



Beverly H. Rohman

## **Building Life Skills and Learning Strategies ....**

### **Finding Support for Adult ADD**

The truth is out --- and there are roughly 10 million adults in the United States to prove it! Adult Attention-Deficit Disorder (Adult ADD) symptoms are similar, but not identical, to those seen in children and adolescents. The basic categories of symptoms in children are inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. People often refer to the adult form of the disorder as ADD, because symptoms of hyperactivity tend to diminish with age, often taking the form of restlessness or fidgetiness (e.g., persistent pencil tapping and/or foot tapping) and difficulty engaging in quiet activities.

Until the 1970s, it was believed that Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) was only seen in childhood, and that children outgrew it in adolescence. This neurobiological condition affects an estimated 6-8 percent of the population. In most cases, AD/HD is thought to be inherited, and tends to run in some families more than others. It affects both males and females, and people of all races, cultural and social backgrounds. We now know that AD/HD is a lifelong condition that affects children, adolescents, and adults of all ages. Only gradually was it realized that while the hyperactivity component may diminish, the inattention and impulsive aspects can persist well into adulthood.

Symptoms commonly associated with Adult ADD include:

- Lack of focus
- Disorganization
- Restlessness
- Difficulty finishing projects
- Losing things

Similarly, a variety of daily living difficulties, including problems in marital relationships, workplace problems, parenting difficulties, money management, and a host of other difficulties get in the way at home, work or with friends. Gone undetected, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, addictions to drugs and/or alcohol, or other clinical conditions often surface and present additional life challenges.

Many adults do not realize that they have Adult ADD until their own child is diagnosed. Only then do they recognize the pattern of problems they have faced since childhood and understand their long-standing difficulties with concentration, memory, organization, and interpersonal relationships. They are usually relieved that there is a name for the frustration they have felt all their lives, and that there are therapies, programs and treatments designed to help. While there is no cure for ADD, once properly diagnosed

and treated, ADD can be well managed and lead to increased satisfaction in life, positive attitudes and significant improvements in daily functioning. Many individuals with ADD lead highly successful and happy lives. (Ask Jay Leno, Charles Schwab, Whoopi Goldberg or Erin Brockovitch, just to name a few!) There are many services and treatments for adults with ADD. Among them is **ADD Coaching**, a relatively new field that has become more prominent in recent years. Although concepts of professional and personal coaching have been around for several decades, the concept of ADD coaching was first addressed in the 1994 best selling book, *Driven to Distraction*, by Edward M. Hallowell, M.D., and John J. Ratey, M.D. **ADD Coaching** seeks to address the daily challenges of living with ADD. Coaching is a partnership designed for the purpose of providing a supportive, goal-oriented process to help individuals and families develop the tools, strategies and confidence necessary to achieve success and help maximize the opportunity to reach their full potential. It is a partnership that provides a safe, supportive environment where together the client and coach discover how to create a joyful, satisfying life based on the client's strengths, talents and gifts.

Through the use of Structure, Support, Skills and Strategies, the coaching relationship is designed to move a person forward, enhance their learning, and help them achieve better results in their life: academically, professionally, socially, or in any area of life they want to improve. Through individualized assistance and support, coaches help people concentrate on where they are now, where they want to be, and how they can get there.

A coach is someone who:

- Checks in with you regularly about your goals and progress
- Listens for your possibilities
- Helps you identify actions to overcome blocks and barriers
- Encourages you to take steady steps forward
- Helps hold the vision of what you and your life can be
- Celebrates your successes along the way

With a coach you can:

- Take better and smarter actions – because you set the goals you really want
- Have a balanced life which works well – because you designed it
- Reach for more – much more – because you are seeing the vision
- Make better decisions for yourself – because your focus is clearer

***Adult ADD is a real journey --- filled with possibilities and promise!***

*For more information about adults with learning differences and ADD, contact The Learning Connections, at 12 West Dover Street, Easton, MD 21601, 410-763-7097, or write to [info@thelearningconnections.net](mailto:info@thelearningconnections.net)*

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