

## **Dr. Mirian Rissenberg - Bio**

### **Who I am**

I am a neuropsychologist with many years experience working with people of all ages to help them overcome problems with learning, attention, memory, mood, motivation, relationships and behavior. I have a very whole-person, positive approach, geared toward identifying strengths and preferences and addressing individual differences. My Thinkprint model is a framework for understanding how our brains work, and how each of our brains works a bit differently.

When I meet people and watch them do what they do best – build rock walls, play the guitar, tell me why my car won't start and how much it's going to cost to fix it, I marvel at how well their brains are working, how easily they are doing things that I am not able to do. We all have different kinds of brains, designed to learn and do some things better than others. We have evolved this way on purpose, so that we can do all the different kinds of jobs that need to be done in our complex society. To expect everyone to learn the same way, to be interested in the same things, to function equally well in all situations, is to misunderstand the neurodiversity that underlies our human nature.

### **What I Do**

I am an expert in the diagnosis of problems with higher-level brain function (attention, memory, language, reasoning, etc.). These include *neurodevelopmental* disorders in children (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder, dyslexia and other learning disabilities, sensory integration disorder, emotional dysregulation disorder), *neuropsychiatric* disorders (anxiety, depression, bipolar, schizoaffective disorder, PTSD), concussion and traumatic brain injury, age-related memory changes, neurologic illness such as parkinsonism, and infectious and chronic inflammatory/autoimmune conditions such as Lyme disease, multiple sclerosis and chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS).

My goal, though, is to go beyond the diagnosis, to a deep understanding of the person, to identify strengths as well as challenges, to help them be as happy and productive as possible. To do this, I use the tools of my field, the insights from my clinical experience, and the lessons from my own life's journey.

The *neuropsychological assessment* includes an interview and history, review of educational and/or medical records, and the administration of neuropsychological tests. These are pictures, puzzles, and questions, presented on the computer or with paper and pencil, that are carefully designed to measure the different kinds of *information processing* (higher-level brain processes), and can show us which processes work more or less efficiently and consistently for that person.