

# **Dyslexia: Its Impact on My Creative Process**

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Albert Einstein the physicist, Stephen Cannell the producer and writer, and Charles Schwab the financial investor more than likely all have one unique gift in common. They have a uniqueness that is common among those who have dyslexia. I believe that they are able to vividly visualize what others cannot. What is creativity? Are makes ones creativity more powerful than another? What abilities does someone with dyslexia bring to creativity?

Having lived with dyslexia my entire life, it is my opinion that there are two distinctively positive characteristics for those who have dyslexia that leads the way to a heightened creativity. The first is the ability to brilliantly visualize. My brain constantly fires visual images. Unlike the norm, most individuals I know picture words in their mind. For me, a word is only understood when a visual picture is associated with it for understanding and meaning.

The second most distinctive characteristic of dyslexia is curiosity. The Carroll School, a school specializing in dyslexia for children located in Lincoln, Massachusetts captures and cultivates this dyslexic characteristic so well. Curiosity drives dyslexics with unrelenting zeal to discover an answer and find truth and understanding. When understanding is reached, a higher level of creativity is unleashed.

Those who have dyslexia cannot understand the full meaning of a word simply by reading or being read its definition. This leads the way to curiosity for meaning and an innate use of multisensory exploration to allow the meaning of a word to be understood. Those with dyslexia learn best through experiential, hands-on teaching and experimentation: being able to touch, hear, see, and use their body provides the path to meaningful information and understanding of words.

My thoughts and the pictures in my thoughts are three-dimensional and include rich colors and detail. Proven through the use of MRI technology, the dyslexic right brain is larger in size and has more capacity than a non-dyslexic right brain. The right brain is responsible for creativity and imagination. A right brain with increased ability provides for a highly unique creative process. Specifically, this ability to visualize in a three-dimensional abstract and thinking without boundaries and preconceived ideas, adds to a very powerful creativity. As so powerfully paraphrased by Editor Marianne McCarthy, "there was a time when everyone who existed believed that the world was flat...no questions, no worries. It was flat. Then....it was discovered that the truth was quite different, that the planet was round or pear shaped and actually quite dimensional. The visual process of dyslexia is something like this. Non-dyslexics think in words---similar to the world being flat. The person with dyslexia thinks in dimensional, visual ways that expand the possibilities."

Submitted Confidentially to Neil Alexander-Passe

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Being highly creative and producing solutions is the result of my search for word meaning and an ability to visualize. It is no wonder that many with dyslexia are drawn to the arts. As a child, I loved to draw, act, and create. In third grade I won a writing contest for the best scary short story at Halloween. In high school drama, my colorfully unique costume designs were easily imagined and produced. Finding creative solutions come easy for me. With my eyes open and focused toward a solution; I can visualize the whole solution with its fine details distinctively imagined using my mind's eye. Its details are distinctly imagined in my mind, with the pieces being shifted and manipulated for an optimal outcome. Dyslexia's innate visualization is a significant aspect and is anything but ordinary. It is the core of what makes this unique creative process happen. It is an ability that cannot be felt nor understood unless you experience it. To expound upon it and describe it is a challenge in itself.

Having dyslexia is a gift: a gift that affects all aspects of my life and the lives of those around me. My unique creativity has allowed me to envision solutions through out my life and professional career. The process is intertwined with enthusiasm and passion that comes from my curiosity, which results in the abundant energy needed to complete the final visualization. The passion exists as an excitement of ascertaining the desired solution. With it, there is also an instinct that rides beside my mind's eye. My mind provides constant feedback on all creative possibilities, which contributes to reaching the optimal creative solution. Can you picture the drafting board and pencil that never rests? This is my creative process: it happens quickly - before my mind moves on to the next idea or task.

An important ingredient in my creative process is the use of perspective. One's perspective or viewpoint provides your window of the world. The ability to not only see the whole but the details enhances one's perspective. These details provide exclusivity to my creative process. My perspective allows my mind to see what others cannot see - and to visually think. The thoughts that transpire from this unique perspective are endless and untiring, providing a constant energy source to fulfill a creative outcome.

