



Last week was Kara Hanna, MPT, Certified Dyslexia Screener and Tutor, on the topic of dyslexia.

Kara is a mother of five and married to Ben for 22 years.

She's a graduate of University of North Dakota, an accredited Master of Physical Therapy, and board member of the [International Dyslexia Association of Oregon](http://InternationalDyslexiaAssociation.org).

As "Mind Coach," Kara coaches dyslexics to succeed in class.

Ten years ago Kara and Ben decided to begin homeschooling their kids. "All of my girls knew their letters and sounds but my first grader struggled. She could recognize a word on one page but not the same word on another page."

*Editor's Note: I always thought the word dyslexia a cruel term to describe someone that confused letters, like the word lisp.*

In fact, its etymology is Greek with dys (difficulty) and lexia (language).

Dyslexia is not a vision issue. It's not laziness or lack of intelligence.

One common, early sign is delayed speech and mispronunciation of kid words like pascetti and flutterby. *It's like colorblindness for communication.*

Kids don't become dyslexic because parents didn't read enough to them, or teacher didn't teach right, or from lack of intelligence. And being dyslexic doesn't mean your child can't read.

Where most of us discern letters, word and sentence structure as they're written, a dyslexic may read by memory or shape of words. *Hey, maybe contracts written in all caps should be banned for ADA non-compliance.* Or taking cues from pictures or

story predictability. *Did you notice this newsletter's header? Or just know what it meant?*

We can predict where a dyslexic will stumble. By leaving out sounds, like seeing black but saying back. Or seeing stare but saying star.

We feed students about 5,000 new words a year. At that rate, most coping mechanisms will fail and a dyslexic will hit a wall around third grade.

Dyslexia most clearly presents itself in spelling and writing but also shows up in application of simple direction, like confusing left and right shoes or misinterpreting d for b and m for w.

Here, we can diagnose before age 6 if English is the child's only language. *I took that to mean that bilingual students are more difficult to diagnose as early.*

The strengths of a dyslexic are often in athletics, the arts, music, and mechanical aptitude. They are typically very curious and can do a lot ... if they know the "why."

To succeed, we need to teach dyslexics differently. They are often described as 3D thinkers. The [Orton-Gillingham](http://Orton-Gillingham.com) is a very effective, multi-sensory approach.

As a physical therapist Kara taught people how to cope with physical challenges and work through issues to maximize success in their own lives. She is applying those same skills as Mind Coach.

Her daughter struggled when she was 7. Now, at age 16, she is on Newberg High's honor roll.

Comments and Questions:

Tom T: I help with the SMART reading program and can tell which kids have learning support at home.

**John B: What's the solution?**

Kara: We have ten programs we apply depending on screening and whether we are tutoring an individual or small or large group. It takes from 3 - 5 years, twice a week for an hour each.

**Beth P: What about adults?**

Kara: Yes, we work with adults, but often they don't ask for help for any number of reasons. Whether it be they myth about

intelligence or because they have been getting by for so long.

**Gary S: Are there tools that can help us?**

Kara answered yes, but I misinterpreted the question. I thought he was asking how us left-brain types could be more creative like the dyslexic with their larger right brain. He was actually asking if there were ways teachers could better reach both types of students. The full answer beyond yes would have put us way over time.

In closing, Rod shared a story from his years as elementary principal.

He had a Ghanaian family with a Straight A daughter. At assemblies he butchered the family name on stage every time.

Finally, the dad had enough, pulled Rod aside. "Boamponsem\*, it's not that hard!"

Rod humbly apologized explained that he is dyslexic and that sounds and syllables are a struggle for him.

The father was waiting in Rod's office the following Monday. He had seen a professor at Azusa Pacific and inquired about dyslexia, and had come to apologize himself.

\*not the real name, I googled a Ghanaian name that looked phonetically difficult.

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This week's Blue Tape award went to Brian "Guido" Doyle for raking in \$3,800 in fines and brags this year.

And to Connie Christianson for her coming award of the



Norm Aldred Ethics in Business Award, to be presented at the Chamber dinner (during which Connie will be vacationing).

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