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## PERSONAL GROWTH THROUGH THE BRAIN MANAGEMENT® COURSE

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### Abstract

The following article presents a graduate student's assessment of personal development and growth that has been facilitated by the practice and integration of the Brain Management® techniques into her daily personal and professional life. The role of personal belief statements as the key to releasing learning challenges, such as dyslexia, is given particular attention. A glossary provides explanations for some of the exercises used in Brain Management®.

A glossary at the end of this paper will help to explain terminology used in the Brain Management® Course (indicated with asterisks).

Keywords: Brain Management, Dyslexia, Personal Beliefs, Learning, Personal Growth, Reading Comprehension

### Dyslexia: an enormous challenge in my life

As I tell my story, I ponder the question: "Is dyslexia a hidden jewel, a torture, or a beneficial companion for life?" Like many other people of my generation, I was introduced to the term 'dyslexia' as an adult. My second child, Liesel, was in first grade only a short while when her sunny disposition shifted quickly from being cheerful to being dispirited. Many afternoons when I picked her up from school she was in tears: "No matter how hard I work. Mom, I can never earn the stars for my very best work. I really try hard, Mom. I do the very best I can. Why can't I get stars for my work? Everyone else gets the stars but I just can't get them."

Alarmed and somewhat panicked, I stood by as the teacher worked with my daughter after class. The teacher's best intentions and efforts to assist her outside of regular class time kept failing to get her up to the level of the rest of her classmates. In that first year, tests were administered that classified her as dyslexic – she was labeled as 'a special needs' child. She used to come home after school and cower in a chair, pulling a blanket over her head; she wished she could just die and go to Jesus rather than go back to school.

These events triggered wide-ranging emotions within me which oscillated between denial (which manifested in the form of anger), panic, and a profound sense of mourning. Fully supported by my husband, I embarked on an intensive search to address my child's needs. While I conducted my research, I placed my daughter into a school that focused on educating dyslexic children. By the end of my daughter's third grade her depression had become so severe that the teachers from the new school asked me to pick her up at noon every day because she could no longer function in the afternoons. My nine year old knew instinctively that nothing this specialized school was doing was actually helping her. The school had implemented the Orton-Gillingham techniques, which are successful with some types of dyslexia other than the dyslexia that my daughter experienced.

Since infancy, my daughter had known how to verbalize her feelings quite well. She cried herself to sleep many evenings, and one night she sobbed, "I feel as if I am lost in the woods and there is no way out." Meanwhile my relentless search for answers and solutions had left me with a better understanding that her depression was only a byproduct or a symptom of the deeper underlying learning difficulties, which I was not willing to treat through medication. The next day I pulled her out of school.

After traveling across the country and listening to many authorities at conventions and medical symposia, I eventually identified the Lindamood-Bell Learning Systems in San Luis Obispo, California as a modality that had the greatest potential for assisting my daughter's learning. She was identified with an auditory processing deficit, a reading comprehension deficit, dyslexia, dyscalculia, and attention deficit disorder. In the Lindamood-Bell Clinic, Liesel was introduced to pre-phonemic processes and phonemic awareness, as well as comprehension imagery. After a short time in this program she began to blossom and so did I. I learned as she learned. I was allowed as an observer in many of her one-on-one sessions with her clinicians and I learned parts of the processes which she was taught.

Liesel returned to the clinic periodically throughout her remaining school years. She never accepted the label of 'learning disabled.' I am ever so glad she did not. She completed high school in part through home schooling and in part through a private Socratic school that fostered her many talents and gifts. She attended standard college courses for two years and she became an emotionally sound and stable mother, a licensed real estate professional, and a private pilot. Her foundation is very solid and she has learned many tools that help her cope with dyslexic issues which continue to make themselves known in her life, as they do in mine.

Deep, old wounds were opened up for me through my daughter's plight. Her despair had become my despair: this began to tear down the walls of protection and denial I had built around my own dyslexia issues. I had not recognized all of this back then, but now I know that my daughter had become my voice and the expression of my own denied emotions. My learning issues did not appear as severe to me as hers seemed to be, but I cannot truly know this because I have acquired many compensatory skills throughout the years.

