


## Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Please start this training by watching and listening to this wonderful song which provides an opening explanation of how ADHD affects the brain and the processing of information:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR2CUB5iy0wqzOw2xpGhTLYozpLISyv2eeo6M2Qvy2qb5AFkWFDESKG7iS0&v=Zvqx9DfG9IU&feature=youtu.be>



## ADHD Fact Sheet

### ADHD is...




- ✓ An abbreviation for attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. It's also the official name for what is sometimes referred to as attention-deficit disorder (ADD).
- ✓ A common disorder that can impact focus, impulse control and emotional responses.
- ✓ Often diagnosed in childhood but sometimes not until the teen years or later.

### ADHD is *not*...





- ✗ All about hyperactivity. Kids with the inattentive type of ADHD may appear "daydreamy" or off in their own world.
- ✗ A problem of laziness. ADHD is caused by differences in brain anatomy and wiring.
- ✗ Something most kids totally outgrow. Many kids diagnosed with ADHD have symptoms that persist into adulthood.


Kids with ADHD may have trouble with...

### Ways to help kids with ADHD

-  Behavior therapy can help kids get organized and replace negative behaviors with positive ones.
-  ADHD medication can reduce ADHD symptoms, but only when the medication is active in the body.
-  Classroom accommodations, like taking movement breaks and getting extended time on tests, can help with things like staying seated and finishing tasks.

### Success stories

-  **Will.i.am**, Grammy-winning singer and producer
-  **Lisa Ling**, Award-winning TV journalist 
-  **David Neeleman**, Founder of JetBlue Airways



For more information on ADHD and how to help, go to [u.org/adhd](http://u.org/adhd)

# What is ADHD?

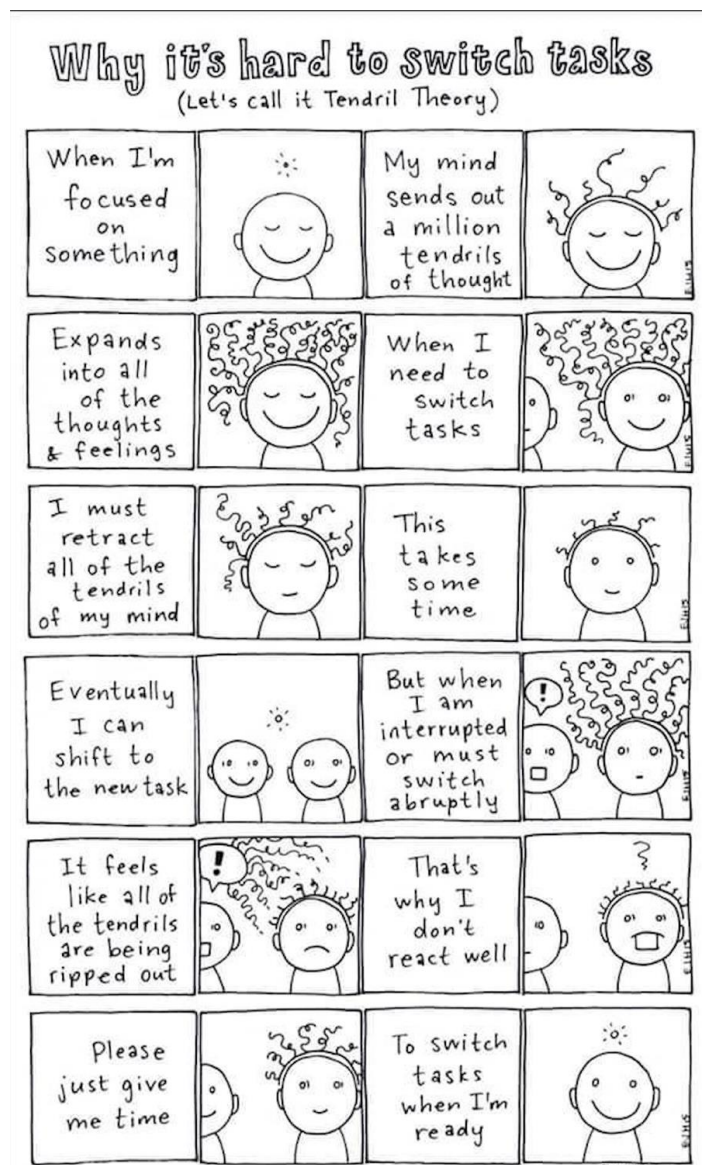
ADHD is also a neurodivergence.

