


Welcome to

Adventures in Neurodiversity: Think and Teach Like an Educational Therapist


Presented by

Diana Black Kennedy, M.A., ET/P


The Association of Educational Therapists is the national professional association for educational therapists. AET defines and sets standards for the professional practice of educational therapy. Educational therapists provide a broad range of individualized educational interventions for children and adults with learning disabilities and other learning challenges. www.aetonline.org



35th Annual National Conference




37th Annual Conference
October 23-25, 2015
*The Power of Collaborative
 Relationships in Educational Therapy*
Hoffman Estates, IL - Chicago Marriott Northwest




Featuring

- **George McCloskey, PhD**, lead author of the books *Assessment and Intervention for Executive Function Difficulties* and *Essentials of Executive Function Assessment*
- **Tina Bryson, PhD**, co-author (with Dan Siegel) of the best-selling book *The Whole-Brain Child*

For full information about events or to find an educational therapist go to www.aetonline.org.



Adventures in Neurodiversity: Think and Teach Like an Educational Therapist



Diana Black Kennedy, MA, ET/P

Adventures in Neurodiversity

Teach and Think Like an Educational Therapist

Agenda

- Old paradigm
- Neurodiversity paradigm
- Neurodiversity in teaching
- Supporting parents

Old paradigm

- Intelligence
 - Product of normal brain
 - Objective & universal
 - Static
(fixed mindset)

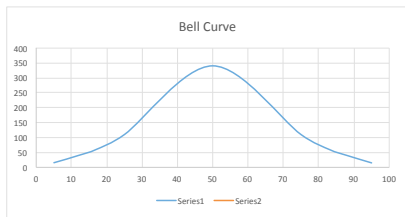


Old paradigm

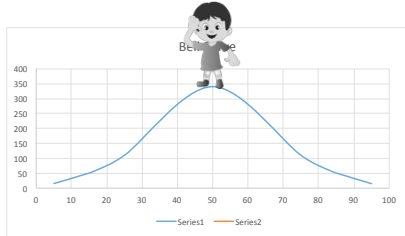
- Learning disabilities
 - Broken version of normal brain
 - Located in student's brain
 - Objective
 - Static (fixed mindset)



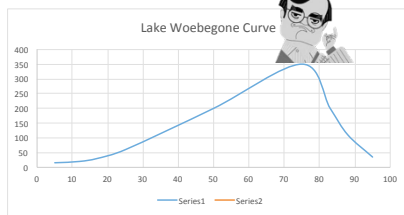
Old paradigm



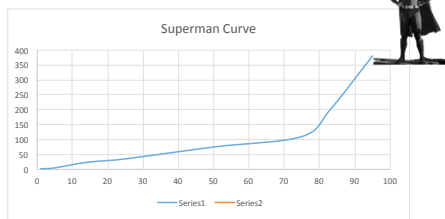
Old paradigm



Old paradigm



Old paradigm



Neurodiversity paradigm

- Intelligence
 - Socially constructed
 - Multidimensional
 - Plastic (growth mindset)



Neurodiversity paradigm

- Learning Disorders
 - Neurodiversity: the rule, not the exception
 - Context specific
 - Plastic (growth mindset)



Neurodiversity paradigm

Socially constructed

- What is valued in school?
- What is valued in society?



Neurodiversity paradigm

Socially constructed

- What is valued in school?
- What is valued in society?
- Often mismatch between the two



Neurodiversity paradigm

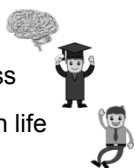
Socially constructed: School/Life mismatch

Old assumptions:

ideal brain = intelligence

intelligence = school success

school success = success in life



Neurodiversity paradigm

Socially constructed: School/Life mismatch

- High grades do not predict life success
- Do not even predict success in first year college

James Parker

Canada Research Chair in emotion and health at Trent University

Do grades really matter? Maclean's, Sarah Scott August 30, 2007
<http://www.macleans.ca/education/universitycollege/do-grades-really-matter/>

Neurodiversity paradigm

Socially constructed: School/Life mismatch

"Good students figure out how the system works so they can excel within the system..."

"[O]ur success does not come from working within the system. It comes from reinventing the system."

