



ldak • Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston

The right to learn, the power to achieve

116-993 Princess St. Kingston ON K7L 1H3 (Phone) 613-546-8524

Website: www.ldakingston.com E-mail: ldak@ldakingston.com

Winter 2014 Newsletter

An Educator's Guide to Promoting Student's Mental Health and Well-being

As part of the provincial Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, the Ministry of Education has developed a K-12 resource guide to provide educators with information in the early signs of mental health and addiction problems, along with strategies that can be used in the classroom to support students. The draft guide is available on the website, www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/health.html, along with an e-mail address for feedback. LDAO is very pleased that the draft document is now available, and will be preparing a response with suggestions for changes and additions.

LDAO Communique

LDAK Now Accepts Donations Online

LDA Kingston has chosen **CanadaHelps** to process our online donations. **CanadaHelps** is fast, secure and an economical way for the LDAK to fundraise online:



Just visit www.ldakingston.com and click the “**Donate Now**” button on the home page. Follow the instructions on the webpage designated for LDAK. Tax receipts are sent immediately following the payment of your donation to the email you entered.

ALERT: LDA Kingston has moved to a NEW UNIT #

If you want to visit or mail us, we have moved to a different office space, within the same building. You will now find us just off the main front lobby. Our new unit number is shown below.

993 Princess St. Suite 116 Kingston ON K7L 1H3

PLEASE POST UNTIL March 2014

GROUPS AND MEETINGS

KINGSTON'S ADHD PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Our group supports parents who have children with ADHD in the Kingston and surrounding area.
We are a not-for-profit parent to parent support group.

OUR MISSION: *"To better the lives of children and Families living with ADHD"*

- . **Yearly** Parent workshop (Oct 5th, 2013 8:30—1pm) Location: 255 Kingscourt Ave.
- . **Monthly** Support Meetings (Nov-June)
- . **Yearly** ADHD Awareness Campaign (June)

Contact Information: adhpsgkingstonon@gmail.com **Phone:** 613-389-3894

Or visit our website for additional information on meeting & upcoming events: www.adhdsupportgroup.ca

****Please note the location of the support group is now at 255 Kingscourt Avenue.****

The Reading Clinic

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL, RESHAPING FUTURES SINCE 2001

www.thereadingclinic.ca

Specialists in Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities

Yes! Reading, Writing and Math

New! After School Yes! Reading, Math, Writing Programs!

2 locations: 559 Bagot St 1287 Woodbine Rd

Contact: Jan MacLean 613 547-5179

jan@thereadingclinic.ca

Quintilian Social Club

An opportunity to meet new friends and practice social skills in authentic social situations.

Grades 3+



Contact Laura DeSousa, Director of Programming 613-542-0400 www.quintilianschool.org

The Reading Room Intervention, Remediation, Treatment

The Reading Room offers students with language based learning disabilities the opportunity to learn using research based, multi-sensory programs.

Before, during and after school sessions are offered throughout the school year.

Call 613-328-0223 or email: info@the-reading-room.ca

I Just Don't Learn The Way You Learn

A Profile of Author/Artist Tory Woollcott

Tory Woollcott is one-of-a-kind, the “goofy” kind, but still one-of-a-kind! She’s an award winning writer, artist, comic and one ferocious supporter of dyslexia awareness. Tory is also a proud Canadian who graduated from the University of Toronto with an Honours BA in Archeology and Near Eastern Studies.

She’s also studied graphic design at George Brown and is now working full time as an adaptive technology trainer with LEARNstyle. Tory has become a campaigner for dyslexia awareness; has appeared on CBC Radio’s Metro Morning, Ontario Morning and Canada AM, and been featured in many articles. She is spreading the word on dyslexia by speaking at events including: Word on the Street and Right to Read, as well as the University of Toronto and at a variety of public schools around the city.

Her highly successful graphic comic book *Mirror Mind: Growing up Dyslexic* tied for first prize on the General Category of the SPACE Awards. It’s her story on the challenges she faced growing up in Toronto with dyslexia. Tory did and does things on her own terms and her book frankly illustrates how she was misunderstood by some of her teachers and teased by her classmates. It describes how she eventually got the assessment, the help and the education that she was missing. One can’t help but laugh when you meet Tory Woollcott: not at her but with her. She exudes humour and it doesn’t just seep out of her...it leaps out and grabs your attention. There is a fine line between laughing at someone and laughing with someone and Tory seems to have been able to discover how to blur that line to her advantage.

