

Explaining ADHD

ADHD is just so difficult to explain to people and therefore so easy for people to misinterpret it. Here are some additional points, just for your information – in trying to explain the ‘attention deficit’ as the label of ADHD is in itself not what it says on the tin!

The ADHD nervous system is rarely at rest. It wants to be engaged in something interesting and challenging all the time as it needs to be stimulated. Attention is in fact never “deficit.” It is actually always excessive, constantly occupied with internal reveries and engagements. They have four or five things rattling around in their minds, all at once and for no obvious reason, like five people talking simultaneously. However, nothing gets sustained or undivided attention, and this impairs their ability to simply focus on one thing, which then appears as an ‘attention deficit’. But the flip-side of this is that due to their excessive attention, they are more able to observe a wider perspective by having a ‘bird’s eye view’ – it enables them to see things differently and therefore think differently.

They also have a low threshold for sensory experiences as their senses and their thoughts are on high volume. The ADHD nervous system therefore gets very easily overwhelmed because its intensity is so high, and it can impair their ability to control their emotions.

Due to the Executive Function impairments, they may have difficulties with organization, prioritizing tasks, keeping track of stuff they have to do, time management, finishing tasks, making careless mistakes, thinking about way too many possibilities at once and end up overcomplicating everything which can be so incredibly frustrating for them. Due to impaired ability in regulating emotions, some children become disruptive because they are too overwhelmed with the constant frustrations – and this can happen very suddenly, due to their impulsivity. However, some children who are less impaired, try to hide all this ‘chaos’ behind the façade by ‘masking’ all their difficulties – these children usually get missed but their needs are no less greater, but they, too eventually reach their endurance point and can no longer internalise their pain and frustrations by which time they have suffered great emotional and mental health distress. All these impairments can also make it difficult for them to organise their thoughts when in conversation and they can find themselves isolated from their peers.

A lack of awareness and understanding of the condition has led to inequitable access to education for these children as the environment as well as teaching processes and practices have ignored these inherent difficulties which has created barriers and made it so difficult for these children to engage and thrive right from the start. It is therefore so important for them to understand the causes behind the behaviour – it is wrong to penalise the children for something that they have no control over. If they are restless, distracted and easily bored, it could mean that the teaching or task is not sufficiently stimulating for their brain and that needs to be adapted (not the child). Also, as they cannot screen out sensory input (e.g. excessive noise, temperature), this can be a great hindrance by distracting them further and therefore the environment needs to be adapted (not the child). Their frustrations in trying to maintain focus would also be compounded if lessons are too long – and that needs to be adapted (not the child). I could go on but I’m sure you can see where I am going with this – it is just not right to blame the child.

King’s College London have a free online course on Understanding ADHD, current research and practice: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/understanding-adhd>

*ADHD is not a learned behavior.
ADHD is not a discipline problem.
ADHD is not a spoiled child.
ADHD is not a temper tantrum.
ADHD is not a choice.
ADHD is not “the easy way out”.*

*ADHD is a medical condition.
ADHD is a chemical imbalance.
ADHD is a big deal.
ADHD is a battle for self confidence.
ADHD is a fight to maintain focus.
ADHD is a war between brain & body.
ADHD is real.*

#TRUTHABOUTADHD

ADHD:

Hyperactive Distractible Impulsive

ALSO ADHD:

Passionate Outspoken Strategic
Creative Fun Caring Generous
Humorous Empathetic Spontaneous
Authentic Inclusive Charismatic
Futuristic Romantic Opinionated Kind
Big-Hearted Adaptable Intuitive
Memorable Friendly Honest Positive
Entertaining Curious Adventurous
Inspiring Brave Enthusiastic Eager
Resilient Influential Resourceful
Talkative Unique Musical Inventive
Imaginative Smart Energetic Awesome

adhddd.com

Copyright © 2019, Dani Donovan. All rights reserved.

@danidonovan   