

ALDA

UPDATE

Express!

Summer Edition

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Taylor's Story

I have always been pegged as different from a very young age. After some testing in grade one, I found out I had a learning disability.

I have always struggled. In elementary school, up until grade five, I never learned my teacher's name. It took half a year to be able to recall their name and that was quite a triumph.

"Dyslexia" is the common answer I give when asked. To explain my difficulties would require too much writing, so the words "sequencing", "memory recall" and a dash of "low attention span" finish the mix.

I was lucky to be in a good program for gifted kids with learning disabilities in high school and had strong advocates on my side. But it took the collective effort of my parents, teachers and myself to keep me going.

After graduating came the big question, what do I do in my life? I have never found one particular area of interest that stood out from many.

I am only now narrowing down what I am interested in. I have heard too many times "why don't you just get a job being a cashier?" I could, but would it make me very depressed and anxious, which are things I already struggle with.

So the battle has been finding something I could do that I could be proud of doing. My first job as a telephone surveyor quickly became miserable with the constant negatives from the people I phoned. I needed a job with a positive atmosphere.



My second job was handing out a local free newspaper. I learned people's names, gave directions and tried to become someone that most people looked forward to. But working outside over the winter and early spring I never was able to get over constant colds and flu.

I can't say that finding these jobs was easy; in fact it took a lot of work and help. My boyfriend has been a great support. The people at ALDA

have helped me to a great degree too, not just in looking for work, but in other ways as well. Finding resources can be a large part of the battle.

After being let go from my last job, it took me several months to get the strength of will to try to start looking again. With the help of ALDA I realized I wanted to work "with people" and we were able to find something that fit the criteria.

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Helping people with unique learning needs develop greater independence!

All that I can say is that I have high hopes that it will work out.

Having a learning disability I have struggled each step of the way, in a slow uphill battle. I am 27 years old, and I feel like I am just starting to accomplish what much younger people are already doing, in working to be what I want to be. If this try doesn't work out, I know that I will be that much stronger for the next try.



Taylor's Artwork

Taylor has a diploma in textile arts from Capilano College and is a big fan of colours.

The red bird (on our front page) was a three year evolution created with oils and water colours on canvas.



Jiffy markers, felt pens and highlighters on canvas were used to create the dragons (above and right). Dragons and the heads of birds are a constant theme throughout her artwork.

In discussing the pictures Taylor said:

"I have always been artistically expressive. I use art as a form of self-expression. It makes me feel good about creating something and being able to say "this is actually mine." Even when things are a real struggle in my life, I am able to feel as though I have accomplished something. Seeing proof that I am capable of something is really powerful. My artwork is very personal. I don't share it often. It is something I do for fun."



ALDA's Mentorship Service can always use your input. If you are an adult with life experience then you qualify!

Our members, participants and clients love to hear what it's been like for you, where you're at now and where you'd like to be eventually.

Either one-on-one or in groups. They gain valuable insight into how to handle the small things in life that can be so hard to master when you have a learning disability. The impact can be very subtle... yet tremendous!

Mentees have said:

"I feel I'm not alone with this."

"I realize that I can do the same things as other people just in a different way and at my own pace."

"That it can't hold you back!"

"It made me feel more ready to take on anything!"

Call 604-683-5554

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

Helping people work with learning disabilities!

