny's guns? How does this trait(s) impact the student(s) that you are supporting?
3. Is Stuart comfortable looking people in the eye? Consider the students you support and if they are similar in this way.
4. What grade did friends in the neighbour stop coming over to Stuart's house? Consider dysmaturity and how this often impacts peer relationships.

### **Chapter 10 - Sam**

1. Stuart's Mom explains how Stuart's personality differs from Declan's. Think of students you know that are diagnosed with FASD and compare how they may have responded to Donny's invitations differently.
2. Sam recognizes that Stuart 'lives in the moment' (page 96). Do you feel that peers understand this about their classmates diagnosed with FASD? How might you develop an understanding of "no two brains are the same" with your students?

### **Chapter 11 - Stuart**

1. Stuart perseverates on two things during track and field practice. What are the triggers for his rigid thinking? How does Sam help him with this?
2. When does Stuart use observation as a strategy during his first run at practice?

### **Chapter 12 - Sam**

1. How does Sam use Stuart's interests and passion as a distraction to assist Stuart in moving forward during track practice?
2. Stuart uses verbal pre-instruction to help Stuart understand the expectations of track practice. Would the students you support be able to understand that amount of verbal instructions? Discuss.

### **Chapter 13 - Stuart**

1. Stuart provides a visual prompt for himself. What was it for? Think about what is highly motivating for your student(s) and how you could use this strategy throughout their school day.
2. What risk behavior does Stuart have to extinguish before his parents will give him a TV in his room? Do you think this is attainable for Stuart? What activity could replace the risk behavior?
3. Stuart runs. Review his train of thought beforehand.



### **Chapter 14 - Sam**

1. Stuart pushes another racer and gets called out by the Track coach. Ponder how often students diagnosed with FASD find themselves in similar situations. Why do you think this happens?
2. Tony, Stuart's Aide, gives Sam a heads up when Stuart is "in a mood". Sam finds it so interesting how quickly Stuart's mood can change in seconds. Reflect on this as you support students.

### **Chapter 15 - Stuart**

1. While in Math class, Tony asks Stuart, "Remember how you figured this out yesterday? You added this number with this." Reflect on this question. Do you find it helpful to ask students, "Do you remember?"
2. Find two examples where Stuart's receptive language ability is at the concrete, literal level.
3. Stuart struggles with the ability to stay focused. How does this impact his race in the school track meet?

### **Chapter 16 - Sam**

1. Sam felt he didn't adequately prepare Stuart for the starter gun and that he set Sam up for failure. Think about a time when you felt that a student was not fully prepared for a task/assignment/event etc. and what was the result? How could planning ahead have better assisted the student to be successful?

### **Chapter 17 - Stuart**

1. Impulsivity can often impact how others view individuals diagnosed with FASD. Staff members supporting students may need to facilitate social interactions. How did Sam intercede after Stuart's impulsive action? When have you had to do something similar?
2. Offering choice is considered best practice. What was the outcome when Stuart was offered two choices regarding running the second race in lane four versus lane six? Also, for running a third race?
3. Stuart compares his body to feeling like he drank Red Bull all day. If you have students that often feel the same way what is considered best practice in supporting them?

### **Chapter 18 - Sam**

1. Sam is a caring, intuitive, empathetic friend. Those supporting teens in Middle School or High School, discuss what friendship looks like for the students you are supporting. Do they have a Sam in their lives?
2. Discuss how Bethany and Special Olympics help Sam to learn better methods when coaching Stuart.



## **Chapter 19 - Stuart**

1. Why doesn't Stuart want to go to the hospital to see his brand new baby nephew? How is this connected to previous trauma? Explain how students you support may be affected the same way? Do you feel well equipped in using trauma-informed practice?
2. What was the "Big Idea" that Stuart learned from Sam? Do you consider this life changing for Stuart?