I was born in 1949 in Munich Germany; I attended a German public school in which the willow switch or paddle were the preferred tools to ensure our learning process. However, intimidation and fears of beatings were nothing compared to the ridicule and shame I felt whenever my teachers resorted to the tactics of humiliating me in front of the class. Every attempt my teachers made to try to force me into overcoming reading and writing issues failed. Despite these severe difficulties, all of my grades throughout my school years were As and Bs except the grades that dealt with writing reading and grammar. This was not only the case with the German language; I encountered the same problem in the other languages that I learned. I lived my school years in a state of fear and discomfort, and on the days of dictations I was in an absolute state of terror. I knew that no matter how much I practiced or how I had prepared myself with the new word lists, I would end up with a D or an F on many (but

not all) spelling tests. Luckily, we were also graded on the content of our essays, which put me back into the passing grade category throughout my school years. Now I recognize that my teachers did the best they could, for they had no idea what dyslexia is, and neither did my parents or I.

For most of my adult life I tried to hide my spelling issues. In the process, I was hiding myself in many other ways. Hiding spelling and grammar issues is nearly impossible, especially when I have to fill out a handwritten form without an electronic spellchecker at my side or when I approach the simple task of writing a check. It is difficult to look up a word in a manual dictionary when you do not know how to spell the word; it becomes a frustrating and time-consuming guessing process. Needless to say, the computer's spell-check program has become one of my best support systems.

One of the hidden jewels that dyslexia has been for me is that I am on a constant search for ways to compensate for the differences in my brain, which supposedly do not allow me to absorb material in a 'normal' or 'standard' way. One of the ways my creativity shows up is in my filing system. I often lose files when I put them into alphabetical order in a vertical file drawer because quite often, I simply cannot recall how I may have labeled the file. I remember where my files are if I have piles or stacks of files around my desk that I sort by topic. In my office I have dedicated an entire closet to vertical letter trays that are stacked in rows. I have a visual memory of which row or at what level a particular document is likely to be because I have created categories that do not follow an alphabetical rule. I simply create a category that is compatible with my visual recall system.

I do not know if my solution to overcoming writer's block is unique to a dyslexic mind, but I have found it to be helpful for me to leave the structure of conventional essay writing behind. More often than not, I begin with my concluding paragraph on paper first. This helps me to get started on what I really want to express. It is not uncommon for me to write my introduction at the very final stages of my assignments.

### **The Brain Management® course**

Over the past four years of graduate studies, it has become clearer to me that one of my underlying unspoken intentions and motivations in participating in the rigors of academia was to transcend the 'learning challenged' label that I used to carry in my heart as something embarrassing and shameful. My active participation in the rituals and assignments of this The Brain Management® course have changed many of the perceptions I had of myself as a learner. I have not asked for special accommodations that are available at most colleges for the 'learning disabled' as I complete my doctorate degree: instead, I dedicate long hours to writing and editing, which makes it difficult to take a heavy class load. Because of this immense amount of time I spend on my written work, I sometimes take only one course per semester and I work very closely with a wonderful editor.

The Brain Management® course teaches students how to undo negative subconscious beliefs (or find the hidden software); it then becomes possible to consciously re-program new beliefs that are supported by intentional designs. I chose to participate in the Brain Management® course to broaden my skills for coping with the variety of learning challenges I encounter, but primarily I sought to overcome slow reading skills and low reading comprehension scores. I do not know yet what it is like to read a technical text such as a statistics composite and be able to form instant mental images of the content. I have to rely on something that comes from a knowing that cannot be described by words. What I found to be true for me is that the Brain Management® course supported my dyslexic brain's innate ability to use intuition in order to connect with texts. In this course I received more assistance and personal growth than I had bargained for. I found that I emerged from this class with new confidence and a new perspective on my life. All I had to do is believe that this method works and then practice, practice, practice and be willing to just let the process reveal its power in me.

In my first Brain Management® class assignment we were each asked to write about how we positioned ourselves as a learner. I positioned myself as a dyslexic learner with attention deficit disorder. The question helped me identify this label as a belief system, bringing it into focus as one of the major obstacles and ongoing internal disputes I have been facing. During the introduction to the program, I adopted the daily ritual of reading new belief statements that I would prefer to hold. I have maintained this ritual over many months. In those statements I declare myself 'limitless.' The concept of being a learning disabled or learning challenged student is in direct conflict with being limitless.

The instructor, Martina Steiger, was instrumental in helping me realize the options I have in how I choose to perceive these challenges. By responding to my essays with carefully constructed suggestions and questions, she has led me to open my eyes to distinguish between some of my previously held perceptions of obstacles that felt like burdens to me. Following her suggestions, I recognized more and more of my subliminal preprogramming, and I initiated working through these challenges with a more positive attitude. The daily mantra, "My capacity to learn is limitless." [1] is helping me shift my perceptions about having to overcome disempowering obstacles, and helping to convert them into challenges that can be transcended.

