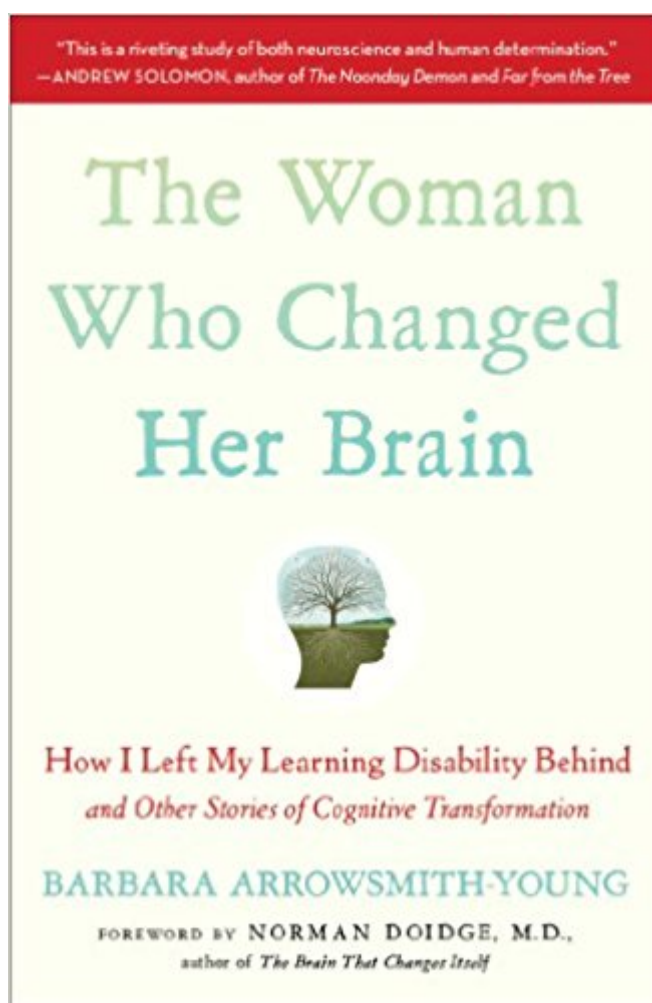


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# The Woman Who Changed Her Brain: How I Left My Learning Disability Behind And Other Stories Of Cognitive Transformation



## Synopsis

A bestseller in Canada and Australia, this is the incredible story of a woman who struggled with severe learning disabilities, built herself a better brain, and started a program that has helped thousands of others do the same. Barbara Arrowsmith-Young was born with severe learning disabilities. As a child, she read and wrote everything backward, struggled to comprehend language, and was continually getting lost. But by relying on her formidable memory, she made her way to graduate school, where she chanced upon research that inspired her to invent cognitive exercises to "fix" her own brain. > interweaves her personal tale with riveting case histories from more than thirty years of her work with both children and adults. People with learning disorders have long been told that such difficulties are a lifelong condition. In clear and lucid writing, > refutes that message, demonstrating with fascinating anecdotes that anyone with a learning disability can be radically transformed: Arrowsmith-Young is a living example. She founded the Arrowsmith School in Toronto in 1980 and then the Arrowsmith Program to train teachers to implement this effective methodology in schools all over North America. This remarkable book by a brilliant pioneer deepens our understanding of how the brain works. Our brain shapes us, and this book offers clear and hopeful evidence of the corollary: that we can shape our brains.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Remarkable" (Daily Mail) "Enthralling" (The Guardian (UK)) "Arrowsmith-Young's poignant and uplifting book about her transformation from a child born with severe learning disabilities to a dynamic pioneer in cognitive education offers hope to anyone who has ever struggled with a

learning disorder, brain trauma, ADD or stroke... an important book. (Mira Bartok, New York Times bestselling author of *The Memory Palace*) "This is a poignant book about two people who connected across continents and generations • a Canadian woman Moving, insightful and empowering! (Elkhonon Goldberg, Ph.D., the author of *The Wisdom Paradox* and *The New Executive Brain*) "If you have a son, a daughter, a parent, a spouse, or a brain, this is a must-read book. It will open your mind to new possibilities on how to deal with 'traffic jams in the brain.'" (Alvaro Fernandez, CEO & Co-Founder, SharpBrains.com) "Hers was a struggle between despair and determination. Determination won." (Michael Schulder CNN)

Barbara Arrowsmith-Young is the director of the Arrowsmith School and Arrowsmith Program. She holds a BA Sc. in child studies from the University of Guelph and a master's degree in school psychology from the University of Toronto (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education).

