

Dyslexia WA Newsletter

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dyslexiawa.com.au

Volume 1 Number 2

October 2012

Newsletter of Dyslexia Correction Service trading as Dyslexia WA; Contact (618) 9591 3482; 0439 698 587; 0479 121 163. email: dyslexiacorrectionwa@gmail.com Annette Johnston: Licensed Davis Facilitator

Many stories worth telling

No stories are more heartening, more satisfying than those which tell of long periods of frustration, followed by revelation, then victory!

There are hundreds out there and we hope to bring just some to you through our newsletter.

Our modest publication this time contains just 2 examples: **Steven Spielberg's**

recently revealed struggle with dyslexia; and, **James Treacy** who is our front page feature and with whom facilitator Annette had the privilege to work back in 2008 and 2009.

Thank you James, for your contribution.

Do you have a story to tell? I suspect everyone does.

There are many 'celebs' out there who may find their way onto these pages but I find the home grown heroes, like James, even better to hear about.

Let's hear from you.



How does it feel to get to 21... and then learn to read?



From **James Treacy**

It's a strange thing to go through the first part of your life without reading.

You're diagnosed with this, tested for that, asked to try doing this, given special programs to help, but does it really?

I went all the way through high school and then did my TEE (now TER) and without flying colours.

Probably beige would be the best comparison.

I often tell people that I learnt to read at 21, and you see the jaw drop.

It wasn't that I couldn't read at all... I learnt.

The beautiful dyslexic part of me found ways around things and crafted methods so I could convince everyone that I could.

Realistically it was just that I had a sharp

mind. I could grasp concepts so much quicker than my class mates.

They would have to read the text to get it. I simply just understood once it was talked about in class.

I understood and I could write well enough to get 60% and keep teacher and parents happy.

There was one thing that used to mortify me though.

One thing that when it happened in school I would shake and hide, disappear into the desk.

The chameleon in me would come out and blend into my natural surroundings of off-white walls and brightly coloured plastic chairs.

"Ok we are going to take it in turns reading passages from this text."

I would stutter and splutter and get more and more nervous, the words would just about disappear from the page.

I wouldn't even mention "if", "at", "the" and all the other words that joined the passage, for I never read them to myself.

I just read the adjectives and verbs and nouns and made my own meaning.

This could be understandable for someone in primary school.

What about when you're in Year 12 doing English? Not so good.

I would read one sentence, maybe two if the teacher just thought I was off to a bad start.

Then I would hide.

After finishing school I went to university. People always said I was smart and I knew smart people go to university.

That was when the penny dropped. I flunked out unromantically.

It turns out when the curriculum said you should do 3 hours of reading you actually had to, and for me 3 hours of reading was more like 8.

So I've got 4 subjects that need 8 hours of reading each plus 2 hours of class time plus I work 20 hours a week and occasionally I want to see friends.

So some simple mathematics: $(8 \times 4) + (2 \times 4) + 20 = 60$ hours per week at my rate. Then exams come and I just

"One thing used to mortify me."

Steven Spielberg on unlocking 'tremendous mystery' of his dyslexia

By Rebecca Keegan

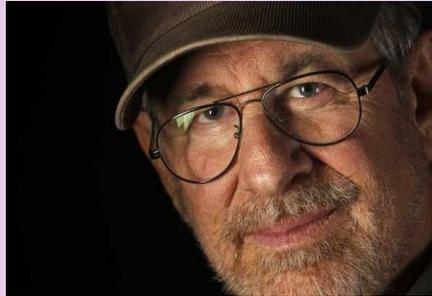
(Los Angeles Times) September 25, 2012

Movies helped Steven Spielberg cope with his dyslexia, the director of "Jaws" and "Schindler's List" said in a rare interview about being diagnosed with the learning disability five years ago.

"It was like the last puzzle part in a tremendous mystery that I've kept to myself all these years," Spielberg, 65, told the website "Friends of Quinn."

As a child, Spielberg said he learned to read two years later than his classmates, which made him subject to teasing and caused him to dread school.

That bullying made its way into Spielberg's work as a filmmaker -- the story for the 1985 movie, "The Goonies," which Spielberg executive produced, was inspired by Spielberg's own



Director Steven Spielberg (Brian van der Brug / Los Angeles Times)

friendships with a fellow group of outcasts, he said.

"I was a member of the goon squad," Spielberg said.

Spielberg also discussed going back to college in his 50s to complete the bachelor's degree he abandoned in 1968 to pursue filmmaking, and

confessed that he takes more than twice as long as most of his peers in Hollywood to read books and scripts.

Spielberg gave the interview to Quinn Bradlee, author of the memoir "A Different Life: Growing Up Learning Disabled and Other Adventures" and proprietor of the online community for people with learning disabilities, "Friends of Quinn."

"I never felt like a victim," Spielberg said. "Movies really helped me... kind of saved me from shame, from guilt... Making movies was my great escape."

Spielberg's next film the historical drama "Lincoln," arrives in theaters Nov. 9.

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/moviesnow>

couldn't do it.

So what changed?

Life went on. I got a job, got bored, went back to uni, failed again, got another job, got bored, got another job, got bored.

I would get bored whenever I worked; whether it was career based or just another job.

I would learn all there is to learn in the first month or two and then get complacent.

My dyslexic brain comes to a new workplace, eats everything up at once and spits out a bigger picture of how the whole establishment works within a month.

I would continue to work for a while feeling good about being part of a team until slowly but surely I begin thinking *I'm not stimulated*. My brain tells me "I got it. lets move on."

I continued doing this for some time.

By the time I was twenty one I would have worked more jobs and been good at them than most people will think about in a life time.

I came from good stock.

If you were to compare this story to horse, dog, sheep cattle or any form of genetic analysis you would say the spawn of the breeders known as my parents should be a good animal.

My family are high achievers. I was expected to too.

My mother was working in a specialised field of Education when she came across Annette Johnston and the Davis theory.

So, as life goes, I met Annette.

In a small building on Great Eastern Highway surrounded by trees and busy traffic, in an upstairs room...
I learnt to read.



"My dyslexic brain... eats everything up... and spits out a bigger picture..."

Working holidays

A number of Davis Program 'Graduates' took the opportunity of a 2 hour 'refresher' in the October school holidays.

Although they have all made good progress since completing the program some enjoy the chance to catch up and just chat about school, studies or just remind themselves of their tools and how best to use them.

"The students enjoyed the opportunity to ask questions and make sure they are on the right track," Annette said.

"We'll do it again next year, and I'm thinking of having a 'Clay Club' in July where all graduates can come together to meet and have a couple of hours together with some fun activities.

"I hope some of the adult graduates can make it too, they are such great role models for the younger ones."

News, letters, questions, comments, ideas...?
Send to dyslexiacorrectionwa@gmail.com