One of those challenges that became obvious at the onset of this course was the mastery of the three-minute distraction index drill.\* This exercise requires that one read from a book without allowing any mental distractions to intervene. I have worked on this mastery intermittently over the span of this course. I had felt stuck for a long time, unable to maintain my focus when reading. After reframing my belief statement, I have now successfully mastered the four-minute distraction index drill. This may seem like a miniscule shift to some people; however, for me it is an accomplishment that I can attribute to my willingness to stay the course by continuously repeating my belief statements.

Family life as well as business challenges often created monumental imbalances to the routines I had originally established. My available time for study seemed to decrease constantly as the course went on and my studies seemed to become a burden on top of these other burdens. This struggle brought me to a surrender point. To handle this dilemma, again Dr. Steiger offered some reflections that assisted me greatly in shifting my perception. The phrase, "I am ready, willing and able to enjoy and be in the now moment" helped me begin to view the two conflicting forces which were demanding my time and attention as opportunities to practice a new art of responding to the perceived obstacles. I reframed this tug of war that kept me on an emotional roller-coaster ride – into an opportunity to learn how to balance. The simple little shift in how I chose to label or judge this need for balance in my life made a huge difference in assisting me to pull myself out of a deep emotional hole.

Although I became imbalanced again later on, I have managed to follow through on my daily brain balancing exercises without interruptions. Some of the other routine drills of the Brain Management program, which I used to practice daily, have become sporadic. I may or may not practice the regular dictionary drill\* and the regular daily mental photographing\* of many pages in books, depending on my ability to manage my time. I practice eye chart exercises\* several times a week, since the chart sits by my computer and I still use it when my computer expects me to wait for something. I am pleased with my successes in using the recall method of 'opening a book at random.' In the course we are taught that we program our minds to scan a book very rapidly and recall the information easily and effortlessly when we need it. My preferred recall style became the method of allowing intuition to guide me to the places in the books where I needed to extract the details necessary for writing my assignments.

In assignment two, I took great pride in reporting that I could now actually produce an essay in less than a week. This was a correct statement until I got to assignment five, in which I had to switch and learn how to express myself in a scholarly voice. This was such a monumental hurdle for me that I went into a dark hole of depression over the fear and doubt that I had created in my own mind in

regard to this challenge. This depression made me realize that the old patterns from childhood classroom experiences had re-appeared and highlighted for me how easily and unconsciously old belief systems can still take hold in my life, even at a time when I thought that I was so alert to my daily thought processes. I felt stuck, and I felt like I was suddenly in a bad dream and could not understand how I got there. This gave me the opportunity to learn something in the ways I learn best: by touching, feeling and experiencing.

During the time that I was re-editing my fifth scholarly paper, I was also photographing Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. I used Pirsig's book for my four-minute distraction index drill and was pleasantly surprised by the synchronicity of this passage, which superbly related to my bewilderment over how 'stuck' I had been in the scholarly paper assignment. Here is what caught my eye in Pirsig:

When traditional rationality divides the world into subjects and objects it shuts out Quality, and when you're really stuck it's Quality, not any subjects or objects, that tells you where you ought to go.

By returning our attention to Quality it is hoped that we can get technological work out of the noncaring subject-object dualism and back into craftsmanlike self-involved reality again, which will reveal to us the facts we need when we are stuck. [2]

Lessons I am learning in other classes are also helping to deepened my personal understanding that the quality of my life depends on my ability and willingness to transcend the old belief patterns, which could be as easily expressed in terms of Archetypal Patterns, as well as in the Inner Counselor language of 'old symbols' and 'new symbols.' [3]

### **Internal deconstructions and reconstructions**

The road to overcoming my old belief systems has its ups and downs. In the last few weeks, when I was reciting the belief statements from our course manual, I noticed that I paused rather consistently while pondering the second half of the very first statement: "1. Fear and doubts are only thoughts. I create my thoughts and I can change them." [4] This pause made me realize that I had an internal conflict with the statement. On some level(s), I did not believe that I had the power to create my thoughts. I came to the point where I could no longer support this statement. After contemplating this for a while, I finally rewrote the first line in my Brain Management® workbook to now state: "I attach values to my thoughts and I can change my perception of those values."

