



15 ADHD INSIGHTS TO JUMP START YOUR ADHD TREATMENT

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To Jump Start Your ADHD Treatment*

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- ✓ *Avoid The Speed Bumps To Getting Started*
- ✓ *Steer Clear Of Distractions To Getting The Help You Deserve*
- ✓ *Focus On Getting The Best Treatment Possible*

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INTRODUCTION

In this ADHD Friendly and easy-to-read guide we share with you valuable insights as to what works and what doesn't work when it comes to successfully treating ADHD. Our clear-cut, no-nonsense answers will help you steer clear of the most difficult and painful obstacles of successful ADHD treatment.

If the idea of reading this entire Guide seems overwhelming, then we encourage you to simply scan over the section headlines, and start by reading those bits of insight first.

Then if one of those insights catches your interest, then read that section and come back another time to see the next section that seems interesting.

Yes, you can read this guide in any order, and even start at the back of the guide if you like (a favorite trick for many people with ADHD).

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1. ADHD CAN FEEL OVERWHELMING

It is easy to get overwhelmed by the idea of that you or someone you love has ADHD and that is very common. Knowing how to go about getting proper treatment, however, can be very confusing and often overwhelming.

Let's Get Real! If you're like most people, you have probably searched the Internet for help and called several doctors and psychiatrists, but still you are in the dark as to any real ADHD treatments.

When you call a treatment provider, be prepared to ask questions...a LOT of them! The more you learn about your ADHD treatment team, the better.

Don't know what to ask when you call? In our "Bonus" section at the end of this guide, we have provided a list of the great 10 questions to ask every prospective provider. Undoubtedly you will come up with a few of your own as time goes by, but these questions will give you a head start.

2. ADHD IS NOTHING NEW

Contrary to popular opinion, what we call Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (or ADD – Attention Deficit Disorder) has been around for centuries. The name has been changed over the years, but it has been referred to in the medical literature since the 1600's!

3. ADHD IS A REAL CONDITION

It's tempting for some people to simply dismiss ADHD as the latest excuse for poor behavior and decreased performance. However, if you have ADHD, and you accept that lame notion, you might find yourself one year from now, no better than you are right this very minute, and no closer to making the changes you need to live the life you deserve!

It's easy for ADHD'ers to lose sight of how debilitating the symptoms of real ADHD are, and instead lose themselves on the internet, getting caught up in the controversy surrounding this disorder and focus their attention on focus on proving or disproving the validity of ADHD. This has caused many ADHD'ers to waste valuable months or even years to the controversy and never

get around to finding the help that they so desperately need and deserve.

Remember: *Those who have received proper ADHD treatment don't get lost in the idea of real or not real; instead they focus on creating more successful lives.*

4. ADHD IS NOT CAUSED BY A LACK OF WILLPOWER OR LAZINESS!

Probably the single most common form of sabotage to successful treatment is the harmful belief that ADHD is not a "real disorder" and that somehow a person's difficulties are caused by "bad character" or "lack of motivation," and are absolutely curable with an extra dose of willpower and/or self-determination.

Adopting this attitude is a guaranteed lose-lose situation for everyone involved! If it was that easy to just "try harder" and everything would be better, then why have so few people been successful using that approach?

When it comes to certain neurological conditions such as ADHD or depression, it is very easy to think that a person should be able to "just snap out of it," or "just try harder to be happier or more focused."

ADHD is a real medical condition believed to be caused by an imbalance of certain neurochemicals in the brain. It is not a disorder of will or a lack of willpower! If you or someone close to you is struggling with ADHD, it is imperative to remember that ADHD is a neurological condition and its roots are in the neurology of the brain, and not in a person's character!

Remember: *You can change a person's neurochemistry; you can't really change people's character deficits!*

5. COMMIT TO THE SOLUTION

The sooner you can accept that ADHD is a real and treatable condition, the sooner you can be on your way to getting real relief from the ADHD symptoms. People who are truly successful in treating their ADHD learn early on to accept that this brain-based disorder is usually responsive to a variety of treatment strategies, depending on the type and severity. For the majority of those committed to their treatment, they will experience great success in their personal and professional lives.

