

Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

A Closer Look



^{**}No diagnosis (self or otherwise) to be made based on the given information. Please consult a recognised mental health practitioner to know more.

Key Themes

What is ADHD?

(Types, What it looks like,
What it may not look like)

Diagnosis & Overlapping Conditions

ADHD & Gender

ADHD Across The Lifespan

Challenges of ADHD

ADHD & Relationships

Key Themes

ADHD in School/Work

Positives in ADHD

Coping Tools

Myths vs. Facts

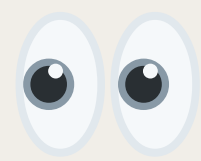
Treatment

For more information

What is ADHD?



ADHD is a
neurodevelopmental
disorder that affects
attention, impulse
control, and activity
levels, often due to
differences in brain
function and
dopamine regulation.



Inattentive Type



The Inattentive Type
involves internal
distractions, forgetfulness,
disorganization, and
difficulty focusing or
following through. It is
often missed, especially in
girls and adults, as it lacks
visible hyperactivity.

☁ Hyperactivity/ Impulsivity Type



The Hyperactivity/
Impulsivity type involves
excessive movement,
restlessness, interrupting,
and acting without
thinking.

These behaviours are
more outwardly visible
and often noticed.

✦ Combined Type



The Combined Type
includes symptoms of
both inattention and
hyperactivity-impulsivity,
often leading to
challenges with focus,
impulse control,
organization, and
managing responsibilities.

Diagnosis



ADHD is diagnosed
through a comprehensive
process by qualified
professionals involving
clinical history,
psychometric assessments,
and review of academic
and performance records,
since there's no single test.



DSM-5 TR Criteria



ADHD is diagnosed when 6 or more symptoms of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity persist for at least 6 months, occur in 2 or more settings, start before age 12, and cause clear social, academic, or occupational impairment.

Co-occurring Conditions



ADHD often co-occurs
with anxiety, dyslexia,
depression, learning
disorders, autism
spectrum disorder.

Co-existing
conditions can impact
diagnosis and
management.

ADHD in Girls & Women



In girls and women,
ADHD may show up as
quiet inattention,
daydreaming, or emotional
sensitivity rather than overt
hyperactivity. These subtler
signs are often misread,
leading to delayed
recognition and support.



Misdiagnosis & Overlap



ADHD is often
confused with trauma,
anxiety, or sensory
processing differences
due to overlapping
symptoms. Recognizing
these overlaps is key to
accurate diagnosis
and support.



