

Nook report: a mind at a time

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A Mind at a Time by Mel Levine introduces the cognitive developmental side of why our brains work the way they do. Some researchers believe that we are born with our brains being at a fixed capacity for growth and refining, being nothing in our power we can do to change how our brains learn.

Others, such as Mel Levine, argues that while everyone is born with a brain at different levels of development, the way the brain learns and functions is a product of how a child develops, not something predetermined by birth.

Mel Levine is a children's pediatrician and education expert who explains how to properly identify what kind of learning patterns your brain has, and how to diagnose problems that may exist within one's neurodevelopmental factions. As a doctor, all conclusions Levine makes he backs up by cases he has worked on in which children have various cognitive developmental problems.

He strongly believes that while everyone is born with a certain kind of mind, much can be done over the years to improve weaker areas of the brain (Levine 14). However, one should focus on identifying and fixing the brain's breakdowns instead of the causes (Levine 268). If many misconnections or disconnections exist within the sequential ordering faction of the brain's neurodevelopmental system, resulting in having a difficult time with processing multiple tasks at once, then the problem of processing tasks should be addressed, not the misconnections within the brain. The primary focus of this book is to educate the reader as to the reason why the brain has the trouble it does and how to best learn by using strategies suited for your brain type. A Mind at a Time was an exceptionally informative book regarding the neurodevelopmental side of optimizing our ability to learn.

There was nothing missing from the book, as it stated early on everything it was going to cover and proceeded to do so. It would have been more helpful to hear more strategies of how one can personally their optimize learning, however the book was packed full of things parents, teachers, and schools could do to help every student learn effectively. Although the book discussed the idea of everyone being born with differently wired brains, a question that arose for me was whether or not there was anything we could do mend the complications one has on a more neurological level. Even though Levine argues that, “ you should observe and think about the relevant neurodevelopmental functions, the mechanisms rather than the causes...” I still cannot help but wonder if there is not something that can be done about the causes Levine mentions (Levine 269). I have conflicting beliefs about whether the focus should truly be on fixing the problems one has when they arise, or if it should be on identifying the causes of the problem and then solving it. If one is truly trying to optimize one’s ability to learn, then the neurological cause should be what is addressed rather than the external problems that these dysfunctions cause.