This book is mostly composed of inspiring stories of people (including the author) who have overcome various learning and cognitive disabilities using techniques developed by the author. Most chapters begin with a detailed and heart-wrenching description of the person's problem and how it made their life an abject misery, followed by a brief description of the dramatic improvement brought about by the author's remedial methods. The main problem with this book is that it contains virtually no specific information about these methods. When they are even discussed - and in most examples they are not described at all - it is in a vague, generalized and very, very brief way. All the discussion of actual remedial techniques in the entire book could easily fit on one page. Typically, after many pages of recounting the subject's terrible problems, there will be a passage like this (quoted from the book): "Much has changed for Nathaniel. Two years of cognitive exercise to address the artifactual thinking deficit have induced a remarkable change in Nathaniel himself and the family dynamic." Unfortunately, just what those two years of cognitive exercise actually involved is not explained. There is no discussion of the scientific methods used to assess progress (especially with reference to a control group), or the process by which the author's training techniques (whatever they are - who knows?) are developed, tested, refined or rejected. It seems unlikely that this omission of key facts from the book was a simple oversight. Presumably this information gap is designed to encourage people to pay for training or treatment provided by the business associated with the author. Whatever the reason, it means that many readers will have tired of the soppy, over-emotional anecdotes and lack of hard information well before the half-way mark of the book. So to sum up: If you want to be inspired with stories of successful treatment for

various cognitive and learning disabilities, then you will enjoy this book immensely. If you want to know anything at all about that treatment, forget it - this book will be an absolute waste of time and money and you will regret buying it. I'm giving it two stars just because it is helping to alert people to the fact that there are solutions to these problems aside from just learning to live with them. But I'm not giving it any more than that because it contains no useful information about those solutions.

The woman who changed her own brain is an interesting and eye opening book. It discusses many learning disabilities and how people using the arrow smith school of learning were able to overcome them. Which in turn I have to say seems like she is advertising the school through out the book. The book hints at cognitive exercises that can with practice develop new neural pathways and or help activate the parts of the brain that are having a hard time functioning. As some one that suffers from a learning disability I was very excited to learn that there might be something I could do about it. However, i do not have the kind of money it would take to go to her arrow smith academy. In short, read this book if you want to read inspiring and interesting stories about people who have overcome their disabilities, but not as a book that will give u information on what to do about those disabilities other than go to her school. Im giving this book 4 stars because she does not list any options for the low budget person to get some help.

I thought this book was a blatant self marketing tool which provided no concrete information to the reader. The topic is an emotional and important one for those looking to help those with problems but all MS Arrowsmith Young did was to sing the praises of her expensive schools and techniques.

Technical scientific study of the brain in the first portion with related anecdotal examples as applied to a specific part of the brain to overcome a deficit in living to be more fulfilled. Improvement is accomplished by exercises with much repetition in the deficient area. This method has been used in many schools and applied with slow learning students with success. It takes work to see that change. My personal view would be to also apply to dementia/Alzheimers persons to see if they can regain recall and function better.

This book has helped me believe that I can more quickly "change" or "retrain" my brain. That just because I've been around a while, I don't have to stay trapped in old behavior patterns stored in my brain. Along with other books, "Brain Rules", "Complex Post Traumatic Shock Disorder", and others, I've made more rapid "changes" to my brain in the last year than in all the time "wasted" using

"toxic" medications, rigid hard to follow "avoidance" life style patterns, and in general becoming a hermit. Barbara truly has applied neuroscience to her own life and won. Her book does a very good job telling you how she did it and why.

This is an inspiring story especially for anyone that has ever had to deal with a learning difficulty. Barbara Arrowsmith young talks of her transformation and successful quest to apply the scientific principal of Neuroplasticity to education in a practical way. I continue to follow and be fascinated by this area of education.

I'm fascinated by the potential of neuroplasticity, but found it frustrating that there was no sharing of how others might go on to overcome their own cognitive dysfunctions short of enrolling at University, or doing an inaccessible Arrowsmith course.

Great overview of Barbara Arrowsmith-Young's challenges and how she overcame them and developed the Arrowsmith Program. Reading this, you may see yourself, your friends or family in some of the case studies she shares about the different learning dysfunctions, and the types of problems helped by the Arrowsmith Program.

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