Some people are Autistic and ADHD, and some are just ADHD or just Autistic. Autism and ADHD are not the same, but there are overlaps.

Autism by itself has a strong sensory processing layer. ADHD by itself has a strong impulsivity, with an often minimal sense of danger. Someone who is Autistic and ADHD often has fixated interests, but can switch fast to other interests (lack of object permanence), can be much more strongly opinionated and passionate, but also highly affected by rejection.

Some key characteristics of ADHD are:

- Bored easy.
- Need lots of things to do which burn energy.
- Easy to become explosive, not easy to calm down.
- Unlikely to want to focus on hard work, prefer easy reward.
- Need shorter tasks which are enjoyable.
- Focus on fun things, minimise any focus on work.
- The 'hard yards' are not appreciated by an ADHD brain mostly; they are avoided and dreaded.
- Very hedonistic in nature.
- Calms down only via distraction – never through conversation or attempts to 'diffuse'.





how my brain works.



# Benefits of ADHD

Any neurotype has its considerable benefits and perks. The ADHD brain can be quite brilliant and lead to wonderful success, a heightened ability to remain calm in difficult situations and amazing creativity.

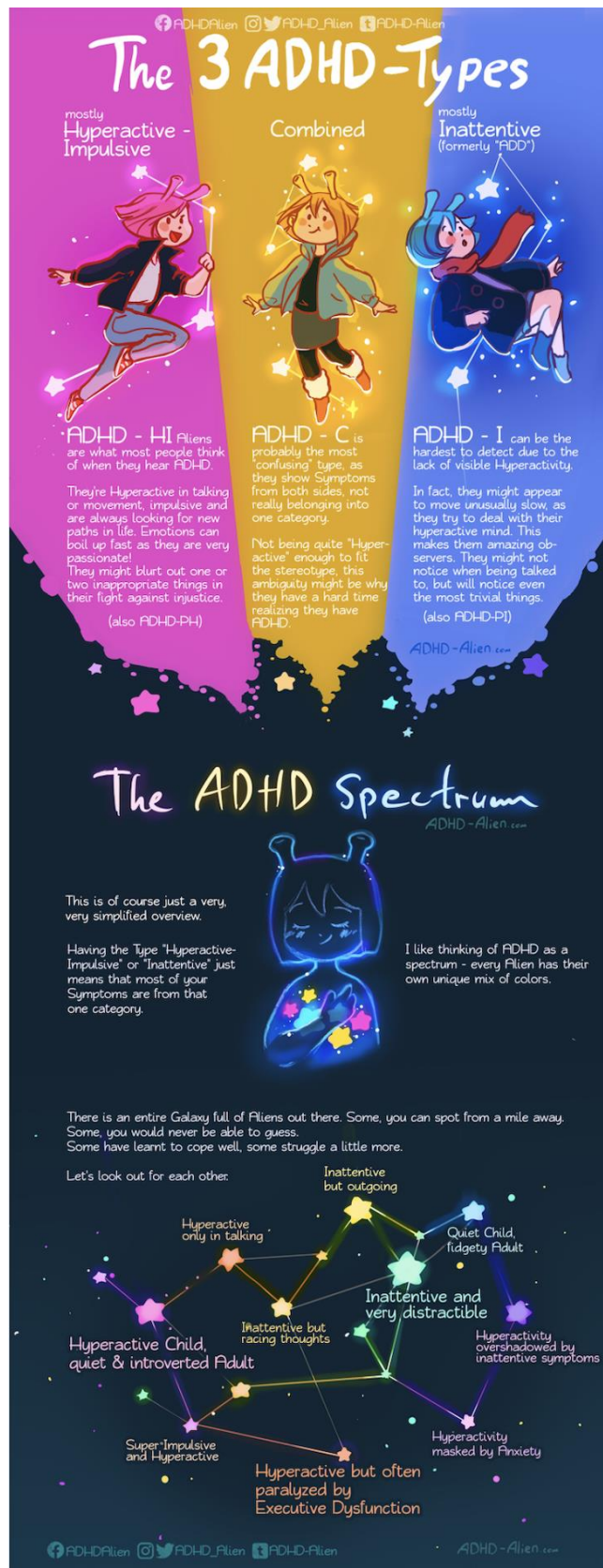
Have a read through some of the perks/benefits of the ADHD brain on the following page.

