

Let's Talk Learning Disabilities

EPISODE 34

In this Episode, Laurie and Abbey interview SJ as a part of the “Living With...” series. SJ talks about what it was like to be diagnosed and live with Visual Processing Disorder. The group discusses red flags, testing, diagnosis, and treatment.

Life Before Getting Diagnosed with a Visual Processing Disorder (3 min)

SJ got diagnosed with a visual processing disorder in 4th grade, around the age of 9 or 10 years old. She remembers a few things about what life was like before getting diagnosed, like writing her name backwards, from right to left, or always writing the J in her name backwards, even after knowing it was wrong. SJ says that she could look at a word or a letter and recognize that it was incorrect, but couldn't execute the correct way of writing it. She also remembers reading with her mom every night before bed and getting very tired after reading one page. She would have her mom read five pages before being able to read another page, and had very big comprehension problems. After being diagnosed, she got prism glasses and spent that summer going through vision therapy.

Testing for Visual Processing Disorder (5 min)

SJ's brother had dyslexia, and she ended up going through the same testing as him. She also went to a regular optometrist who said her vision was completely fine. When she was in fourth grade, she was working with a tutor who noticed that SJ would completely turn her page horizontal when writing, and a couple of other questionable things like grammatical and spelling concerns. That tutor referred SJ to Dr. S (previously on Episode 7 of the podcast), who diagnosed her with Visual Processing Disorder.

Treatment for Visual Processing Disorder (7 min)

After being diagnosed, Dr. S prescribed some special glasses for SJ, called prism glasses. These dramatically changed her ability to read at length and comprehend what she was reading. So much so, that prior to having the glasses, her eyes would get tired after one page and she would have no idea what she had just read. After getting the glasses, she went home to see how it would affect her reading, and finished a 400 page book in two days. This was a dramatic shift for her, from what she could experience without the prism glasses. Aside from reading and comprehension, she experienced better depth perception when wearing the glasses such as being able to walk in a straight line and not bump into things when walking. Copying from the board, and making back and forth movements became so much easier for her with the prism glasses.

Accommodations for Visual Processing Disorder (14 min)

There are definitely some accommodations that could apply to visual processing disorder. SJ specifically, did not have a need for academic accommodations after getting glasses to help with the visual processing function.

Vision Therapy (20 min)

SJ has not had to repeat vision therapy after going through it in fourth grade. The summer she went through therapy, it consisted of a couple of visits per week for 10-12 weeks, and helped tremendously with her ability to process what she sees, and to retain that information, whether that be through reading, writing or physical activity. She doesn't think vision therapy will ever need to be repeated, and keeps up with her treatment through prism glasses and yearly prescription alterations.

Resources:

www.covd.org

Visual Processing Symptoms: <https://bit.ly/3LMUayc>

Contact info for the podcast: letstalklearningdisabilities@gmail.com

E-Diagnostic Learning Website: <https://ediagnosticlearning.com>

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Length of episode 29:43