



Accept – don't reject

15th Anniversary
Greetings from the
Attention Deficit &
Hyperactivity Support
Group of Southern
Africa.
(ADHASA)

Keeping up with ADD

August 2004

Company not for gain
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MY WIFE IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!

CONTENTS:

MY WIFE IS DRIVING ME CRAZY	1
Chaos reigns supreme	1
It's never a choice	1
Cluttered, late and hungry	2
What can be done	2
SUPPORT GROUP HAPPENINGS	3
TAPE RECORDINGS	3
MEMBERSHIP FORM	4

CHAOS REIGNS SUPREME

My home is always a mess and it drives me crazy! There is chaos everywhere and I'm too embarrassed to invite anyone over! My wife never plans a thing: the kids often cry for their dinner - and she hasn't even thought about what she's going to cook! By the time the food is ready, I'm so furious that I can't eat and so we fight.

IT'S NEVER A CHOICE

If you are one of those people who needs order, who likes to know what is happening, when, where and how, then obviously you cannot be happy living in chaos. But let's try to get some understanding of the whole picture:



most - but they often have mothers who themselves have very poor organising skills and so cannot provide it. In turn, they grow up unable to provide the same to their children. Although the inability to organise can affect both sexes, it seems to be more prevalent in ADD females.

Disorganised people are frequently criticized because their lives are so chaotic, and it seems that they don't even try to pull things together. In fact these disorganised people usually try harder than anyone else, and they carry on trying, but they don't get the results. But that doesn't apply to all - others decide "What the heck! I can't do it anyway, so why bother trying!" Interestingly enough some people are highly organised in certain areas of their lives, but a total disaster in others.

Disorganisation is **never** a choice. Nor does it belong exclusively to the ADD population, although it is true that more ADD or hyperactive people have poor organising skills than any other sector of the community. The irony is that people with ADD usually need routine and predictability more than

It is now accepted that planning and organising activities take place in the frontal lobes of the brain, and it has been suggested

15 years of service to the community!!

Poor organising skills are common amongst people with ADD, but non-ADD people may also be affected - And these solutions are for all.

Please forward this E-mail to anyone who could benefit from it.



I'm the kind of person who needs order in my life which means I depend upon a basic routine, but my wife doesn't even know what that means. When I ask her to be more organised she is enraged and tells me I don't know half of what she has to do, and that I couldn't understand anyway.

I really don't understand - it all seems so simple! My sister has a bigger family and runs a smooth household without all that fuss and performance.

that a lower flow of blood through these areas can affect the efficiency of these activities. Impaired organisation skills do not only affect the person's external world, they also impact internally upon the organising of both incoming and outgoing information to and from the brain ... and so can have a most devastating impact on scholastic ability. Poor organising skills can be a tremendous handicap, affecting every area of a person's life and, rather than criticism, these people need help.

Let's look at some of the ways that an inability to organise can affect an individual, and the devastating effects it can have on those around him:

CLUTTERED, LATE AND HUNGRY

It's difficult enough trying to organise herself, but the mum with poor organising skills finds herself also having to organise the children, meals, home, and provide for family needs in general! No matter how hard she tries to get the home running smoothly, or tidy up, it's an uphill battle which she never wins!

Time is a major problem and these people are always late! Late for school or work, late with handing in projects, late collecting the children and late getting home again. Meals are never on time. Life is one huge rush and they never catch up!

It's often more than an untidy home, there's also the messy car with fruit juice boxes, paper flyers from every street corner, apple cores and school jerseys from a week ago. Of course efforts are made to keep it tidy, but disorganised people are so often in a rush trying to catch up with themselves that there's 'never any time' to tidy up properly.

OR the work desk is covered with half-finished projects, each one more important than the last and needing immediate attention, there are also pens, pencils (most of which have no lead or ink) rubbers – and of course there are ever so

many brochures and valuable bits of information but they don't know where to put them and so all these bits end up in a box which will one day be sorted out along with all the other boxes in the cupboard! All sorts of elaborate systems are worked out but the problem is that they don't know how to maintain them –and so they all crash anyway!

Many people are highly talented or have tremendous academic potential but have poor organising skills, and so function at levels way below their ability. They are not stupid or lazy, they just don't know how to pull it all together

www.flylady.net

is a website initiated by a person who herself had tremendous organising challenges: Have a look – it has helped many of their 75000 members.

WHAT CAN BE DONE.

Well meaning people often give advice but, if they are highly organised by nature, they cannot start to understand the challenges of those who are not. Their coping skills are dependent upon well developed organising skills and so their solutions aren't always relevant for people who find organising a challenge.

