What is a learning disability?

Information for LS 281

Famous People with LD &/or ADD

- Cher
- Sylvester Stallone
- Bruce Jenner
- Henry Winkler
- Dustin Hoffman
- Tom Cruise
- Whoopi Goldberg
- Jay Leno
- Albert Einstein
- Woodrow Wilson
- Thomas Edison
- Charles Schwab
- Picasso
- Napoleon

LEARNING DISABILITIES

- Average to Above Average Ability (Intelligence)
- Average Academic Achievement (in at least one area)
- Severe Processing Deficit
- Severe Aptitude-Achievement Discrepancy
ABILITY or APTITUDE

- Reasoning skills & problems solving are measured with standardized tests

Achievement

- Standardized Tests Measure:
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Math

Differences in Cognitive Ability
Processing Deficit

- Problems with INPUT, INTEGRATION, or OUTPUT of information
  - Visual Perception
  - Auditory Perception
  - Memory - Long or Short Term
  - Sequencing
  - Abstract Thought
  - Spontaneous Language

PROCESSING DEFICIT

VISUAL PERCEPTION

- Frequently confuses letters and numbers
- May cause problems with reading, spelling, math, and proof reading
  - Example: 69 =96
  - b = d
Auditory Perception

- Problem keeping up with what is being said
- Trouble with lectures
- May need frequent repetition of oral information
  - *Example:* hears “blue” for “blow”

MEMORY

- **Short Term** - up to one minute
  - *Example:* inability to remember a phone number long enough to dial it
- **Long Term** - problems remembering what was learned
  - *Example:* forgets names, information needed for tests

Sequencing

- Remembering or putting things in order
- Can be visual and/or auditory
- May cause problems with:
  - Spelling
  - Complex math problems
  - Essay organization
Abstract Thought

- Difficulty understanding or explaining complex concepts
- May experience problems with:
  - understanding jokes
  - Reading comprehension
  - Math word problems

Spontaneous Language

- Trouble with word finding
- May occur in written or spoken language

What a Learning Disability Is Not

- An intellectual disability
- A lack of motivation
- An emotional disturbance
- A result of a poor academic background
- A visual, auditory, or other physical deficit