## 1. Calm during a crisis

When others are in a crisis, we can be cool, calm and under control. People with ADHD often pursue and excel at careers like ER doctor, nurse, police officer, journalist, athlete, or entertainer. In contrast, we may struggle to pay attention in calm situations; we need tips and tricks to help us stay on task.

## 2. Creative

One study showed that people with ADHD tend to be more creative than people without ADHD. For this reason, people with ADHD can also excel in creative careers. Just don't forget that structure and organisation is important when following through on those creative ideas in order to see them to completion.





### 3. Intuitive

ADHD brains often take longer to process sensory information (sights, sounds, etc.) than typical brains. While this may seem like a downside, it can actually mean we notice things that others don't. In other words, we can think outside the box.

**I needed to do the laundry, but then I realized I was out of detergent, so I went to write a shopping list and realized how unorganized the junk drawer was, and started checking pens for ink.  
When I went to toss all the junk, I saw that the trash was full but before I took it out I wanted to get rid of old food in the fridge.  
That's when I realized a juice jug had leaked so I needed to clean it up but when I went to grab a rag, I saw that the pantry closet was a nightmare so I started organizing it.  
And that's how I ended up on the floor looking at my old photo albums from 1990's and not doing laundry.**

### 4. Spontaneous

People with ADHD are often quick starters that tend to jump right into a new project or idea. Instead of getting stuck following the status quo, we are often motivated to try new things. Planning is often a good thing, but too much planning can also mean you might miss out on a time-sensitive opportunity or that you don't get anything done.

### 5. Curious and driven

People with ADHD tend to focus really intensely for long periods of time on subjects they're interested in; this is called hyperfocusing. This is great for working on our hobbies or studying a subject we enjoy. And if we happen to hyperfocus on one thing when we should be doing something else, we usually have people around us to give us a reminder.

**me:** \*forgets friends birthdays\*  
**me:** \*confuses memories\*  
**me:** \*forgets own middle name\*  
**me, also:** hey did you know that all pennies minted prior to 1982 are pure copper pennies and not copper plated and are technically actually worth 2 cents

# ADHD & hurtful assumptions

[@ADHD-Alien](#)
[@ADHD-Alien](#)
[@ADHD-Alien](#)

✗ Answering "I don't know" means I'm lying.



I genuinely don't know or my mind goes blank.

When I say "I don't know" it's not an excuse. It's hard to identify the reason when I've been told so often there is no reason I couldn't have done it.

Without learning how ADHD affects my daily life, I won't have the words to describe what I struggle with.

Try asking more precise questions! Instead of "Why didn't you clean up?" Ask: "At what step did you get stuck?"

ADHD-Alien

✗ I want to make everything about myself.



I have a different way of communicating.

I like sharing similar experiences and stories to what you tell me. To me that means: "I think I understand! I hope my story resonates and helps you."

I don't do this with the intention to switch to talking about me.

ADHD-Alien

✗ I'm not answering your messages because I'm ignoring you.



I got distracted or thought I had already answered.

There are many reasons why I don't answer messages. Sometimes, my social batteries are just drained. Other times, I have trouble setting boundaries because I'm afraid of rejection.

The longer and more often I don't answer, the harder it gets to apologize and write at all.

ADHD-Alien

✗ "You're just trying to get out of doing chores."



I have trouble with multi-step tasks and verbal instructions.

ADHD affects my ability to put tasks into chronological order and organize them by importance. That means I will often end up being stuck before I even start - especially if the instructions don't specify an order in which to do things or leave questions open.

ADHD-Alien

✗ "You are so random!"



You can't catch up to the speed of my thoughts.

My brain is incredibly fast and good at making connections and associations. I'll already have carefully considered 20 options before someone finishes talking.

I often only share the end-result of my thoughts, but that doesn't mean they came out of nowhere.

ADHD-Alien

✗ "Well then you should have studied more!"



ADHD makes it hard for my brain to access information.

When I can't repeat what was taught in class or answer simple questions, it's assumed I didn't study enough, that I'm stupid or refuse to cooperate.

But sometimes, my brain just can't access information. Even things like names of vegetables or my own birth date.