Gradually, some of the events in my life began to connect various internal processes for me that had previously appeared unrelated. While on a hike this summer with a dear friend of mine, I experienced a tremendous shift; I had an epiphany of life-changing proportions. She had encouraged me to follow my 'anger' thoughts to where they had originated and I discovered that they were a cover for fear. When I attempted to follow the fear to its origins, I ended up with 'nothingness.' Finding 'no thing' left me in a state of feeling absolutely suspended. It is difficult to find adequate words to describe the sense of suspension in a space without feelings or animation or sense of place, for there are no words that could reach this space. This space was neither threatening nor illuminating. If there is such a place as a void or a vacuum in nature maybe that is where I had landed. This experience caused me to go through a paradigm shift in my family dynamics instantaneously. I now believe that thoughts arise out of the overall universal context of our lives and each of us attaches our judgment, discernment, emotion, or value to a thought as it arises. I also concluded that there are times when our physical response and emotional response precede a thought (for example in a car accident) and then we attach a value to the thought that arises out of the context of the experience.

The reflections arising out of my personal ponderings over whether or not I create a thought, and my reflections on Pirsig's musing regarding 'Quality' led me to another question. What if the paradigm in which I personally create the quality or the value of a thought is nothing more than just another creation of an energetic wave of my mind, which comes from the same source as the original thought? Does it not become invalid or meaningless or non-influential, no matter when I let go of the concept that there is a mind which is separate from that energy field from which the very thought had arisen? What if any mind construct is only noticeable when one focuses on it at a given time and it may change when we examine it the next time? Would a thought not be much like observing an electron or projectile under a microscope as described by Amit Goswami in *The Self-Aware Universe*? Goswami states, "When we make an initial observation of any submicroscopic projectile, we find it localized in a tiny wave packet, as a particle. After the observation, however, the packet spreads, and the spread of the packet is the cloud of our uncertainty about the packet." [5]

What are we actually perceiving? Maybe this is as close as I will get for now to understanding that everything is an illusion, which I create by my judgment of observation and my thoughts – as is being suggested in *A Course in Miracles*:

Projection makes perception. The world you see is what you gave it, nothing more than that. But thought is no more than that, it is not less. Therefore to you it is important. It is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition. As a man thinketh, so does he perceive. Therefore, seek not to change the world, but choose to change your mind about the world. [6]

Finally, through Goswami's remarks, which I applied by identifying myself as the 'cloud,' suddenly a switch had been turned on that created all the links in my understanding of what I have been studying. With the invisible switch turned on, I recognized the connection between the energy of the words on the page and my energy; I intuitively know that we share the same energy. The concept of not being separable suddenly emerged as an epiphany. (It was not only an 'aha!' moment, it was also as if I heard a voice saying, "What took you so long?") This roundabout thought process of connecting the associated texts of this Brain Management® course with the first line in the course manual's preliminary belief statements helped me to recognize at last that I could actually go back to the statement's original form and believe that I do create my own thoughts! What an exciting and decisive moment for my personal evolution in this program.

This incident helped me to recognize for the first time on a new level of consciousness that I had internalized the photographed material on levels that did not seem to be accessible within my previously known paradigms. I was recalling the content of the books at this precise moment when I wanted to explain in this essay what transformations I have been privileged to put into practice.

### **Settling into the new, reconstructed me**

The Brain Management® course teaches students how to undo negative subconscious beliefs (or find the hidden software); it then becomes possible to consciously re-program new beliefs that are supported by intentional designs. My new design is to accept dyslexia as a gift which has enabled me to become very creative – and that in spite of how it looks when I cannot recall how to spell correctly.

It is conceivable that out of this internal revision of the meaning of the words, 'create thoughts' that my life will shift on multiple levels. I now have concluded that my thoughts and beliefs represent the 'I' that identifies itself as all of its mind constructs and at the same time it is the 'I' that is part of the particles in the infinite universe from which all thoughts emerge. This 'I' is the same 'I' that creates all of its

own projections and thus creates its own universe from which it cannot be disconnected, ever, no matter what definitions or words I may conger up to define it.

This incident not only provided a miniscule insight into the theory of non-duality in philosophy which I had read and heard about prior to this shift, but up until that particular moment I could never really relate to these theories about non-duality from a deeper internal 'knowing.' Here is an example of how this newly internalized concept of non-duality may look like in my world as a professional businesswoman and mother and wife who up until this moment had maneuvered through life for fifty-eight years attempting to hide the turmoil she was experiencing from the outside world. In the past, when I was asked to handwrite a note or a memo, I would get a response from someone who was shocked at my spelling. When they would say, "Gee, don't you know how to write?" I would always respond with immense anxiety. My response was already in the matrix, so with shame and embarrassment I would have to admit, "I guess not." I kept attracting incidents into my life that would allow me to see how I thought of myself. I only heard in their voices what I was thinking and feeling about myself. Now I can see these people and the challenges (or the false beliefs) as the gifts that had highlighted my own criticism about my dyslexia. They had been purposely sprinkled throughout my life, teaching me the spiritual lessons that I was meant to transcend. Maybe the next time someone criticizes my spelling I will answer differently because now I can recognize their innocence, as well as mine. I hope to respond by saying, "Thank you for noticing: I am still learning how to spell," which will help me feel humbled and freed by the love that is embodied in my interaction with my self-created universe.

