

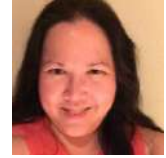
Dyslexic Advantage

NEWSLETTER



NEW
MIND
STRENGTHS
POSTERS!

- BRETT KOPF CO-FOUNDER OF OMELLA
- NOT OVER BUT AROUND HURDLES
- INTELLIGENCE MATTERS - IQ
- READING BEYOND LEVEL
- DYSLEXIA NEWS + NEW



Fernet Eide MD, Editor

Dear Friends,

First of all- thank you for supporting our efforts with Dyslexic Advantage since our latest appeal. We're happy to still be alive and we know it's you that we have to thank. Enjoy the stories this issue - importance in recognizing intelligence, a wonderful chat with Omella co-found Brett Kop, and Some terrific new MIND strengths posters from Marcia Ciorra! Hurray!

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**). <https://joom.ag/3sdd>

The **NEUROLEARNING** Dyslexia Screening App is \$49.99 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.

Thanks to Shelley Wear, Trish Seres, Michelle Williams, Cheryl Kahn, and Jack Martin. Thanks to Lady Grace Belarmino for design and layout and Andi and Freshea for their social media and admin help!

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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TESTING SHOULD
INCLUDE IQ**



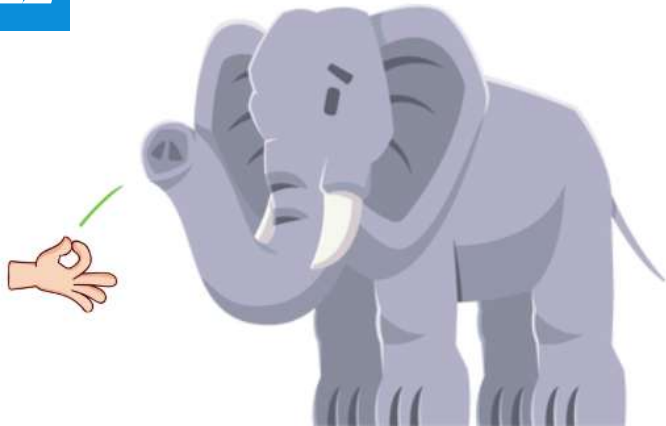
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**BRETT KOPF
CO-FOUNDER
OF OMELLA**



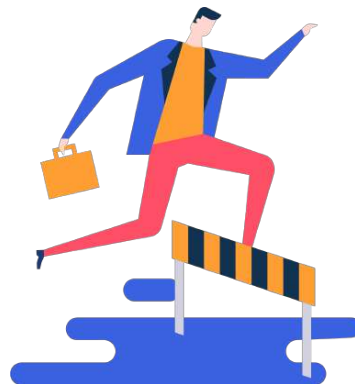
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**DYSLEXIA MIND STRENGTHS
POSTER**



INTELLIGENCE MATTERS: WHY DYSLEXIA TESTING SHOULD INCLUDE IQ

"...he would be the smartest lad in the school if the instruction were entirely oral..." - W Pringle Morgan (1896)

After the initial rush of excitement that dyslexia screening and funds for teacher training would come available to many public school students in the United States, there is now a steady wave of reality becoming apparent.

What is passing for dyslexia screening varies widely. Many platforms have simply renamed school readiness or pre-reading screeners that take one minute or less to perform (results are about what you might expect from 60 second screeners).

Potential upsides to this type of screening are that some students may be identified as needing extra phonological training, but the downsides are that students don't receive any specific information about their abilities, strengths, weakness, and specific educational recommendations.

INTELLIGENCE MATTERS WHEN TESTING FOR DYSLEXIA

Testing for phonological awareness is important for students, but so are many other things, especially intelligence. Dyslexia is a specific LD which means students have average or above average intelligence. Some dyslexic students may be in the highly or profoundly gifted range of IQ and you may not know that this high intelligence exists unless it is specifically assessed.

Of course perceptive and high IQ parents may recognize the high intelligence of their children, but there are definite benefits to knowing - because it can change how students are perceived and are educated. Parents of students who are bilingual should also be attentive to the need to be tested in their native language because being tested in a non-native language can grossly underestimate intelligence.



