

Dyslexic Advantage

NEWSLETTER

LORD RICHARD ROGERS
IN MEMORIAM



- FINDING THE POSITIVE
- NURTURING STRENGTHS
- VISUAL PROCESSING
- FURTHER TESTING
- NON-DYSLEXIC WORLD
- DYSLEXIA NEWS



Fernet Eide MD, Editor

Dear Dyslexic Advantage community,

Happy New Year! May this coming year be a year of happiness and peace!

Become a **Premium Subscriber** and discover the most comprehensive resource on dyslexia in the world. You can sign up for an individual subscription or gift a school with institutional subscription. Don't forget there is a **Homeschooler's** course for parents and for teachers, a clock hour course that provides professional development credits (**Dyslexia for Teachers**).

You don't have to go it alone!

The **NEUROLEARNING** Dyslexia Screening App is \$39.99 and available for children and adults 7-70 years old. iPad, iPhone, Android, and Kindle Fire.



The app may be used to identify and qualify for services such as Benetech's huge free library of e-books.

Thank you volunteers Shelley Wear, Trish Seres, Dayna Russell Freudenthal, and Michelle Williams for their astute critique and proofing. Thanks to Lady Grace Belarmino for beautiful design and layout.

PREMIUM

Editor's Note: to make our publications easier to read, we will avoid use of italics and certain types of fonts.

Newsletters can be read online **HERE**. This issue will be available on the Joomag site for 3 months and can also be downloaded as a pdf file.