While in an emotional state which may be caused by a trigger stemming from an old belief (still undiscovered), I may or may not recall this knowing of which I speak right now. I believe our lives are constructed of an endless series of emotional fixations or automatic emotional responses that have been left uninvestigated as to their origins and/or original purposes. What I am suggesting is that upon close examination of these emotional triggers, and through adopting a willingness to work with them rather than deny their existence, they can be transcended. I have been experiencing one of those automatic emotional triggers all of my life. Up until now had I not wanted to talk about my dyslexia because it has always been embarrassing and it always plunged me into a very dysfunctional state of being while in a crowd of people. These automatic responses are very similar to those encountered in my grade school years when I was singled out for an assignment in front of the class.

Whenever I am called upon to speak in a crowd or even when I want to ask a question. This automatic physical response takes over my entire being. I have always perceived talking to a crowd as stressful: my body shakes, my voice trembles, and my brain begins to shut down. This physical response happens regardless of the fact that I wanted to speak, and regardless of whether or not I am in the audience with a microphone or on the podium in front of the class or group. Similar anxiety is also present during test taking, which is particularly frustrating because my brain begins to shut down automatically. Although I have made a great amount of progress in this area, my physical responses let me know that I have to go to even deeper levels in my subconscious to unearth the false beliefs that cause these automatic physical responses. My new awareness of this has led me to the discovery that denial has been the most prominent addiction in my life.

This self-discovery has led me to apply the Brain Management® system into my daily life more than ever. I also began working with Dr Dan Benor with a trauma releasing process called WHEE. [8] I found Dr Benor's WHEE technique to be highly effective and harmonious with the Brain Management® teachings. Both are helping me to sweep out of my body the residual pain that seems to have been lodged in my body for decades. Only when I am ready to hear the truth about my old beliefs can I go into honest inquiry about those beliefs, as the sage Byron Katie suggests in her process called 'Doing The Work.' Only after I have made a truthful assessment about my old beliefs am I open to embracing the new, as Dr Dan Benor suggests in his WHEE method, or as the Brain Management®

class teaches. Willingness to be open to receive new insights and an intention to re-unite with our limitless and loving selves appear to be key ingredients to have all the methods described herein become effective.

### **Further applications of the Brain Management principles**

Professor Martina Steiger provided me a further opportunity to become a better observer/witness of myself. Over the last year I had the privilege to be in on the group telephone conferences in which the participants can ask their questions pertaining to this course. In one of the meetings, the most prominent questions focused mostly on how to wrap one's mind around some of the concepts taught in this class.

It seemed to me the telephone-conference participants were attempting to grasp a non-linear concept with linear tools. As I heard the questions it made me more aware that some of the personal belief statements that I had written in my course manual might answer some of the group's questions. These statements identified beliefs that blocked my ability to allow myself to open into the intuitive mode of functioning that is required in order to activate knowledge acquired through the Subliminal Dynamics reading. Here are some of my personal belief statements that I had written a year ago that were particularly relevant:

#### **13. MY LINEAR MIND YIELDS TO MY ALL-KNOWING ~~MIND~~ PRESENCE.-**

I had crossed out the word mind and replaced it with the word presence.

The next day after the conference call I woke up and I felt as if something was wrong with what I had shared with the group. Belief statement # 13 does not sound like is my own language. It sounds to me as if this could have come out of *A Course in Miracles*, which happened to be one of the books I was photographing for my exercises. I went to the book to look for the quote. I have not found it yet. I now trust that this belief statement came through that book's source.

#### **25. I TRUST MY INNER GUIDANCE.**

Although I still fail to trust my inner guidance at times, I have become more aware when I seemed to have pushed that inner voice aside. I do trust my inner guidance that my belief statement (13) was influenced by photographing *A Course in Miracles*, however I did not recognize it until now. Noticing this is a sign of my progress. Becoming more aware and conscious is the key to elevating my personal vibration to higher levels, which means to me that I can be more present in the moment. What is particularly important to me about noticing that I do not shut down my insights is that the fear of past trauma is subsiding and I am learning to trust the world and my intuition again.