ADHD-Alien

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Resources explaining ADHD and Executive Dysfunction more in-depth:

"Taking Charge of Adult ADHD" by Russell A. Barkley, PhD  
 "Delivered from Distraction" by Edward M. Hallowell, MD and John J. Ratey, MD.  
 "Executive Functions" by Russell A. Barkley, PhD

Some popular views of ADHD and Autism / ADHD from the Autistic/ADHD community are provided below for thought and consideration.



**Adelaide the #DREADcaptain**  
@ADHDelaide

ADHD: Explains jumping from a topic to another related topic, too fast for anyone to follow.

Autistic: Makes thorough explanation on a very specific subtopic.

Autistic + ADHD: Gives thorough explanation on the most random irrelevant subtopics, jumping over the important parts.

1:49 PM · 8/19/20 · [Twitter Web App](#)



**Cole (he/him)**  
@semispeaking

A very annoying brain feature I have is what I call Waiting Mode. Like today, I have to leave for an MRI at 2:45. Unfortunately at 12:30 or so, my brain decided to activate Waiting Mode, which means that instead of getting anything done, I just have to sit here and wait.



**myk's got your back!**  
@mykola

Autism: "Let me focus on this subject for 300 hours."

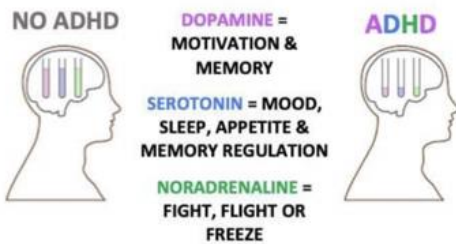
ADHD: "Let me change my focus every 15 seconds."

Autism + ADHD: "Let me tell you superficial details about 10,000 shiny things."

9:27 AM · Jan 27, 2020 · [Twitter Web App](#)



## ADHD A PHYSICAL BRAIN DEFICIENCY IN PRODUCING SUFFICIENT LEVELS OF BRAIN CHEMICALS (NEUROTRANSMITTERS)



**A PHYSICAL DEFICIENCY NOT A CHOICE  
NOT CONTROLLABLE BY WILLPOWER  
NOT CONTROLLABLE BY DISCIPLINE**

## ADHD & EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

**Executive function** is a set of mental skills in the frontal lobe of the brain that we use every day to learn, work, and manage daily life. ADHDers can be an average of 30% delayed in the maturity of their executive functioning. The brain reaches maturity in the early 30's. Deficiency in certain brain chemicals and, or, challenges with the part of the brain where executive function is located can affect and make it difficult to do the following:-

|                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Working memory      | Internal voice             |
| Initiation of tasks | Foresight & hindsight      |
| Adaptability        | Self-awareness             |
| Prioritisation      | Self-regulation            |
| Organisation        | Filtering                  |
| Flexible thought    | Re-focussing               |
| Planning            | Emotional regulation       |
| Time management     | Ability to shift task      |
| Internal regulation | Multi step complex thought |
| Decision making     | Sustaining task            |

| Biological Age | Possible Delayed Executive Age | Biological Age | Possible Delayed Executive Age |
|----------------|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 3              | 2                              | 17             | 11.3                           |
| 4              | 2.6                            | 18             | 12                             |
| 5              | 3.3                            | 19             | 12.6                           |
| 6              | 4                              | 20             | 13.3                           |
| 7              | 4.6                            | 21             | 14                             |
| 8              | 5.3                            | 22             | 14.6                           |
| 9              | 6                              | 23             | 15.3                           |
| 10             | 6.6                            | 24             | 16                             |
| 11             | 7.3                            | 25             | 16.6                           |
| 12             | 8                              | 26             | 17.3                           |
| 13             | 8.6                            | 27             | 18                             |
| 14             | 9.3                            | 28             | 18.6                           |
| 15             | 10                             | 29             | 19.3                           |
| 16             | 10.6                           | 30             | 20                             |

## ADHD & RSD REJECTION SENSITIVE DYSPHORIA

"RSD is extreme emotional sensitivity and pain triggered by the perception – *not necessarily the reality* – that a person with ADHD has been rejected or criticised by people in their life". - Dr William Dodson MD

These extreme, intense, instant, reactions can be internalised or externalised and can be seen as –

|                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Defensiveness                | 1000% effort & nothing good enough |
| Defeatist                    | Impressive instant rage            |
| Fear of failure              | Unreasonable attacking             |
| Oversensitivity to criticism | Suicide ideation                   |
| Blame of others              | Blind unfiltered temper            |
| Apathy / uncaring            | Dismissive of others               |
| Major depression             | Minimisation of others             |
| People pleasing              | Justification of action            |

50% of people assigned court-mandated anger-management treatment have previously unrecognised ADHD. – Dr William Dodson MD.