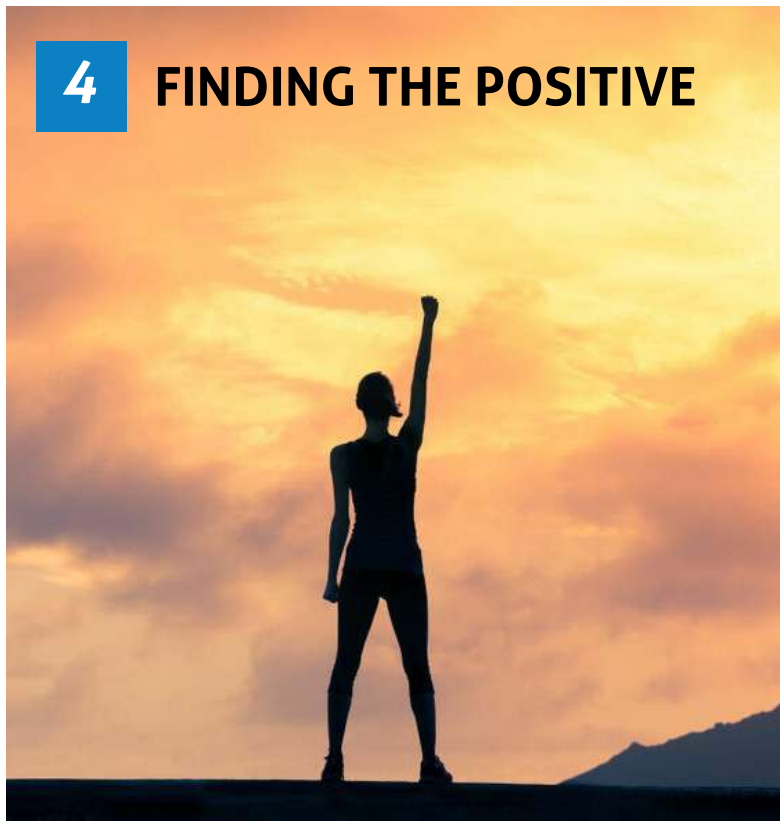


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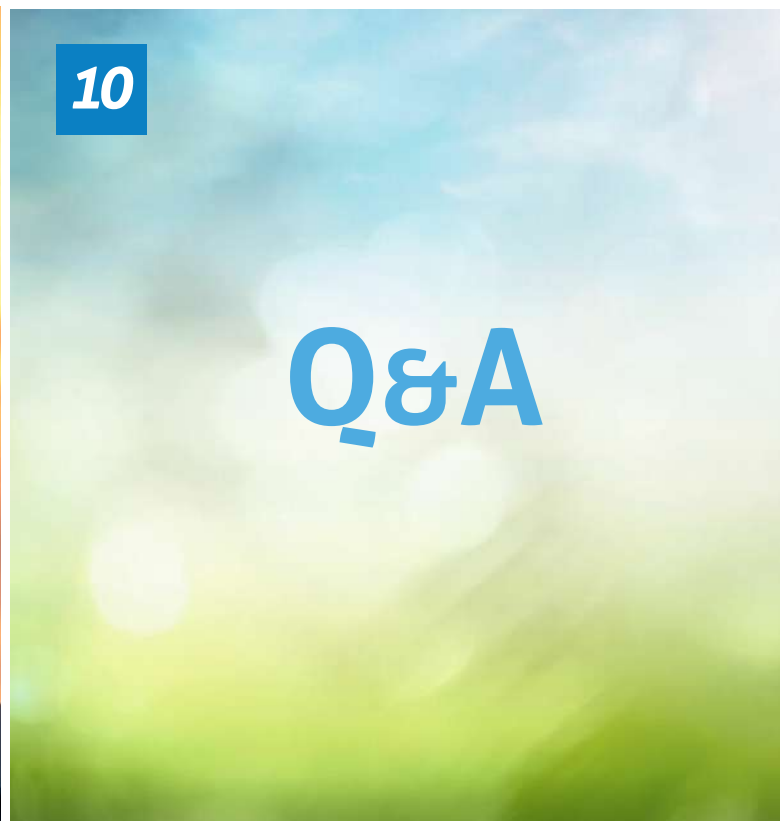
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FINDING THE POSITIVE

Before the holidays, I received an email from parents of a student that we tested almost ten years ago. They were celebrating their recent news of his acceptance into his college "dream" pick. Things had looked very different a decade ago, but since that time, I know he had flourished under homeschooling, tutors, and remote schooling. He won some Dyslexic Advantage student awards and another award at the national level. Almost the same time, a letter came in sharing a similar aged student's struggle. He was coming to the end of his academic career and yet was frustrated, embittered, and exhausted. What would the future hold for him?

EDUCATIONAL MISMATCHES ABOUND FOR DYSLEXIA - FIND THE POSITIVE

The reality is that educational mismatches abound for dyslexic students; even if you get a well-informed and supportive teacher one year, it may be completely different the following year. It's a rare student who survives traditional education unscathed.

What is important is to help find positive experiences for your students. Those experiences may be outside or inside the classroom, or both. It's critical every student has some chance to experience what it is to be good at something... for some it may be sports or extracurriculars, while for others it may be certain subjects.

What we know about dyslexic students is that - as a group they are more emotionally sensitive ([reference](#)) and [metacognitive](#) compared to non-dyslexic students, so it's important for them to have a positive and emotionally-supportive educational environment as well as guidance to understanding how they may think differently and how their differences can lead to all types of benefits.

It's also student #2 that we discussed above may finally be getting through the chore of education and finding what he's good at. As often as there are stories of dyslexic adults returning to school and becoming successful, there are others who forego school and become successful in their own businesses, in corporate, small business, or technical work, or the arts.

Some people with especially "spiky profiles" (extreme strengths and weaknesses) may struggle in educational programs that have specific requirements or goals of churning out "well-rounded" students; many of these people just need to get out of systems and into their own ecosystem where they develop expertise in a field that they have chosen.

I was recently listening to a [podcast](#) where illustrators were talking about how they got started in their business. How many years did it take to become an independent creative professional? The artist paused briefly, and asked if they really wanted an honest answer - and of course the hosts said yes. 6 years - no actually 7 years. Whoa! Or is that an uh-oh? Cam Kendell confessed that he had the support of his parents and it took him a while before he could completely support himself on his artistic work. In addition, his father was the head of a successful advertising agency and when he retired, he wrote a letter to all of his clients mentioning that if they needed someone to help with their advertising needs, they should contact his son.