When asked when she first started to use humour as a defence mechanism she chuckled, drummed her fingers on the desk and said, “Oh God...in the uterus!” Always always...the terrible thing is, I’m not that funny! If I were actually funny it would probably work a lot better. I’ve found that if you say something ridiculous and then just wait with a ridiculous face on long enough, someone will giggle. I wondered if they were laughing at her or with her. Grinning she said, “I don’t care so long as they are laughing and I can get out of it, I’m thrilled!”

While doing research for my interview with Tory I found some interesting You Tube videos of her that were filmed in libraries. Since we were meeting at the Toronto Reference Library; I had to ask her if she found it ironic that she seemed to be interviewed a lot in libraries? And given that she has dyslexia, was there some sort of hidden message here? She laughed, agreed that it was ironic and said, “I love libraries so much, especially the reference library. It’s like nothing else.”

“When I was young and I would go to libraries and try to find a book and I would say that I’m not very good at reading, the librarians would always find ways around it. Librarians are so great, so invested and I think that they are a lot like teachers in that it is more than a job, it is a completion of something!”

She goes on to say that most people who have any sort of LD really know pretty early on that there is something a bit different about them and everybody else. For her it was probably going into kindergarten, because everybody else was getting something out of books, (It was) something that I really wasn’t understanding and I really liked the pictures but I never really felt an interest in these word things that everybody else seemed to be into,” she says. “Honestly, when I was very young, I just thought that everyone else was crazy: Why are you worrying about this when we could be looking at the pictures.”

I Just Don 't Learn The Way You Learn

In her book she writes: "I made a decision then that has followed me for the rest of my life. I would keep everything separate. Home would be different. I would not make my mom sad because of what happened to me at school or with my friends or anything. I would never tell. And I never did. This book is the first she has heard of it. I became a secret keeper I think that I will always be like this." "Was she still a secret keeper? Yea I am. Actually, when I first started noticing that there was something different about me I was mostly invested in keeping it a secret. That need-to-keep-it-a-secret was the occupation of everything, it wasn't great but I was so preoccupied with trying to cover it up that any other emotion would kind of take second fiddle to it."

We are having our chat in one of the reference library's new study cubicles. It's made of glass and sort of looks like a fish bowl. While functional, there's a lot of distractions going on outside. During our interview Tory's eyes are constantly roaming, but now they lose focus as she stares off into space. She remembers that when it was story time in school she would run and hide or do something goofy or loud in order to get ejected from the room. "Anything-to-avoid seems to be something that all of us that are bundled into this LD package do," she laughs, "Seems to be our main tactic."

Tory goes on to say that she has a self-esteem war going on and that she kind of likes her defence mechanism of being goofy and always having a joke handy or being silly. "The way I communicate, the way I speak, I know comes from the dyslexia and from the way my brain is wired. It allows me to communicate and understand things in that way, it is a bonus. I certainly think that the bonuses (of having dyslexia) outweigh the negatives."

Fire leaps from her eyes and she leans forward, pushing into my space as she declares. "I really don't like the term "disabled." I don't like it especially for 'learning disabled.' No I'm not, I can learn anything; I just don't learn the way you learn. But I think that it is an inaccurate word and I think that's what bothers me about it; I hate it!"

Spelling Disabled

Tory asserts she is not learning disabled if anything she is spelling disabled. "I don't like somebody who is not me putting me into a learning disabled box that I have not named." She prefers the term, 'learning difference' instead of learning disabled and whenever she says, 'LD' she is talking 'learning difference.'

"I'm kind of done with this LD being a negative; certainly all my life I thought of it as being a negative and thought of myself as being less than everyone else." She looks at me speaking softly. "You know that feeling keeps creeping in to me and it's that little dark monster that I don't think that I'm ever going to get rid of."

She's now working fulltime with kids, loving it and ready to turn her humour on anyone who doesn't get these kids. "But every single kid that I work with is certainly not less than anybody! I talk to these kids and they're smarter, they're faster, they're coming up with stuff. Like yeah, some of them have a delay, right. So I will say to a kid how do you spell red, and you are going to wait for a second. It doesn't come to them right away, and then they say red, R-E-D but that delay allowed all sorts of crazy stuff to happen in there."

I Just Don 't Learn The Way You Learn

She stops to catch her breath and plunges on. "I say, 'okay, spell 'red' and it takes them a minute to spell 'red' but what else did you think about? 'I thought about apples, I thought about Little Red Riding Hood, I thought about the colour red, I thought about blood, I thought about this, I thought about that!" Like there is the same amount of brain juice happening in this kid as is happening in any other kid, it's just that the way that this idea is expressed is just taking a second longer."

