

Strategies for Working with Clients with ADD/ADHD

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ADHD IS

- A Neurological Disability
- Hereditary and Genetic
- Occurs Throughout the Lifespan
- Primarily a Hidden Disability
- High Risk for Comorbid Conditions
- Generally Misunderstood

Three Types of AD/HD

- Primarily Inattentive Type
- Primarily Hyperactive Impulsive Type
- Primarily Combined Type

Mild, Moderate or Severe

ATTRIBUTES, STRENGTHS & TALENTS

OF THOSE WITH ATTENTION DEFICITS

- **CREATIVITY**
- **DETERMINATION**
- **IMAGINATION**
- **SENSITIVITY**
- **PERSISTENCE**
- **SOCIABILITY**
- **MAGNETIC**
- **STIMULATING**
- **FUN**
- **SENSE OF HUMOR**
- **COURAGEOUS**
- **INFECTIOUS HIGH ENERGY**
- **INTELLIGENT**
- **INTUITIVE**
- **HIGHLY FOCUSED IN THINGS THEY LOVE**
- **VERY TALENTED IN AT LEAST ONE AREA (OFTEN NOT A CORE ACADEMIC AREA)**

Brain Development

LEFT BRAIN

- Linear Sequential
- Rule Oriented
- Structured
- Organized
- Linguistic
- Literal
- Logical
- More Rigid

*RIGHT BRAIN

- Visual
- Experiential
- Creative
- Imaginative
- Global View
- Sensitive
- Spontaneous
- More Chaotic

Gardner's Nine Intelligences

- **LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE**
- **LOGICAL - MATHEMATICAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **SPATIAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **BODILY - KINESTHETIC INTELLIGENCE**
- **INTERPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **NATURALIST INTELLIGENCE**
- **INTRAPERSONAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **EXISTENTIAL INTELLIGENCE**

***SIGNS OF ADD/ADHD**

- 1. Creatively Talented in Area Other Than Core Academics**
- 2. Chronic Underachiever**
- 3. Often Inattentive & Distracted**
- 4. Very Forgetful**
- 5. Difficulty Getting And Staying Organized**
- 6. Impatient and Low Tolerance for Frustration**
- 7. Inability to Conceptualize and Manage Time**
- 8. Restless or Hyperactive**
- 9. Sudden Mood Swings**
- 10. Inability to Recognize Cues or Impact on Others**
- 11. Drawn to Highly Stimulating Activities**
- 12. Chronic Procrastinator**
- 13. Chronic Problems with Self Esteem**
- 14. Tendency toward Worry and Anxiety**
- 15. Tendency toward Addictive Behavior**
- 16. Poor Problem Solving Skills and Doesn't Ask for Help**
- 17. Live in the Moment with No Concern for Past or Future (Spontaneous)**
- 18. Difficulty Getting Started and Staying to Completion**
- 19. Easily Bored**
- 20. Unable to regulate attention**

***To be ADD/ADHD, one does not have to have all the symptoms**

Brown's Model of Executive Functions Impaired in ADHD

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

Organizing Prioritizing & Activating to work	Focusing Sustaining Focus, & Shifting Focus to tasks	Regulating Alertness, Sustaining Effort & Processing Speed	Managing Frustration & Modulating Emotions	Utilizing Working Memory & Accessing Recall	Monitoring And Self-Regulating Action
1. Activator	2. Focus	3. Effort	4. Emotion	5. Memory	6. Action

(T. E. Brown, 2001)

ASSESSMENT

- ADHD Screening Check List
- Complete Family History including Psychological and Neurological Diagnosis
- Inventory of ADHD Symptoms and the Severity
- Symptom Checklist: from parents, spouse and/or teacher. Checklist from a work supervisor would also be helpful if possible

TREATMENT APPROACH

- **PSYCHO EDUCATIONAL**
- **MEDICATION STABILIZATION**
- **DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES AND SKILLS**
- **ENVIRONMENTAL RESTRUCTURING**
- **COGNITIVE BEHAVIORIAL APPROACH**

ALWAYS TRY STRATEGIES FIRST

Strategies

STRATEGIES

Strategies

STRATEGIES AND SKILLS NEEDED

- Organization with Some Structure and Routine
- Time Management
- Memory Support
- Planning
- Visual Project Planning
- Problem Solving
- Habit Building in Weakness Areas
- Self Advocating for Needs to be Successful

WHAT WORKS

Visual Organizational Structure

- Calendars
- Charts
- Lists
- Project Maps to Achieve Goals
- Visual or Phone Reminders

The Process

- Keep it Simple
- One or Two Things at a Time
- Recognize ANY Improvement
- Lots of Encouragement
- Train Until it's a Habit
- Celebrate Every Small Success

Accommodations

- Quiet Spaces Free of Distractions
- Short Deadlines
- Flex Time
- Use Strengths & Delegate Weaknesses
- Use of Technology Instead of Paper

Cognitive Behavioral Approach

- Therapy to Identify Mistaken Beliefs that Keep Them Stuck
- Build Self Worth Separate From Behavior
- Use of Visuals & Stories to Explain

Challenge Mistaken Beliefs

- I am worthless if I do it wrong.
- I am never good enough.
- I am stupid, lazy and irresponsible.
- I am inadequate as a person.
- I am incapable of working up to my potential.

- I am a total screw up.
- I am completely irresponsible.
- I am a failure.
- I am never measuring up or trying hard enough.
- I am always screwing up.

I Should Beliefs

- I should always do it right the first time.
- I should always have everyone's approval.
- I should do everything perfectly.
- I should never ask for help.
- I should be perfect.

Beliefs About Others

- No One Can Help Me
- Everyone Always Criticizes Me
- Everyone Thinks I'm a Worthless Failure
- People Can't Be Trusted
- Everyone Expects Me to Fail
- People Don't Believe in Me
- People Think I am a Bad Person

Solution

- Believe in the Client
- Address the Real Problems
 1. The Neurological Problems
 2. The Lack of Self Worth & Sense of Belonging and Security
 3. The Mistaken Beliefs

For More Information

For More Information About Identifying
and Changing Mistaken Beliefs

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Post Test

ADHD is

1. A bad habit
2. Irresponsible misbehavior
3. A neurological disorder
4. A psychological problem

A positive attribute of someone with ADHD is:

1. They are creative
2. They are organized
3. They are compulsive about being on time
4. They are good at handling their emotions

Which of these is not a type of ADHD?

1. Hyperactive-Impulsive
2. Oppositional
3. Inattentive
4. Combined

A neurological problem common for those with ADHD is:

1. Poor reasoning ability
2. Inability to do well in school
3. Inability to remember things
4. Inability to express themselves well

What is a strategy used with clients with ADHD?

1. Lists
2. Mapping out projects
3. Phone reminders
4. All of the above

What is not important in doing therapy with these clients

1. Building their sense of self worth
2. Challenging their mistaken beliefs
3. Giving them weekly assignments with consequences for not completing them
4. Giving lots of encouragement

Answers:

1-3

2-1

3-2

4-3

5-4

6-3