Therapy alone may not help due to the instant '*red mist*' intense reaction. There are certain medications that can help with this issue. Alpha agonists such as Guanfacine (Intuniv) and Clonidine are known to help and also MAOI's (Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors) which are prescribed off-label.

**Remember** it is the perception of the person with RSD, *not necessarily the reality of the situation*, they are responding to.

## ANXIETY

HOT FLUSH FEAR HEART PALPITATIONS SECOND GUESSING  
SHORTNESS OF BREATH FATIGUE OVER-PLANNING NAUSEA  
FOCUS ON NEGATIVE UNMOTIVATED WHAT IF? INDECISION  
DISCOUNT POSITIVE OVEREMOTIONAL TIGHT CHEST ANGER  
LOSS OF APPETITE CATASTROPHISING MUSCLE TENSION  
HEADACHE SWEATING DESIRE TO CONTROL EVERYTHING  
UNCONTROLLABLE WORRY DEFIANCE IRRITABILITY TENSE  
FRUSTRATION AVOIDANCE EXCESSIVE WORRY INTOLERANCE  
OVERTHINKING WORRY ABOUT FUTURE PANIC ATTACKS  
NUMB TO FEELINGS TREMBLING SCARED STOMACH CRAMPS  
RESTLESSNESS INCREASED HEART RATE AGITATION  
NERVOUSNESS UNREASONABLE OUTBURSTS UNCERTAINTY  
HYPERVENTILATING DISTURBED SLEEP EXTRA SENSITIVE  
MINDREADING WORRY OF PAST EVENTS EXTRA EXPECTATION  
DEPERSONALISATION FEEL DISCONNECTED EXTRA PRESSURE  
NEED REASSURANCE STRUGGLE PAY ATTENTION OR FOCUS  
ALL OR NOTHING ATTITUDE WOUND UP EGGY OBSSIVE



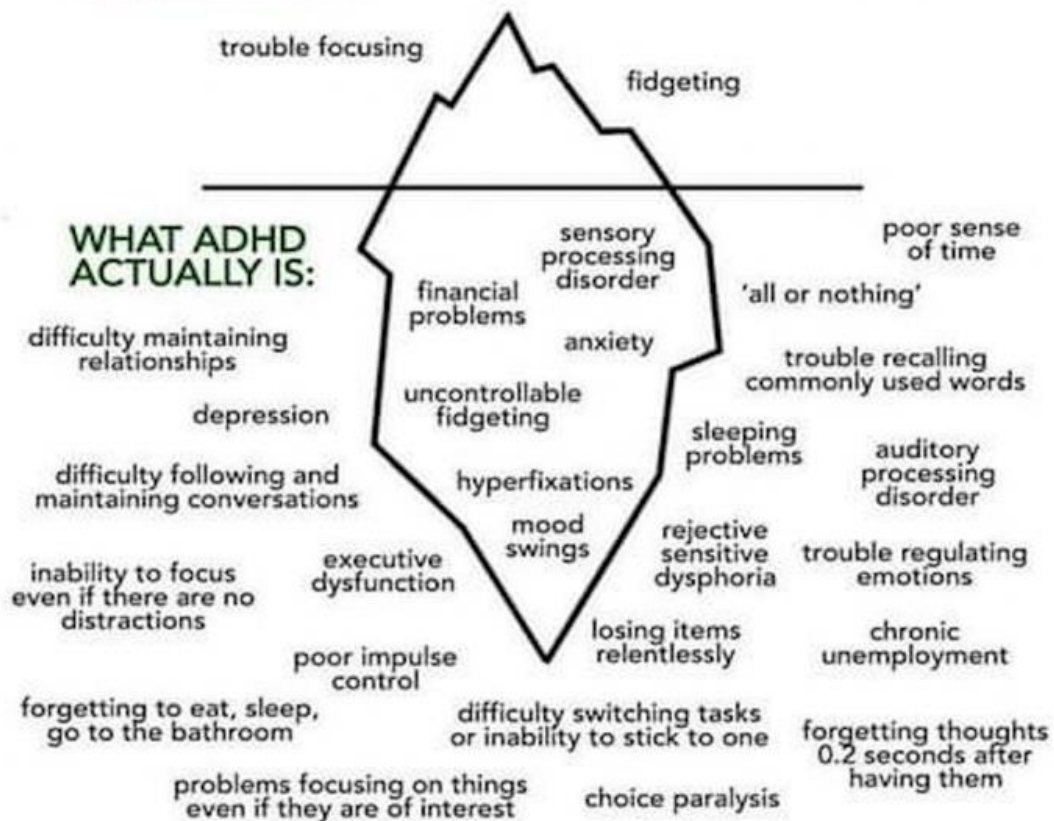
**LACK OF SEROTONIN**  
(vitamin D + omega 3)



