

ALDA

UPDATE

Express!

Premiere Edition

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Doug's Story

I first realized I had learning difficulties when I was placed in a "special" class at school after failing Grade 2 three times. I do not have happy memories of school as I found everything that involved reading, writing and math very difficult.



I was okay at science and P.E. but everything else was tough. The Special Needs teachers were kind and did help me, but the other students gave me a hard time and called me "dumb", "stupid" and "retarded". Nobody seemed to understand what was wrong with me and my parents were told that I just was not trying hard enough. Because of this, I didn't get any support from my family and I felt like I did not have anybody I could talk to. This continued throughout High School.

When I first left school I was fortunate to get a production job that did not require any reading or writing. I was happy there. I felt I could handle things and as I learned coping strategies over the years, my life at work was a lot easier than it had been in school. I stayed there for thirteen years until the company went bankrupt. After that, I tried several jobs that did not work out. I became more and more frustrated at having to look for work by myself and eventually ended up on welfare.

Around this time I saw an article in the newspaper about a support group for adults with learning difficulties. The support group was held at ALDA and I decided to check them out. When I first went to ALDA I was very shy, but soon realized that there were many other people with the same difficulties as me. For the first time I felt like I had structured support and it felt safe!

After spending some time at ALDA, I was given the opportunity to have a formal diagnostic assessment and was diagnosed with a learning disability. Although I was not exactly happy about the diagnosis, it was actually a relief to know the reason why I had been having problems.

All that was many years ago and I am still here! For the past 19 years I have been volunteering for ALDA. I chose to stay around because, here, I am around people that understand my strengths and weaknesses and I feel accepted. I have learned to become more focused and have developed my social skills enabling me to interact more comfortably with others.

My past experiences in school and work have made me better prepared to help others in a similar situation. If it was not for ALDA's friendly support and understanding, I would not be where I am today. I have met some great people and would recommend anyone with learning difficulties to give them a try!

Helping people with unique learning needs develop greater independence!

The purpose of life is to find out
'Who am I?', 'Why am I here?' and
'Where am I going?' *George Harrison*



George Harrison portrait (used with special permission) by
ALDA mentor, Amber G.
See more of Amber's artwork on the internet at
<http://ambersartpage.tripod.com>

for re-igniting the Update *Express* bulletin
came out of ALDA's mission statement, which
reads:

“Adults with learning disabilities are intelligent,
capable people who can be productive citizens.
ALDA exists to support adults with learning
disabilities who wish to achieve personal,
social and economic independence.”

The hope is that the Update *Express* bulletin
will provide a venue for people with learning
disabilities to share their experiences with
others who are in need of encouragement
and support.

Darci

Darci Knibb,
Executive Director



Helping people work with learning disabilities!



SPECIAL THANKS

to our mentors for all of their contributions in
reviving what we now call ALDA Update
Express.

It is through these contributions that we can
reach out to the community at large and
provide them with a better understanding of
learning disabilities and the people who live
with them.

Our hope does not stop here. The inspiration

ALDA | Adult
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City of Vancouver

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Content submissions are welcome but may be subject to editing for content or brevity!

BINGO!



Home of Starship

11th & Main St., Vancouver

Gaming revenue is vital to ALDA so we can
continue to provide a wide range of services
for adults who have learning disabilities, but
we can't do it without your help!

Play TODAY!

British Columbia
Lottery Corporation

Know your limit, play within it.

19+
YEARS