

Women Discovering ADD

Maybe you were shocked to learn that you had ADD when you took your child for an evaluation. The truth is that ADD runs in families. There's a 25 - 35% likelihood that if you have ADD, your child may have it, too. You can't feel bad about it and be depressed because you think that your son or daughter has ADD because of you. That kind of thinking is just depressing. On the other hand, you may have been relieved to learn that the feelings you'd had since childhood were actually ADD. You could finally put a label to it. Take a positive attitude and focus on your strengths and weaknesses. By doing this, you'll be on the path to ADD success for both you and your child. Women who are married with children find that ADD can be particularly stressful. Since the woman is expected, in most households, to be responsible for organization. When ADD causes you to be less organized than society expects, this can promote feelings of guilt and intense frustration. Here are some ideas to help you: Business, just by its very nature has certain structures, and if you have ADD, this probably helps you because you know what to expect next. But at home, this is totally not the case, unless you make it so. Try to make some simple scheduling there, and especially if you work outside your home, it will tend to make your home life less overwhelming. Break your household chores down. First, delegate what you can. All kids need to have little jobs to do by the time they're around 5 years old. You can have them set the table, for instance. It's a simple thing that a young child should and can learn to do easily. As the kids get older, add more tasks. As they grow, they will relieve you of many burdens and at the same time, you'll be teaching them responsibility. Give them an allowance that starts small and grows with them, too, and you'll be teaching them the value of money, how to save for what you want in life, what's important, etc. Then, decide what you're still totally responsible for handling, and schedule those tasks in. For instance, on Monday, do the vacuuming. On Tuesday, maybe it's the grocery store. Wednesday might be laundry day or whatever. Get some kind of planner that you always have access to, and write it all down or use some electronic version that will schedule repeat tasks automatically. But when you see all these things in writing, suddenly, they don't seem so daunting. Plus, you won't have to worry that you forgot to do something because it will be right there, in front of you. Waking up and going to bed at around the same time every day may be helpful, too. Eat your main meals at the same time every day. Do things with your kids at the same time every day and so on. Though not everything in life should be structured, having a loose idea of what's going on during the day will make you feel more secure. And if you work outside your home, try having "nights," like "pizza night," "fun night," and "learning night," or something like that. It will help you to know what to do when you're too tired to figure something out. ADD can also be accompanied by fits of temper when too much is going on around you. If you're trying to make dinner, the phone rings, and the kids start fighting, do you feel as if you might explode? Do you start yelling and telling everyone to get out of the kitchen? This can happen. Some ADD women have to be very careful that these fits of temper don't lead to even worse situations. Recognize times when the kids get to be too much for you, like when you're trying to concentrate on cooking a meal, especially when you're tired from working all day. Distractions can be extremely frustrating. Ask your partner to watch the children for you and to keep them out from under foot while you're cooking, if possible. Or don't cook! Getting someone else to do it for you. Having food catered in may not be as expensive as you think when you consider that you don't have to spend time shopping, paying for the food, and cooking it, too. But if you're just a chef at heart, or you can't afford to have meals catered or to eat out often, then prepare the meals while your kids are in school, or at least the hard parts, and just take them out, ready to go when the family is ready to eat. If you're a single parent, you might also consider hiring a babysitter when you're doing something that needs complete concentration from you. It can be cooking or a big project for work. Just because you're at home working doesn't mean you can't use a babysitter sometimes. Just think of all the ways you can help yourself, and you're sure to come up with an ADD-friendly system that will work for you. Still, when you feel like you want to burst, walk away, into another room for a while, until you can control your emotions. Don't allow these situations to spin out of control. They'll only serve to make you feel worse if you give into them. Women who have ADD often struggle with substance abuse, too, but the worst part of it all is that they tend to hide their dependencies from other people. Sure, drugs, alcohol, food, and any other addiction are rationalized ways to "help" your condition. You feel that your self-medicating, but you're just making yourself more miserable. If you have these issues, consult a professional immediately. Doctors and counselors can help you find ways to deal with ADD that won't destroy your family and your self-esteem. First, stop blaming yourself. You never asked for ADD, and in some ways, it's a great advantage. You're undoubtedly highly intelligent. You think faster and more creatively than most people, and you have a tremendous capacity to focus. Realize that those things make you very special and look for possibilities, not obstacles. Use ADD to your own advantage. ADD is nothing to be depressed about. In fact, figure out what your strengths are and it can make you very happy. You're probably highly intelligent and can do many things at once. You can hyperfocus on tasks that you really enjoy doing and come out with something far superior to the average Jane. Discover your personal pitfalls, and work on ADD-friendly systems to overcome them. You may need professional help to do that, and if you do... ask for it! That will be the first step on your road to making your life happier and in sending your self-esteem through the proverbial roof.

About the Author

Tellman Knudson is CEO of Overcome Everything, Inc., and a certified hypnotherapist and NLP practitioner, who was also diagnosed ADHD in his childhood and has learned to deal with typical ADD problems. Get his Free weekly ADD Success tip when you visit Instant ADD Success at <http://www.instantaddsuccess.com/>

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