It is a fact of life that some families are able to help their children get a start in life - more than others. That being said, if you have a daughter or son who you know will need help, then brainstorm how you, your extended family members, or work acquaintances might be able to help them.

There are many dyslexics who do better in jobs than on timed tests to qualify for them; as a result, it is almost always a good idea for young people to gain work experiences - relevant and good work experiences that can help them advance in their work as well as give them a positive track record for a career that gives them confidence for what they might want to do as their next step.

TEMPERAMENT AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAILURE

Another thing it might be helpful to know about is that temperaments can explain why two people may respond in dramatically different ways to disappointments, failure, or setbacks. Temperament is a person's typical way of responding behaviorally and emotionally to the world. Along with traits like intelligence, humor, interests, and talents, temperament is something that makes up a person's personality.



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LIFE

It might be that you've heard of a "sunny temperament" that means having a positive attitude or cheerful nature, but it's also possible that that you or someone you love have one of those clusters of "difficult" temperament traits; for example, negative reactions to new situations or people, slow adaptability, intensity, negative mood, and especially high or especially low levels of physical energy or activity. Many times it would happen that we would see two students with similar scores on standardized assessment tests, but opposite ways of dealing with their challenges in school. If you are parenting (or tutoring) a child with more negative temperamental traits, it is usually harder and it's not necessarily a reaction to you or what you've done.

That said, the outcomes are not simply the result of temperament.

Predisposition (temperament) + Provocation = Response

So what helps is to create an environment where they can be successful. It's also helpful if the individual has guidance on developing a positive interpretative style for how they have faced challenges and found successes along the way.

It was psychologist [Martin Covington](#) who described four ways of responding to failure:

- **Failure-accepting:** people who accept failure, but may have given up on trying to succeed. This group is the most difficult to motivate.
- **Failure-avoiding:** people who want to avoid failure and don't necessarily believe they can succeed. This group may make excuses, procrastinate, or opt out.
- **Over-strivers:** people who are afraid of failure so much that they strive to avoid it at all costs, even beyond reasonable expectations of effort.
- **Failure to Success-ers:** this group sees failure as a path to learning and success, rather than an indicator of self-worth.

It's this last group that finds the positive in failure, opening a path forward.

**"...With self-compassion, we give ourselves the kindness and care we'd give to a good friend."
- Kristin Neff, PhD**

Kristin Neff (see below) has [talked](#) about the importance of cultivating and making time for self-compassion. Self-compassion, according to Neff, involved three components: self-kindness vs. self-judgement, shared human experience vs. isolation, and non-judgmental mindfulness over emotional reactivity and negativity.

She has made the point that having compassion for oneself is no different from having compassion for others. One must notice suffering, feel moved by suffering, and offer kindness and understanding when failures happen and mistakes are made. It doesn't involve "self-esteem" which intentionally or not, involves some comparison to others.



Kristin has a free Self-Compassion Test on her site (click on the photo below).

Test how self-compassionate you are

Welcome to the Self-Compassion Test!

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each item, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

Almost Never	Occasionally	About Half Of The Time	Fairly Often	Almost Always
1	2	3	4	5

? - Choose one: 1. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.

? - Choose one: 2. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.

? - Choose one: 3. When things are going badly for me, I see the difficulties as part of life that everyone goes through.

Mindful Schools is a non-profit that creates programs for students and teachers to learn more about and practice self-compassion. Below are some examples of how students write themselves notes as they learn self-compassion.

11/2/18 p
Love Letter writing
Dear me, you should not worry
if something goes wrong, tomorrow
will be a new day and you
will try harder and do
your best. I know that I'm
smart, kind, and loved. I know
that I have nothing to
worry about. I am going to remember
to have self-confidence. I also know
and remember that I am protected
at all times. I also know that
I am amazing and awesome. I will
always know and remember to
love myself at all times. No matter
if something goes wrong, to love

Dear me, I now that your
smart and you are good
when I got mad one day
I said bad stufe
to you but what I
should do is say kind
stufe and I'm sorry
but when I should do
is say it was a
axedint and say sorry
and to not get mad
I should inhale exhale too.

