

Interventions for adult ADHD

Subtypes of ADHD

Inattentive

Hyperactive/impulsive

Combined type

- It is more diagnosed in boys than in girls.
- Issues with goal oriented behaviors:
 - Paying attention
 - Staying focused
 - Seeing tasks through to the end.

Common characteristics for people with ADHD

- Inattentive:
 - Forgetful, often losing things
 - Can not remember names
 - Zoning out/daydreaming
 - Pays attention to too many things at the same time making hard to focus on a specific topic
- Hyperactive/impulsive
 - Fidgety
 - Overspending
 - Anger outburst
 - Engaging in risky behaviors
- Combined type

When left untreated ADHD also leads to:

Anxiety

Depression

Body Dysmorphia

Aggression

Addiction

Mood Swings

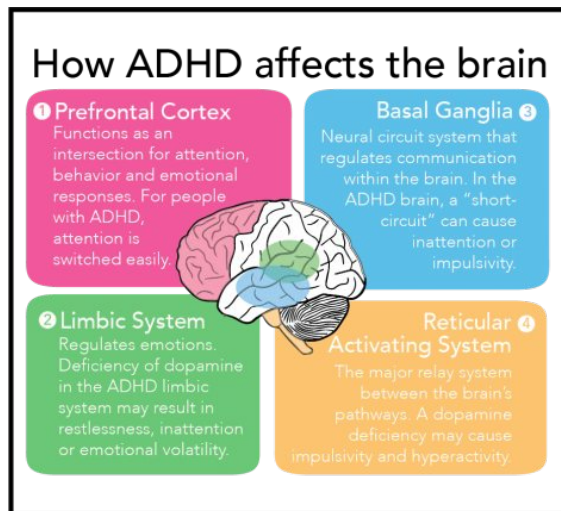
Understanding the ADHD brain

We can not try to apply a neurotypical approach to a non neurotypical condition. We want to help people with ADHD to be successful with their own brain rather than trying to fit them into a neurotypical mold.

“ADHD is not a damaged or defective nervous system. It is a nervous system that works well using its own set of rules.”

“Interest-based nervous system” individuals with ADHD struggle with producing and utilizing Dopamine in an optimal way.

<https://youtu.be/Zvqx9DfG9lU>



Advantages of adhd

Entrepreneurship.

3x more likely to take risk leading to more possibilities AND... yes more injuries.

Great problem solvers and very creative.

Ability to hyperfocus and learn everything about a specific topic

Disadvantages of adhd

Emotional dysregulation (lack of patience)

Aggression

Relationship issues

Overspending

Famous people with ADHD



Typical Treatment options

Most effective treatment options: Combination of therapy and medications.

CBT: Creating routine, Creating patterns, Make an environment that is ADHD friendly.

DBT: Emotional regulation and mindfulness

Metacognitions therapy: creates new cognitive patterns and addresses maladaptive behaviors.

Specialized skills building: very similar to CBT

If you have tried these options and you have found them to be not as effective as you were hoping for, don't worry!

A note for clinicians.

When working with adults with ADHD you might find yourself feeling frustrated and demoralized by the lack of progress. This is often part of the nature of ADHD and in part due to the fact that some therapists use neurotypical approaches instead of ADHD friendly approaches.

Take a big breath and remember that you are working with someone with a different neuro-system than yours. The key is learning strategies that make sense for the ADHD brain.

Common ADHD related terms

Chasing the dopamine/Dopamine hits

Pause mode/Stuck mode/wait mode

Overstimulation and sensitivities (sounds, light, texture)

Intrusive thoughts/overthinking

Black and white thinking/ All or nothing

Boredom

Hyperfocusing/time warps

Time perception (Often late, loose track of time)

Perfectionism

Shame

ADHD friendly Interventions

Personal ADHD manual:

How do you get in the zone now? Under what circumstances do you succeed and thrive in your current life? Rather than focus on where you fall short, you need to identify how you get into the zone and function at remarkable levels. What do you love about having ADHD?

Encourage your clients to keep a journal for 2 weeks and write down what helps them complete tasks and stay motivated. Urgency and competitiveness as a form of motivation.

Promoting acceptance and psychological flexibility:

To counterbalance shame, and black and white thinking typical in adult ADHD, clinician should work with clients on acceptance and psychological flexibility.

Timers and alarms

Help them understand their nervous system:

- Dopamine hits (picking fights, trying to find problems)
- Boredom
- Time perception
- Perfectionism
- Pause mode
- Hyperfocus

ADHD friendly Interventions

MOVEMENT and body based interventions

Movement is beneficial for all humans, but especially for people with ADHD with hyperactive tendencies. Hand on activities like (painting, building something, legos, playdough, fidgets)

Creative outlets/ list of hobbies they have on rotation.

Help your client identify a list of hobbies or outlets to utilize when they feel bored. Boredom is very common in ADHD and it can be your client's worst enemy. ADHD brains need to be stimulated a lot more than neurotypical brains. When left unoccupied, the ADHD brain will try to find stimulation causing anxiety, overthinking, depression spirals.

Fanny pack:

Encourage your client to get a fanny pack or a purse or anything that will keep all of their important belongings in one place. This improved my life significantly.

Notes and to do lists:

In conversations people with ADHD have a hard time waiting their turn and they tend to interrupt others because they are afraid they will forget what they want to share. Encourage your client to keep a notebook or to write down on their phone their thoughts while in conversation and to let their interlocutor know they just want to make sure they remember what they want to share.

Lifestyle: Diet, time outdoor, self-care, exercise.

A high fats and high protein diet with low sugar has been shown to be very beneficial for ADHD symptoms.

Questions



Resources:

Articles:

<https://www.additudemag.com/secrets-of-the-adhd-brain/>

Books:

- Is it You, Me or Adult A.D.D? Stopping the Roller Coaster When Someone you Love has Attention Deficit Disorder. By Gina Pera
- Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder. By Edward M. Hallowell

YouTube videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FE-k0yV-KF0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ae1X8HZunok>

New treatments

EndeavorRX