Bob Young

co-founded Red Hat, a global open-source software company

Do grades really matter? Maclean's, Sarah Scott August 30, 2007
<http://www.macleans.ca/education/universitycollege/do-grades-really-matter/>



Neurodiversity paradigm

Multidimensional

- Alternatives to uni-dimensional view of intelligence
- Neuroscientist view
- The story of Lisa*

*names have been changed

Neurodiversity paradigm

Multidimensional

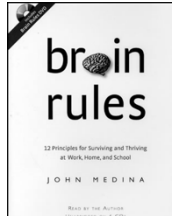
- *The Mismeasure of Man*
- Gardner's multiple intelligences
- Levine's 8 neuro-developmental constructs



Neurodiversity paradigm

Multidimensional

- Neuroscientist view:
"But categories of intelligence may number **more than 7 billion**--roughly the population of the world."



Medina, Brain Rules, p 64

Neurodiversity paradigm

Multidimensional: The story of Lisa*



*names have been changed

Neurodiversity paradigm

Multidimensional: The story of Lisa*



*names have been changed

Neurodiversity paradigm

Multidimensional: The moral of the story of Lisa*

A diagnosis

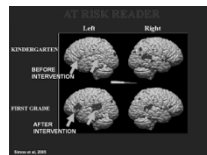
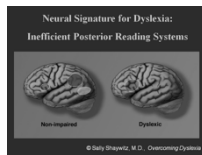
- can be helpful shorthand
- can circumscribe the issue
- *is not the student*

*names have been changed

Neurodiversity paradigm

Plastic

Sally Shaywitz, Overcoming Dyslexia



Neurodiversity paradigm

Plastic

- The Pygmalion Effect

“When teachers *expected* that certain children would show greater intellectual development, those children *did* show greater intellectual development.”



Pygmalion in the Classroom, Rosenthal, R and Jacobson, L, 1968

Neurodiversity paradigm

Plastic



"It's not always those who start out the smartest who end up the smartest"

Carol Dweck
Professor of psychology

Mindsets, Carol Dweck, 2006

Neurodiversity paradigm

Neurodiversity: the rule, not the exception

- Coined by sociologist Judy Singer, who has autism
- Shift from pathologizing to accepting the diversity of human brains
- Not anomaly: human condition



Neurodiversity Rewires Conventional Thinking About Brains, Steve Silberman April 16 2013
<http://www.wired.com/2013/04/neurodiversity/>

Neurodiversity paradigm

Neurodiversity: the rule, not the exception

- Ojemann the neurosurgeon

"He has to map each individual's critical function areas because *he doesn't know where they are.*"



Medina, Brain Rules, p 65

Neurodiversity paradigm

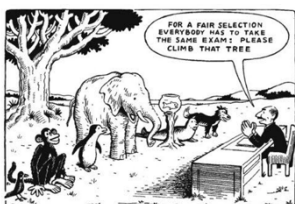
Neurodiversity: the rule, not the exception
 “Neurodiversity may be every bit as crucial for the human race as biodiversity is for life in general.

Who can say what form of wiring will prove best at any given moment?”

Neurodiversity: On the neurological underpinnings of geekdom. Harvey Blume September 30 1998.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1998/09/neurodiversity/305909/>

Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific



Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific

“Learning *differences* are an expression of normal human variation.

Learning *disabilities* are an expression of variation in the environment.”

Dr. David H. Rose

Developmental neuropsychologist and professor

Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific

"All learning disabilities are an outcome of the child-world interaction."



Dr. Deborah Waber
Psychiatrist and professor

Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific



versus



Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific



Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific

"When they grow up, they will be able to practice their brain's specialties; in childhood they will be evaluated ruthlessly on how well they do everything."

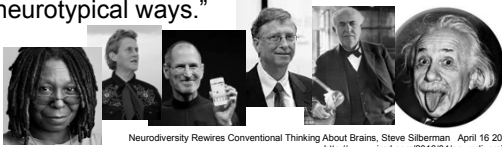
Dr. Mel Levine
Pediatrician and professor

A Mind at a Time, Mel Levine, p. 14

Neurodiversity paradigm

Context specific:

"We owe many of the wonders of modern life to innovators who were brilliant in non-neurotypical ways."



Neurodiversity Rewires Conventional Thinking About Brains, Steve Silberman April 16 2013
<http://www.wired.com/2013/04/neurodiversity/>

Neurodiversity paradigm

Forbes: **ADHD: The Entrepreneur's Superpower**
Scientific America: **The Advantages of Dyslexia**
Personality and Individual Differences: **Uninhibited imaginations: Creativity in adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**
Yale Scientific: **The Paradox of Dyslexia: Slow Reading, Fast Thinking**
Bloomberg Business: **Why Dyslexics Make Great Entrepreneurs**

Neurodiversity in teaching

- Remediation & accommodation
- Strength-based versus deficit model
- Mental flexibility: not just for students!