#### **19. EVERY DAY I IMPROVE MY MEMORY.**

I could not remember my access code to my security gate – it is only 4 digits, but I had to look it up every time I went through the gate. Needless to say, phone numbers were nearly impossible for me to memorize. After working with this belief statement, I now use a calling card by memory, containing 20 digits.

My revised 2007 statement 19 now reads:

**EVERY DAY I IMPROVE MY MEMORY AND THE SOURCE OF MY QUOTES.**

I attribute my past poor memory skills to dyslexia and possibly Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or trauma from my childhood school experience, which is on my list to shift into a new concept that I now label as 'Dyslexia in Recovery.' There are many old beliefs surfacing all the time and revisions of what I wrote before are ongoing. My personal notebook is full of these, and I share here but a few of them:



29. EVERY DAY MY WRITING AND ACCURACY SKILLS IMPROVE AND INCREASE IN SPEED.

12. EVERY DAY I WRITE MY ASSIGNMENTS WITH EASE AND ACCURACY.

21. EVERY DAY I GAIN CONFIDENCE IN MY INNER COUNSELOR AND ARCHETYPAL INTERPRETATION TALENTS, AS WELL AS MY WRITING ABILITIES. I TRUST I AM BEING GUIDED TOWARD MY MISSION.

(21) included my intention to overcome my hurdles in the classes I was taking simultaneously with the Brain Management® course and it also includes my trust that some day I will find what my research project will be for my dissertation.

22. EVERYDAY I BECOME MORE CONSIDERATE AND COMPASSIONATE TOWARD MYSELF AND OTHERS.

To illustrate how this belief statement may have come about a year ago and is still important for me to read to myself today on a daily basis, I give the following example: About three or four days ago I had to write the word Los Angeles in one of my papers. I wrote 'Los Ancheles,' and the computer let me know, as it does ever so frequently, that there is an error in my spelling. I have been to Los Angeles many times; I have seen that word in many places. However, if the computer had not pointed it out to me I would not have seen the error. Spell check on my modern computer could not help me with this one. I tried to adjust this word: I went from Ancheles to Anchelos to other variations, but the red line would not go away. I could not adjust the word and I could not see what was wrong with it. Finally, I had to go to another book to find how it is spelled. I had to go letter by letter to find the error.

I now realize that this demonstration of my inability to see where my spelling error lies is the same as one's inability to recognize how one's faulty belief system can keep a person stuck. Creating new belief systems becomes at least as painstakingly detailed as looking up a word and going letter by letter to compare the old with the new so that the new can completely replace the old. The revelation here is that many times we absolutely cannot see what is amiss right before our eyes. Sometimes we cannot even tell that something is amiss. I would not have caught the misspelled word 'Los Ancheles' if the computer had not alerted me to this error.

This is the deeper and richer revelation for me in the context of course and life in general. To learn to be more compassionate with myself allows me then to do the same with others. We often judge other people for how or who they are. We do not know if they could change or be different. We resist looking at our own discomfort with whatever is bothering us about the others. So learning to love what is in the moment helps to overcome the resistance. Without resistance, the path opens to the subliminal dynamics that are taught in the Brain Management® course.

To pay attention to the small details in my life has been a challenge. Whether that is a side effect of dyslexia or not is immaterial to me at this point. What is important to me is to simply notice what is not working. What becomes more important to me is to look for and define what I intend to make happen in my life. Only then can I create a new belief statement. If I find that a statement is incomplete, then I have to adjust it as I continue to evolve in this process of discovery. I used to be very embarrassed about this condition labeled dyslexia, as I never wanted to buy into the idea that I had a handicap. Now I can begin to view this as a gift that has allowed me to capture more of the whole of life because the small details had eluded me. Suddenly, as I am writing this and sharing my vulnerabilities, I realized that my survival depended on my ability to grasp the bigger picture.

Here is an example where my survival quite literally hung in the balance: Years ago, when I had just passed my private pilot's license, I found myself alone on approach to one of our busiest small-craft airports in Alaska. The tower responded to my request for a full stop landing with a long list of other aircraft that were also in the pattern of this airport. I could not recall the numbers or recall the

identification of the types of other aircraft that were ahead of me in line. However, I understood that I had two behind me and I was cleared to land as the fourth aircraft. I was already in the downwind leg of this airport pattern and I could see only aircraft on base, which is the last turn before you line up on final descent, in direct line with the runway. My dilemma was that I could not get a visual on the other two aircraft that I was to follow into the base leg of the pattern. If I could have remembered the calling numbers of the aircrafts which were telling the tower what their position were, perhaps I could have figured out when it was time for me to make my turn. My inability to hang on to the detail had put me in a precarious, potentially life-threatening position. All I remember was that I had a grasp on the larger picture. There were three planes in front and two behind and I am clueless where the two in front of me were or at which elevation they were flying.