From our recent [virtual lecture for the Hamlin Robinson Speaker Series](#), a few questions from viewers:

QUESTION: How do you separate vision processing disorders from dyslexia? How do you think about these? Also same with auditory processing disorders like CAPD?

It sounds as if you are well-informed about the fact that many individuals with dyslexia have visual and auditory processing disorders. Depending on how an individual is assessed, for instance by a medical professional, language specialist, vision specialist or auditory specialist, different "labels" can be attached to what may present as difficulty with visual aspects of reading or with hearing all of the sounds in words or in noisy environments.

On a practical level, integrating a wide range of test-related information along with a given client's symptoms and difficulties is what medically-trained dyslexia professionals do as part of their clinical assessment. What are the practical implications of various test findings? In one case, visual processing difficulties may be mildly abnormal, but more significant difficulties are found in auditory processing; in other cases, the reverse may be true. In still other situations, the problems may be more related to memory-related challenges associated with dyslexia. All that said, there are many medical professionals who don't receive adequate training in dyslexia - and many dyslexia specialists who don't have medical backgrounds to interpret visual or auditory processing tests. Parents can read up on various possibilities, but they won't have the clinical experience of seeing a wide range of individuals with dyslexia, knowing what happened with various interventions and seeing how things change over time.

With this context, it's important for whoever is guiding an individual's educational plan to know all potential issues - but also prioritize what is impacting education the most.

If a student is failing to make progress with dyslexia intervention because of more severe auditory or visual difficulties, then those problems may need to be specifically addressed to see if it affects reading.

If visual or auditory processing difficulties are mild and a simple treatable intervention like glasses or treatment of an ear infection are not necessary, then specific intervention may not be necessary other than some consideration of how these difficulties might impact reading instruction (for instance, read with a larger font, reading ruler, slower pronunciation of sounds, etc.).

When a student is planning to take high stakes tests like college entrance exams, or later in adulthood, licensing exams, then being aware of needs like visual processing - that may have an impact on time or the need to write in a test booklet instead of scantrons - is important.

QUESTION: How can we nurture Dyslexic strengths in our children?

There are many great challenges facing the nurturing of strengths in dyslexic children. Some of the challenges are external because traditional school work may provide little outlet for dyslexic strengths. Typically students who are struggling with school tasks often spend extra time receiving remediation with little time for extracurricular activities that allow them to develop or show their strengths. Parents and teachers have an important role to identify strength and interest areas of their dyslexic students and make the time even in the midst of a busy school year. It's my intent with every single issue of this newsletter or our Premium magazines to highlight how dyslexic strengths may present. We now have over 140 issues of these newsletter or Premium magazines - and they are all telling the stories of dyslexic strengths in various forms. Also listen to interviews and see various people found their strengths as children or adults. These strengths tend to recur and if there is no time for children to explore and live all types of experiences, they may never discover their true potential.

One homeschooling parent of 3 dyslexic children who have won multiple science fair awards at the state and national levels told me that she and her husband set out to have their children's education reflect a 2:1 ratio of strengths to remediative work. Not everyone will be able to do that - but it's an approach that has certainly worked for them. The actual numbers don't matter and they are likely to change at different times, but the important thing to remember is that a student's strengths are usually much more important than weaknesses - so making

Q & A

the emotional health of the student, it really sets them on a positive track for their future.

QUESTION: Clearly the dyslexic person has advantages in brain functions. But, they have to operate in a world that is not oriented to the way they think. They still have to read, write and compute. In addition, at this time they must also be able to see and understand complex information. How do we help them develop the skills they need while not diminishing their strengths?