And that is terrific news!

6. ADHD IS BIOLOGICAL

We now know that 80 percent of the causes of ADHD are genetic or neurological in origin. Research has now found three separate genetic markers for ADHD. People with one gene experience the lightest form; those with two markers experience more symptoms, and those with all three genetic markers experience the strongest form of ADHD.

ADHD is not due to either a lack of willpower or to poor parenting. While the exact cause of ADHD is unknown, research suggests that ADHD is caused by an imbalance of the neurochemicals dopamine, norepinephrine and serotonin.

Studies also suggest that in addition to functional deficits, there may also be structural differences in how the ADHD brain is constructed. Current treatments work primarily on regulating the functioning of these neurochemicals in the brain.

7. SUCCESS STARTS WITH AN ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS

Like most things in life, it is crucial to know exactly what you are dealing with before attempting to solve a problem. An accurate diagnosis is the first and most powerful step to treating your ADHD as it will help explain the reasons why you struggle more with things like paying attention, following directions, listening closely, being on time, or having organizational skills—things that come easily to your non-ADHD peers.

8. A DIAGNOSIS OF ADHD IS AN EXPLANATION NOT AN EXCUSE

Once you receive a proper diagnosis, you may actually find a sense of relief! Finally you can put a name to the symptoms you have been suffering from. You will see that it wasn't laziness or a lack of intelligence that has been holding you back.

It can be empowering to know this is a real disorder that you can actually do something about. A diagnosis is not an excuse to explain away negative

behavior; it is a call to action to find solutions! For instance, people who wear eyeglasses don't use the excuse, "Oh I just can't see." Instead they wear their glasses to function best. So, too, must the newly diagnosed ADHD patient not respond to adversity by saying, "Oh that is because I have ADHD." No! Instead they are responsible for finding solutions to meet their day-to-day challenges.

Remember: *Actions speak louder than words! Look to create new and creative solutions to everyday challenges and expect to do things differently.*

9. GET YOUR DIAGNOSIS IN WRITING

You will need to have your diagnosis performed by a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, or medical doctor—and be sure to ask for your diagnosis in writing. Most people don't realize that this documentation can come in very handy when dealing with your insurance company, school, college, university, or if you have to change to another doctor. And be sure to ask for it early on in treatment, as that is much easier than going back and having the doctor write it out later.

10. AVOID SELF DIAGNOSIS

Be careful with self-diagnosis! Not only can you be wrong, you could severely limit your ability to get proper help from a treating professional. Many people ADHD tendencies have gone online, taken a test or answered a questionnaire, and are feeling somewhat confident that they must have ADHD. And whether they are right or wrong, they are in no position to help themselves with the proper help they need, so they miss out on that very valuable asset.

You may even have had a "nearly-spiritual experience" as you read materials that answered questions about ADHD. It may have felt like for the first time, you were really understood. That is an awesome feeling, but don't be fooled into thinking that just because you answered all of the questions affirmatively, you have enough information to confirm a diagnosis of ADHD.

Everyone struggles at one time or another with paying attention, losing things, or staying focused on boring subjects. For people with ADHD they seem unable to inhibit their thoughts, speech, and behavior. Still others with authentic ADHD find that their ability to initiate or inhibit behaviors seems to NOT be under their control. Despite intelligence, abilities and desire, for people with ADHD, these problems are more the rule, not the exception. Real ADHD causes significant and severe dysfunction across many areas of a person's life, and continually negatively impacts many different situations and environment.

11. THERE IS NO SINGLE TEST TO DIAGNOSE ADHD

Yes that's right, there is no single test to diagnose ADHD. It is probably exactly the opposite of what you were hoping we would say. Like most diagnoses in mental health, there is no single physical, medical or psychological test that a person can take that proves an ADHD diagnosis.

