

Coaching ADD with Sharon

Newsletter

Know Your Own ADD

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Dear Friend,

Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful holiday and are looking forward to the new year with enthusiasm. This is the fourth issue of **Coaching ADD with Sharon Newsletter** with information for adults and kids with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), also referred to as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and their friends and relatives. I am a practicing coach and graduate of the ADD Coach Academy and have a degree in Mental Health Psychology. Please refer to my web site at www.coachingaddwithsharon.com for additional information about me.

ADD can affect adults and children and usually runs in families. Coaching can be a positive component of a multi-modal treatment plan. I invite you to read the information below, use it and share it with a friend or family member who may be dealing with the frustrations of ADD.

My first three newsletters were about *Raising Successful and Happy Kids with ADD*. It seems to me that a good topic to begin the New Year is **Knowing Your Own ADD**. The best way to make progress in controlling your ADD is to understand it. What are your particular symptoms, which ones are causing the most disruption in your life and then learn ways to begin making the necessary changes.



Know Your Own ADD

A person with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is characterized as being hyperactive (inability to sit still, wait your turn, engage in quiet activities or not interrupt conversations) or inattentive. If you are inattentive, you are probably cognitively hyperactive. This means your mind is going 90 miles an hour in multiple directions creating a state of anxiety and a feeling of being overwhelmed.

In addition, any of the following symptoms may be present and they may be mild, moderate or severe with regard to their affect:



Inattention – Difficulty sustaining attention and/or paying close attention to details which can lead to careless mistakes.

Concentration – The harder you try to concentrate, the harder it becomes to concentrate.

Executive function (includes organizational skills, planning skills and time

management) Difficulty remembering where you put things; deciding where the logical place is to keep items, where to file papers and being able to find them once they are filed; creating piles on desks and tables because of the inability to decide where things logically should be; inability to determine how long it will take to do things; always being late for work or appointments because it took longer than you anticipated to get out of the house.

Focus and sustained focus – Difficulty paying attention to instructions, listening for long periods of time in a class, a lecture, a meeting or to an uninteresting conversation.

Shifting attention from one stimulus to another – Difficulty shifting your thoughts and attention from what you are doing to another project. For example, shifting your attention from your computer to a phone call or from a TV program to a conversation.

Impulse control – This can manifest in many ways including blurting out inappropriate statements, impulsive eating, spending, or risk taking (which can manifest in such things as irresponsible driving habits, irresponsible sexual behavior or substance abuse.)

Emotional reactivity – ADDers often have a short fuse and can become excessively angry over things that may seem incidental to others. The reason for this behavior may be attributed to the constant frustration and feeling that you have no control over your life.

Easily bored by things that do not interest – The neurological differences in the ADD brain make it more difficult than for the average person to sustain interest in things that we find uninteresting or boring. Like many other ADD issues, this is not a matter of not wanting to but we actually “can’t”.

Hyper-focus on things that do interest – When involved in a task of great interest, an ADD person can often be involved to the point of not being able to hear or be aware of other things going on around them.

The Positive Side of ADD:

There are also many positive things about being ADD. I have read about very successful people who attribute their success to being ADD.



Creativity - ADD people are very creative. They tend to be very artistic, musically inclined, inventive and entrepreneurial. This is often the positive side of their impulsiveness. They are often unwilling to “put on the breaks” with regard to their free thinking and creativeness.

Hyper-focus – This can also be a positive thing. The state of super intense concentration can lead to completion of tasks.

Hypo-focus (daydreaming) Is a state of calm that can lead to creative, innovative, “out of the box” thinking and wonderful new ideas and inventions.

Intuitive – ADD people are very intuitive about other people and situations. They should always pay attention to their intuition and not allow others to talk them out of what they think is the right way to deal with a given situation.

Not every symptom applies to every person with ADD. If you can determine which ones apply to you and to what degree, then you can begin to make some sense of how ADD

is affecting your life. Take time to make a list of each "issue" that is holding you back and put them in order from most severe to least severe. Then decide if it is important enough to your life to start making changes.

Ways to help

It can be difficult to impossible to deal with the issues of ADD by yourself. Medications can help with focus and concentration, but as many experts say, "the pill does not give you the skill." You will generally need additional help to deal with the disorganization, planning, time management, impulsivity, etc. You can find this help with a therapist, ADD trained personal organizer or a coach.

A coach can help by providing you with strategies, support and encouragement. A couch can also help you uncover your strengths and talents and renew your self-esteem.

ADD is a real issue but it does not have to continue to define your life. Make it your New Year's resolution to seek help and improve the quality of your life now!

"Don't let what you can't do get in the way of what you can"

Getting Help

If you know or suspect you or your child has ADD, dealing with it alone can be very difficult. I know, I have been there. Teaming up with a coach that is trained to deal with ADD issues is one approach that can help. Visit my web site www.coachingaddwithsharon.com. If you feel I can help, contact me.

I'm Interested in Hearing From You!

I am interested in hearing from you! As part of my bi-weekly newsletter, I would like to know if you have questions or experiences to share. Other readers can benefit from answers to the questions or situations you have successfully dealt with. Please e-mail me at sharonh75@optonline.net and I will try to include your questions and/or situations anonymously in future newsletters.

Sharon Howell

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Quick Links...

- [More About Us](#)
- [CHADD \(Children with Attention Deficit Disorder\)](#)
- [ADDA \(Attention Deficit Disorder Association\)](#)
- [CACLD \(CT Association for Children & Adults w/Learning Disabilities\)](#)

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