This question is a bit related to the previous one - but I will add that it also raises the issue of the challenge that some dyslexic people have communicating their ideas to non-dyslexic co-workers or employees. The issue comes up quite a bit in workplaces especially when people have to work in teams.

For the challenges, dyslexic people do benefit by intervention, remediation, and assistive technology, but even so, there are many examples of people who found success at what they do despite not having received appropriate remediation. It is not impossible, but the overwhelming evidence is it that it is helpful for the vast majority of children - so that is why it is recommended and supported.

So all this being said, I don't think intervention is "enough" especially if we want to do the best we can to supporting young people. Talent and strength development has always been important for parents who have the means to help their children - and that help can take many forms.

I like the fact that you mentioned the ability to see and understand complex information. There are significant numbers of dyslexic students who have advanced conceptual ability (i.e. "gifted") in addition to their dyslexia. For these students, having advanced curriculum with the use of assistive technology and accommodations when necessary can be their best fit in the educational system.

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Too often after formal testing, attention is driven to the weak scores, with little thought for the strengths. Does the student look forward to something during their school day? Are they exercising their creative minds and their advanced conceptual thinking? Over the years, we've heard about some kids flourishing after winning one of our Karina Eide Young Writers Awards, or others from out-of-the-box choice of what to do on their summer vacation. We've known many kids who were grades behind in reading and writing, who nevertheless talked with their parents on every topic under the sun. They discussed TED talks, talked to relatives and various family friends about their interesting occupations, and they explored subjects and fields beyond their grade school curricula.

As we've begun putting together some of the updates for the 10-ish year anniversary of Dyslexic Advantage, it's even clearer that what we know about dyslexic differences should imply more learning based on physical experiences that employ personal or episodic memory.

It is also important for dyslexics as a group to learn about their differences and develop strategies for communicating their thoughts to the non-dyslexic world. In the best of all possible worlds, non-dyslexics should work just as hard at learning how to communicate effectively with the dyslexic world.

QUESTION: I'd like advice on what to say/do when a school/program requests further testing on a dyslexic as testing is expensive and time consuming, and dyslexia does not go away!

This is can be a very frustrating and costly problem.

As you may know, the Department of Education tried to clarify this issue and not require families to undergo continue with frequent burdensome expensive re-testing for learning disabilities.

A summary post is located [HERE](#). The government document is [HERE](#).

The relevant section (see opposite page)

- **Past Testing Accommodations.** Proof of past testing accommodations in similar test settings is generally sufficient to support a request for the same testing accommodations for a current standardized exam or other high-stakes test.
 - **Past Testing Accommodations on Similar Standardized Exams or High-Stakes Tests.** If a candidate requests the same testing accommodations he or she previously received on a similar standardized exam or high-stakes test, provides proof of having received the previous testing accommodations, and certifies his or her current need for the testing accommodations due to disability, then a testing entity should generally grant the same testing accommodations for the current standardized exam or high-stakes test without requesting further documentation from the candidate. So, for example, a person with a disability who receives a testing accommodation to sit for the SAT should generally get the same testing accommodation to take the GRE, LSAC, or MCAT.
- **Formal Public School Accommodations.** If a candidate previously received testing accommodations under an Individualized Education Program (IEP)³ or a Section 504 Plan,⁴ he or she should generally receive the same testing accommodations for a current standardized exam or high-stakes test. If a candidate shows the receipt of testing accommodations in his or her most recent IEP or Section 504 Plan, and certifies his or her current need for the testing accommodations due to disability, then a testing entity should generally grant those same testing accommodations for the current standardized exam or high-stakes test without requesting further documentation from the candidate. This would include students with disabilities publicly-placed and funded in a private school under the IDEA or Section 504 placement procedures whose IEP or Section 504 Plan addresses needed testing accommodations.
 - **Example.** Where a student with a Section 504 Plan in place since middle school that includes the testing accommodations of extended time and a quiet room is seeking those same testing accommodations for a high-stakes test, and certifies that he or she still needs those testing accommodations, the testing entity receiving such documentation should generally grant the request.