I was in a near panic when I lost both the auditory and the visual references in line for landing. I kept lowering my altitude in hopes to see the preceding aircraft outline better with the background of the sky rather than the busy background of houses and cars below. The communication from the tower and the numbers of the other aircraft had become a blur. I had advised the tower numerous times that I could not locate the aircraft in front of me. (They could see me just fine but I knew I was lost). A part of my brain may have shut down, which could be why I left the pattern without advising the tower of what I was doing. I believe that I instinctively knew that I could not allow my anxiety over the loss of detail to take over.

I opted to leave the pattern with a right turn out and departed from the airport vicinity. I could not risk my life or the other pilots' lives just because I could not remember some of the details. I was called on the carpet by the airport authorities for leaving the pattern unannounced after I finally landed about a half hour later. It was not pleasant then, but it makes my point now. That is only one of the many examples that come to mind.

### **Supports in making my shifts**

Professor Martina Steiger made me pay attention to detail. It became necessary for me to hire the talent that does not appear to be within me yet. I began a new relationship with my trusted editor, Laura Estill. She has become more than an editor, for she continuously and patiently makes the corrections that are always accompanied with detailed explanations about the rules as well as the nuances of the English language that have eluded me this far. Thanks to Laura's patience my writing is improving, and I am very grateful for my professor's willingness to hold my feet to the fire. After the course was completed, Professor Steiger commented that she makes no apologies for having been so strict and holding me to correct punctuation and grammar. I am grateful for what her stance on rigorous standards did for my personal evolution. I am very grateful to Dr Dan Benor for his request to share my experience with the Brain Management® course, which allowed this article to evolve into it's present state. His probing questions prompted me to explore ever deeper levels of pain that had been covered up by a lifetime of denial. Therefore the many hours and days dedicated to this personal sharing and re-writing processes has become a healing all of it's own. I thank the Dr. Martina Steiger, Dr. Dan Benor, and my editor, Laura Estill for all of their help.

The Brain Management® Course is being taught by various facilitators world wide; however, Professor Steiger offers the student an opportunity to remain connected to her wisdom and to other students long after the course is over. The free conference calls which she offers to any of her students appear to me so much like the support I have encountered in a variety of twelve-step programs where I have the opportunity to learn and grow and to give back. It has not been quite a year now since I completed the coursework assignments, and I have just come to the full realization that taking the course is only the beginning of the personal growth experience a person can allow themselves to have through this connection with Professor Steiger. One of my more recent

communications with her revealed once again how her innate gifts as a master teacher and a healer have blessed my life. In this recent encounter I explained, "Re-taking the Brain Management® class may prove to be beneficial for my ongoing studies, for I believe that each time we rise to a new level of consciousness, we gain new insights that were not available for us to grasp on a lower level of awareness. Participating in the Lindamood-Bell Clinic could be beneficial for my ongoing studies as well, enabling me to explore and address my own unique learning issues, which would address some of the technical aspects of reading and writing."

Professor Steiger replied, "Is there another old belief buried underneath, which speaks to your slipping back into old dysfunctional patterns? Is there a tape running that says that only hard work and repetition get you to where you need to go? Or perhaps, that if it's not hard work, it cannot be any good? Or something to that effect?" This response was not only kind and direct but most beneficial, as her other comments and suggestions were. Professor Steiger was correct: this comment revealed another one of my hidden beliefs that she was able to detect but to which I was completely oblivious at the time when I voiced the thought about repeating the course. I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity to work with teachers like Martina Steiger who continue to show me that I am simply not yet quite awake and aware of my limitless self.

### **In summary**

Sometimes our beliefs remain uninvestigated and they are left to rule our lives in an automatic, subconscious fashion, like the invisible software in a computer. I have operated from the subconscious belief that being dyslexic is humiliating and needs to be hidden. In the Brain Management® class we learned to re-write and update our brain's computer software, which takes us to new frontiers. My approach to the material presented in the Brain Management® course was to be as open and willing to participate in all of the prescribed exercises with the same openness or innocence of a child. Perhaps that was the key ingredient to my ability to connect with the material being presented in this course.