THE INTELLIGENCE OF DYSPLEXIC STUDENTS IS OFTEN UNDER-ESTIMATED

As attentive as parents can be, the intelligence of dyslexic students is commonly grossly under-estimated. The reasons for this are several.

Often by the time students come to the attention of professionals and get tested, they have experienced a good deal of failure and then they are asked to take more tests under time pressure.

It's one of the reasons why testing dyslexic students is an art as well as science. A good testing person can establish a rapport and bring out the best in a student who may be feeling low.

When parents bring their student in to get tested, they may worry that they are pushing their student too much or expecting too much. When we find that the student's intelligence is much higher than they might have expected, there can be a palpable sense of relief and it's important information that can be used to design a truly appropriate education.

Our interviews with extraordinary dyslexic men and women for the past two decades has told us that recognition of their high intelligence and potential was much more the exception than the rule.

Brilliant dyslexic individuals were held back and failed multiple times and many people went from remedial education and being told they "weren't college material" to graduating college or graduate school with highest honors. These mistakes in education have not changed for many people.



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INTELLIGENCE

Pulitzer-Prize winning poet Philip Schultz was held back in school twice because he was thought to be unintelligent. MacArthur Genius winner and Berkeley Biology Professor Mimi Koehl was discouraged from pursuing science as a career and enrolled in art school at first instead. One of the world's leading paleontologists, Jack Horner, another MacArthur Genius winner, flunked out of college 7 times in 5 years.

A misunderstanding or underestimation of a student's intelligence can derail a student's educational plans forever if no one recognizes the true level of their intelligence.

On the other hand, objective evidence of a student's high intelligence helps parents and teachers raise the bar, provides students with a better understanding of themselves, and guides appropriate educational placement - sometimes in advanced courses with accommodations.

RELUCTANCE OF SOME SCHOOLS TO USE IQ TESTING

Controversies exist over IQ testing because of concerns that different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds may affect the validity of scores. For that reason, some schools have sharply curtailed IQ tests and many opt not to test IQ even in the setting where dyslexia is highly expected.

However, the dilemma for many dyslexic students is that it may affect perception of their intelligence and their educational planning.

IQ tests have problem solving tasks that don't require reading (questions are read to students), writing, or spelling. They also present an opportunity for students to be tested on cognitive skills that are above their age, so their above age-level strengths can be formally identified.

It is not uncommon, for instance, for students who are held behind in elementary and or middle school, to end up taking honors classes in high school. Did they need to be in globally "slow" classes in elementary or middle school? Maybe not.

INTELLIGENCE

Gifted dyslexic students can also be stuck in limbo - not struggling enough to get help that they need, but also not performing well enough to be admitted to a gifted program at their thinking level.

HOW TO GET TESTED

With all the changes going on in school, many students behind in reading and math, and a [shortage](#) of school psychologists (some states have only 1 school psychologist for 5000 students), it can be difficult obtaining testing in a timely fashion. Some schools require students to be severely underperforming in school in order to be tested.

Many schools keep a list of professionals who test students nearby. The cost can be expensive. You can see if some of the school's pandemic funds could be used to test your student. If your student has been failing, held back, or developing secondary problems like anxiety or behavioral problems, or a teacher says that they do not know how to best teach your student, then these difficulties may help you in your request for an IEE. An IEE is an [Independent Educational Evaluation](#) that the school pays for because a parent disagrees with the findings of a school. It is not suing a school, it's seeking an outside evaluation - often because there is a fundamental disagreement - such as an LD not being recognized or remediated.

Gifted dyslexic students are especially susceptible to being misdiagnosed without comprehensive testing because their strengths and their weaknesses are overlooked. Abilities may be overlooked if they are never tested with above-level subtests, and weaknesses may be overlooked if skills like oral reading, nonsense word reading, and spelling in handwritten essays is not part of assessment processes.

Twice-exceptional (high ability + LD) students are at risk of social-emotional and or secondary behavior difficulties if they are forced to learn in poorly fitting classrooms that fail to recognize their strengths as well as their educational needs. This is not a "free and appropriate education" that Section 504 and the IDEA say should occur. If you have a student who doesn't seem to 'fit' at school, look for more information and be prepared to advocate for them.