Students with an IEP may qualify automatically for college entrance accommodations. 504 or other students may be on the edge; if they "get by" without accommodations in school, it is harder to justify that they need accommodations for high stakes exams. But it is also true the demands of college-level reading and writing are also much greater. Professionals who know your student may try to appeal to the College Board stating that repeat testing is not necessary. In general, we have heard that more than half of appeals tend to be granted, so it's always worth trying. Present your case like a lawyer, collect letters of support from teachers and other professionals who know your student. Sometimes universities have a pro bono (free) special education law clinic who will give you advice for free or on a sliding scale that can strengthen your case.



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National Center for Learning Disabilities, the International Dyslexia Association have evaluated the Sondag System(r) and deemed that the program contained the required elements for teaching reading identified by the Nation Reading Panel.

IN MEMORIAM: LEGENDARY ARCHITECT LORD RICHARD ROGERS



"My ethics may continue..."

Lord Rogers revolutionized architecture as well as the way people thought about city planning. At the peak of his success, he reconfigured his architecture firm as a charity.

Rogers recently passed away at 88, but his legacy will live on.

Rogers often spoke of the first 30 years of his life as "hell" because everyone said he was stupid (unrecognized dyslexia), but he said the last 30 years of his life have been "fantastic."

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Read about the latest release of American Rescue funds to support Children with Disabilities.

IDEA

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has a federal grant that provides funds to ensure that eligible students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education.

The priorities of the IDEA are to:

- Ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services.
- Ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected.
- Assist states, localities, educational service agencies, and federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities.
- Assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities.

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IN MEMORIAM

"I had lots of trouble in school as a child, and I lost confidence. Teachers thought I was stupid. I learned to read very late, when I was 11. Dyslexia wasn't recognized then, and the assumption was that you were incapable of thinking."

Rogers' ideas behind his buildings are interesting. For him, it was not enough to design a building for its appearance. He and his partner designed it to be enjoyed and for the effect it would have on the city's people.

From [Pompidou Center, a 70's Radical That's Never Gone Out of Fashion](#):

"It wasn't supposed to be a monument but an event, a happening. Piano now also describes it as "not a building but a town where you find everything – lunch, great art, a library, great music". The point was, as Rogers puts it, that "culture should be fun". "After decades of museums being dusty, boring and inaccessible," says Piano, "someone had to run away, to do something different.."

Or listen to this [fan](#):

"More than a museum, it's a cultural touchstone.

Few places in Paris carry the sort of sentimental weight that the Centre Georges Pompidou does for me. When I was a student, I spent untold hours poring through books and writing dissertations at the public library there.

I met friends and drafted articles or poems at the Pompidou's humming mezzanine-level café. I passed afternoons sitting on the open, sloping plaza outside...More than a modern art museum and cultural center, it's a place where people of all backgrounds and milieus converge, create and commune. "

If you judge the worthiness of a building on the basis of its positive impact on a building, Rogers' projects have undeniable worth.

*"Summit Center helped
me find out I am both
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Now I like school, and
I have the tools I need
to succeed."*