As my mind works to solve a problem and design a solution, the mind's eye perspective places me at the center of the energy. An understanding of a word or greater problem through visualization will begin the creative process. The desired solution begins to transform with visual pictures of possible pieces intertwining to make to the whole solution. The swirling energy and floating pictures begin to create the whole solution.

Actual exposure and hands-on experience enhances my ability to visualize solutions. It is very important to learning and gaining understanding for those with dyslexia. The more experience that is gained, the better one is at creating solutions.

My professional career has spanned business systems, human resources, and marketing. The uniqueness of my creativity has helped me to be successful in all aspects of my career, and bring an imagination that were admired and sought. I thrived in environments that not only encouraged thinking outside the box, but allowed implementation of ideas

and solutions. I believe that my gift of dyslexia was valued by my employers even though they were not aware of where I got my gifts.

Using the diagram below, the elements of my creative process are summarized as follows:

**Curiosity**

Curiosity begins the creative solution that knows no boundaries and goes where ever it desires.

**Visualization**

Visualization is the mechanism for seeing what others cannot see.

**Perspective**

Perspective forms the pictures that are visualized in a three dimensional mind.

**Imagination and Mysticism**

Imagination and mysticism is done in the mind's eye where I visualize a solution.

Mysticism works with imagination and provides an intuitiveness that opens my mind to all possibilities.

**Connection**

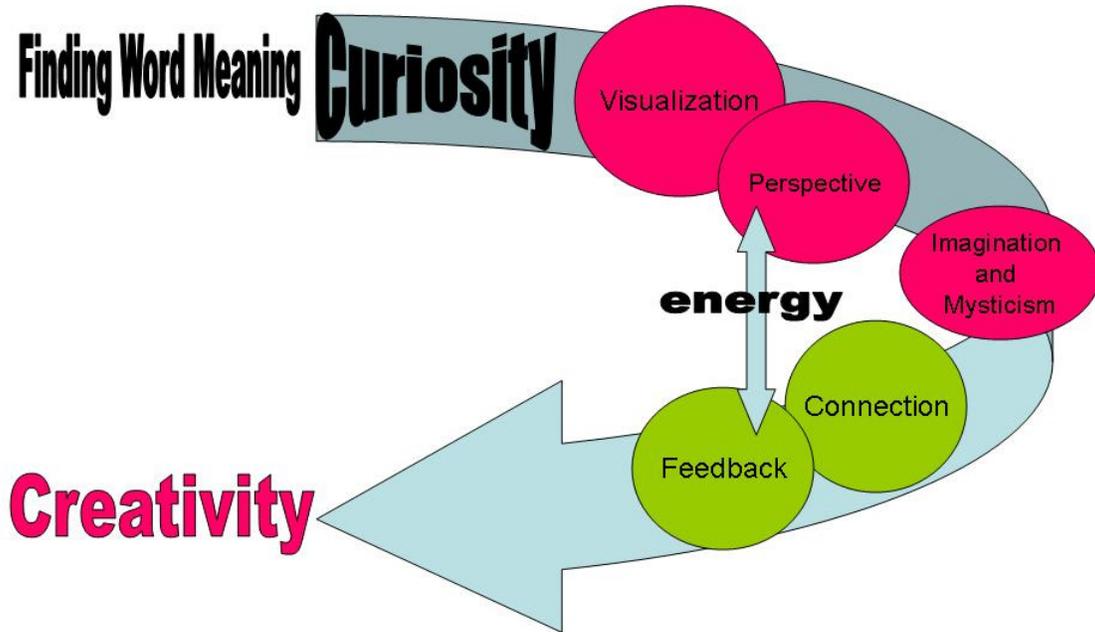
Connection is the ability to attach and bond ideas together that do not seem to be related at all. Taking one part from one situation and connecting it with another unrelated situation is inherent in my solution process.

**Feedback**

Feedback is the immediate response that constantly provided me with ideas as I think and visualize a solution.

The National Society of Creative Dyslexics is the positive result of over a decade of advocacy to provide an appropriate public education and understanding of all children and adults who learn differently and have dyslexia. Let's allow the gifts of dyslexia to shine - at all ages.

# Dyslexia's Creative Process Elements



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