CO-FOUNDER BRETT KOPF'S JOURNEY TO SUCCESS WITH REMIND AND OMELLA

"...Can I just start off by making a blanket statement that I think dyslexia can be such a gift?" - Brett Kopf



Brett Kopf is co-founder of Remind and Omella, two companies that grew out of his interest in solving problems that mission-driven organizations and schools face.

Brett's path from struggling in school and spending almost every day in the principal's office, to difficulty deciding on a career path in college (agriculture?) seem disconnected to his remarkable success as a business co-founder, but there were signs of his talents even as a child.

Brett remember enjoying talking to his principal, and in his job today he likes talking to customers and figuring out what they need and then brainstorming about how what he could create could solve their problems.

A lot of people don't like customer service because they might hear a lot of complaints and that can be exhausting - but if you are a problem solver, listening to customers all day long can also give you a lot of ideas about what your next product or business could be.

Brett describes Remind as a company that would result if Venmo, GoFundme, Google Forms, and DocuSign had a baby. Schools, parents, students, administrators, and now tutors need to be able to communicate securely and exchange money - and Remind was designed for that - and in a uncomplicated user interface. Maybe the secret behind its successful design is that it was designed by a dyslexic!

INSPIRATION

While the idea for Remind sounds pretty simple, its design is so user-friendly and helpful, it spread by word of mouth and today, remarkably, 80% of teachers use it.

Brock recently introduced me to [Omella](#). It could save non-profits -- like Dyslexic Advantage, schools, religious institutions, and small business -- thousands of dollars each year. The principle is that for something like a donation, 3% credit card fees are waived and donors are given the option of providing Omella with a tip over their donation amount if they choose to. It has the potential to be win-win because charities get more of their donation and donors don't get charged extra unless they opt to give a tip to Omella for providing the service.

It's a creative idea for a company - and it's easy to set up. It doesn't have all the bells and whistles that more established platforms have, but if your needs are simple, it just might be a good fit.