ADHD across Lifespan

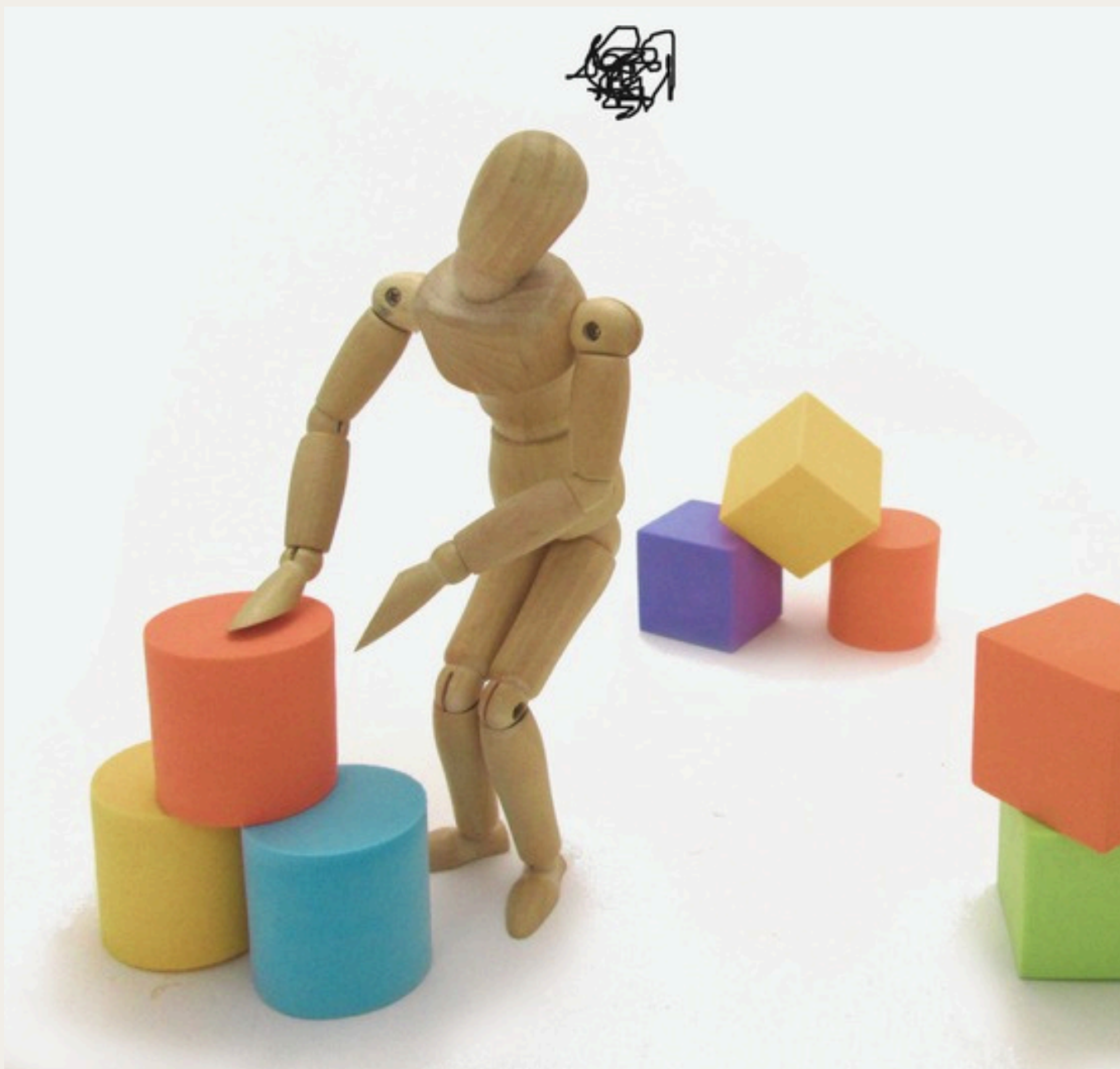


ADHD changes across life.

Childhood hyperactivity
can become adult
restlessness, and
inattention impacts work,
relationships, and daily life.

Recognizing these shifts
helps tailor support across
every stage of life.

👁️ What It Looks Like



ADHD may show up as forgetfulness, zoning out, or feeling overwhelmed by daily tasks, even in high-achieving or quiet individuals. Symptoms can be subtle, especially in familiar or structured environments.

