



*Michael Senoff's*

**HardToFind Seminars.com**

**Expert Interviews On Mind Body & Spirit**

# *University*

**INTERVIEW SERIES**

**What You Need To Know  
About Dyslexia That Will Save  
Your Child's Self-Esteem**



*Michael Senoff's*

**HardToFind Seminars.com**

**Expert Interviews On Mind Body & Spirit**

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://HardToFindSeminars.com).

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable audio business and health related interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently.

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers.

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

*Michael Senoff*

Founder & CEO: [www.hardtofindseminars.com](http://www.hardtofindseminars.com)

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## What You Need To Know About Dyslexia That Will Save Your Child's Self-Esteem

The harsh reality when it comes to dyslexia is this – you can't afford to wait for your child's school to figure it out because that may never happen. Studies show one in five kids struggles with dyslexia, but federal education laws don't require schools to screen or test for it. And a child who can't keep up with peers, who's embarrassed when another child sees his class work, or who feels stupid every day at school is at risk for lifelong emotional scarring.

But parents don't have to sit back and watch it happen anymore. There are steps you can take to help your child if you suspect they have dyslexia. And in this audio, you'll hear all about them from Susan Barton, founder of *Bright Solutions For Dyslexia*. She's going to tell you how to identify the classic warning signs and how to help your child overcome them at home and at school.

### You'll Also Hear . . .

- A simple "laundry list" of things to look for if you suspect your child has dyslexia
- Exploding the dyslexia myths: For example, do they really see things backwards?
- Where to find a simple free screening test
- The one best way to help schools get the training they need for dyslexia (but probably can't afford)
- The science behind the disorder – what causes the differences in brain structure and wiring detectable in dyslexics
- How to look at your family tree to determine warning signs and risk factors
- How to know if your child's school is "behind the times" when it comes to dyslexia and a simple book you can give them that will catch them up to speed

Fortunately, dyslexia is manageable, and dyslexics go on to achieve anything they want in life – architecture, computers, science, medicine, engineering, etc. But it's not something people naturally "grow out of" and does require a treatment plan. However, it's never too early (or too late) to get started. And in this audio, you'll hear the latest and greatest strategies for success.

*Hi, I'm Michael Senoff, Founder and CEO of [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com). For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds. Along the way, I've created a successful publishing business all from home from my two car garage. When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home. Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable mp3 audio business interviews. I knew I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions and inside angles to help you live better, to save and make more money, to stay healthier and to get more out of life. I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills you need to survive.*

*Hi, this is Chris Costello, and I've teamed up with Michael Senoff to bring you the world's best wellness related interviews. So, if you know anyone struggling with their weight, with cancer, diabetes, ADHD, autism, heart disease, or other health challenges, please send them to Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).*

Chris: Thank you so much Susan for being here.

Susan: It's my pleasure.

Chris: So, Susan, why did you develop the Barton System?

Susan: Well, I never expected to. When I originally got into this field, I got into it because my nephew Ben was finally diagnosed with profound dyslexia when he was sixteen, and at that point, the public school system pretty much said, "It's too late to do anything. He'll never get any better. Just accept it and learn to live with it."

So, I switched my career completely at that point from the high-tech field into the field of dyslexia and learning disabilities, and after spending four years in adult literacy programs learning that there are effective ways to greatly improve the reading, writing, spelling skills of adults with dyslexia, and it's never too late.

Then, spending four years learning other Orton Gillingham systems that work with children and working at a clinic for children and teenagers with dyslexia, I realized the problem wasn't dyslexia. Dyslexia is pretty easy to spot. It's pretty easy to improve their reading, writing, spelling skills. The problem was that the parents and the teachers and the administrators didn't understand it, didn't have

training in it, and didn't know what would work and what would not work.

So, I felt at that point, the way I could help the most children was to stop doing tutoring directly or testing directly or working in clinics, and try to do educational outreach work.