Neurodiversity in teaching

Remediation & accommodation
“But s/he still needs to learn the basics!”

Neurodiversity in teaching

Remediation & accommodation

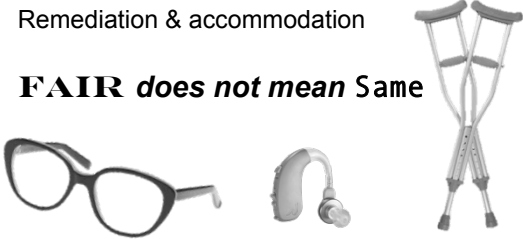
- Simultaneous, parallel paths
- Not either/or
- Cannot afford to wait



Neurodiversity in teaching

Remediation & accommodation


FAIR does not mean Same



Neurodiversity in teaching

Remediation & accommodation

- Audiobooks
- Dictation



Neurodiversity in teaching

- Audiobooks
- []



Neurodiversity in teaching

Remediation & accommodation

- Audiobooks
- Dictation
- Multiplication tables
- Extended time

Neurodiversity in teaching

Strength-based versus deficit model

- All brains have areas of strengths
- All brains, even gifted ones, have areas of weakness

"It is indeed tragic when a kid has strengths he has no chance to use."

Dr. Mel Levine
Pediatrician and professor

A Mind at a Time, Mel Levine, p. 283

Neurodiversity in teaching

Strength-based versus deficit model

"If we simply focus on improving our weaknesses, we'll only ever get to being mediocre.

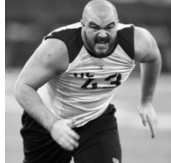
But if we focus on our strengths, then we can become truly excellent."

"If we focus on our weaknesses, we'll only ever get to being mediocre" Eugenie Teasley, December 13 2013, The Guardian
<http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2013/dec/13/diary-of-a-2014-clare-social-fellow-2>

Neurodiversity in teaching

Strength-based versus deficit model

"Sports became my salvation. When I stepped inside the white lines, all my insecurities and fears melted away...I just needed to let my God-given talent take over..."



Neurodiversity in teaching

Strength-based versus deficit model

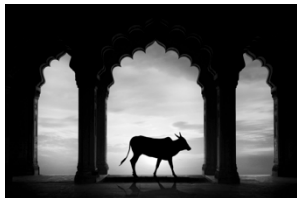
"There, my classmates and friends still looked at me as "special," only not because I couldn't keep up, but because they were having trouble keeping up with me." Kasey Studdard



Offensive guard, The Houston Texans
It's Time To Stop Using The Word "Retard" Kasey Studdard February 5, 2015, Medium
<https://medium.com/the-cauldron/its-time-to-stop-using-the-word-retard-738994fbaaed>

Neurodiversity in teaching

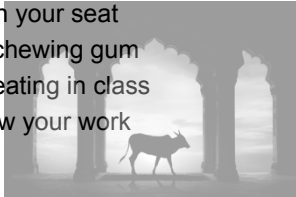
Mental flexibility: not just for students!



Neurodiversity in teaching

Mental flexibility: not just for students!

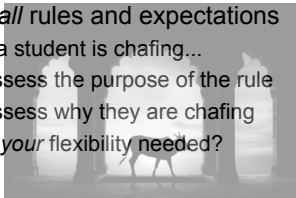
- Sit in your seat
- No chewing gum
- No eating in class
- Show your work



Neurodiversity in teaching

Mental flexibility: not just for students!

- For *all* rules and expectations
 - If a student is chafing...
 - Assess the purpose of the rule
 - Assess why they are chafing
 - Is *your* flexibility needed?



Supporting parents

- Grieving the perfect child
- 30,000 foot view
- Who knows what the future brings?
- What parents really can do

Supporting parents

Grieving the perfect child

"A lot of work I do is to get parents to let go of the ideal child they imagined and appreciate child they have."

Louis Cozolino

Psychologist and professor of psychology

Supporting parents

Grieving the perfect child

"Parents must grieve the loss of their idealized baby."

Ken Moses

quoted in Ellis

Grieving for the Loss of the perfect Child: Parents of Children with Handicaps, Jon B. Ellis, Child and Adolescent Social Work Vol 6, No 4, Winter 1989

Supporting parents

Grieving the perfect child

- Grieving process same stages as grieving a death
- Non-linear and recurrent
- Often re-triggered at key moments of schooling

Grieving for the Loss of the perfect Child: Parents of Children with Handicaps, Jon B. Ellis, Child and Adolescent Social Work Vol 6, No 4, Winter 1989

Supporting parents

Grieving the perfect child

- Parents need accurate information about
 - the child
 - possible outcomes
 - possible treatments

“Is s/he ever going to get over this?”