There is some very promising genetic research indicating that certain genetic differences can predict ADHD. These tests are not readily available and would be quite costly to perform. An accurate diagnosis for ADHD is based on an extensive clinical interview with the patient, as well as the collection of collaborating information from outside sources such as parents and partners. All of this is combined with various screening instruments and checklists. These screening instruments and symptom checklists are not proof of an ADHD diagnosis, but are very helpful in understanding what symptoms you are suffering from.

The truth is that there is no substitute for the skill and experience of someone that specializes in Attention Deficit Disorder. It is the job of a highly skilled clinician to examine all of the evidence, and ultimately to make an accurate diagnosis. Just like you don't go to your regular doctor to get a broken leg set and put into a cast, so too you are better served by seeking the assistance and wisdom of someone who specializes in ADHD.

12. ADHD HAS MANY IMPOSTERS, BEWARE OF INCOMPLETE DIAGNOSIS TECHNIQUES

"But I have every symptom on the list, Doctor! Doesn't that mean I have ADHD?" The answer is a definitive maybe. What you might not realize is that the test or quiz you took is not a test at all. It is just a screening instrument—nothing more than a list of questions that suggests that ADHD is something to consider clinically. It guides a patient or clinician in understanding the likelihood of a particular diagnosis by highlighting the symptoms that the patient is experiencing.

Many things can cause problems with attention, focus, impulsivity and hyperactivity. These symptoms alone are not sufficient to warrant a diagnosis of ADHD. Remember that part of the reason for getting a comprehensive ADHD evaluation is to make sure to identify and "rule out" the possibility of other health, psychological, medical, situational, and nutritional and lifestyle

problems that may be the cause of these symptoms before jumping to a diagnosis of ADHD.

There are common causes of attention, memory, and motivation problems that are not caused by ADHD. These include stress, allergies and sensitivities, problems with diet, poor sleep, dehydration, under-active or over-active thyroid function, and certain hormone imbalances. Trauma, depression, and some types of anxiety can also mimic ADHD. It is risky and not good medicine to overlook these vital systems and other considerations when making a proper diagnosis.

13. THERE IS NO CURE FOR ADD/ADHD

“If money could buy you a cure for ADHD, then no rich people or their children would have ADHD!”

The fact is that you can learn to manage your symptoms and your life better, but ADHD does not go away. *Treatments for ADHD include medication and non-medication strategies. Even the best medicine only helps relieve many of the most difficult symptoms. Unlike other conditions—such as depression—ADHD does not “get better” with time.*

Don't be fooled into thinking that there is a non-medical alternative that is the secret miracle that will cure you of ADHD. If money could buy you a cure for ADHD, then no rich people or their children would have ADHD! Furthermore, if there were a cure, some drug company has probably already paid billions to keep it a secret, depending on your personal views.

The Internet is filled with different websites that will confirm or deny anything you can possibly think of, including every possible position on ADHD. If you have ADHD, then you probably have problems focusing on what you need to do, but can focus really well on stuff that is exciting or compelling, like finding the cure for ADHD on the internet. This can be a real diversion for people with ADHD, and may keep you from getting the real help that you need.

“Unmanaged ADHD can rob you of the Life You could have Lived if only You Had Finally Agreed to Get Help”

If there were a cure for ADHD, we would tell you. *We would be selling it to all of our patients and frankly we would use it as well. Dr. Wilford comments “Believe me, I have a full throttle case of ADHD and even though I feel fortunate that I have medication to help alleviate my symptoms, the fact is that I would love to never take medicine again—or undergo some process that would put an end to the parts of my ADHD that make life really hard.”*

He goes on to say that “If such a product or process existed, I would jump on it in a minute. I am here to tell you that I have spent years looking, and what I found is this: If you have ADHD, you have to still do all the usual stuff to manage your health, like taking supplements, eating right, getting enough sleep, avoiding foods that you are allergic to, and so on. On top of all that, for most of us, we still have to take medication.” The sooner you make peace with the medication issue, the sooner you will be on the road to successful management of your ADHD symptoms.

Dr. Sarah also notes “there are people with mild cases of ADHD, who do lots of things to work around their ADHD and don’t use medication as part of their ADHD management regimen.” Dr. Sarah also reminds readers that research now shows that exercising twice a day has shown to be very helpful in managing ADHD symptoms.