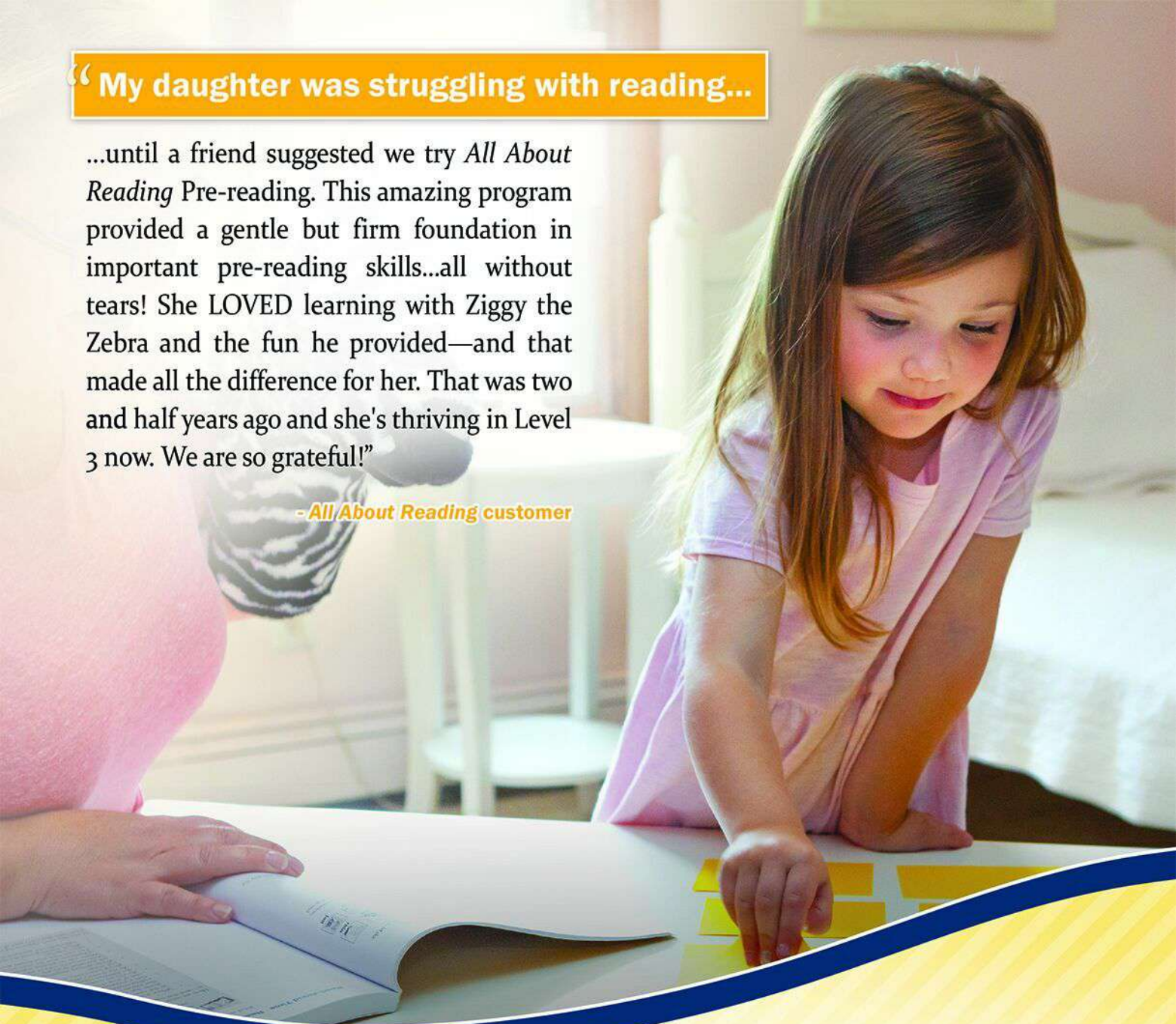
Watch Brett's interview with us below!



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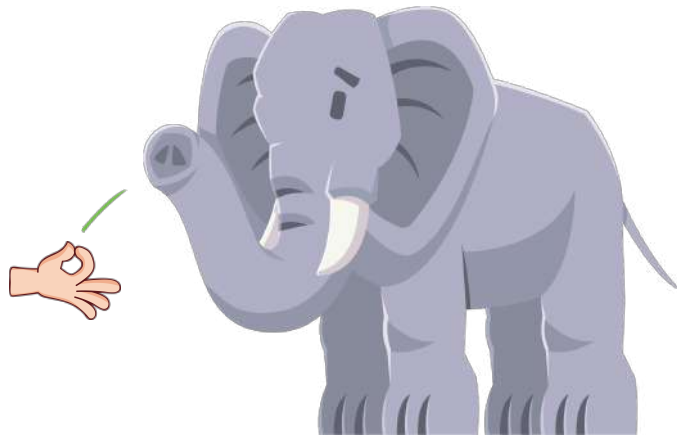
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READING BEYOND LEVEL

Don't restrict students to decodable readers. It's a little like trying to feed an elephant one blade of grass at a time.



Reading decodable books has an important place in structured literacy programs for dyslexic students, but recently some in the reading community have been calling for "phonics-only" or "phonics-first" and this is not a good idea.

Recently Emeritus Literacy Professor Timothy Shanahan from the University of Illinois at Chicago has also called these policies as overreach. From his recent [blog post](#):

"The National Reading Panel report (2000) is oft cited as the major support for phonics instruction. We found (I was a member of the panel) that explicit, systematic phonics instruction helped students to become better readers – based on a meta-analysis of 38 studies. But most of those studies provided the phonics instruction embedded in or accompanied by a more comprehensive reading program (the same was true of all the other components of reading that NRP examined). If you have any doubts, Linnea Ehri, the scientist who led the alphabetic part of the effort, has focused her research not only on how kids learn to recognize words (ever hear of "orthographic mapping"?), but also on more comprehensive approaches to decoding like Reading Rescue.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development found that once instruction had successfully raised kids to average levels of decoding ability – levels that should have resulted in successful reading – more than half the students still struggled. Decoding was essential, but insufficient for success.