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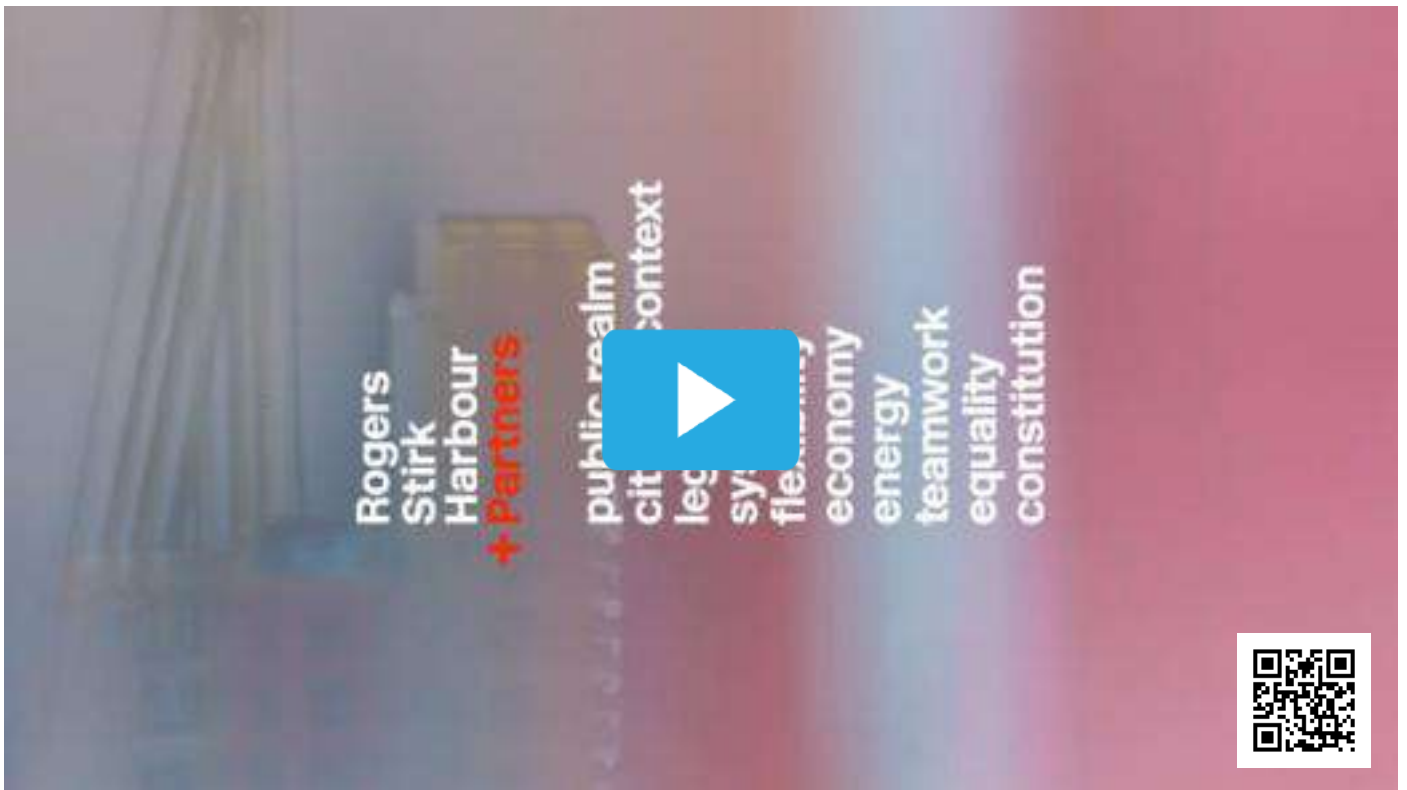
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IN MEMORIAM

When I watched the video below from Rogers' architectural firm, I was struck by how many innovative ideas about the city were incorporated into their projects. The buildings are marvels of architectural design, true, but also powerful for their ideas of serving people - in the present, but also into the future. I was impressed by how much the dyslexic MIND strengths seemed to be present in the organization's mission. I don't think I'll be alone seeing his ideas as being visionary.



"Dyslexia, though, made me realise that people who say "but you can't do that" aren't actually very important. I don't take 'no' too seriously."
- Richard Rogers

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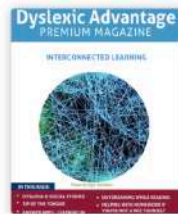
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When 'Careless' Mistakes Aren't: Dyscalculia, Math Anxiety, Learning Strategies That Help

Additude



Dyslexia in Schools

US News and World Report



California Governor Writes Children's Book About Dyslexia

ABC TV



Call for All Primary School Children to Be Screened for Dyslexia (UK)

Independent



Idaho Parents Push for More Resources for Dyslexic Students

Idaho Statesman



What is Dysgraphia? (Writing)