# THE ADHD ICEBERG

@FINUCCINIALFREDO

WHAT PEOPLE  
THINK ADHD IS:



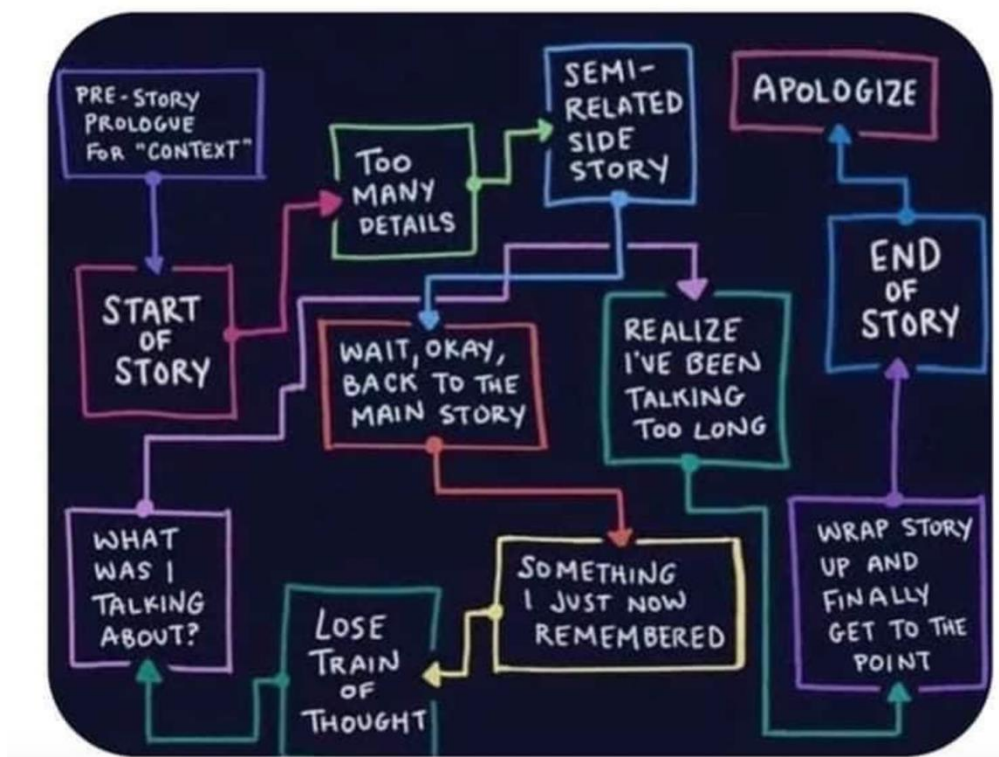
## ADHD Summary Comments

The best way to work with people who have ADHD is that they are seekers of enjoyable experiences and find quiet, still spaces, with expectations of socially regulated conduct to be terrifying. They often love rules that they can follow and can be staunch advocates for rules once they know they exist and know they can follow them. There is often boundless energy that exists with those who are ADHD, but this can be coupled with total exhaustion if they don't acquire the sensory input they need, with the balance they require. The best way to move forward and work with someone who is ADHD is to:

