Let's Talk Learning Disabilities

In this Episode, Laurie and Abbey continue their conversation with Darius Namdaran, founder of BulletMap Academy in Scotland. This is a continuation of a conversation that started on dyslexia in student and adults, mind-mapping, and learning strategies. This portion of the interview dives into managing dyslexia and ADHD in the workplace, along with specific apps and resources to increase productivity.

Managing Dyslexia in the Workplace (2 min)

After spending time teaching techniques of managing dyslexia and mind-mapping techniques to students, and to parents of students with dyslexia, Darius realized the parents and adults who learn these techniques are benefiting from them so well, and using these techniques more intently because they know the pain of having to work without these techniques.

Tools for Dyslexia & ADHD (3 min)

Darius shares specific tools he uses with adults who turn to BulletMap for help. He recommends they use an iPad and download specific apps: Goodnotes, Notability, Otter & Calendar or Task apps. Goodnotes is an app that stores handwritten notes that are written with the apple pencil, keeps them organized, and is even searchable. All of the content that is written can then be searched by topic, or specific words that were written in the handwritten notes. Notability is a wonderful app to use when listening to a lecture, where you can take notes simultaneously and playback the lecture while seeing what notes were taken at the time of that audio content. Darius adds that this would also be a great app to use for someone who has difficulty with auditory processing. Otter is a dictation app that listens to long periods of auditory content such as lectures, zoom meetings, trainings, etc, and transcribes it into textual content. This is great for looking back at incase something was

missed, or you needed to remember specifics after the fact. Aside from that, he recommends using Google calendar to keep track of each task that needs to be done, as little as 15-30 min tasks with automatic reminders and notifications like 10 minute warnings. There are a couple of task apps that Darius has looked at using, and typically recommends Tick Tick. A very dyslexic friendly function of Tick Tick includes dictating tasks. When someone who has dyslexia stops their train of thought to write down a task, or change screens from one to the next, their brain is occupying a high load of information that is difficult to hang on to, and go to the next step, only to lose that train of thought after the task is written down. It occupies a lot less brain processing power to dictate that train of thought, and have it captured in a list immediately.

Workplace Strategy Coaching (13 min)

In the UK, the government provides assistance for those who are challenged by learning disabilities through workplace strategy coaching and other assistance. The government will pay for tools like an ipad, or support software, and the cost of someone sitting down with you to learn these programs, and coach you on how to implement them regularly throughout your day. Darius and his team also offer this remotely through BulletMap for those in America or other countries who may be interested in using something like this as a resource. The coaching goes through stages of implementation from showing you how to use the apps fundamentally, to best practices on organizing them, and how to use them in everyday tasks like sending emails, taking notes, setting reminders, etc.

Reasonable Adjustments or Reasonable Accommodation (17 min)

A lot of people struggle with staying organized at work, or dealing with learning disabilities even on a smaller scale. Something that can be put in place is a reasonable adjustment, or a reasonable accommodation as it's called in the US. Aides such as another monitor to see multiple things side by side, or a standing desk to keep attention and physical movement for someone who has ADHD, can be small accommodations that can help performance in the workplace. Sometimes these are funded by the employer, sometimes they are funded by the

employee, and in the UK, some of these reasonable adjustments can be funded by the government.

Resources:

BulletMap Academy: www.bulletmapacademy.com

Contact info for the podcast: letstalklearningdisabilities@gmail.com

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