Some organising skills could be taught to children by involving them in household routine such as making beds and folding linen or tidying their rooms, do these thing with them but don't take the job away from them. Help them until they're able to tackle the task on their own. Avoid putting them into situations they cannot handle. The child who learns organising skills keeps these skills for life.

For the adult there are no easy answers and it's generally not a good idea for couples to teach each other.

Until recently "You'll have to try even harder!" was the only solution. At least there is now greater insight which should be reflected in books coming onto the shelves.

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TV programs can also be very useful: On 1 September, 3-talk on SABC 3 hosted a panel discussion on Decluttering. If you didn't see it, contact the SABC for tapes of the program – I've heard it was very useful.

Coaches who help disorganised people plan and organise their days and activities are becoming increasingly important. Two such coaches are running a course entitled "Spring Clean Your Life" in mid-September. Phone them at 082-787-0262 for further information.

Come to the Support Group meeting on Saturday 16 October where you can learn about Adult ADD and be part of setting up regular support meetings for adults (which will include improving organising skills).

Don't just accept that you will never be able to organise – take advantage of whatever there is on offer – and who knows how much easier your life could become!

Heather Picton

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Support Group Happenings

People are realizing that ADD/ADHD is not outgrown at puberty and that there are many adults affected by the condition; and there is ever increasing awareness of the extent to which it could be affecting themselves, their work, homes and families. The media is also taking an interest in the subject which is being discussed in newspapers, magazines, radio and TV programs.

Did you know that our Support Group Newsletter published an article on Adult ADHD just over a decade ago (1st quarter 1994) when the group was only five years old? Even then we were already giving insight into the condition (and discussing the importance of diet and supplementation for the ADD/ADHD adult) while the rest of the world was still coming to terms with the

concept of adult ADD/ADHD. So much more is known, and there is more help for these people than every before.

How does this benefit you? Come along and find out at the next Support Group meeting to be held on Saturday 16 October at 14h00 where the speaker will be Terry Wilke (Psychologist) who has been assisting and freely giving advice to the Support Group since 1991. He has vast experience and is always a most interesting speaker. Anyone with an interest in this field is welcome to join us. The venue is Delta Park School, Standard Drive, Blairgowrie.

Don't forget that we'll be starting our long awaited **Adult ADDvance** Group on that day. This will be an exciting forum offering continual

support and giving you the opportunity to express frustrations, understand the condition and how it affects you, learn new coping skills etc. Your needs will determine the activities of the Group. Please RSVP us at 011-886-7668 to let us know if you are coming.

Lack of organising skills can have a devastating effect on the whole family. Find out how "Spring Clean Your Life" can assist you - we have negotiated discounts for our members or for anyone who receives notification of this Seminar through "Keeping up with ADD" Speak to Lori Lea at 082-787-0262

Tape recordings

Audio Tapes of the following talks are available at R20 each. Order them from Sandy at 011-793-2024:

Topics are:

1. **The Nature of ADD, Nutrition and Supplementation** by Heather Picton
2. **Diagnosis, Assessment, Treatment and Medication** by Dr Johan Erasmus
3. **Occupational Therapy and Sensory Solutions** by Francoise Harrison and Meg Allan
4. **Managing the Environment of the ADHD Child** by Terry Wilke
5. **Promoting Successful Learning Experiences** by Elaine Harcombe
6. **The Latest Facts about Fats** by Stuart Wilson
7. **Speech Therapy and Auditory Processing** by Jean Bowker
8. **The Social and Emotional Development of the ADHD Child** Anita deCaires Wagner
9. **Stabilising Blood Glucose Levels** by Jeske Wellmann

We also have a few Seminar Packs containing summaries of the addresses available at R50 per pack - they can be collected at the Support Group Office on Wed and Fri mornings during school term.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Can you help us?

No experience needed – we offer full training.

One morning a week of your time enables us to provide a better service to the ADD/H community. As you help others, you inevitably gain greater skills for helping your own family.

Can you afford not to come?

Please contact Sandy at
011-793-2079



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**MEMBERSHIP
APPLICATION FORM - Annual Subscription R85-00
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FAX NO: (.....).....E-MAIL.....

NAME OF CHILD/MEMBER:.....

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SCHOOL:

SIBLINGS: (Names & Ages)

1 2

3 4

OCCUPATION: Mother

Father

SIGNATURE: DATE:/...../.....

For confirmation of application kindly deposit into ABSA Sinoville Branch, Saving Account No. 907-161-3544.

- Please make all cheques payable to: ADHD Support Group – National Office (Jhb)
- Cash payments can also be made into this account
- Please complete the deposit reference blocks below your signature with your printed full name
- Please fax your application form together with the bank deposit slip to (011) 793 4790 or 793 2079.
- Alternatively, post this form, together with your remittance to PO Box 3704 Randburg 2125.