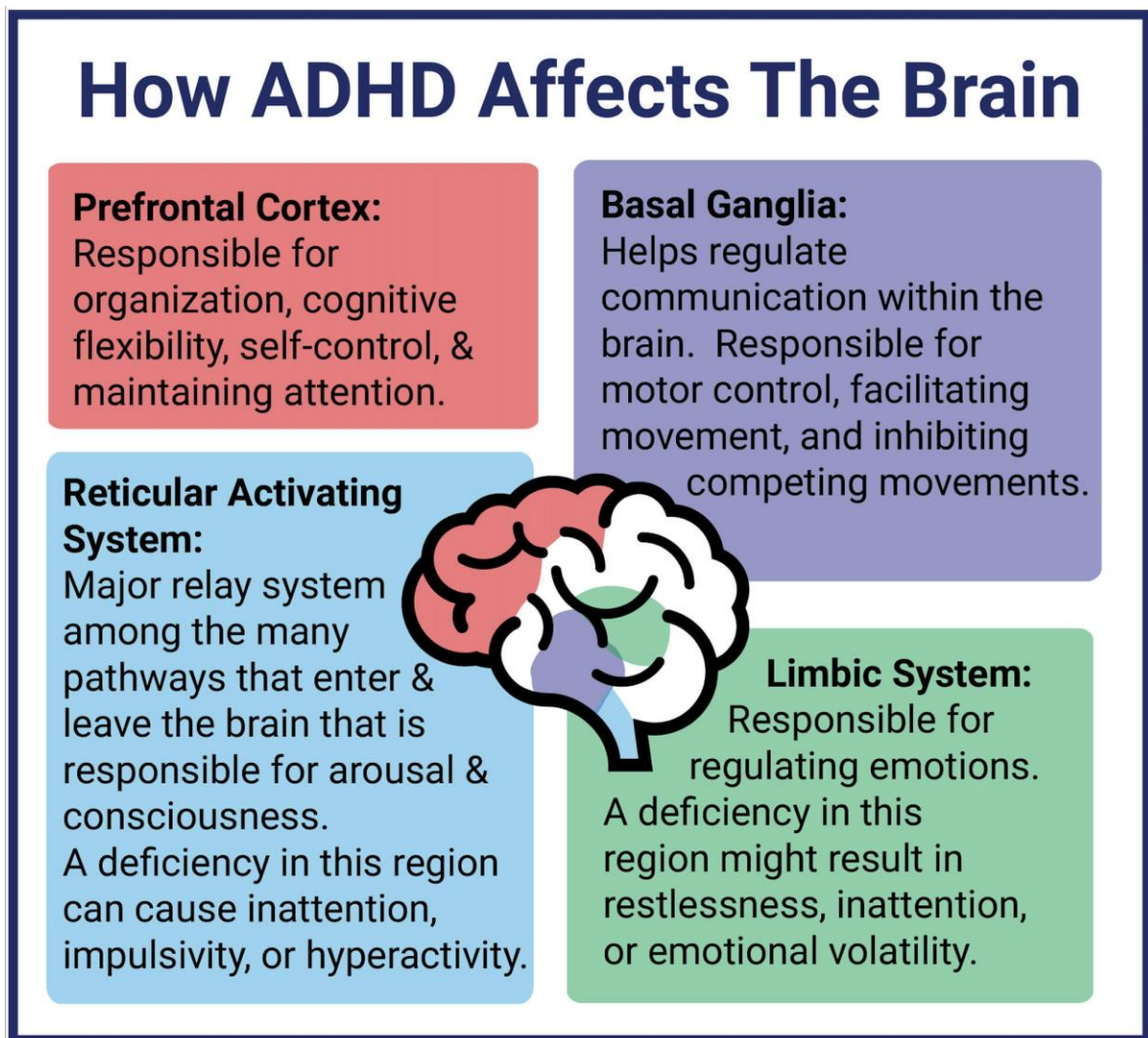
### How a normal person tells a story



### How I tell a story



- Use distraction as the primary response to difficult situations.
- Space and break up boring or monotonous tasks with fun, short tasks to make it easier to get through.
- Use consistency in expectations to help manage executive functioning complexities.
- Use reminders and prompts to help the person remember what they are up to.
- Enable the person to have control over their life and wellbeing.



Help us move the change to non-ABA strategies by adopting brain-based and sensory based integration interventions.  
Join FB group "The OTHER Way" to find the community pushing this movement.

[The OTHER way \(public group\) | Facebook](#)

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