Grieving for the Loss of the perfect Child: Parents of Children with Handicaps, Jon B. Ellis, Child and Adolescent Social Work Vol 6, No 4, Winter 1989

Supporting parents

Grieving the perfect child

“Is s/he ever going to get over this?”



Supporting parents

Grieving the perfect child

- Parents need
 - a way to tell their stories
 - their feelings validated
 - especially the ambivalent ones
 - support and community

Grieving for the Loss of the perfect Child: Parents of Children with Handicaps, Jon B. Ellis, Child and Adolescent Social Work Vol 6, No 4, Winter 1989

Supporting parents

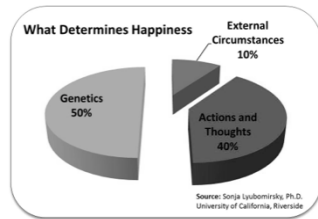
Grieving the perfect child

- Parents need realistic, multifaceted view of future: "Grounded Hope"
 - "Pull up a chair"
 - Diane Provo, Special Education expert
 - 30,000 foot view

Supersurvivors: The Surprising Link Between Suffering and Success, David B. Feldman & Lee Daniel Kravetz, 2014
Grieving for the Loss of the perfect Child: Parents of Children with Handicaps, Jon B. Ellis, Child and Adolescent Social Work Vol 6, No 4, Winter 1989

Supporting parents

30,000 foot view



Supporting parents

30,000 foot view

- Childhood predictors of life satisfaction
 - child's emotional health
 - child's conduct

"The least powerful predictor is the child's intellectual development."

Sir Richard Layard
Economics professor

Supporting parents

30,000 foot view

- George Vaillant & The Grant Study

“And by far the most important influence on a flourishing life is love.”



Supporting parents

Who knows what the future brings?



Supporting parents

Who knows what the future brings?

“We can only imagine a future that is based on our own experience...”

But the reality of the world is that there is an infinite number of niches and we can't predict them.”

Ann Gordon

Psychologist and Board-Certified Educational Therapist

Supporting parents

Who knows what the future brings?

“In a world changing faster than ever, honoring and nurturing neurodiversity is civilization’s best chance to thrive in an uncertain future.”

Neurodiversity Rewires Conventional Thinking About Brains, Steve Silberman - April 16 2013
<http://www.wired.com/2013/04/neurodiversity/>

Supporting parents

What parents really can do

“Parents have a special responsibility and joy as they get to know well and to cultivate their children’s individual minds.”

Dr. Mel Levine
Pediatrician and professor

A Mind at a Time, Mel Levine, p. 13

Supporting parents

What parents really can do

“The more we can see them for who they are, the more they will have the confidence to go forth.”

Dr. Ann Gordon
Psychologist and Board-Certified Educational Therapist

Supporting parents

What you really can do

"Love them unconditionally," she said. "They will show you what they've got, and their abilities will shine. I promise."

Grace Tevlin

Mother of Madison Tevlin, teen with Down syndrome



Teen with Down syndrome defies the odds with beautiful cover of John Legend song, Lisa Flinn TODAY Feb. 6, 2015
<http://www.today.com/parents/teens-amazing-cover-john-legend-song-defies-odds-2D80476819>

Thank You

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to sign up for newsletter, <http://eepurl.com/OfIhP>



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Diana Black Kennedy, MA, ET/P



Training Programs

- **Master-level programs:**
 - Holy Names University, Oakland, CA
 - California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA
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 - Holy Names University, Oakland, CA
 - California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA
 - University of California at Riverside, Riverside, CA
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 - California State University East Bay
 - Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology
- **See www.aetonline.org for more information.**



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 - Professional Educational Therapist (ET/P)
 - Associate Professional Education Therapist
 - Allied Professional (psychologist, social worker, pediatrician, speech/language professional, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.)
 - Student
 - General



Thank you for attending
Adventures in Neurodiversity:
Think and Teach Like an
Educational Therapist
with Diana Black Kennedy
www.MindSparkLearning.com

Our next webinar takes place August 19
Starting on the Right Foot: Helping Students
Embrace the Challenges of a New School Year
 featuring Mary Dee Sklar, author of *50 Tips to Help Students Succeed:*
Develop Your Student's Time-Management and Executive Skills for Life
 and Board Certified Educational Therapist, Susan Micari

Go to www.aetonline.org for more information about
 educational therapy, membership, and training programs.