Conversely, excruciating emotional and physical pain have also been principal learning tools which have opened the portals to new insights throughout my personal history. In one of the darkest moments of despair in my life (which was at the time of a head-on car collision), I was given the insight that "EVERYTHING IS AS IT SHOULD BE." This profound message, which seemed to come from the universe in a moment of despair, is also very applicable to the despair I once felt about my dyslexia. After the accident, while I was manoeuvring about in a wheelchair or on crutches, people would extend empathy for my physical impairments and would gladly hold a door open for me. Now I recognize that dyslexics carry their crutches and wheelchairs on the inside, silently suffering. The internal impairments of dyslexics stem from beliefs that can be changed. It seems clear to me now that when I investigate what I believe there is an end to suffering and I am so glad I have come out of my denial.

Before I started the Brain Management® course I read in the syllabus that for extra diligent work a student could obtain a grade of 'honors' for their efforts in this class. This comment in the syllabus gave me an instant flashback to my daughter's tears about not being able to be rewarded by sticker stars for her hard work in first grade from her teacher. Thanks to my willingness to be open in embracing this Brain Management® method and to the professor's talents, many of my false beliefs have been replaced and now I know and I understand that neither my daughter nor I will ever have to look for the star sticker acknowledgements from anyone outside of ourselves ever again.

I now recognize dyslexia as a gift that is to be cherished. I believe that the only thing that dyslexics need to transcend is how they feel about themselves. I continue to heal and evolve; I enjoy the

privilege of being called on to assist others in their self-healing whenever the opportunity arises. Most importantly, I am learning to love myself regardless of the labels or the false beliefs that I have allowed myself to take on, which shaped my life in one fashion or another. I am learning to honor myself. It feels absolutely freeing and life-enhancing to be in recovery from my false beliefs.

Without my story, I am a human being who is gradually becoming aware of my ability to step out of the darkness of false beliefs that I have erroneously labeled as the challenges in my life. I am learning to step into the light, which allows me to transcend perceived obstacles and move into opportunities that teach me to embrace forgiveness, grace, humility, joy and a never-ending abundance of love.

I love how my life is unfolding...

## Glossary:

**Copenhagen Interpretation:** a concept formulated by early twentieth-century physicists that relates to quantum physics. The Copenhagen Interpretation posits that the wave function describes that all that can be known of any situation. This takes Heisenberg's uncertainty principle into account, which states that all parts of a system cannot be known simultaneously. The Copenhagen Interpretation is concerned with the possibilities and probabilities of given situations.

**Eye Chart:** an eye exercise intended to increase peripheral vision and intuitive awareness

**Dictionary Drill:** an exercise designed to activate visual recall, enrich vocabulary, and improve spelling as well as enhance memory

**Distraction Index Drill:** Reading a section of written text with single-minded attention helps to focus awareness in a state of relaxed and alert concentration that supports locking into all aspects of any task at hand

**Mental Photography®:** the intuitive reading process during which written material is absorbed at 2 pages per second

## Notes:

1. *Subliminal Dynamics® Brain Management®* Course Manual USA, Canada: Educom, 2002, 55.
2. Pirsig, Robert, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, New York: Bantam 1975, 288.
3. Nunley, Ann. Inner Counselor™ A spiritual Discipline Course Manual, McLouth, KS 2006.
4. *Subliminal Dynamics®*, 55.
5. Goswami, Amit. *The Self-Aware Universe: How Consciousness Creates the Material World*, New York: Penguin, 1995, 41.
6. Foundation for Inner Peace, *A Course in Miracles*, Mill Valley, CA 1992, 445
7. Goswami, Amit. *The Self-Aware Universe: How Consciousness Creates the Material World*, New York: Penguin 1995, 45.
8. Benor, Daniel J. WHEE articles <http://www.wholistichealingresearch.com/wheearticles.html>

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Inge Turner moved to Alaska in 1971 where she met her husband. Together they built and operated a successful business there for more than thirty years. They raised five children. Inge considers herself to be a retired real estate professional, though she remains involved in their firm as a marketing and design consultant. Over the years, Inge has studied with a variety of healers around the country and was ordained into a non-denominational healing ministry by Dr Willard Fuller. At present, she is a 4<sup>th</sup> year student at Holos University Graduate Seminary. Her thesis will explore “The Intentional Transformation of the Heart.” She admits that her greatest challenge is to live her life in a contemplative way that supports the title of her doctoral thesis. It is her hope that she will be led to discover a sound and conventionally acceptable research methodology, which would embrace the newly emerging scientific paradigms that unite science and spirituality.



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