

ADHD and Addiction

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ADHD is a developmental disability with a childhood onset that typically results in a chronic and pervasive pattern of impairment in school, social and/or work domains, and often in daily adaptive functioning.

Why must we change our view of
ADHD?

Adults With ADHD

- Any substance abuse or dependence (70%)
- Major depressive episodes (60%)
- Generalized anxiety (20%)
- Personality disorders
- Pessimistic, disorganized, passive, introverted, internal locus

Personality Disorders in Adults With ADHD

- Anti-social personality (22%)
- Passive aggressive personality (19%)
- Borderline personality (14%)
- Histrionic (11%)
- Avoidant (11%)

(Barkley et al, 1998)

Substance Use Disorders in Adults With ADHD

- Alcohol abuse (15%)
- Alcohol dependence (41%)
- Substance abuse (45%)
- Substance dependence (31%)
- Any abuse or dependence (69%)

(Millstein et al, 1997)

Gambling in Adults with ADHD

- No formal statistics.
- Estimated to be three fold greater than general population.

ADHD reflects exaggeration of
normal behavior.

The Symptoms of ADHD Lead to a
Nearly Infinite Number of
Consequences

Self-regulation

- The ability to inhibit
- The ability to delay
- The ability to separate thought from feeling
- The ability to separate experience from response
- The ability to consider an experience and change perspective
- The ability to consider alternative responses

Self-regulation

- The ability to choose a response and act successfully towards a goal
- The ability to change the response when confronted with new data
- The ability to negotiate life automatically
- The ability to track cues

People with ADHD aren't

Clue-less

They are unfortunately often
cue-less!

Poor Self-regulation is
synonymous with. . .

Poor Self-control

Poor self-regulation leads to . .

.

Impulsive behavior

Poor self-regulation leads to:

- Knowing what to do is not the same as doing what you know
- Inconsistent behavior
- Unpredictable behavior
- The illusion of competence
- Riding an emotional roller coaster
- Problems with automatic behavior

Why Do People With ADHD Under Regulate?

- Lack of standards?
- Problems with self-monitoring?
- Chronically weak skills?
- Temporarily weak skills?
- Temptation?

Conditions under which inattention is observed

- Repetitive
- Effortful
- Uninteresting
- Not chosen

Conditions under which problems with consequences are observed

- Delayed
- Infrequent
- Unpredictable
- Lacking saliency

ADHD acts as a catalyst fueling other developmental and environmental risk factors.

ADHD appears to primarily involve the basal ganglia, especially in relationship to impulsivity, and variably the frontal lobe, depending on associated learning difficulties. Comorbidity with ADHD probably confounds findings from different study groups.

(Hendren et al, 2000)

Diagnostic Guidelines

- Use self-report of ADHD symptoms:
- For current symptoms use DSM flexibly (4+)
- For childhood recall of symptoms use DSM
- Mandatory corroboration
- Paper trail of impairment
- Onset of symptoms before age 13

Diagnostic Guidelines

- Chronic course, no remission
- Impairment in major life activities using average person standard
- If impairment arose late must be explained
- Rule out: low IQ, LD, anxiety, depression as primary cause of symptoms

Assessment Tools

- History
- Self-report measures
- Other report measures
- Tests of attention and inhibition
- Cognitive (memory, processing, etc.) measures
- Intellectual measures
- Personality measures

Treatment Plan For ADHD

- Education
- Thorough assessment
- Medication
- Behavior management
- Educational support
- Long term perspective
- Build success
- Focus on resilience

Five keys to successful management of ADHD

- Make tasks interesting
- Make payoffs valuable
- Adjust expectations for change
- Allow more trials to mastery
- Allow more time for change

The Learning to Swim Mindset

Provide opportunities for the individual to consistently, predictably and independently self govern.

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