Parents Magazine

PREMIUM ISSUE SEVENTY-THREE JANUARY 2022

Dyslexic Advantage

PREMIUM MAGAZINE

THE SOCIAL
EMOTIONAL SIDE
OF DYSLXIA

- PRACTICING READING ALOUD
- TECHNOLOGY: AUTO-TEXT AND MACROS
- MATH LEARNING EXAMPLES
- MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS AND DYSLXIA
- CONNECTING THE DOTS: TECH CEO JOHN CHAMBERS

PREMIUM



PREVIOUS ISSUE: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL

- Social and Emotional Side of Dyslexia
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We accept poems, short stories, fan fiction, and excerpts from longer stories. Submissions are judged on ideas, storytelling, and quality of writing and not on technical aspects such as spelling. Works may be dictated to a parent or friend. If you'd like to check out some previous winning entries, visit **HERE**.

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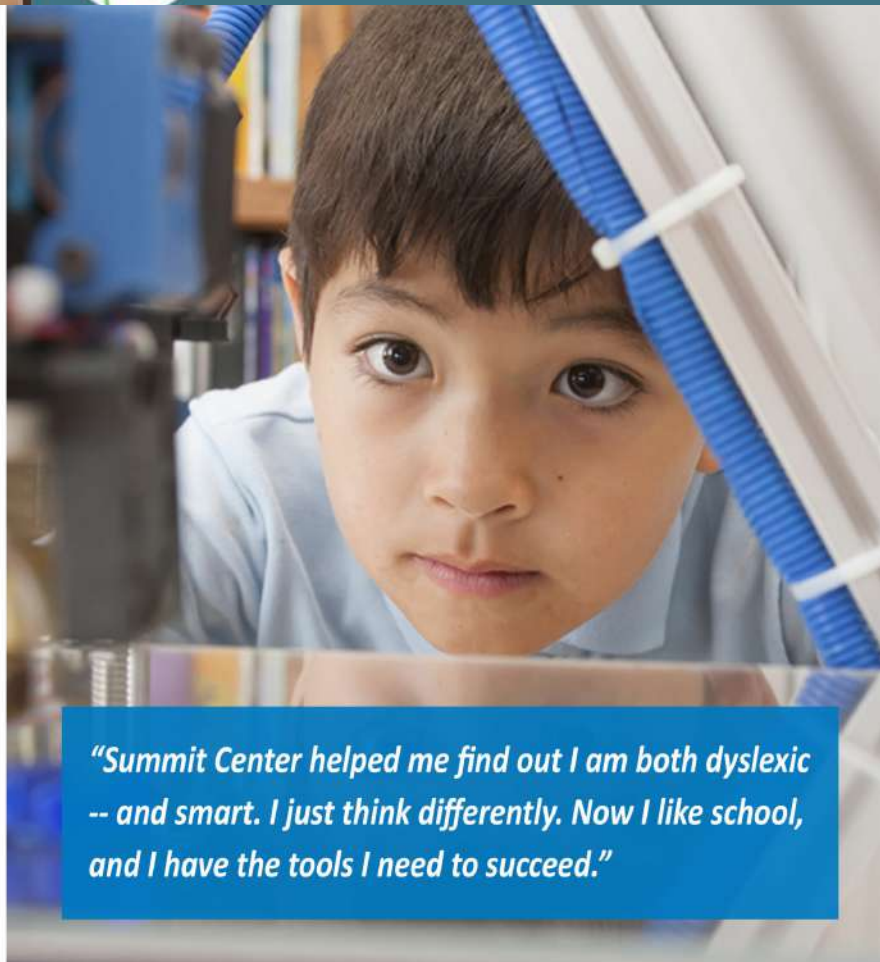
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How to Help a Teen Out of a Homework Hole

NY Times



Pandemic Made It Harder to Spot Students with Disabilities, Now They Must Catch Up

EdWeek



How to Help Students Navigate Online College

Smart Brief



Long COVID is a Disability Under ADA, 504, and 1557

ADA.gov



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