



SHANE LYNCH PSYCHOLOGY

Brrrrr...

Winter, fall, winter, fall. Don't like the weather? Wait five minutes.

Don't forget

ADHD is a label we use to classify a group of consistent symptoms that occur in three different environments. This doesn't mean that everyone or anyone needs to identify themselves as having or being ADHD. Diagnostic labels are only as helpful as we make them.

If it makes you feel better about yourself to have the label, great. If it makes a part of you feel insecure, leave the label and work to address the symptoms you experience just like we would do with a cold.

About Shane

Re: Halloween: My youngest son (2) went as a lion, so my wife and I decided to be giraffes. There was no fully family costume as my other two boys (4, 6) had to be ninjas.



ADHD Part 3

Adults and ADHD

Adults can have ADHD, too. There, for anyone who needed that affirmed for them, consider your experience acknowledged. Now consider this: I once attended a conference seminar with other psychologists, physicians, and nurses, and the presenter, a psychiatrist, indicated a significant amount of adults presenting with depressive symptoms were found to improve with medication used to treat ADHD. One conclusion she attributed to this finding was: it's more common to diagnose ADHD in children, and depression in adults, but a missed ADHD diagnosis in an adult may in fact address complaints of depressed mood.

For any diagnosis in the mental health field, multiple symptoms must be present and as previously mentioned in Part 1 of this series, I am not going to offer diagnostic criteria beyond inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. One thing we know about adult ADHD is that hyperactivity is less common.



Tips for Dads & Moms

A common issue with ADHD adults is stress susceptibility. Co-parents of ADHD adults will notice their partner has less refined coping strategies. Things that are bothersome to a non-ADHD adult may be earth-shattering to an ADHD adult. Literal mountains not molehills.

ADHD adults will also experience more daily stresses and potential bodily symptoms like aches and pains, headache, and tension.

Keep this in mind when dealing with the usual household routines with your kids. ADHD adults may require support where non-ADHD adults don't. If support is not available, ADHD adults may require a longer recovery time after dealing with the kid's needs/ routines.



Shane F. Lynch, MA, CCC, R.Psych

Another interesting pseudo-diagnostic point is the impact of stimulants on folks with ADHD. Because we treat ADHD with medication that is classified as a stimulant, it is interesting to note that adults with ADHD often respond in the opposite way than those without ADHD. For example, coffee relaxes adults with ADHD to the point they could have an espresso and then feel relaxed enough to have a nap.

Okay, on to some strategies:

Improve Organization: Try the 4 D method with tasks: *Dump it* if it's just not that important; *Delegate it* if it needs to get done, but someone can support you to complete it; *Delay-with-deadline* if you are the only one who has to do it but it doesn't have to happen now/today; *Do it* if you can right now!

Use Reminders: Try using timers to signal you to change tasks or start tasks you plan to do. Leave needed objects for work or school near the door. Use visual prompts/notes in different places. If a sticky note has been on your computer monitor for more than a couple of days, you no longer see it. Find a new spot for the note. Schedule time to tidy your bedroom/office/desk.

Eliminate Pockets of Chaos: Organize your closet, out of season clothes are stored, personal care products are organized in a drawer, and consider maintaining an organized interior of your vehicle.

Build and Maintain Routines: Consistent meal times, bedtimes and wake-up times, self-care activities, recreation, and social development.

Build Your Stress Coping Strategies: Adults with ADHD tend to have less refined coping strategies and will deal with stress and stressful situations less effectively than their non-ADHD adult counterparts. Work on these 4 different areas to address stress: Social - connecting with others, physical - calming down/relaxing, centering - meditation, and expressive - creativity.

If these skills are difficult to implement, get support. Practice is always key for any practical approach and support is required for success. Sometimes partners can be supportive, sometimes friends, sometimes family. Sometimes a therapist is the most consistent place to find the support you need. Important: you must ask for support the way *you* want it. If you don't, your supporters will support you the way *they* would like to be supported.