So, I formed Bright Solutions for Dyslexia, strictly an information and resource center and started doing a lot of public speaking and speaking at conferences about dyslexia and the classic warning signs, and letting people know that there were good solutions already out there, that there were many good Orton Gillingham based systems for people who needed them.

Then, I discovered that because so very few people are trained in these systems, there are very few professional tutors available, and schools would say, "I'd love to get my teachers trained in this, but we can't afford to send them to professional training schools during the summer which are multiple weeks of training, and they are often several summers in a row to get fully trained," which is the type of training I've had.

Parents would say, "I'd do it myself, but I can't go to those training centers either. I've got children at home. I don't plan to do this as a profession. I just need to know enough to tutor my own children because there are no professionals in my area, or they are full, or they are so expensive, I can't possibly afford them, or I can afford them for one of my children, but two of my children need this. Now what do I do?"

So, I realized there was a tremendous need for yet another Orton Gillingham system, but this one designed for a different type of teacher. This one designed for parents who want to or have to tutor their own children.

So, I had to design it from scratch assuming the person doing the tutoring would have no teaching experience, probably is not a certified teacher, may not have a college degree, and because dyslexia runs in families, might also be dyslexic. So, I'm the only Orton Gillingham based system that assumes the tutor might be as dyslexic as the student, and I also had to assume that this person could not travel to a training center.

So, I had to design the whole approach on how to teach the tutor very differently.

Chris: That would be challenging I would imagine.

Susan: It was very challenging and enormously fun and has been highly successful. So, all the training that the parent or a tutor would need comes inside each level on DVD. That means the tutor does not have to travel anywhere to learn how to use this system.

Now, these DVDs are not to be shown to the student. These are to train the parent or the professional tutor or the reading specialist, or the resource specialist how to give the lessons that are in that level.

Chris: Now, I would think with statistics like that, one in five children, this would be something that you would see in schools just as part of the basic curriculum. Is that what's happening?

Susan: Unfortunately, no, that is far too rare. Federal education law is years and years and years behind the research. So, believe it or not, federal education law does not require any public school to screen or test for dyslexia, and that's why most teachers get no training in what the warning signs of dyslexia are as part of their college courses, nor do most reading specialists, resource specialists, or even school psychologists or principles.

Because they're not required to test for it, they're not trained in it. They're often not trained in these methods that work specifically for the one out of five students who are struggling through some degree of dyslexia.

Chris: Wouldn't it be a lot easier just to catch this early, like in the early years for a child?

Susan: It certainly would. As a matter of fact, that's critical. Early intervention is critical because although it's never ever too late, it is never too late to greatly improve the reading, writing, spelling skill, the emotional scars that come from years of feeling stupid and defective and falling further and further behind in school do more damage in my professional opinion, more lifelong damage than not being able to read, write and spell as well as everyone else. It's very, very, very difficult to rebuild a person's self-esteem.

How a child feels about themselves when they're eight, nine and ten is pretty much how they're going to feel about themselves when they're forty, fifty and sixty. If you can't read, write and spell, no matter smart you are and how hard you try, you're not going to succeed very well in school.

So, teaching them effective ways to read, write and spell early can prevent the academic strugglers and failure that often come with this.

Chris: So, for the teachers out there that are listening, or the parents that are listening or the grandmas that are listening, they see a child that's struggling, what are some of the symptoms that people can kind of notice right away with children or even adults with dyslexia.

Susan: Well, to start with children, there are some myths out there that people think are true about dyslexia that are not, and that's one reason why they miss a lot of kids with dyslexia. The most common myth is that they see things backwards, which is not at all true.

Children with dyslexia see things the same way as everyone else. They confuse their Bs and Ds, but it's not because they're seeing them backwards. It's because of directionality issues and auditory confusion issues, but they don't see things backwards. That's why reversals have nothing to do with dyslexia directly.

So, they don't see things backwards. It's not a vision problem, which is why vision therapy never solves the issue. Then, people think that if you have dyslexia, it means you can't read. That is not true. Everybody with dyslexia can read up to a point, but then they surprise everybody with this bright child who is reading initially, hits the wall in reading development by third grade if not sooner.