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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.

READING

That's why Reid Lyon, Jack Fletcher, Barbara Foorman, Joe Torgesen, and so many others endorsed more comprehensive approaches to meeting children's reading needs (Fletcher & Lyon, 1998). They were quite explicit that the teaching of these components takes places simultaneously, not consecutively or sequentially. It would be cruel to put all the emphasis on one part of the process, while allowing kids to languish with the other parts (sort of like providing calcium by taking away the protein)."

Which brings us back to the elephant and the blade of grass.

I first heard of that saying when it came to gifted children.

Betty Meckstroth (co-author of [Guiding the Gifted Child](#)), was talking about how gifted children can make connections about ideas and information that others might not know even exist. The situation fits so well with dyslexic individuals as well.

Betty: "Teaching those types of voracious minds in a regular classroom without enhancement is like feeding an elephant one blade of grass at time. You'll starve them."

Dyslexic students are often very curious and hungry for information - and yet they can't easily access the information they seek by reading. They may be trapped in classrooms below their intellectual level because of their reading and writing issues- but then get further stymied by well-meaning teachers and librarians who redirect them from above-reading level texts.

DECODABLE TEXTS AND ABOVE-LEVEL TEXTS

The truth is there are places for both decodable and above-level texts for dyslexic students. Decodable texts are motivating for students and they reinforce lessons. Students realize what they are accomplishing as they move through stepwise curricula.

It's the above-level texts though that attracts many to become lifelong readers. Students often have to be past a certain level before they can really enjoy it - but don't underestimate the will of some students to get through texts that they really and truly want to read.

Although a rarity among the students we saw in our clinic, we would occasionally see students who were trained to read almost exclusively with decodable books. These students were able to decode at the single word level, but struggled reading with any kind of fluency. They read slowly, one word at a time.

As we looked into the sources of why long words were so difficult, we found mixtures of difficulties - insufficient practice with decoding long words, lack of a personalized approach to orthographic mapping, or the visualization of letters and letter patterns to spell words. In orthographic mapping, students learn patterns that may occur commonly in words (for instance -igh, -ough, or -alk), but don't have a 1:1 correspondence of letters to sounds.

In some cases, it was that students didn't yet progress far enough in their structured literacy curriculum, or the curricula that were chosen had insufficient practice for them to learn.

Students who can get hooked on books above their reading level, may learn to recognize words by regularly checking words with an app-dictionary, listening to book audio while reading along, or even googling words that they cannot decode on their own. There are positive skills that can develop from such practice that would not take place if simple decodable readers were all they were permitted to read. Like a healthy diet, having different types of reading is a good idea for young readers

orthographic mapping of less common spellings

"s -- e -- d"

s a i d

"c -- aw -- f"

c o u g h

"g -- r -- ay -- t"

g r e a t

Reference: [Doyoureadme.ca](https://doyoureadme.ca) from an article on Orthographic Mapping

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Michelle Lucas, M.Ed., AT



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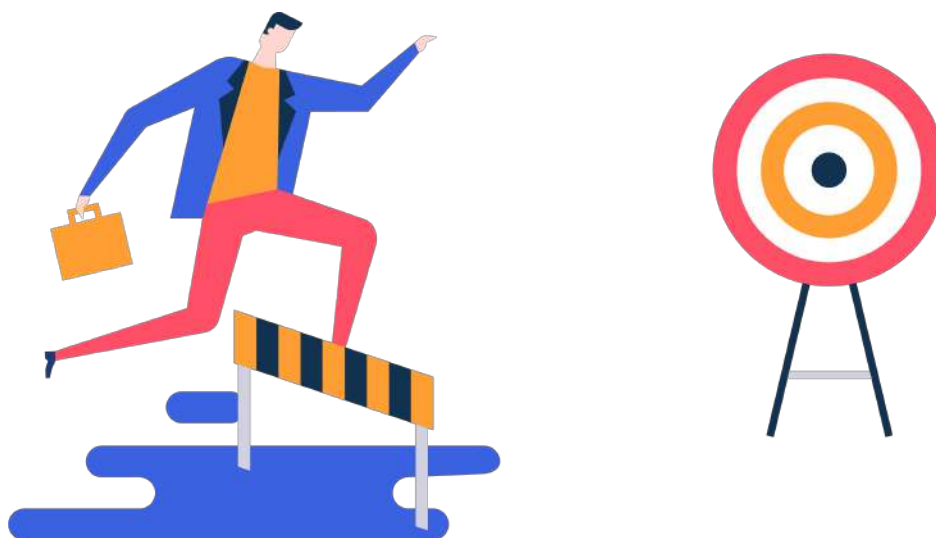
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NOT OVER HURDLES BUT AROUND THEM