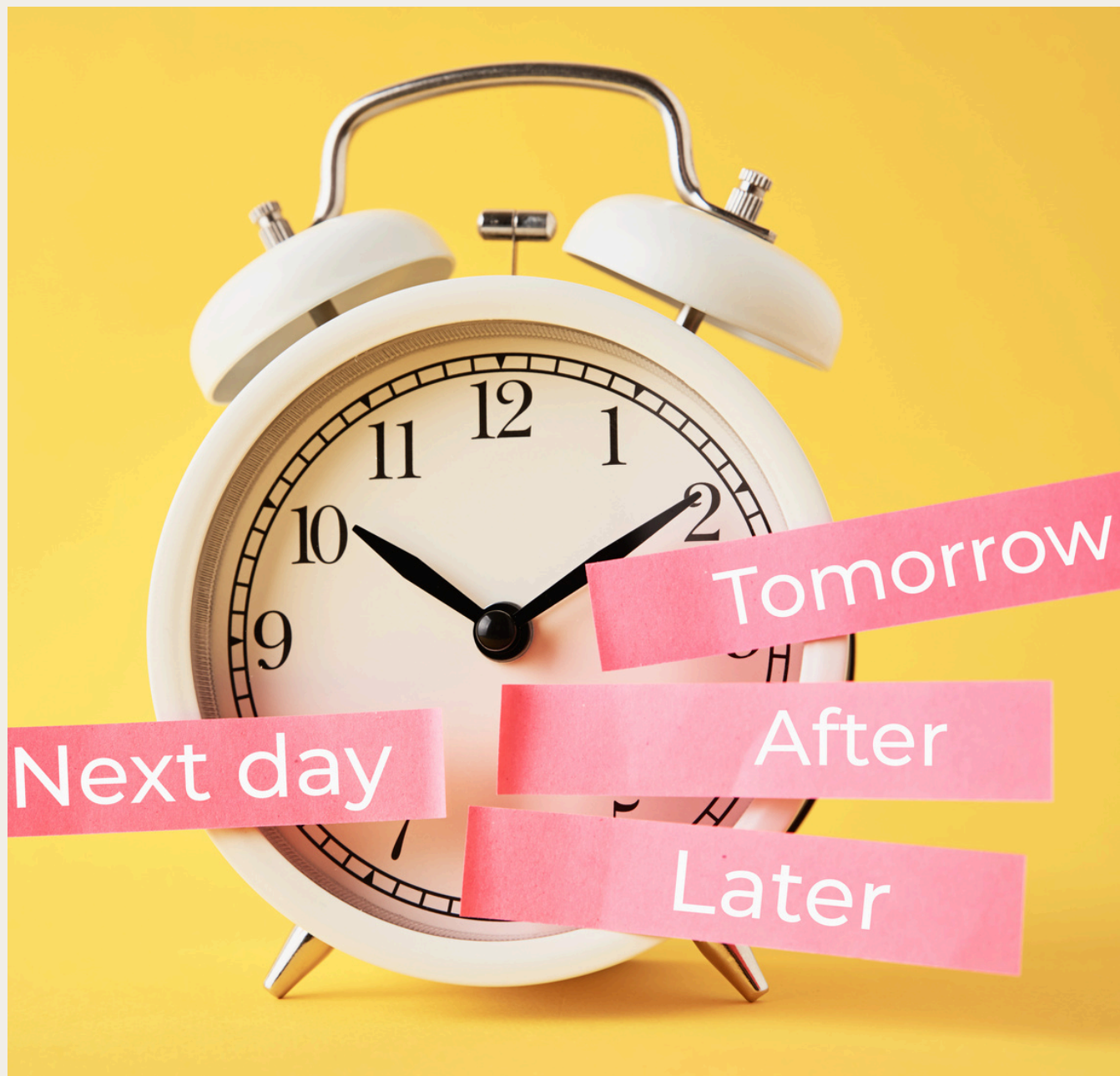
✗ What It May Not Look Like



It isn't always loud,
hyperactive, or linked to
poor performance.

People with ADHD are
often mislabeled as lazy or
disinterested, when in fact
they're trying hard and
feeling deeply
misunderstood.

⚡ Executive Dysfunction



Executive dysfunction in ADHD affects the brain's ability to plan, prioritize, and complete tasks.

Unlike procrastination, it isn't about willpower, but about how the brain manages motivation, attention, and task transitions.

Intention With Action



“I stared at the task for hours, knowing what to do but unable to act. My mind felt frozen, able to see the steps but unable to act. Guilt and helplessness overwhelmed me as I struggled to push through.”



Time Blindness



Time blindness is the difficulty sensing the passage of time, affecting one's ability to plan, stay on schedule, or switch tasks. It can feel like time either drags or disappears, and tools like Pomodoro timers or external cues can help.



Wait, it's
been hours?



“I sat down for a quick
break, just scrolling
through my phone.
I meant to rest for 10
minutes, but suddenly
two hours had passed.
It was like time vanished,
and I had no idea
where it went!”



Procrastination



Procrastination often stems from brain-based difficulty starting tasks, especially those that feel unclear, boring, or big. It's not laziness, but how the brain is wired, and using the 5-minute rule or implementation intentions can help start tasks.



Last Minute Mode



“I keep putting it off until
the deadline is right
in front of me.

That’s when my brain
suddenly decides
it matters.

I do want to do it,
but I just can’t get myself
to start earlier.”