Then, no matter how smart they are and how hard they try and how hard the teacher tries, and how hard outside tutors try, unless they're taught differently, they won't be able to get over that brick wall in reading development by third grade.

Our typical reading pattern you'll see even when they "can read," the dyslexia forces them to read very differently. Some of the early reading warning signs are they'll know a word on one page, and won't recognize that very same word on the next page. How come you knew the word over here, but don't know the word over here?

Another classic warning sign is when they come to a word that they don't know when they're reading, they won't sound it. Even though they've been taught phonics, they know their sounds, the inability to sound out an unknown word despite being taught phonics is a classic warning sign of dyslexia. They'll look at the first letter. They'll look at a picture. They'll try to guess based on context, clues, which is why another classic warning sign when they're reading is they'll say a word that makes sense there even though it's nothing at all like the page.

Like, they might look at the word, "Horse," and say "pony." They might look at the word "journey," and say, "trip." They might look at the word, "small," and say it's "tiny." The word would make sense there, but it doesn't have any of the same letters. They're not looking at the letters on the page to help them read the word. In fact, they're using every strategy they can think of other than to look at the letters because the letters have always confused them.

Dyslexia is huge. It is complex, and it's way more than reading, way more than reading, which is why when I speak at reading conferences, I tell the reading specialists, "If a child is only struggling in reading, and nowhere else, it's not dyslexia." Dyslexia affects way more than reading, and what it affects most and what people will be more aware of is its impact on spelling.

In fact, if you don't struggle in a major way with spelling, you don't have dyslexia. It can be confusing because parents can say, "Oh, he does okay on his weekly spelling test," and that's not what we're talking about, but a parent will know it takes hours and hours and hours of practice to get this kid to learn the list of twenty words for Monday well enough to try to pass Friday's test.

They will also know that despite that enormous effort and the hours and hours and hours they put in, even if they do okay on Friday's test, the spelling doesn't stick. By two or three days later, they can't spell those words anymore.

It really affects their spelling when they have to write. When they write sentences or stories, these are the kids that misspell even the high frequency words like "very," "because," "friend," "does," "where," and it affects more when they write. These are the kids who just can't seem to remember that a sentence has to start with a capital letter and there has to be a punctuation in there somewhere.

So, they write without capitals. They write without punctuation. They write with significant misspellings, and yet their content, what they write is terrific.

But, it affects more than spelling and more than writing and more than reading. They usually have an odd unusual pencil grip and a great deal of difficulty getting their letters to sit on the line, and difficulty getting their tails to go below the line. It's called dysgraphia, and most kids with dyslexia also have dysgraphia, hand writing difficulties, but it goes beyond that.

You can hear dyslexia. It affects their speech. Not only were most of them late to speak, they weren't speaking at twelve months is when most kids speak. They might not have started speaking until they're eighteen months or two years or two and a half or three or later, but when they started saying those multi-syllable words, they frequently get the sounds out of sequence, and they say things like "aminal," "bisghetti," "hangaburg," "flutterbies."

At first you think it's cute until you realize you can't correct them. When they go into school, they can't say words like "consonant." Two types of letters are vowels and constanants, compliments, anything but consonants. They can't say cinnamon. My adults can't say aluminum or statistics.

Dyslexia also causes you to have enormous difficulty learning to tie your shoes. You have difficulty memorizing random facts like your math facts. My kids usually like math. They understand math, but they can't memorize their adding or subtracting facts. They always have to count on their fingers, which means when they get to their multiplication tables, they're dead in the water.

You can spend years with flash cards and worksheets and songs and everything you can think of trying to get into long-term memory, into long-term memory, into long-term memory, and you can get it in, you just can't get it out.

My adults can't do nine times seven, eight times six, this time this quickly and easily, even after years and years and years of practice. We have solutions for most of this. There are effective, research-based ways to teach them to read, write and spell, and believe it or not, they've been around since the 1930s.

