

Coaching ADD with Sharon

Newsletter

Dealing with ADD in Women and Girls

March 7, 2007

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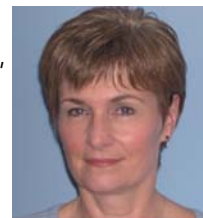
Dear Friend,

ADD coaching can be an important step 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.

My last issue discussed some of the things that women and girls can do to begin dealing with the symptoms of ADD. In this issue, number eight, I will provide a few more ideas, mostly centered around **taking care of yourself**.



Dealing with ADD in Women and Girls



Women, in general, are not programmed to take care of themselves. Mothers in particular take care of everyone else, leaving little time for themselves. I know you are familiar with the saying, "If you don't take of yourself, you can't take care of others." Well, it is true and for women with ADD it is even more important for you to pay attention to.

Because life often leaves you feeling overwhelmed, you need to take time each day to relax your mind and your body to improve your ability to manage your life well. Here are several essential things to keep in mind and to practice so you can improve your quality of life. Remember, these skills apply to girls as well as women. The earlier you begin to practice them, the better.

1. Get plenty of sleep. It is true that you need at least eight hours of sleep each night. People with ADD often have problems falling asleep and waking up in the morning. If you are experiencing sleep issues, seek help. Sleep deprivation not only makes your ADD issues worse (focus, concentration, patience), but ages you more rapidly. Stress management techniques, added calcium at bedtime, turning off the

computer and the TV two hours before bedtime can help. If you feel medication is necessary, discuss it with your doctor regularly. Sleep medication should be a temporary, not a permanent measure.

2. Exercise regularly. Exercise raises your endorphin level. This means it helps you feel good. If it makes you feel good, it is important and you need to make it a top priority in your day, not something you fit in if you have time. Take a walk, do yoga, try aerobics or kick boxing. There are lots of great videos available to save you time and money, but you may need the experience of being out of the house in a class with other people to motivate you. Do whatever works for you, but strive for a minimum of ½ hour of exercise three times a week.

3. Eat right. If you do not nourish your body, you can't nourish your mind. Eating balanced meals, with plenty of protein is essential to keeping up your energy level and keeping a clear mind. Most people do best eating five times a day (three meals and two snacks). Eating snacks consisting of protein combined with something else (cheese and fruit or whole grained crackers, almonds and dried fruit) help keep you from having those tired, foggy brained periods during your day.

4. Take time for your own interests. Do you have a hobby or other interest that you have abandoned and wish you could resurrect? Do it. You need to take time to exercise your own creativity and interests or you could become resentful of the things or people who appear to be keeping you from them. Make time each week just for you. Join a book club, take a class, go hiking, have lunch with a friend, take a long leisurely bath.

5. Get help. This is **very important**. Your ADD is a reality. It is a non-visible disorder, but a disorder just the same. You need to accept that it will, therefore, cause some limitations in your life, particularly with regard to the amount of time it takes you to complete tasks. Consequently, if you can afford to hire out tasks such as housework, grocery shopping, tutors for your children, etc., do it. If you can't afford to pay for the help, find another way. Work at eliminating unnecessary, time consuming activities from your life. *If you are not sure how to add this step of self care to your life, coaching can be helpful.*

6. Trust your intuition. People with ADD have a very good sense of intuition. You need to trust yours and not let others talk you out of what feels right to you. One example of trusting your intuition is when you feel the criticism from others is unfounded or upsetting to your self-esteem. You need to learn to deflect comments from others who are not familiar with what you are dealing with. You need to trust your feelings about this criticism and learn to deal with it appropriately. This is called **creating boundaries**. Learn positive and constructive ways to create the needed boundaries by letting others know that you are doing your best and their opinions are neither appropriate nor constructive. *Need help with **creating boundaries**? Coaching can teach you ways to understand how and why to address the issue.*



I hope these tips have been helpful. If you start putting them into practice one at a time, your experience will be a calmer, more productive and satisfying life. Don't take my word for it, start practicing it and experience it for yourself. Good luck!

"Work smarter, not harder"

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!

I recently received this question from a reader:

Question:

My daughter is 10 years old and in my opinion, a poster child for ADD. We have tried to establish a 504 plan, however I think her teacher is overwhelmed with too many students to be able to follow through effectively. I received a note and email from her yesterday, asking for my help, since my daughter has failed to turn in her homework or class work for three weeks. The homework is completed, but she doesn't get it turned in. My daughter's reasoning for not turning in her class work is that it is not "finished." I am at a loss as to how to fix this. I can't make her turn in her class work, and my daughter acts as though the whole thing doesn't even matter to her. Help!

The homework issue is a very common one with ADD students, often because it gets lost somewhere between home and the teacher's desk. In your daughter's case, saying that it is not finished could be an issue of perfectionism and/or procrastination, both of which are very common among people with ADD. If it is not perfect, it is not finished (perfectionism). Since it will never be perfect, it will never be finished (procrastination). In either case, you as a parent need to intervene. You need to help her establish a routine homework time and place that is comfortable for her. This might be a quiet place or she may need a place with some background sounds, like music. Allow enough time to finish all homework, with break times included and make sure the homework is finished and in her backpack before she goes to bed.

If you have a good working relationship with your daughter, you can help her with her homework, including making sure it is complete and in her backpack. If doing this is a struggle and you and your daughter are constantly arguing, do not put this kind of strain on your relationship. Hire a tutor. This could be someone who helps her with her homework or just someone who sits with her to make sure she completes it and gets it in the backpack (usually referred to as a body double).

If your daughter acts as though the school work does not matter to her, it may be that she is feeling overwhelmed by school, feels like a failure, does not know how to deal with it or verbalize it and is using indifference as an excuse. You need to talk to her about her school experience and try to get to the bottom of it all. Ask her teacher how she feels about your daughter's attitude toward school. She may be feeling like a failure. Talking to her and her teacher may get to the bottom of it all and then you will know which area or areas are a problem and need to be addressed. It may help to get her involved in something outside of school that she really loves and can feel successful at. This will help to take the emphasis off of issues in the classroom and improve her self-esteem. (Her self-esteem is most probably what is at the bottom of the whole attitude about schoolwork and needs to be addressed in order for her to

succeed)

With regard to the school, if you work with the teacher, asking what you can do to help and giving her as much information about your child as possible, she will most likely cooperate with you. It is up to the school administration to make sure that your 504 is honored and that the teacher complies. If the teacher is overwhelmed with too many students and your daughter is getting lost in the shuffle, you need to revisit the school and find out what they intend to do about it. Every child is entitled to an education.

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...

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- [CHADD \(Children with Attention Deficit Disorder\)](#)
- [ADDA \(Attention Deficit Disorder Association\)](#)
- [CACLD \(CT Association for Children & Adults w/Learning Disabilities\)](#)
- [Dr. Daniel Amen and the Amen Clinics](#)

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