

DYSLEXIA AND ME: Dyslexia – the positives

Are there any positives to dyslexia? Of course! I'm a big picture thinker: I see connections, routes, and methods that others don't. I can often summarise complex tasks in a simple picture. This thinking style is in demand: Ernst & Young, Government Communications Headquarters, NASA and MIT actively recruit candidates with dyslexia (approximately 50% of people at NASA are dyslexic).

What positives are there?

Dyslexics have a strong sense of empathy and compassion. They have often been through a great deal of pain during their school days and so when they train or mentor someone else, they seem to be able to find different ways of showcasing concepts - this might explain why they make good nurses, teachers and academics.

1. Dyslexics are highly intuitive and insightful.
2. They think and perceive multi-dimensionally (using all the senses).
3. They have vivid imaginations
4. They can utilize the brain's ability to alter and create perceptions

Pattern recognition and spatial awareness are additional strengths - we think in pictures, shapes and movement. We see patterns, links and logic where others can't, hence why we make good engineers, architects and artists. It's thought that approximately 20-30% of engineers are dyslexic!

"I talk with parents of dyslexic children. I see the crease of worry -- of fear. I tell them, your child is blessed with an edge that other children don't have. Maybe it's Faraday's holistic vision. Maybe it's verbal retention. But it's there, and it's something the rest of us don't have." - John H. Lienhard, author and voice of The Engines of Our Ingenuity

When we pay more attention to those advantages and nurture them, we can use them not only to alleviate the disadvantages but boost people's self-confidence too.

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In this blog series Mamta explores dyslexia and how it's affected her life and career.