Most children and teenagers and adults with dyslexia can greatly improve their skills if they're taught using a system called an Orton Gillingham based system of which there are many. There are effective ways to teach them their math facts. There are workarounds for not being able to tie your shoes called Velcro.

There are solutions or workarounds for most of these weak areas so that their gifts and their talents can be put to tremendous use because people with dyslexia not only – despite being very, very bright – have these unexpected holes in certain skills. They often are incredibly gifted and talented better than anybody else in their class and their age in areas also. There are unusual combinations of strengths and weaknesses.

*I'm Chris Costello reporting for Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).*

Chris: As you were talking, Susan about the writing in school and not being able to remember how to spell, that kind of thing, it really got me thinking about what happens to these kids self-esteem-wise when they're in a situation where their classmates are writing these beautiful stories and they can't write, "The cat went for a walk." What does that do to kids?

Susan: Emotionally, it destroys them. It destroys their belief in themselves. It makes them very anxious. Often times, they develop a secondary anxiety disorder. Anxiety is fear, fear that the teacher is going to call on me and make me stand up and read out loud in class today. Fear of what happens when the teacher does a spelling bee; fear of even passing your assignments by passing them up the rows and all the other kids can see your handwriting and your spelling and everything else.

It makes these kids hate school. These are the kids who often by kindergarten and first grade and second grade say, "Mom, please don't make me go to school. I've got one of those headaches. I really don't want to go to school." They're at high risk of dropping out.

They either internalize their struggles and failure and get depressed and anxious or whatever, or they do the opposite and act out their frustration, become behavior problems as a way of getting out of having to do tasks that they are bad at and having public humiliation. My guys would rather turn over the desk and get sent to the principal's office than stand up in front of class and read out loud.

Chris: So, basically, you're saying the schools can deal with somebody for twelve years and have a lot of problems the whole way along, or they can take a child in kindergarten, find out what's going on with this, and do a two year learning system, something like yours the Barton Learning System, where the kids can cope with the academics. Is that right?

Susan: Correct. What I'm getting more and more public schools to do and private schools to do is early screening. I know schools don't have dyslexia learning specialists on staff, and I know school psychologists aren't trained in it, but dyslexia comes with a classic list of warning signs, and the more warning signs that match, the more confident somebody can be. Don't wait for formal diagnostic report. Step in and do the right thing.

There are other simple free screening tests that are not screening necessarily for dyslexia, but they're screening for the areas where a dyslexic child would be weak, and they'll be weak fairly early on. One of the best out there is called Dibels.

Dibels stands for Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, and parents and teachers can download this from the internet for free. It's copyright free and free of charge because it was developed by the researchers with your tax dollars, and it's designed to be given three times a year by the regular teacher. It doesn't need a school psychologist to do it, and they have a version for beginning kindergarten, mid-kindergarten, end-kindergarten, a different version for beginning first grade, middle first grade, end of first grade all the way up to sixth grade.

It takes less than ten minutes to give. It's very easy to score. The instructions on giving it and scoring it are included, and so are the benchmarks. It's saying, "If a child is on track in reading development, their score should be here or higher." So, if a child is meeting the benchmarks, then just keep teaching and check once a quarter and they're not at risk of not being able to read at grade level by third grade.

My kids with dyslexia will start messing those benchmarks early, early enough to step in and do something and preventing them from hitting that wall. You need to put in place early intervention programs.

Chris: Right, and as a parent, frankly, I find it pretty easy to see and notice the signs. I didn't have the formal diagnosis or information, but there

were a lot of red flags. He never would pick up a book. He never wanted to sit down and write, things that my other children always wanted to do.

Susan: Yes, often, they will actively avoid things.

Chris: You have a wonderful website. Can you give our listeners some direction on how to find your website?

Susan: For parents or teachers who want to learn more about what those classic warning signs are and more about what can be done, go to the website for Bright Solutions for Dyslexia, and that website address is [www.BrightSolutions.us](http://www.BrightSolutions.us), which stands for United States.