Emotional Experiences



ADHD affects emotional regulation, leading to intense reactions like rejection sensitivity, mood swings, and shame, not as overreactions, but as part of the brain's struggle to manage emotions.

💔 Why do I feel
so much, so fast?



“I feel like every time I make a mistake, I feel like the worst person in the room. One small comment and I feel completely crushed and not good enough. It makes me feel rejected and isolated.”

Masking



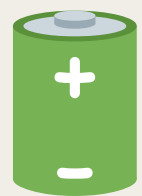
People with ADHD often mask their symptoms to fit in. They try hard to seem focused, calm, or “normal” on the outside.

But inside, it can feel exhausting and disconnect them from who they really are.

😊 Struggling? Me?



“Since I’m expected to be
consistent and do well,
I smile, nod, and get
things done. But inside,
I’m struggling more than
anyone can see.
It feels exhausting and
suffocating to keep
holding it all together.”



Burnout



The constant pressure to keep up can lead to burnout. It drains you emotionally, mentally, and even affects how you see yourself.

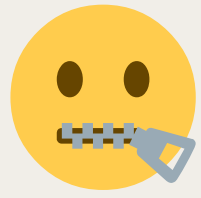
That's why long-term support and self-acceptance really matter.



From breaking, to feeling broke



"I thought I was
managing fine, juggling
it all, staying strong.
But the exhaustion was
building quietly,
beneath the surface.
Then one day, it all
crashed, and I couldn't
even get out of bed."



Stigma



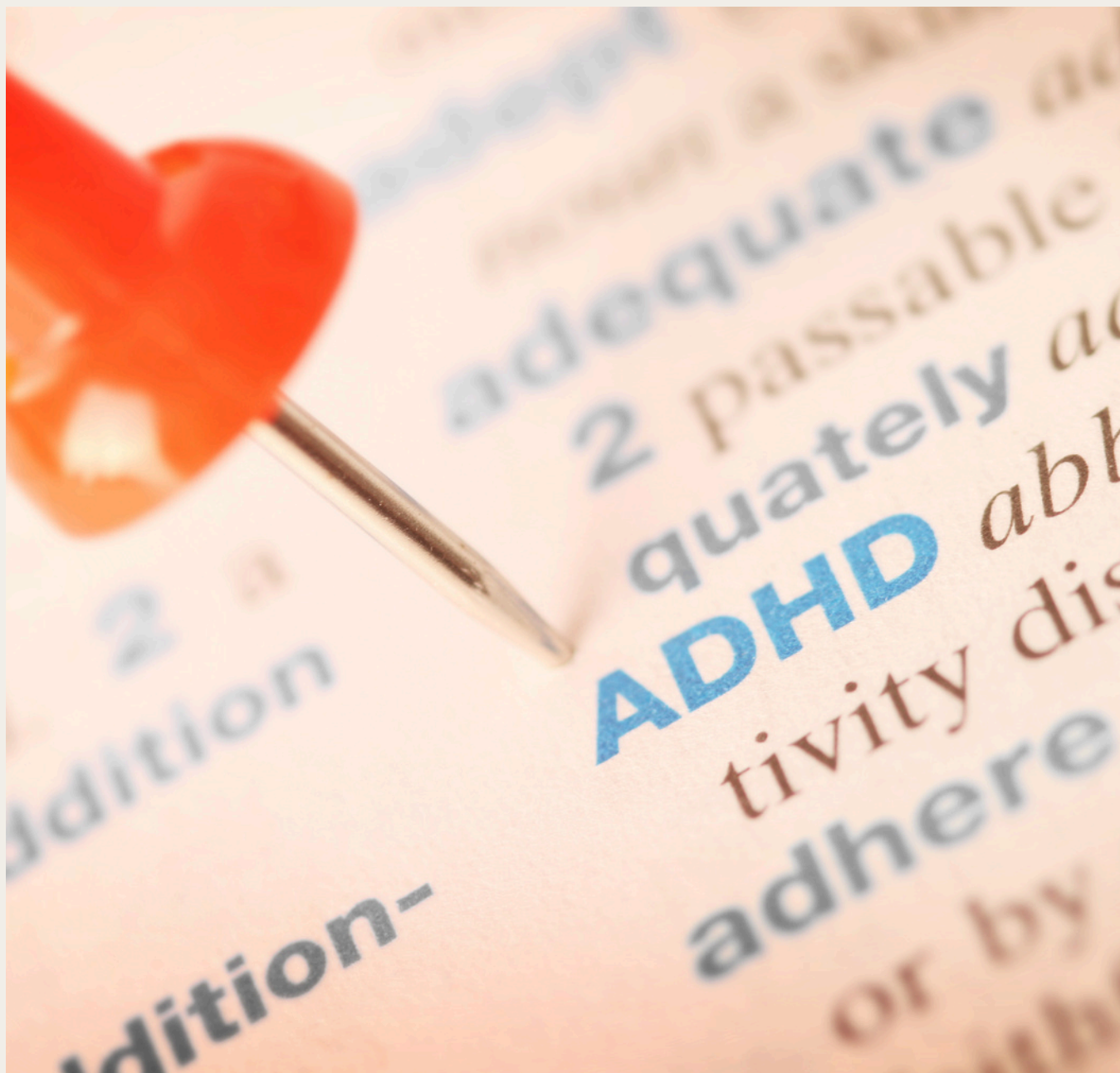
Individuals with ADHD feel shame and self-doubt from years of misunderstanding.