I asked her if there was anything special that she'd like to say to our readers. She grins and says, "I just feel that there is this negative attitude towards something that is in fact, positive. It's like, oh, dyslexia is so bad, but if it's good enough for Einstein it's good enough for me. It's fine and like ADD, okay ...have you hung out with a kid who has ADD? They are awesome, they're awesome!"

"That's the thing that I want to get off my chest!" She thumps the table, "Let them play video games, let them goof off, let them read comic books, let them do things for fun, let them be good at something, don't make them do their homework all the time. All these kids ever do is their homework and they get yelled at for not paying attention in school, let them play soccer, just let them go and goof off with their friends and just be teenagers, you know. It is so important."

I was curious about her 'secret keeper status' and how her mom reacted to the book. "My mom was very surprised and sad, sad that I haven't told her since. My mom and I have a really excellent relationship. She was sad in that she felt that she probably would have helped, but I didn't want to tell her. In that when I was home, I was home and this was a different world and when I am with my parents and I am safe and everything is fine!"

With the success of *Mirror Mind* I was curious if we could expect a sequel or was she working on something else? She replied that interesting enough her next book will be titled *Toronto to Tuscany*. It will be a sort of travel diary which evolved from a month-long journey that Tory and her boyfriend took through Italy. *Mirror Mind: The University Years*, is still in the works.

However, the second book is proving to be much trickier to write. "I've got the story mapped out but as I was writing it, it started to become more and more about my grandmother because my grandmother had become very sick and passed away recently." Her voice continues with a catch in it, "I wanted to talk about that and the story kept changing and evolving, becoming this different thing and moving away from the LD and the focus of that. I keep having this debate with myself. Do I want to continue to focus my books on being about having dyslexia or do I want to focus them on the experience of me being me?"

Having sat with Tory for over an hour-and-a-half now and listened to her story I now, like her readers, feel that I know her a little better. I felt comfortable asking her if she was going to grab a banner and charge to the front as an advocate for dyslexia. Laughing, she skirts the question by saying that she loves working at LEARNstyle and they have given her the opportunity to work with kids, and as a result, she is taking her mirrormind.ca blog more seriously.

"I do want to start blogging with more of a direction that I have been in the past because my blog was more about my art and goofing off, it was just a fun thing and I'm starting to realize that there aren't very many advocates for dyslexia who are themselves dyslexic. I'm starting to see how important that is!"

I Just Don 't Learn The Way You Learn

As to being more of an advocate she says, Yes I hope to. I view the LD community as a tribe and I just want to look out for my group. They are my “peeps” and I just want to do anything I can to help out my group! I just love LD kids; I think that they are the best and I just want to hug them and tell them that everything is going to be okay!”

Tory-Tested and OK'D Technology

Word Q software helps the user with typing and proofreading by providing features such as word prediction, highlighting and auditory feedback. It can also read back text as the user types.

Dragon speech recognition software types as the user talks and it allows the user to use their voice to create and edit documents or emails. It can also be used to launch applications, open files, manipulate the mouse..

Smart ideas is concept-mapping software used as a visual learning tool that helps the user to develop and organize written assignments, and understand complex ideas. It includes extensive clip art galleries and a multi-language template library.

There is also Kurzweil an award winning integrated literacy software that reads text aloud from digital, online and print formats. It provides reading, writing and test taking support.

AudioNote allows the user to take notes synced to audio via note-taking software. It combines the functionality of note-taking and voice recording in a downloadable app.

Or go old school by using your smart phone to take photos of things that you need to remember, to buy, where you parked your car, etc.

She also uses a cheap plastic fifteen-inch ruler to help her focus on what she is reading by placing it beneath the line that she's reading. Its function is to block out the words and sentences she doesn't need yet.

Communique by Kenneth E. Seaton

United States: Ebook Readers Make Reading Easier For People with Dyslexia

A new study performed by the Smithsonian Institute found that ebook readers like the Amazon Kindle can actually help those with dyslexia with reading comprehension. Technology!

When you think of dyslexia, what first comes to mind might be some form of inversion—reading backwards, that kind of thing. But dyslexia is actually a broad term to cover lots of different ways in which people with otherwise normal intelligence levels have trouble reading. That could include difficulty converting letters into sounds, difficulty spelling, and difficulty separating the phonological tones of one letter from another.

The benefit of ebook readers is largely in their customization. A book, due to being , you know, printed with ink on paper , is not very customizable. But an ebook reader offers the ability to change the look of the book—and this particular study wanted to see if it would be possible to change the text so much that people with dyslexia would be able to read it without getting the letters confused.

