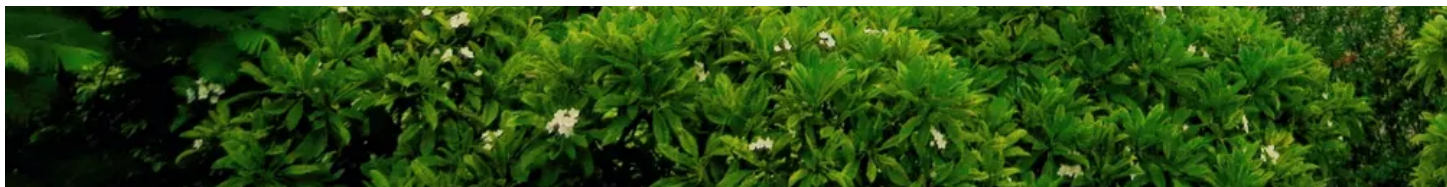


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## Chap 4: M.I.N.D. Strengths—Dyslexic Strengths Explained

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# M.I.N.D. STRENGTHS—DYSLEXIC STRENGTHS EXPLAINED

**Brock L. Eide, MD and Fernette F. Eide, MD in their book *The Dyslexic Advantage* describe four different thinking and processing styles that are found in dyslexia: Material, Interconnected, Narrative and Dynamic Reasoning.** They have an acronym for the four styles: **M.I.N.D. Strengths**. Each dyslexic person has their own unique combination and degree of these styles and the tradeoffs that accompany them. I've drawn the information below from the Eides' great book—please listen to or read their book for an in-depth understanding. Dean Bragonier offers the following brief video describing the four strengths: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8ijgzCjjw&feature=youtu.be>

## MATERIAL REASONING AND M-STRENGTHS

### Definition:

**Great spatial or 3-D reasoning.**

- Think of looking at a blueprint on a page. **A dyslexic with M-strengths will look at the blueprint and quickly be able to see it as a complete, three dimensional building.** While non-dyslexics can learn to do this, a dyslexic person will do this with ease and artistry, like world famous architect Richard Rogers. Some dyslexics are visual. Others are more kinesthetic and feel things. **Dyslexics with M-strengths can make a 3-D model in their mind and are able to “test” it out in their mind to find and correct flaws long before production!**
- A famous dyslexics with M-strengths is Einstein.

- M-strength dyslexics make great mathematicians, engineers, designers, architects, mechanics, contractors, surgeons, painters, sculptors, photographers, pilots, filmmakers and directors. Dyslexics can have great talent in sports which are essentially 3-D expressions of the body.
- Tradeoffs include symbol reversals and subtle language challenges. M-strength people may be late bloomers in the classroom (Einstein did poorly in math) but show amazing creativity outside school.

## INTERCONNECTED REASONING AND I-STRENGTHS

### Definition:

Seeing unique connections that others often miss.

Using different perspectives and approaches to create a big-picture view.

- Because of the greater distances that the neural signals travel in the dyslexic brain, **dyslexics with I-strengths are great at making unusual and creative connections between things.** The Eides write that people with I-strengths possess the “ability to see how phenomenon (like objects, ideas, events or experiences) are related to each other, either by likeness (similarity) or togetherness (that is, association, like correlation or cause and effect).” **They have the ability to see phenomenon from multiple perspectives and many disciplines and unite all sorts of information about a particular idea into a big picture view to “determine its gist.”**
- Douglas Merrill, who struggled greatly with school, went on to Princeton where he did groundbreaking research about learning, decision-making and artificial intelligence. His incredible problem-solving abilities lead him to eventually serve as an early CEO of Google.
- I-strength fields include computer or software design, all sorts of scientists, inventors, clothing and fashion designers, dancers and choreographers, musicians, actors, comedians, trainers and people in the fields of history, political science, sociology, anthropology and philosophy.
- Tradeoffs can include some difficulty with fast fine-detail processing.

## NARRATIVE REASONING AND N-STRENGTHS

### Definition:

Being able to create vivid mental scenes to display important ideas and concepts from the past, present and future.

Having a great personal memory (a.k.a episodic memory).

Being able to write so vividly that others imagine it clearly.

- **Dyslexics with strong N-strengths turn experience into long term memories by using episodic or personal memory.** This means that they store factual memories in a form that supplies context to the facts. For them, remembering stimulates events, episodes or experiences that they've had. Remembering is like “restaging mental scenes” from bits of past personal experience. The Eides' definition: “Episodic memory has a highly narrative or ‘scene-based’ format in which concepts and ideas are conceived or recalled as experiences.” **This is different than creating long term memory semantically or impersonally as abstract data with no context or experience,** as in remembering by rote fact that the Magna Carta was signed in 1216. A dyslexic using personal memory has access to an incredibly rich storehouse of personal experience. They excel not only at remembering the past but the ability to “imagine the future, solve problems, test the fitness of proposed inventions or plans, or create imaginary scenarios

and stories.” **They have the ability to assemble and re-assemble multiple aspects of experience and use their memory in unique recombinatory and artistic ways, for example to create poetry, novels and screenplays.**

- Pulitzer Prize winning poet Philip Schultz is dyslexic. Musician John Lennon was dyslexic. Anne Rice is a dyslexic who has used her N-strengths to write the twenty-seven books in her series that begin with *Interview with the Vampire*.
- N-strengths occupations include poets, songwriters, novelists, journalists, screenwriters, counselors and therapists, coaches, teachers, public speakers, game designers, attorneys, sales and marketing folks, and public relations.
- Dyslexics drawing from N-strengths may struggle to remember things by rote or “bare semantic facts” and instead excel when they store things by using episodic memory and personal experience.

## DYNAMIC REASONING AND D-STRENGTHS

### Definition:

**Taking information and accurately making predictions about the past and the future.**

**The ability to notice patterns, even where some information is missing, and correctly make predictions.**

**Understanding how to deal with change and uncertainty from looking at qualitative data.**

**Having and following insight.**

- D-strengths add an additional predictive ability to N-Strengths. **It is the ability to look at information and using episodic memory to accurately predict outcomes in the future** (very handy for things like predicting financial markets) **or the past** (as in the work of geologists and paleontologists) rather than using cause-and-effect linear reasoning. It is very helpful when chunks of information are missing or unavailable, as dyslexics with D-strengths not only get the “gist” but can understand outcomes and antecedents without having access to all of the information.
- Vince Flynn struggled mightily in school, but was determined to become a writer. He was author of twelve counterterrorism-themed novels. His ability to predict and express were so startling that after his publication of Memorial Day he was contacted by officials at the Department of Energy because they were certain he must have been fed classified information!
- D-strength dyslexics find occupations as entrepreneurs, CEOs, venture capitalists, small business owners, business consultants, tax planners and CFOs, economists, doctors (especially immunology, rheumatology, endocrinology, oncology), farmers and ranchers.
- Dyslexics with D-strengths use their powers of intuition. They may be seen as being “passive” or “daydreaming” while they “stare out the window” as nondyslexics may misunderstand the nature of the way they “work.” They arrive at accurate answers quickly, but sometimes must learn how to explain to others the steps to arrive at their surprising and accurate conclusions.