Even if a parent feels uncomfortable trying to read a website because they themselves don't read very well, right on our very first page are seven free video webcasts that someone can click on and watch a video right online. So, they can either learn by watching and hearing me explain it in great depth, or by reading the other pages.

Chris: Also, you have another website, [SusanBarton.com](http://SusanBarton.com).

Susan: That I just set up in case people wanted to know more about who I am, [SusanBarton.com](http://SusanBarton.com) just explains my background. If people were interested in learning more about the Barton Reading and Spelling System in detail, we have a separate website for that, and that would be [www.BartonReading.com](http://www.BartonReading.com).

When I work with schools and try to convince them to do an early intervention program, screen and find the kids who are falling behind early enough to fix it before it starts impacting them academically. One resistance I get is, "Do you mean to tell me one out of five kindergartners is likely not to meet these benchmarks?" I say, "Yes because dyslexia does impact twenty percent of our population."

Now, some only have it mildly. Some have it moderately. Some have it severally. Some have it profoundly, but you will find a large percentage of your kindergartners and first graders are not able to meet these benchmarks.

Then, they panic and say, "We don't have enough personal in special ed to meet their needs. How are we going to help them? If we identify that they're struggling, how are we going to provide the resources to help them?" The nice thing is they don't have to go into special ed. My

goal is to prevent them from ever needing special ed services by catching it early and teaching them a way that will work.

With the Barton Reading and Spelling Systems, they don't have to rely on expensive certified teachers because we designed it for parents or other caring adults to be able to learn it even if though they have no teaching background. Schools can bring in parent volunteers, community volunteers, church members.

A lot of churches have literacy organizations as part of them, and they can work one on one with a child. It doesn't take a lot of time, two hours of one on one tutoring per week will close the gap if they're using the right approach.

Every parent I've ever talked to has already tried Hooked on Phonics, and discovered a child can learn phonics. They just can't apply it.

Chris: Can you explain to our listeners just a little bit about how the Barton System is different?

Susan: It's a tutoring program. So, it's not a classroom curriculum. A teacher can not do this to thirty kids at one time. This is meant for intense intervention, which means we're going to catch kids up as quickly as possible.

So, ideally, it's done on a one on one situation, which means one tutor works with one child at a time. Experienced teachers can use it in a very small group, up to three, but that's why regular ed teachers can not do this. They can't work in groups that small, but reading specialists often can. Resource specialists can.

It is ideally a one-on-one tutoring system, and there's a whole lot of things that are different about it, but one major difference is we don't teach just reading. Our kids are struggling more in spelling than they are in reading.

So, the reason it's called the Barton Reading and Spelling system is we're teaching them how spelling and reading are actually the same skill, and we work intensely on teaching them to spell, not by memorizing lists of words. That'll never work for my guys, but spell by sounding out and knowing a few very reliable spelling rules.

So, in the Barton System, there are many steps in every lesson, and one step is a reading step. The next step is the same skill as the

spelling step, then a reading step, then a spelling step. We're teaching kids that reading and spelling are actually the same skill.

Anytime you try to work with a dyslexic child and teach them just reading, it's not going to go very far. They have got to see – if one is looking at the letters and turning them into sounds, the other one is taking the sounds and turning them back into letters. That is the same skill, and it's sounds that they're having trouble with. They're having trouble with a skill called semantic awareness.

So, we get them to the sound level. We teach them how to work sounds from both direction. So, the sequence in which we teach skills is the most common where there are no choices gradually up to where there's two choices, and one our way up as we teach it in a spelling sequence, not a reading sequence.

So, we make spelling seem very logical, and they can learn how to spell without having to memorize, without having to remember what a word looks like, and as their spelling gets better, so does their reading. There's not one person in the world who is a good speller who is also not a good reader.

Chris: So, it sounds like the Barton process is very different from the traditional process, learning process of reading.