With support, they can reframe experiences, build resilience, and embrace a strengths-based identity.

ADHD isn't a flaw, just a different way the brain works.



I was called
“Lazy”



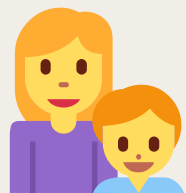
“For years, I was called
careless and lazy,
and I believed it.

Getting diagnosed with
ADHD in my 30s helped
me understand it wasn't
my fault. I still struggle,
but now I meet myself
with kindness.”

ADHD and Relationships



ADHD can cause
miscommunication in
relationships, where
distractibility or
emotional reactivity may
be mistaken for disinterest.
Having traits like empathy,
and loyalty can support
meaningful connections.



I misunderstood my child



“I thought my child wasn’t
trying hard enough and
needed to put in more
effort to succeed.

I didn’t realize how much
energy they used
every day just to keep up,
feeling exhausted
and unseen.”



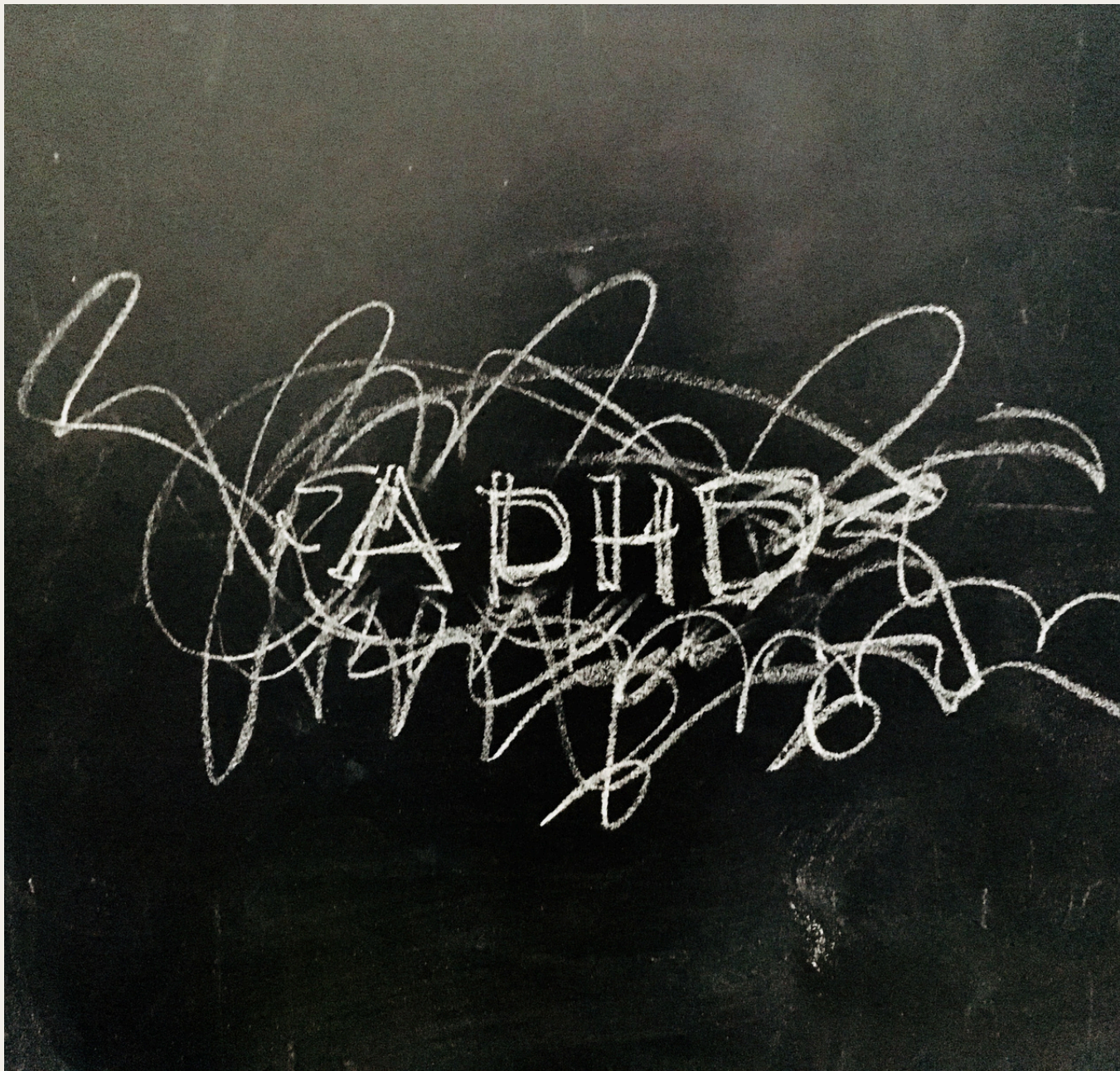
ADHD in School/Work



ADHD affects focus,
organization, and follow-
through in academics and
work, but with proper
support and structure,
individuals can manage
these challenges and thrive,
bringing unique and
creative contributions.



Misreading my student's struggle



“I saw a distracted, careless student who never seemed to finish assignments or pay attention in class. I didn’t realize they were silently battling every day, using all their energy just to hold it together.”

Positives in ADHD



ADHD comes with its own rhythm, carrying creativity, resilience, and moments of deep focus. With understanding and support, these traits can shine, like when divergent thinking helps solve problems in new and unexpected ways.