If you have moderate to severe dyslexia, chances are that you've encountered many obstacles on path to higher education and career. The farther one gets in education, the more one can recognize that much of education deals with writing about things rather than doing them.

If you can find a program that is more hands-on and real world problem solving, you may have hit the jackpot; if not, you may have heard the lecture that some thing that you want to do is impossible or out-of-reach, but it may not be. You may need to find your way around a hurdle and not over it - like others of your peer group.

Spiky profile dyslexics may find themselves getting A's in physics, science, and even mathematics, but F's in English and French. The crazy thing is there may be tremendous demand for what you do well, but you may find it impossible to take the most straightforward route to what you dream of doing.

If we've learned anything from listening to so many people's stories over the years, it's that you should look for other ways that give you the opportunity to show other people what you can do.

Last month, Brock and I were talking to a tech executive named Charles. He grew up in the UK and wanted to become a pilot. In the UK, all students need to take standardized tests that qualify for them for higher education. Despite the fact he had science and math courses where he excelled, his low scores in English resulted in his school telling him that he would not graduate or be allowed to train to become a pilot.

Initially discouraged, he contacted a pilot he knew in the neighborhood (he lived near an airport). The pilot knew him because he had built a computer for him from a kit. He said he would see what he could do to go help him go around the block. In the meantime, he also visited a small flight school and asked if he could learn to fly. To his delight both things came through - the flight school accepted him and a flight engineer accepted him as a job shadow for several weeks.

Once in the little flight school, Charles was disheartened when he was given a stack of books and manuals to read. Were these digitized he asked? "No," came the answer. It was impossible for him to do all that reading so he figured out how to digitize all the articles and then could listen to the information using technology. The flight school director was so impressed, they suggested he write an article about the process for Pilots magazine. Charles said he could not write it because of his dyslexia, so his director found someone else to co-write the article with him - and soon he had an article in Pilots magazine.

After Charles showed the published article to his teacher, she told him now he would have to be allowed to graduate - so that is how he got his high school degree.

Charles currently has had a remarkable succession of executive positions in addition to several patents with broad applications; nevertheless, he faced many challenges that likely were related to his dyslexia. Promotions based on paper qualifications disadvantaged him despite strong work performance.

Also Charles could not count on HR or other executives understanding dyslexia or the innovative solutions that innovative employees can bring their companies.

Clearly much work needs to be done training and educating corporations; they will great difficulty recruiting and retaining the "best and the brightest."

LET'S TALK DYSLEXIA AWARENESS



October is just around the corner, and with it comes dyslexia awareness month. For our third year running, Scanning Pens is sponsoring **Go Red for Dyslexia Awareness**.

REDUCE DYSLEXIA STIGMA

Go Red is a global community of passionate individuals, companies, schools and organizations looking to eliminate dyslexia stigma and promote quality literacy support.

Will you join this united campaign against dyslexia?

▶ Find out if your state was involved last year.

Why Red ?

The dreaded red, a color we've all seen throughout our education. The red marker used to highlight our mistakes is all too familiar for those with dyslexia around the world. **#GoRedForDyslexia** is reclaiming the color red and taking back its meaning to globally promote dyslexia awareness.

Inspired by so many amazing parent-led organizations working in the USA, Canada, UK, India, Australia and more, we're excited to keep this important awareness initiative moving around the globe.

