

Case Study – The Listening Program®

E.F., Age 40, Dyslexia

Submitted by: Carol Newsam
Deeside College
North Wales
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Name: EF

Gender: Female

Chronological Age: 40 years

Clinical Diagnoses: Difficulties consistent with a diagnosis of dyslexia. Significant visual perceptual and language difficulties.

Carol Newsam has two related roles at Deeside College, Tutor/Coordinator for Specific Learning Differences and Inclusive Learning Coordinator. Deeside College in North Wales provides education to people ages 16 and older. The college offers a variety of full and part time courses in a number of vocational areas as well as other academic, general interest and professional courses.

Carol told us she took 2000-2001 as a "research year" with The Listening Program to see whether it was possible to deliver TLP effectively in this setting. She also wanted to look at its effectiveness in terms of supporting students with certain specific difficulties to access the curriculum and/or demonstrate learning outcomes more effectively.

Carol sent us an extensive report on her efforts and the outcomes with various students. We do not have the space to give you her complete study. However, we present here highlights which we feel will help the reader better understand the changes which might occur in an adult going through The Listening Program.

The human brain is so very plastic when we are young. Brain research in the past several years shows that change is still possible until a very advanced age. But learning patterns become more set as we grow older. We have our own ways of doing things, sometimes developed as compensation for what isn't working. Adjusting to improvements in processing may take longer. In fact, whole new ways of learning may need to be adopted.

What struck Carol was how an adult might report changes very differently than a child due to a more extensive vocabulary, life experience, and ability to communicate better. She felt this might be useful for other Providers to understand what might be happening during TLP since children often say very little. She also found that because perceptions were so different after TLP, testing and test scores might need to be looked at in a different light.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EF has completed a degree in Psychology, has had a number of jobs and is now working with an agency as well as completing a part-time computer course at college. A report by an Educational Psychologist suggested that EF had a number of difficulties consistent with a diagnosis of dyslexia. Additional assessments indicated significant visual perceptual difficulties and significant language difficulties. A report by a Speech and Language Therapist stated that "despite good pragmatic and social language, EF struggled to understand fully what is said to her and to construct clear replies."

TREATMENT

EF had been supported for a year before beginning TLP. Much of this work was to do with supporting EF to identify and develop methods of managing the language difficulties. EF completed The Listening Program through three times. The Sensory Integration CD, the Speech and Language Integration CD and the High Spectrum CD were also used.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

EF kept detailed Journals noting each day's listening and completed a "Changes to Look For" form at the end of each week. Here are highlights of EF's first run through of TLP, Base Program.

#1 I am more motivated to do everyday chores, more aware of the birds singing outdoors. I noticed an increase in appetite, am ready to enjoy my lunch. I am able to do simple math (bank balance) more efficiently. I slept well and it was easier to wake and get up. My ears were popping, tickling, something happening to my ears and brain. I feel something happening to the muscles in my legs. I'm getting speech and words a bit jumbled up at times. I felt as if I was walking better. I felt sleepy during tracks 7, 8, and 9. NOTE: EF noted 7 physical changes, 13 emotional changes and 12 mental changes on the form at the end of the week.

#2 I feel as if my brain is tightening. My legs felt heavy, more so - something was definitely happening to my left leg and foot. I felt as if waves were going through my brain at times, I'm getting more assertive. It was easier to write out a cheque. I'm walking a bit better. Tracks 4, 5, and 6: my legs felt heavy and something was going on. This was also the case with my hands. I felt very tired, slept well, but had a cold. NOTE: In discussion EF noted that sometimes she notices that "my speech is slowing down and I feel that words may not come out right." She can now say "neurological" - "I could not say that before" and can now say "millennium" much better. She is feeling more emotional, feels like weeping but it is manageable. It may be anger.

#3 I can feel the program doing/working on my legs and feet and something is happening to my brain and round the throat/mouth/ears. It feels as if I am having a new lease on life. My balance and stance is better and steadier in the shower. How lovely to be able to say "millennium" and other long words. I can feel The Listening Program flowing over my body and through my brain. I can say more complicated long words now without much effort. My speech is better. My body seems to be adjusting when I am walking. NOTE: In discussion EF commented that "I am enjoying going out more and meeting people. It is lovely to enjoy myself. I now feel I want to leave home and get my own place."

#4 I can feel the tracks having a "sedating effect on me. I can feel the program working on my body. I also feel brighter mentally." NOTE: In discussion about the form, EF reported having "growing pains." Some of the muscle feelings can be painful, a bit like having toothache, needing to rest up sometimes. She seems to be hearing her own voice differently at times.

#5 Very often during the night whilst sleeping or whilst I am resting I can feel something happening to my brain and the rest of my body. At times it feels as if parts of my body are waking up and coming alive. Also at times it feels as though the CD is calming down the body and I feel much better mentally. At times it feels like my body is tingling and going into ripples.

#6 At times I feel as if I have had enough but as always I keep going. NOTE: In discussion, EF reported that she can now tolerate background music better and is no longer being asked to repeat an address or a telephone number. It is coming out as it should do.

#8 I believe I am talking with more of a "bounce' in my voice. I can feel something happening when I am not listening to the program. My walking and balance is better. I seem to be having a little difficulty at the moment understanding fully what people are saying. Often they have to repeat things.

Sensory Integration. Two Weeks. EF's journal makes constant reference to the program working throughout the body including the brain and a strengthening/awakening sensation.

Second run through of TLP, again base schedule. #1-4 When the program is actually playing it feels as if something is happening physically to my body (muscles and nerves) and going through my brain, like a comb going through your hair. The program also seems to be helping my eczema, my skin seems to be getting better.

My confidence and belief in myself is slowly coming as is my motivation to get on with my life. There are more sensations in my feet and hands. It feels as though parts of my brain are being kneaded. My ears feel as though they are being tickled and my jaw and mouth area feel as though they are being kneaded or something. I feel as if I am being made more "solid."

#5-8 My coordination when I am driving seems to have improved. It seems to be working on my teeth and gums as well and circulating around my head and mouth. Sometimes it feels as if the palate of my mouth is moving. I can feel my voice being more calm, but also more deep at times. As I have mentioned before, the program often feels like I am having rigorous physiotherapy. I am definitely more motivated both physically and mentally. I also feel it working quite a lot on various parts of my brain. It is very difficult to try and explain what it is like. Often I can feel the program working on my brain even when I am not playing the program. It can be working on my brain at any time of the day. NOTE: EF noted 15 physical changes, 13 emotional changes and 7 mental changes on the "Changes to Look For" form.

Third run through of TLP, Base Program. This was a 9 week program including the High Spectrum CD between disks 6 and 7.

The program certainly sounds different this time round. I could feel the program working quite strongly throughout the night whilst I was sleeping. I seem to be going on to a "healthy eating" phase - fruit, salads, etc. which is very good. I also seem to be going faster on the computer keyboard - it is less of a strain now. I am also getting on better with other people. I feel more content with myself.

I am pleased with the improvements which the sound therapy has done. It is especially pleasant to have a calmer mind and body.

NOTE: We decided to use the Speech and Language Integration CD until the end of term. EF's main reporting was about noticing intonation in people's voices much more and noticing the music of language much more. EF reported that she seemed to be using more "music" in her own voice.

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End of Case Study

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