



Accept – don't reject

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

# Keeping up with ADD

July 2004

Company not for gain  
93/003639/08

P.O. Box 3704  
Randburg  
2125

Tel: Sandy (011) 793-2079  
Fax: (011) 793-4790  
E-mail: rscox@icon.co.za



**Counselling hours:**  
Wednesdays and Fridays  
08h00 to 13h00  
ADHD National Office  
Delta Park School  
Blairgowrie Tel: (011) 888-7655

## My husband is driving me crazy!!!

### CONTENTS:

<b>MY HUSBAND IS DRIVING ME CRAZY</b>	<b>1</b>
Hurt and angry?	1
Impulsive behaviour	1
Chronic not constant	2
Does this affect us?	2
Opposites	2
What do we do?	2
<b>SUPPORT GROUP HAPPENINGS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>VOLUNTEERS NEEDED</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>MEMBERSHIP FORM</b>	<b>4</b>

**My husband is driving me crazy!! He's forever criticizing me. When I try to talk to him – about anything - he listens to half a sentence and yells at me, telling me how ridiculous I am. The frustrating thing is that these regular attacks are usually not for what I have said or even wanted to say, but for what he thought I was going to say!!! The children and I avoid him because it is so unpleasant being with him.**

**His mother says that he was a highly sensitive but very impulsive little boy. Could this be the same person or did they swap children half way? Could the impulsivity be affecting his behaviour now? Should I try to be more understanding?**

**HURT AND ANGRY?**  
If you are constantly in the firing line of the aggressive, impulsive person it is only natural that you are hurt and angry. However, if ADD or hyperactivity (AD/HD) is a factor, it is useful to try to understand the full impact of the condition and how it affects him. This does not mean finding excuses for him, but rather gaining insight which you can use to exercise damage control; or even better, it could be taking control of the situation.

It is important to recognise how the symptoms of AD/HD affect the child, because they usually have a very strong bearing on that person's behaviour when they grow into adulthood. The AD/HD behaviour might seem totally different, but basically the

symptoms remain the same, they are just manifesting differently – and are usually aggravated by the low self-esteem experienced by many ADHD adults. In this month's **Keeping up with ADD** we focus on the effects of impulsivity.

**IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOUR**  
Impulsive behaviour manifests in many different ways and seems to affect more males than females. Usually it is recognized early in the active little boy who seems to have no fear, who does the craziest (and often dangerous) things without any thought of the consequences or his safety.

It is difficult to control the impulsive AD/HD child, especially if he enjoys exciting situations, but it is far more difficult to cope with the im-



impulsive, excitement-seeking adolescent. Sometimes maturity helps them to gain greater control but this is not always the case. Nor do they necessarily gain control as they enter adulthood and some continue with their reckless behaviour for many long years. Sometimes this impulsiveness has been used to great advantage, but for others it can be a disaster.

Children's verbal impulsiveness usually lets them down when they say the most outrageous things without stopping to work through what they are saying, and so seem rude and precocious. As

### **15 years of service to the community!!**

Impulsive behaviour is common amongst people with AD/HD but it can also be found in people without it – and these solutions are for all. Please forward this E-mail to anyone you think could benefit from it.



adults they may still come across as uncaring and intrusive, saying the most inappropriate things and then resorting to bravado to hide their embarrassment.

Many ADD/hyperactive children and adults are impulsive spenders and *money must be spent* without consideration of what they really want or need! It's almost impossible to save. Their financial status would be more secure if they learnt about money control and/or gained financial intelligence. Sharing financial decisions with a responsible partner may also help avoid some of the pitfalls of the impulsive spender.

#### CHRONIC BUT NOT CONSTANT

This means that an impulsive person will always be impulsive but different people will be affected in different ways. For example one person may be impulsive in his actions while another may be verbally impulsive. Some are both. One might spend money recklessly while another watches every single cent! People are all different.

#### DOES THIS AFFECT US?

Everyone is impulsive at one time or another but, when this impulsiveness regularly takes over leaving a person with diminished control, then it can be devastating. It can have the most dramatic impact on families with both AD/HD children and adults, where impulsive and impetuous behaviour frequently becomes the order of the day. Invariably these households are totally chaotic and the child doesn't really know what to expect from one moment to the next – unfortunately AD/HD children depend on the stability gained from well defined boundaries and structured routine. Often the adult needs this just as much.

#### OPPOSITES

Opposites attract ... and this leads to a very common combination of the shy, introverted woman marrying her strong, exciting and (often) impulsive man she can admire and care for. He marries her so that he can protect this delicate little lady who has so much love to offer. This can be a wonderful combination if he is able to contain his impulsivity and not vent his anger on his wife when his frustrations get the better of him. Unfortunately this doesn't always happen

and the poor woman ends up being subjected to regular barrages of angry criticism, draining all energy and leaving her totally devastated. Does this sound familiar??

Sometimes the female is the dominant ADD or hyperactive type, and it is the peace-loving husband who is subjected to the abusive criticism.

When the AD/HD partner loses his cool, he has his devastating temper tantrum and then, having spat it all out, calms down and gets on with life ... and expects everyone else to do the same. He

◆ Impulsiveness does not affect every AD/HD person and so families with AD/HD are not all affected by the behaviours described in the article. Different patterns of interaction will be discussed in a subsequent edition of **Keeping up with ADD**

◆ Although this pattern of behaviour is common in families with AD/HD, it is also found in families without it.

invariably cannot understand his partner's reaction, especially when they take days to recover from an unpleasant outburst.