Creative Ways to Get Involved



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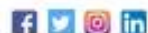
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THE CHALLENGE OF LARGE COMPANIES

In many respects, working in large companies can be challenging for many dyslexics - especially before they have risen to a level where they have the authority to work in the ways that are best for them, hire their own teams, and pursue their own projects.

A good supervisor is worth their weight in gold. They may understand the particular talents of their colleague, protect them from unnecessary distractions or challenges, and give them the resources to succeed.

Unfortunately, the reverse is also true - poorly fitting supervisors can misinterpret and obstruct creative and efficient execution of your job, leaving you with little choice other than to endure it or to quit.

GOING AROUND ROADBLOCKS

So often people with spiky profiles, or wide gaps between strengths and weaknesses, must use ingenuity and resilience to eventually achieve what they want for their careers.

SKIP THE HIRING CATTLE CALL

Conventional hiring practices disfavor many dyslexic candidates especially if artificial intelligence sorts for GPAs and advanced degrees. Many entry level positions place greater emphasis on speeded clerical tasks over problem solving so strengths are overlooked while weaknesses are magnified.

Many dyslexic applicants may also be reluctant to disclose before their strengths are identified, so they compete on clerical tasks without accommodations or standard word processing technology that could significantly narrow any gaps.



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DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS YOUR WAY AND MAKE YOUR EXPERTISE KNOWN

Many successful people have made a science of learning about how they learn best in order to achieve their goals. Like Charles finding a small flight school, and then personal contact who would allow him to work all summer with a British Airways flight engineer. Find what you want to do and who you want to learn it from and then do it. There are many foolish hurdles and ignorant people who may stand in your way, but usually if you work hard and have good people skills, you will find an opening.

Jack Horner, the famous dinosaur hunter, couldn't find a conventional job as a junior professor because he hadn't been able to complete his college degree; however, he learned all he could as an amateur, audited lots of classes (even if he did not pass them), then finally got his first job in academia as a paleontology technician at Princeton. He applied to many many positions and only got accepted for interviews at two.

Erin Egan, now a leader in corporate negotiations, found herself suddenly being promoted to working with top executives at Airbus when she pointed out nonverbal cues during international negotiations that helped her team recognize how different points were being received and who was getting in the way of successful agreements.

Dyslexic strengths tend to shine in the real world with complex problems. Some people got their break into dream jobs by cold calling executives or seeking out people who would recognize their good ideas at trade shows and conventions.

EMBRACE THE DIFFERENT WAY

Once you really understand your strengths and how your mind works, you may feel more at ease breaking away from groupthink and letting others know how you see things differently and spot what others miss.



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It may be that you also have big picture strengths and so only people higher up in a company's hierarchy may recognize some of your strengths.

Take the initiative, come up with new ideas, and solve significant company problems and people will notice. And if they don't and you don't feel valued by your company, then there will be others who will and better places to work.

CREATE YOUR NICHE

Some people find their niche in the executive suite of large companies, while others launch out on their own as consultants to different companies.

Still others might recognize gaps in their business ecosystem and use that to leave their company and start their own.

There is tremendous need for people to understand more about dyslexia - whether it's a hiring manager, HR, line manager, or CEO. If a company does not understand how to leverage the strengths of its employees, then the only solution may be to leave for a better position.



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DYSLEXIA NEWS



Dyslexia Innovation Conference - Online and Free!
Brock and Fernette Eide and WNBA's Jewell Loyd

Montana State University Oct 27-28 - Sign Up!



The Dyslexic Artist - Tricia Findlay

UnisonColour.



Dyslexic Dictionary
Art Show San Francisco
DyslexicDictionary.com



Student Who Can't Read or Write Passes Exams with Flying Colours

Wales Online



Neurodiversity in the Lab

The Physiologist



Army Prep Course for Military Service

(article includes a dyslexic student who needs to boost his ASVAB score)

American Military News



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"Summit Center helped me find out I am both dyslexic -- and smart. I just think differently. Now I like school, and I have the tools I need to succeed."

MARCIA CIORRA GIFTS US WITH NEW DYSLEXIA MIND STRENGTHS POSTERS!