Silver Lining?



“Now that I see it, ADHD
helps my mind make
unexpected connections.
Ideas link up in ways
I never planned it,
but somehow it makes
sense. It’s this spark that
often leads to the most
creative solutions.”



Coping Tools



Managing ADHD involves creating brain-friendly systems, like timers, visual checklists, body doubling, and accountability to enhance focus, reduce overwhelm, and build sustainable habits through personalized strategies.



Myths & Facts



Myth: People with ADHD
can't focus at all.

Fact: They can hyper focus
on things they enjoy.

Myth: Only children have ADHD.

Fact: ADHD can persist into adulthood, though symptoms may change with age.

Myth: Medicine is the only fix.

Fact: Therapy, routines, and lifestyle changes also help.

Myth: ADHD is more common in males.

Fact: ADHD is found equally in males and females

Myth: ADHD is
overdiagnosed.

Fact: Many adults and
women are still
underdiagnosed due to
subtle or internalized
symptoms.

Myth: Everyone is a little ADHD.

Fact: ADHD is persistent and impacts many areas of life.



Treatment



ADHD treatment is individualized, combining medication (stimulant or non-stimulant) with CBT, coaching, psychoeducation, occupational strategies, and family therapy to improve focus, emotional regulation, and functioning.

👉 Have you
experienced this?



Think of a time you
felt misunderstood or
labelled unfairly
at any time and place.
What did you need
at that moment?
How would you
support someone else
in that situation?

QR Code For Associated Material



Task Initiation Strategies



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