related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be lifelong in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities." Dyslexia "tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effects can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling." The possible difficulties associated with dyslexia are; reading hesitantly, misreading, making understanding difficult, difficulty with sequences, e.g. getting dates in order, poor organisation or time management, difficulty organising thoughts clearly and erratic spelling. However, there may also be a positive side to dyslexia as it can produce innovative and lateral thinkers, induce intuitive problem solving and many people with dyslexia can be found to be creative and artistic.

A close friend of mine told me how she was labelled a troublemaker, told she was stupid and constantly accused of being disruptive when she was in school. She was said to have a mild form of dyslexia where he was unable to distinguish between alphabets such as b,d,p,g,h,q and would read 'god' instead of 'dog'. At one particular school meeting with the parents of my friend, the headmaster even commented to the effect that their daughter may not even be capable of getting through secondary school let alone pass his 'O' levels. The dyslexia had obviously been a major factor in her inability to perform well in her studies but had not been dealt with in the appropriate manner in school. However, she overcame her reading disability by herself and came out of university with flying colours and is currently very successful in her profession. If I said the names, Leonardo da Vinci, Pablo Picasso, Agatha Christie, Winston Churchill, Richard Branson, John Lennon or Tom Cruise I am sure what would pop up in your mind is that this is a group of highly successful, artistic, creative and famous people. I am sure it would not even cross our minds that they are all dyslexic or have had reading disabilities.

In the Sub-continent where there is so much pressure on children to perform in school and reach academic excellence, parents are unaware of dyslexia or attention deficiency disorder etc. and assume that their children are being difficult. I think and hope that a film like *Taare Zameen Par* will make not just make parents but also teachers aware of and more sensitive to why a child may be behaving in the way they are. As the title in *Taare Zameen Par* says "Every child is special"...

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