Susan: Very different from the traditional process in learning to spell as well, and if people want to see what's so different because I could give someone all the technical words, but they could go to our website [BartonReading.com](http://BartonReading.com), and watch a twenty minute demo, a video demo showing you a Barton lesson, showing you what's so different about this approach to reading, writing, spelling.

If somebody wants to see that for free, they can just go to [BartonReading.com](http://BartonReading.com) and find the button that talks about the demo.

Chris: If your dyslexic child is being tutored with this method, how long does it normally take for them to get to where they're reading where they should be?

Susan: It depends on where they should be. It doesn't take as long to take a first or second grader and get them up to grade level as it does a sixth grade to get them up to grade level because the grade levels are different.

We don't teach in a traditional grade level sequence. So, I tell parents, "You will see slow steady improvement all along the way." Within just a couple of months not only will their reading be better and their spelling be better, but you'll see a change in their attitude, from walking in and feeling so defeated that their head is down and they hate the idea of reading and spelling, to just after a couple of months of just twice a week tutoring, you'll see them sitting up taller. Their head is up high. They're saying, "This isn't so hard. I thought spelling and reading was hard. I can get this. I guess I wasn't stupid after all."

So, parents often will see a change in attitude even before they see years of growth on standardized reading tests, but I tell parents start at the beginning, give them at least two hours of one-on-one tutoring per week, which you can break into two one hours sessions, three forty-five minute sessions, four half-hour sessions, but at least two hours a week.

You will see slow steady progress all along the way. Now, when will they be at grade level? It's impossible to say because we don't teach in grade level sequence, and how do you measure grade levels for reading. There are so many different ways to measure reading. Is it reading comprehension? You'll see those scores go up fast.

Is it reading speed? It takes longer to build speed, which is called fluency. Is it reading accuracy? You'll see that go up quite a bit, but is it grade level reading accuracy? It depends on how you measure that because we don't teach in grade level sequence.

Our goal on the Barton System is to get them able to read and spell those great big long multi-syllable words as fast as possible. So, we teach them just what they need to know to be able to break apart those great big long words because they're textbooks are full of those great big long words. Then, once they're able to do that, we fill in other things after that.

Some of the stuff we don't teach until later, they typically teach in kindergarten. Some of the stuff we teach right in our level four, they don't ever teach until tenth grade. That's why it's hard to say, "Where will they be in grade level?" It depends on how you measure it, but parents will see slow, steady progress in both reading and spelling and written expression, all along the way.

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Chris: So, you've talked a little bit Susan about the symptoms of dyslexia. Can you tell us a little bit about what's behind the brain science of dyslexia? What is dyslexia all about?

Susan: That's a great question, and to me the brain research is the most fascinating because you've got tons and tons and tons of it. One thing we know is that dyslexia is genetic. It strongly runs in family trees. They've actually isolated the three genes responsible for it, and they haven't found any new ones for quite a while.

Where this field is heading, where we hope we'll be in – I don't know – five, ten, fifteen years. It's already being done in research labs, is everytime a child is born, we'll just scrape the inside of their cheek, look at their genes and we'll know right then and there. "This kid, you can teach reading anyway you want to, this child better get something special."

We will no longer have to wait until they've hit that wall in third grade and they're at least two years behind, and their self-esteem is in the basement to say, "Gee, maybe it wasn't a motivation problem after all. Maybe there was really something different about this child."

Chris: Right, kind of like how we've prescribed glasses for kids.

Susan: Yes, right then and there, we'll know early, early enough to teach them the right way from day one. They'll never have to hit that wall. So, I tell people the biggest warning sign of all is if you know or suspect there's dyslexia in your family tree. That puts this child at high risk. How high? Fifty/fifty odds, it's like a toss of the coin for every child born into a family where you know there's dyslexia in the family tree. This child is going to come heads or tails, heads or tails.

Now, we know that these genes impact how the brain is developed. People with dyslexia have a different brain structure, and a different wiring, different nerve pathways in one part of their brain. So, their different brain structure, their different architecture is why they have a larger right hemisphere than most people.

