

# **Auditory Processing Disorder in the United Kingdom (APDUK)**

## **What is Auditory Processing Disorder? (A Brief Description)**

### **A Description**

**Generally for most Invisible Disabilities, the causes are similar in nature, faulty link in the human information processing system.**

**For those who have Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) it is the Auditory information processing function, which has a faulty connection.**

**APDs are normally not deaf, in fact most APDs have A1 hearing, they just do not process what they hear.**

**They may process part of what they hear but, without processing the rest, often the whole meaning is lost, or they perceive a totally incorrect idea of what has been said.**

**When APDs have a processing failure, they do not process what is being said to them.**

**They may be able to repeat the words back word for word, but the meaning of the message is lost, not processed.**

**Simply repeating the instruction is of no use if an APD is not processing, neither will increasing the volume help.**

**Most APDs have random Auditory Processing Disorder.**

**I use the word random because APDs cannot control when we process auditory information and when we do not. (Like a loose connection in a faulty computer processor it fails when you least expect it to).**

**APDs have an Auditory (verbal) information Processing Disorder, therefore APDs will also have problems processing verbal code, and text is only verbal code.**

**So Auditory Processing Disorder is extended to reading and writing, processing Auditory code.**

**Therefore APD is a cause of Dyslexia.**

**(As is the corresponding Visual Processing Disorder but for very different reasons.)**

**Some APDs are easily distracted by background noise and / or unexpected noises.**

**These Environmental factors disrupt their processing strategies, and in many instances mean that they have to go right back to the beginning of the task, to**

**understand what they are trying to do.  
Especially with a conceptual subject such as Maths.**

**APDs are unlikely to participate in debates unless they have had time to prepare their case.  
This poses problems for self-advocacy, and can lead to discrimination and bullying.**

**APDs will process a discussion, as it unfolds, and may not fully understand the discussion there and then, but they may be able to fill in the gaps later. Eventually they may have a better understanding of the topic than the actual participants, when they have finally processed the information.**

### **Coping Strategies**

**Coping Strategies for APDs are developed on individual life experiences.  
This is because the strategies have to work in, and be stored in the limited space of the Short Term Memory. (In computer terms, these strategies take up a great deal of RAM).**

**So APDs develop and select strategies they need to cope with their own life challenges, some are rejected or forgotten if not used.**

**New strategies are always being developed.**

**Unfortunately some of the newer strategies may by-pass an existing strategy, and so this useful strategy may need to be re-linked into the system.**

**Hence APDs can perform a specific task on one day perfectly, but struggle on a later day.**

**Many APDs develop an alternative way of thinking to cope with their disability.  
So if the Auditory function is faulty, Humans try to develop their visual and other communication skills. Used by our ancestors before we developed the skills of speech. Some become Visual Spatial Learners, using visual (pictorial) methods of thinking and learning.**

**Some APDS use back up strategies, such as lip-reading, body language, and eye contact. (The later two can become confusing as people say one thing with their body language (truth), and something else with their verbal communication (not quite the truth)).**

### **Hidden Implications.**

**(There are many hidden implications)**

**APD is for life, as with other Invisible Disabilities.**

**APD cannot be cured. But with the correct diagnosis, remediation and strategies, APD sufferers can learn to cope with their disability with the help of those around them.**

**APDs may find groups of more than 3 or 4 people threatening as they unable not process multiple auditory (verbal) input.**

**APDs find following social interaction difficult especially with new people, and those with good adversarial debating skills.**

**APDs may have problems filling in textual forms Problems processing what the meaning of the questions mean will in turn cause problems when trying to process an answer.**

**APDs who have a high IQ are more difficult to diagnose, as they are very good at developing their own coping strategies.**

**APDs really find life difficult to cope with when leaving the relative safe confines of the education system if they have not come to terms with their disability and how best to cope with it. They can become very isolated.**

**APDs could try the **APDUK** web site Communication Section at <http://www.contact.apduk.org>**

**© APDUK 2002-**