

A Qualitative Study About a Former Professional Baseball Player with Dyslexia

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Abstract : In this qualitative study, we interviewed a young man with learning disabilities who played professional baseball for two years. Individuals with severe academic challenges constitute one of the most vulnerable groups of our society. Science has to find ways on how to arm them against life's challenges and help them to cope with the many risk factors that they are usually confronted with. Team sports like baseball seem to be a suitable means for that purpose. In the interview, our participant talked about his life as a student with severe learning difficulties and related how his career in baseball made his academic challenges appear much less significant. He gave some meaningful insights into what helped him to build a happy and fulfilling life for himself, not only in spite of his challenges but also because of what he's learning disabilities taught him. Support from significant others, a sense of purpose, his fighting spirit ignited by sports, and the success that he experienced on the baseball field were among the most relevant factors. Overall, this study highlights the importance of finding an outlet for young people with learning disabilities where their academic difficulties retreat into the background and their talents are validated.

Keywords : baseball, inclusion, learning disabilities, resilience

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