Testing the reading comprehension and speed of 103 dyslexic students in Boston, the study found that by spacing the books to a mere two or three words per line, the dyslexic readers were able to significantly increase both speed and comprehension. The idea is to reduce visual distraction; people with the disorder have a hard time with a dense page of letters, so by spacing them out, it's easier for them to concentrate on the task at hand. Communique Dan Nosowitz <http://www.popsoci.com/technology/article/2013-09/ebook-readers-make-reading-easier-dyslexics>

Reading, Writing & Math Tips

Reading, Writing & Math Tips from The Reading Clinic

Reading Tip:

Struggling readers often don't recognize recurring patterns in text, so it's important to model and to encourage good 'sounding out' strategies when reading with our children. Patterns like 'th' and 'sh' are easy, but the vowel team 'ea' can be a bit tougher, as it makes not one, but three different sounds!! If you can remember the phrase 'Eating Bread is Great', you've got all three sounds of this vowel team figured out.

Encourage your reader to always try the /ee/ sound like in 'eat' **first**, as it's by far the most common (dream, heat, breathe). The second sound of 'ea' like in 'bread' is less common, but is the next sound to try when you come to an unfamiliar word. (dealt, weather, head) The **third** sound of 'ea' like in 'great' only occurs in a few words (like break, great, steak)-so it's a very poor choice for most words..Happy Sounding Out! (*Jennifer Harrison is an Orton-Gillingham trained Reading Therapist and co-developer of the Yes! Reading Program.*)



Math Tip:

Remembering multiplication facts can be challenging. If your child has problems remembering some of the facts, try teaching them to access the facts by making use of an easier multiplication fact that they might already know. For example, the 6 times table (which is quite difficult) can be reached from the 5 times table (which is easier). Let say you want to know what is 6×4 i.e. 6 groups of 4. If you know 5×4 (20), then 6 groups of 4 will be 5×4 (20) plus one more group of 4 ($20+4=24$). In an equation it will be shown as $6 \times 4 = 5 \times 4 + 1 \times 4 = 20 + 4 = 24$. (*Jade Gunn is an Orton-Gillingham trained Reading Therapist and developer of the Yes! Math Program.*)

Writing Tip:

Students are often told not to start a sentence with the word 'because'. It is perfectly correct to start a sentence with the word 'because', as long as it introduces a dependent clause and is followed by an independent clause.

Now in case you are wondering what an "independent clause" is, well an independent clause is basically just a simple sentence with a subject and verb, that makes sense, and can stand alone (independent). What makes a clause dependent is a word like 'because' which requires it to be connected to an independent clause so it makes sense. For example:

Because my friend is coming, I must be on my best behaviour.

'I must be on my best behaviour' could easily stand alone as a simple sentence, so it is an independent clause. 'Because my best friend is coming' needs more information for it to make sense, so it is a dependent clause. Following this pattern, your child will now know how to write a complex sentence! (*Catherine Oakley is a retired teacher with a Specialist in Special Education and developer of the Yes! Writing Program.*)

L. D. A. K. EXECUTIVE

2013 - 2014

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| President | David Williams |
| Vice President | Gail Eaton-Smith |
| Treasurer | Pat Dudley |
| Secretary | Cole Greenlees |
| Members at Large | Mike Kusters |
| | Bill Cormier |
| | Charly Chiarelli |

RESOURCE CENTRE HOURS

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday

11 am—3 pm

Saturday & Sunday Closed

Resource Centre Co-ordinator
Lana Greenwood

Disclaimer

THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION does not endorse or recommend any of the facilities listed or any of the methods, programmes, products or treatments offered by such facilities.

Our aim is to keep the community informed about services and facilities that are available to people with learning disabilities.

We urge consumers and service providers to review carefully any programmes and services listed in order to select those which will meet most appropriately the identified needs of the person with learning disabilities.

Membership Application Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

CITY PROVINCE POSTAL CODE

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____

ANNUAL DUES:(Effective April 2/04)

Family/Individual - 1 Year Fee -\$50

Student (1 Year Fee Only) - \$20

Institutional (1Year Only) - \$125

Professional (Private Practices)
1 Year Fee - \$75

I would like to volunteer to help with:

- Fundraising Membership
 Publicity Newsletter
 Other

Membership Advantages:

- ⇒ subscription to Communiqué
- ⇒ affiliation with local, provincial and national levels of LDA
- ⇒ free information on learning disabilities
- ⇒ free access to Kingston's resource centre and the lending library of LDA Ontario
- ⇒ discount on LDA conferences

Your membership is important in providing a stronger voice within all levels of the Association.

Please tear off and mail this form and cheque (made out to **LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF KINGSTON**) to Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston
116-993 Princess St. Kingston On K7L 1H3

THANK YOU