



Can Dyslexia Be Cured?

By Prof. John Stein



Dyslexia Research Trust

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It makes no sense to talk of 'cure' when dyslexia is not a disease. Dyslexics simply have different brains that find reading difficult, just as some of us find piano playing difficult. However our society places such great emphasis on reading and spelling that dyslexia can undoubtedly present problems – most of which stem from others' lack of recognition and understanding.

However, many dyslexics have exceptional 'holistic' visuo-spatial skills and they value the gifts, which their dyslexia has given them, and so do some employers who understand the talents that dyslexia can confer. There are many opportunities for dyslexics, particularly since the development of computer and film technologies has created a huge demand for programming, artistic and graphic design skills. One well-known architect's practice prefers to employ dyslexic people because of their unusual spatial awareness and lateral thinking abilities.

Simple treatments, such as yellow or blue filters, which can help any visual problems, can often help dyslexics improve their reading. In addition, auditory training, or targeting the underlying biological causes of dyslexia, for example by improved nutrition, particularly with omega 3 fish oils, may also improve things. Specialist remedial reading programs can also help. But be very wary of the many groups purporting to offer treatments, or even 'cures', for dyslexia for a large, up front, fee. These may or may not help (and there is little recourse if they do not). These programs are frequently based on little or no scientific research, or involve treatments (such as nutritional supplements, coloured overlays, exercises or intensive reading programs), which you can do yourself much more cheaply.

Although awareness of dyslexia is much higher than it was, it can still go unrecognised, with the result that the child can be stigmatised and accused of stupidity and laziness. This of course destroys a child's self-confidence and leads to depression and misery, whereas knowing he's dyslexic is often a huge relief because he now understands why he's been having such difficulties, and is more confident that he can be helped.

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