

## NILD Educational Therapy® - MY STORY



### **The Lord knew of the struggles my sisters and I had... - *My Story***

One of my earliest memories of school took place in first grade. I was studying my spelling words with my dad a few nights before the test. I remember bursting into tears and running from the room all because I could not spell the word "rabbit". Up until that point I had never thought of school as hard.

I have an October birthday - which, I am told, meant that I could start first grade at the age of four and turn five part way through; or wait for a year. My parents decided to go ahead and start me "early," at age four. I faced many struggles throughout that year, due to a not-so-understanding teacher and an undiagnosed learning disability. As a result, it was recommended that I repeat the grade. It was my second time through that I experienced the "rabbit incident". Even with a different and extremely compassionate teacher this time, school began to become a problem for me.

When I was in third grade my parents began their missionary career by moving to Costa Rica to study Spanish. It was during this year that school became unbearable. My teacher had a policy that misspelled words were to be rewritten a set amount of times. When you are misspelling 20 out of 25 words; that gets to be a daunting task. It seemed that no matter how long I studied or how many times I wrote the words, nothing helped. In fact, the stress of that year was so great that I began to get migraine headaches.

Thankfully, the Lord knew of the struggles my sisters and I had and sent my family to a school in Venezuela, South America that had a great NILD program. Upon arrival, all four of us were given different educational assessments (which would have been somewhat costly in the USA). It was discovered that my sister, Amanda, and I had dyslexia and were immediately enrolled in the program (Jen would not start NILD until high school). There were still struggles throughout my time in the program and at first I could not see a difference in my academic abilities.

After a lot of hard work and three years in the program I began to see a difference. I noticed when we were on our first furlough and I was in seventh grade that I was no longer the slowest worker. I could understand new concepts much easier, sometimes quicker than my friends. This boost in confidence helped me to apply myself even more to my school and NILD assignments. By the time I was in high school I was no longer getting C's and D's on my report cards, I was earning A's and B's! School was no longer a daunting task, it was a challenge I felt ready to face. I am proud to say that at the end of 11th grade I graduated from the NILD program.

This program has helped me to face life's struggles differently. Instead of beginning with a defeated attitude I dive in and try my best, relying on the things I have learned. I whole-heartedly believe that God sent my parents to Venezuela so that my sisters and I could participate in NILD, among other reasons. I also believe that it is because of the skills I learned there that I was able to earn a bachelors degree in Elementary Education. I am now beginning my second year of teaching in a school that also supports the program. I feel that I can relate to and encourage my struggling students better because of the positive experience I had in NILD.

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