14. A GOOD EVALUATION TAKES TIME AND EXPERTISE

There is no substitute for good medical or psychiatric care. If your clinician gives you a diagnosis in less than one hour, be nervous and get a second opinion. *The core symptoms of ADHD can mimic many other conditions. It is very easy to say to someone, “Look here, you have these symptoms, so therefore, you have ADHD.” However, that is akin to saying, “Look, you have big eyes and fur, so therefore, you must be a wolf.” The fact is, you could be a wolf or nearly any other mammal based on those few characteristics. A good ADHD evaluation will be a Minimum of one hour spent doing a clinical interview (this is still the gold standard of medical care), including:*

A Thorough life history from childhood through present day

A comprehensive review of medication history

Detailed family history

Extensive symptom review

A review of your sleep habits

A look at your eating habits

A consideration of other medical conditions

A review of recent lab work to rule out other conditions

A serious comparison to dyslexia and other learning disabilities

Detailed, measurable goals to be reached by the treatment

The ADHD evaluation will rule out other possible medical conditions, and it will include getting labs done to exclude any conditions that can be tested for. It will also examine your life from childhood through adulthood. Finally, it will attempt to rule out other common coexisting conditions including learning disabilities, as these can cause symptoms that are remarkably similar to ADHD.

You should know the process is going to be expensive. The nature of good care is time. Taking time costs money and that is just how it is. The amount of documentation required to make an accurate diagnosis is extensive, and extensive is expensive. You only get one mind, and a proper diagnosis is something that can affect you the rest of your life.

15. AVOID THIRD PARTY DIAGNOSING OF CHILDREN

Believe it or not, we have heard of clinicians who will diagnose a child based solely on what a parent or set of parents might say about the child, and the clinician will have never seen the child in person or interviewed or observed this child. This is bad medicine, no matter how you slice it. While a parent's input is truly an invaluable source of information, there is no substitute for observing and interviewing the child personally.

CONCLUSION

"The only thing that is holding you back from the life you want are the things you still don't know"
R. Wilford, PhD

Successful ADHD treatment takes time, effort and a willingness to go the distance and stay the course. The truth is that with most things in life, any one thing can mean the difference between success and failure. People with ADHD are especially susceptible to giving up once the novelty of the situation has ended. In addition it is wise to remember that many people with ADHD have a very low frustration tolerance as well as lose interest in something once it becomes routine. That means

that if you or someone you love has ADHD it sometimes only takes one reason, one frustrating or unlikable experience to opt out of being successful. Giving up too quickly robs a person of the chance to experience all that life has to offer.

Remember, there are going to be set backs from time to time in any treatment plan. Think of set backs as temporary feedback that something your doing needs to be changed in some way and that each time you make an adjustment you are closer to finding your ideal treatment strategy.

This guide was written from a place of hope, a place of wishing that you could know some of the attitudes and insights that people who have been successful at treating their ADHD have known and also give you a way to avoid the pitfalls that often keep people from finding success.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



We are Richard Ferman, Robert Wilford, and Sarah Ferman, co-founders of ADHD Couples Success. Like you, we are challenged with dealing with ADHD in each of our relationships with our partners.

We have experienced the same struggles, challenges that ADHD couples face everyday. The difference is that they have learned the value of getting an ADHD education about the different issues that they have faced first hand in their own relationships. They bring a first hand knowledge and understanding of what it is like to feel like you are all alone and understood by no one.

We are ADHD Couples Experts

We are Licensed psychotherapists

We are ADHD Specialists

We live with ADHD

We get ADHD

We love someone with ADHD

We can help you with your ADHD Relationships!

Having worked with thousands of clients struggling with ADHD and the people who love them or at least seem like they still might. We created ADHD Couples Success.com to bring our years of professional expertise to any couple that is struggling to hang on, looking to tune up an ok relationship, or to take their functioning relationship to the next level.

We work with both members of the couples. We recognize that in addition to the ADHD partner, the non-ADHD partner needs just as much support, guidance and tools to cope with their partners ADHD.



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