#### WHAT DO WE DO?

If you are in a situation like this, do something! Usually neither you nor your partner understand how you have reached that point and you are both equally unhappy. Remember that you were attracted to your partner for a very real reason ... if you had not married that person, chances are that you would have married someone very much like him. Same applies to the partner.

➤ Get rid of the guilt by recognizing the pattern of events and consider that there

are no guilty parties – only people that have slipped into a very uncomfortable situation which has to change for everybody's sake. Speak to a professional such as a Psychologist, Doctor or a Social worker but make sure they have a keen understanding of AD/HD and how it affects family dynamics at all levels. Become involved with the Support Group's Adult ADDvance group.

➤ Focus on your favourite hobby and don't feel guilty if you are claiming a couple of hours for yourself. The opportunity to regenerate helps you to be a better partner and parent.

➤ Build your self esteem. As your confidence levels increase, you will be in a far better position to tackle the challenges that come your way.

➤ Supplementation of EFAs, vitamins and minerals, especially if combined with dietary intervention, can once again provide much needed support. It is not going to be the magic wand that eliminates **all** difficulties, however it can go a long way to making reducing the intensity of challenges encountered. Contact National Office at 011-888-7655 for further information.

The condition of ADD in Adults has only been recognised in the last few years and there are relatively few therapists who deal with it. Take control of the situation by learning as much as you can about Adult ADD – read books, attend seminars and surf the net. Join the Support Group. Become aware of the symptoms of ADHD and how they affect children ... and use that understanding to recognize the many ways in which Adult ADD could be affecting you.

Too many ADD adults have told me that they are "Bad People" when in fact they are normal people who have been facing challenges that no one, and least of all themselves, understood. Usually these people are underachievers but, hopefully, learning about and taking control of the situation will help them recognize their gifts and ultimately take their place as confident and valuable members of the community.

**Heather Picton**

## Support Group Happenings!

- ◆ Our meeting last Saturday was especially 'interesting' for me. As a result of an accident at the school we couldn't use the arranged venue and so, at the last minute, transferred the meeting to my home. We were inundated by 50 people who sat on chairs, the floor and also spilled outside the open doors to hear Jeske Wellman's informative talk on stabilizing blood glucose levels, which included the preparation of balanced meals and snacks. Tape recordings of this meeting can be ordered from the Support Group Office. Cost R20.00.
- ◆ I would personally like to thank all those that came for being so supportive and helpful, and especially the ladies who have offered to assist in Support group Activities.
- ◆ The next meeting of the Support Group will be held on **16 October at 14h00 at Delta Park School** where we will be dealing with the topic of **ADULT ADD**. We want to make this meeting as relevant as possible to your needs so please send us any questions or topics you would like us to cover. PLEASE DIARISE Sat 16 October at 14h00. At this meeting (Oct 16<sup>th</sup>), we will be setting up an adult support system, Adult ADDvance, for anyone who would like to join. Further details will be provided in the next 'Keeping Up with ADD'.
- ◆ Early in the New Year we will be hosting a celebratory dinner which is going to be a very exciting event - and we'd love to meet you there! Further details will be included in our next 'Keeping up with ADD'.
- ◆ Terry Wilke, Psychologist, Director and long-time Advisor to the Support Group, had delegates fascinated at our recent Seminar as he gave (often amusing) insights into our children. We are pleased to inform you that he has opened a Therapy and Assessment Centre at Grayston Mews in Sandton. Contact him on 011-433-4148 or 082-440-4359. Terry Wilke will be the speaker at our Adult ADD meeting on Oct 16<sup>th</sup> and has agreed to be involved with our Adult ADDvance group.

## 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

POS: Box 267  
 Broodersdrift  
 0248  
**Positive Effects**  
 In Just One Day  
 (011) 208 1345  
 082 408 5921  
 For all your Graphic and Photographic needs  
 Positive Effects is a Design and Photography company that Designs just about anything you need or want as well photographing any of thought needs or wants. So call Us today and get a quote on any of thought wants or needs.  
 All Graphics for ADHASA are sponsored by us



**ATTENTION DEFICIT AND HYPERACTIVITY  
SUPPORT GROUP OF  
SOUTHERN AFRICA  
- NATIONAL OFFICE -**

P.O. Box 3704  
Randburg  
2125

Tel: Sandy (011) 793-2079  
Fax: (011) 793-4790  
E-mail: rscox@icon.co.za

**Counselling hours:**  
Wednesdays and Fridays  
08h00 to 13h00  
ADHD National Office  
Delta Park School  
Blairgowrie Tel: (011) 888-7655

Accept – Don't reject

**MEMBERSHIP**

**APPLICATION FORM - Annual Subscription R85-00**

**PLEASE PRINT**

NAME: .....

POSTAL ADDRESS: .....

.....CODE:.....

TEL: (h) (.....) .....(w) (.....).....CELL.....

FAX NO: (.....).....E-MAIL.....

NAME OF CHILD/MEMBER:.....

DATE OF BIRTH: ...../...../.....

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.