



# Dyslexia and Mental Health: Helping people identify destructive behaviours and find positive ways to cope

By Neil Alexander-Passe

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Dyslexia is a complex condition that affects not only learning but every part of life. Experience or fear of social stigma can lead people with dyslexia to camouflage the difficulties they face, to withdraw and to adopt negative coping strategies, particularly if they lack adequate support, identification and intervention. This can have lasting impact on their emotional health.

Neil Alexander-Passe is an experienced researcher and a special needs teacher in secondary mainstream education. He also has dyslexia. Neil uses his personal and professional experience to shed light on the complexities surrounding dyslexia and examines psychological theories such as ego-defence mechanisms and learned helplessness that reveal how people deal with its emotional impact. He offers guidelines and advice, illustrated with real life examples, about how to help people with dyslexia avoid harmful coping strategies and learn to deal with stress, anxiety and low self-esteem in more effective and psychologically positive ways.

This book will help educational and clinical psychologists, teachers, mental health specialists, counsellors and therapists understand the emotional complexities of dyslexia.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

A comprehensive model for understanding the defence mechanisms used by dyslexic individuals...This author has done a remarkable job of presenting both theoretical and practical information in an understandable way. He handles very complex and difficult problems with sensitivity and offers concrete suggestions. This work will be an excellent resource for both the researcher and the clinician. It adds to our understanding of dyslexia and how real people cope. -- From the foreword by Michael Ryan, clinical psychologist and former SEN teacher, past Vice President, International Dyslexia Association and President, Michigan Branch, International Dyslexia Association I am so pleased that Neil is addressing this long ignored topic. As a counsellor specialising in the emotional repercussions of dyslexia, I believe dyslexia is inextricably woven into self-image, self-confidence and self-esteem. It impacts on everyone - not just the dyslexic...Understand the dyslexia. Understand the dyslexic person and you will understand the presentation. -- From the foreword by Pennie Aston, counsellor, trainer, supervisor, writer and speaker on the emotional repercussions of dyslexia and other neuro-diverse conditions This book provides an original perspective on the socio-emotional aspects of dyslexia and will be welcomed by professionals working in the field. It provides a refreshing addition to the plethora of books focusing on the theories and causes of dyslexia and complements these by turning to the important question of what it feels like to be dyslexic. -- Professor Maggie Snowling, President, St John's College, University of Oxford This is an important and much needed book - the emotional impact of dyslexia has been neglected for too long. In this comprehensive and accessible analysis, Neil Alexander-Passe skilfully draws upon contemporary theory and research from a range of disciplines to explore what we know and what we can do to best support the well-being of those living with dyslexia. -- Professor Neil Humphrey, Director of Research for the Manchester Institute of Education This book provides a comprehensive picture of the many manifestations of emotional and affective domain challenges that might be encountered by dyslexics. It uses a wealth of pertinent research to provide a comprehensive background for understanding these problems and proposes a structure to manage and overcome them. -- Steve Chinn, author of Addressing the Unproductive Classroom Behaviours of Students with Special Needs, founder and former Principal of Mark College for dyslexic pupils, Chair and co-founder of the CReSTeD It is our responsibility as advocates for dyslexia to ensure that the next generation of dyslexic children have the opportunity to express their strengths more fully, with greater understanding and support within school and society for their difficulties. This book can contribute to this recognition. -- Emeritus Professor Angela Fawcett, Swansea University, Honorary professor Sheffield University

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A comprehensive model for understanding the defence mechanisms used by dyslexic individuals...This author has done a remarkable job of presenting both theoretical and practical information in an understandable way. He handles very complex and difficult problems with sensitivity and offers concrete suggestions. This work will be an excellent resource for both the researcher and the clinician. It adds to our understanding of dyslexia and how real people cope. (From the foreword by Michael Ryan, clinical psychologist and former SEN teacher, past Vice President, International Dyslexia Association and President, Michigan Branch, International Dyslexia Association)

I am so pleased that Neil is addressing this long ignored topic. As a counsellor specialising in the emotional repercussions of dyslexia, I believe dyslexia is inextricably woven into self-image, self-confidence and self-esteem. It impacts on everyone - not just the dyslexic...Understand the dyslexia. Understand the dyslexic

person and you will understand the presentation. (From the foreword by Pennie Aston, counsellor, trainer, supervisor, writer and speaker on the emotional repercussions of dyslexia and other neuro-diverse conditions)

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This is an important and much needed book - the emotional impact of dyslexia has been neglected for too long. In this comprehensive and accessible analysis, Neil Alexander-Passe skilfully draws upon contemporary theory and research from a range of disciplines to explore what we know and what we can do to best support the well-being of those living with dyslexia. (Professor Neil Humphrey, Director of Research for the Manchester Institute of Education)

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#### About the Author

Neil Alexander-Passe is the Head of Learning Support (SENCO) at Mill Hill School in London, UK, as well as being a special needs teacher and researcher. He has taught in mainstream state, independent and special education sector schools, and also several pupil referral units. He specialises in students with dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, ADHD and autism. Neil has written extensively on the subject of dyslexia and emotional coping and, being dyslexic himself, brings empathy and an alternative perspective to the field.

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