Their left hemisphere is the same size of everyone else. Parts of their right hemisphere is larger than everyone else, and we've seen this in study after study after study. We think that's why they're so gifted and talented in areas controlled by the right side of the brain. They've got more of it, and they seem to be putting it to pretty good use.

So, people with dyslexia, although they do struggle with reading, writing, spelling, are often off the charts gifted in things like art, and it may not be your traditional painting or sketching. It might be architecture, landscape design, photography, sculpture, graphic design, fashion design, amazing talent.

A lot of my guys are amazingly gift athletes, and they go to college on athletic scholarships, and my guys win a lot of gold medals at the Olympics. A lot of the highest pay baseball pros, basketball pros, football stars, golf pros are dyslexic, and many are becoming more and more comfortable sharing that.

They love anything that's logical, three dimensional that they can put their hands on and manipulate it. So, they tend to be very, very gifted in science, medicine, engineering. They can figure out how to build something, design it better, fix it. They can figure out how things work like computers are often a very gifted area for them.

Their people skills are outstanding. They're empathetic, compassionate. They understand how people work. They how understand how to get teams of people to work together. They can be very, very successful as adults in fields that require good people skills whether it be sales and marketing, counseling, pastoring, teaching, politics, motivational speaking, team leaders. They're terrific with people.

I could go on and on. We have the gifted areas listed on our website. If we can get them through school undamaged, emotionally undamaged, they can put these kids to good use, but unfortunately, the experience at school is so devastating, if they don't get what they need, they are emotionally so destroyed by the time they get out, they never put these kids to use.

So, unusual brain structure, yes, unusual brain nerve endings – the wiring that I talked about, the nerve pathways that go in the left hemisphere, that go out to the part of the brain called Sylvian fissure, those nerve pathways are structured differently, if they have dyslexia than if they don't.

If I had any speech/language therapists listening, they would get very excited at the mention of Sylvian's fissure because they know that right below Sylvian's fissure are the two parts of your brain that practice language, Brokaw's area and Warnekee's area.

The nerve pathways that go through the language practicing part of the brain are structured differently if you have dyslexia than if you do not, which is why researchers do not classify dyslexia as a reading problem, although it will impact reading. They classify it as a language processing problem.

People with dyslexia because of that unusual wiring process language differently, and that's why it impacts all four areas of language processing starting with the speech issues, which is why often times my kids, the first professionals they work with is a speech language therapist either because of their speech or their mixing up sounds in multi-syllable words, or stuttering.

Now, not everybody with dyslexia stutters, but if they stutter, that's considered yet one more warning sign of dyslexia, or there are articulation difficulties. They have trouble articulating or saying clearly two pairs of sounds, Rs and Ls or Ms and Ns.

Sometimes they have trouble with S, SH, CH, but not always. It's always Rs and Ls, Ms and Ns, which is why they often have what's called immature speech. Even after speech therapy, even in the second or third grade, they're still saying, "The weds and the gweens, the wabbit."

I get a hint when I'm talking to adults they might have dyslexia because I can still hear subtle problems with Rs and Ls. They'll call me up on the phone saying, "Mrs. Barton, I'm so fustrated," or "I'm so flustrated," rather than "frustrated."

So, it affects speech. It also affects how you process sounds through your ears, auditory processing. That's considered language processing, and it impacts auditory processing in certain ways. Often times, their auditory memory size is smaller than most means they can hang onto fewer sounds before they fall out of memory.

They often process auditory information more slowly than people without dyslexia, just a little bit more slowly, but we can measure that. They might have some significant auditory discrimination problems. So, they will hear the wrong sound. They will have trouble distinguishing discriminating through the ears alone auditory sounds that are similar like F and Th, or the short vowel sounds.

So, they'll say, "Mom, I have to do my maf homework." "No, sweetheart, you have to do your math homework." F and Th are very similar sounds.