Huge thank you to graphic designer Marcia Ciorra who helped design two new Dyslexic MIND strengths posters available for purchase in our store. We love them! (see the back cover of this issue for her poster #2).

Marcia offered this amazing work because reading our book, *The Dyslexic Advantage* years ago "gave me the hope that my son (and then daughter) would be alright after all the challenges they had. Early learning was extremely unpredictable, difficult, and exhausting. I felt helpless and hopeless at times but your book gave me knowledge and talking points that I used to rebuild some of the self esteem the kids had lost in the early years of elementary school.

Now my son is doing really really well in college. He's so smart....My daughter is a freshman in high school, starting to recognize she's actually smart..."

When I asked Marcia about a career in graphic design for members of our community, she answered:

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PREMIUM ISSUE EIGHTY-TWO OCTOBER 2022

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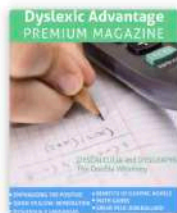
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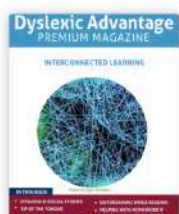
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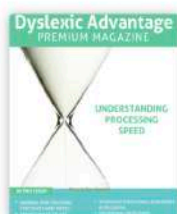
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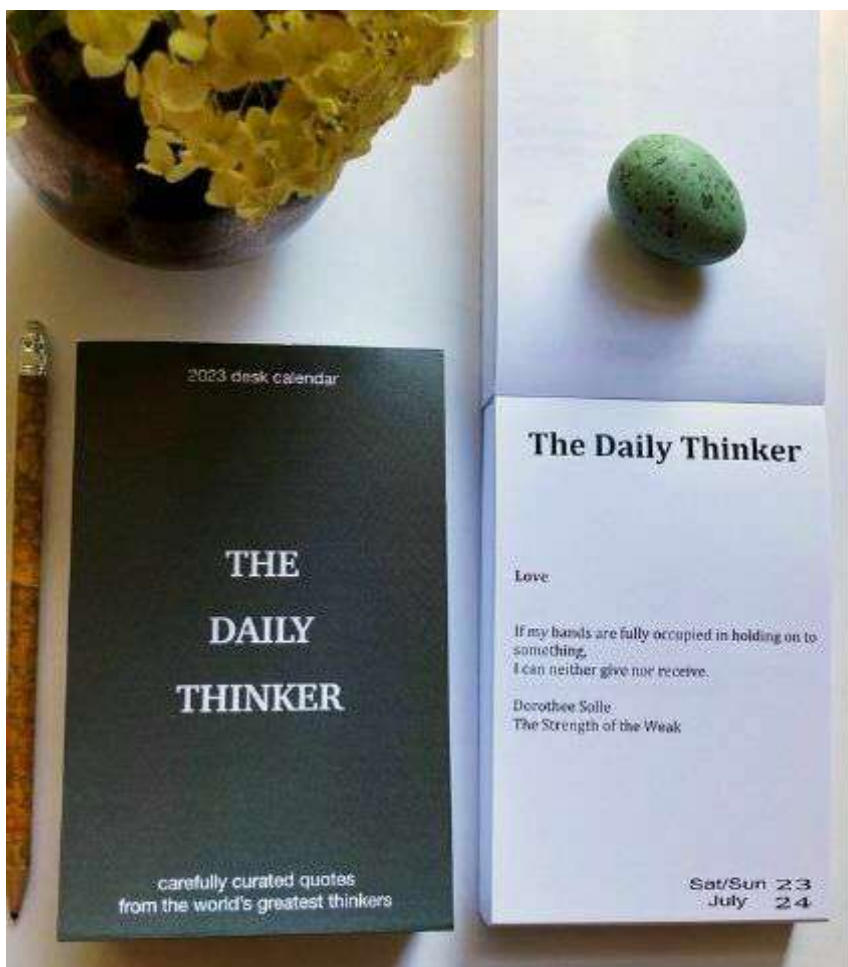
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"...My personal observation is, that the more challenging a person's dyslexia might be, the more developed their strengths."

- Marcia Ciorra, graphic designer