

Coaching ADD with Sharon

Newsletter

Dealing with ADD in Women and Girls

February 21, 2007

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Dear Friend,

ADD coaching can be a positive component in working through the issues of attention deficit disorder. Medication can help with focus, but it does not improve issues such as disorganization, time management, forgetfulness and rumination. Coaching helps you through these issues one step at a time to improve your overall quality of life.

Coaching can be a positive component of a multi-modal treatment plan. I am a practicing coach and graduate of the ADD Coach Academy and have a degree in Mental Health Psychology. If you want to explore coaching, contact me.

Read the information below, use it and share it with a friend or family member who may be dealing with the frustrations of ADD. Refer to my web site at www.coachingaddwithsharon.com for additional information about me and how coaching can help you.

In my last issue, I discussed **Women and Girls with ADD**. In this, my seventh issue, I will share some of the things you can do to begin to deal with your ADD. Remember, it is very important to take it one step at a time or you can become overwhelmed and quit.



Dealing with ADD in Women and Girls



1. If you have not been officially diagnosed, find a doctor who is familiar with ADD. Not all doctors are knowledgeable about attention deficit. Usually a psychiatrist or neurologist is your best bet. Do your research and work with someone who you trust. This is important whether you are an adult with ADD or looking for someone to diagnose your daughter.

2. If you are on medication, be sure you are being monitored regularly. Medication is not "one size fits all." Your prescribing doctor should be monitoring you regularly with regard to the side effects and positive effects of your medication. If

your doctor is not doing this, or is not listening to you when you have questions or concerns, find another doctor. Medication isn't helping if it causes more problems than it cures. Children can often have loss of appetite, sleep issues or develop a flat affect (loss of their personality). It may take time to discover the right medication, but it will be worth it in the long run. *Keep in mind that approximately 20% of individuals with ADD do not obtain any positive results from medication.*

3. Try to slow down. I know that this sounds counterproductive when you already can't keep up because of your ADD. But think about it. Isn't it all that rushing around to keep up that is causing you to become scattered, forget things and become generally overwhelmed? Stop trying to keep up with everybody else and learn to establish a routine that works for you. You will very likely discover that you are wasting less time being scattered and more time actually accomplishing what you want to. For girls with ADD, learning to slow down early on will go a long way toward preserving their self-esteem.

4. Understand your own ADD. As mentioned in the last newsletter, all ADD people are not alike. Learn where your own ADD is affecting your life and start working on the thing that is causing you the most trouble first. For instance, if you are always late getting out of the house in the morning, which can often set your whole day into chaos, go over your morning routine step by step in your head. What are you doing that you can eliminate? (set out clothes the night before, set everything you need to take with you right by the door so you don't forget it or have to run back for it.) Write down how much time you think each step in the morning takes you. Then time yourself and see how long it actually takes, and figure the difference. Chances are, you just are not allowing yourself enough time and you need to get started earlier. If your daughter is the one with ADD, helping her with this process will not only help her, but it will reduce the amount of stress and upheaval in the home

5. Concentrate on your strengths. ADD women are smart, artistic and creative. Learn where your strengths are and concentrate on them, not on your challenges. If you need to, start a **gratitude journal**. Write down every day what you have done that was positive, creative and/or fun. After a few weeks, look back at what keeps popping up. It may be something as simple as your love for animals. Give yourself credit for this instead of kicking yourself for what you can't do. Soon it will become a habit to see the positive and minimize the negative. Practicing this process with your daughter is very important. She will definitely benefit from praise and encouragement for what she does well instead of constant reminders about what she is doing poorly.

6. Take the time to plan. Time management is very often a big issue for ADDers. Consequently, big projects seem so overwhelming that we begin them and don't finish them. Or, maybe we don't even start them and things become even more overwhelming. So, take the time to plan for each project. Before you start any big (or even small) project, take 10-15 minutes and write down, step by step what you are going to do. Then get started, concentrating only on step 1 until it is done. This process unclutters your brain and allows you to just concentrate on one piece at a time. Even if you do not have ADD, practicing this process with your daughter can not only help her do better, but can improve your planning skills too.



These are some beginning steps for helping you live with your ADD. Next time I will provide more ideas centering around the issue of Self Care. Self Care is very important for everyone, but even more critical for women and girls with ADD. I hope these tips are helpful.

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

Coaching is a non-judgmental partnership that focuses on guiding you toward actions to improve the quality of your life. Sessions begin with what the client feels is their biggest challenge and works toward discovering strengths and talents and creating strategies for change. If you are ready to improve your life, I can help. Visit my web site www.coachingaddwithsharon.com or email me at sharonh75@optonline.net.

I'm 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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- [ADDA \(Attention Deficit Disorder Association\)](#)
- [CACLD \(CT Association for Children & Adults w/Learning Disabilities\)](#)
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