I can guarantee you they will have a lot of trouble with phonemic awareness, which is auditory awareness that words are made up of little tiny sounds and be able to break those sounds apart, change a sound, blend them back together.

Rhyme, the reason they have trouble with rhyming which is another classic warning sign of dyslexia is they're saying, "I can't hear what's the same between these two words is not the same between these two words."

That also is why when they learn phonics, they can tell you the sounds that the letters make like sound out that word, maybe the word "cat." They can go "K-a," and they can't blend them together to come up with the word "cat."

They can sound out a word, and still now know what that word is. All of that is related to the skill called Phonemic awareness. That's auditory processing. That's one of the ways you process language. You speak it, and there's a lot of speech issues. You listen to it, and there's a lot of auditory processing issues and phonemic awareness issues. Later on, when you get to school, reading is considered language processing, getting language off the page through your eyes.

They can fool you for a while with that because they can read for a while. They can fake it for a while. They're getting language back on the page is also difficult. That's part of language that's called spelling and written expression, and even how you hold your pencil and form your letters.

Chris: This is all basically from the different brain structure.

Susan: Yes, the different brain structures, and the different brain wiring. So, there's a lot more that goes on with brains, but those are the two major things I wish everybody knew about – a unique brain structure and unusual wiring in the language processing part of the brain.

There are whole entire books written about the brain research on dyslexia. In fact, parents can certainly learn more about dyslexia, or teachers can also by going to our [BrightSolutions.us](http://BrightSolutions.us) website. There's tons and tons and tons of information there.

Sometimes people would rather read a book about it, and the best book by far on dyslexia is called Overcoming Dyslexia by Dr. Sally Shaywitz. She is one of the leading dyslexia researchers out of the National Institutes of Health, and although she wrote the book about three and a half years ago, it's still quite current. Not all that much has come out in the last three years. All the major stuff is in there.

She wrote not for researchers. She wrote it for parents and teachers, so it's very readable even if you're not a researcher. The first hundred pages are a summary of what we now know based on all the latest research about dyslexia.

The next hundred pages are on how should we be testing for it because schools are still not required to test for it. There are very few professionals out there trained to test for it. By the way, I do know where the professionals in every state are that are qualified to test for dyslexia.

So, if any of your listeners would like me to email them a list of certified dyslexia testing specialists in their area, they can certainly contact me by phone or email, and I'd be delighted to send them the list.

We have lists for every state and even for other countries, and if you'd like I can give people my email address at this point.

Chris: Sure that would be great.

Susan: It's similar to our website address. It just starts with [Susan@BrightSolutions.us](mailto:Susan@BrightSolutions.us).

Chris: And, the phone number, Susan.

Susan: The phone number is 408-559-3652, and the last hundred pages in Sally Shaywitz's book on what do we do about it? Now, the nice thing about that book, since it's been out so long, it's available in hardbound, paperbound, almost in every book store in this nation and online, but you can also get it on CD or download as mp3 files.

So, if you don't have time to read a 300 page book, you can listen to it as you drive around in your car, as you work out in the gym, and if your child happens to go to a school where the administration or the professionals are behind the times, and they're still saying outrageous things that are not true, but were once thought to be true but are way

out of date such as, “There is no such thing as dyslexia. It’s a made-up term. It’s an old-fashioned term. We don’t use that term anymore. There’s no way to test for dyslexia anyway. You can’t test for it until you’re nine, or if he’s already nine, it’s too late anyhow,” or any of those things. There’s nothing to be done about it.

Those are outrageously outdated statements that are absolutely not true. You could get a copy of this book, and give it to them as a gift and say, “You know what? You’re a little bit out of date. Here’s a gift from me to you so that you can quickly learn the latest research.”

Often times after I give a talk in the city, there’s a run at all the local bookstores for that book.

Chris: We just have learned so much today. We really appreciate you taking the time to talk with us today about dyslexia.

Susan: It’s my pleasure.

That’s the end of our interview, and I hope you’ve enjoyed it.

*For more great health related interviews, go to Michael Senoff’s [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).*