



**Accept us—  
don't reject us**

Greetings  
from the  
Attention Deficit  
& Hyperactivity  
Support Group of  
Southern Africa

**ADHASA**

Helping the community  
for nearly 16 years!

# Keeping up with ADD

March 2005

**Tel: Sandy (011) 793-2079**

**Fax: (011) 476-4116**

**E-mail: [support@adhasa.co.za](mailto:support@adhasa.co.za)**

PO Box 3704

Randburg

2125

If you do not wish to receive  
this please send an e-mail with  
“unsubscribe” in the subject.

**Company not for gain**

93/03639/08

**Counselling hours:**

Wednesdays and Fridays

08h00 to 13h00

ADHASA National Office

Delta Park School, Blairgowrie

Phone: (011) 888-7655

## Understanding Adult ADD

This article targets  
ADD Adults but the  
information could  
help non-ADD  
people too. Please  
forward this infor-  
mation to anyone  
who could use it

*“Living with my ADD partner is impossible – we swing from one extreme to the other and there is no middle ground! I cannot keep up with the clutter, or the trail of unfinished projects! We can never finish a conversation and I can no longer manage the determination to have it all their own way; or the moods which change in an instant with devastating effects on the family!*”

### SOUND FAMILIAR?

These are fairly common traits but certainly don't cover all the aspects of ADD in Adults. ADD/ADHD manifests in many different ways and so many ADD adults won't have all the above symptoms but will have others instead! Confusing, isn't it?

Symptoms of ADD/ADHD manifested by children are said to fall into three basic categories which are (1) Impulsivity, (2) Distractibility and (3) Inability to pay attention (unless fascinated). If we include an extra category of “Poor Organising Skills” (very common in ADD people) then we can explain a vast majority of their unacceptable behaviours in terms of these four points. ADD adults are affected by the same basic symptoms of impulsivity, distractibility, inability to pay attention

unless fascinated, and we'll include disorganisation. These symptoms are manifested differently to the child. For example, the child who impulsively runs around the block may become the adult who drives to Durban on a whim. As a result of the above four symptoms and the many ways that they combine to create further difficulties, there is another and very destructive “symptom” that often develops – and that is poor self esteem. It can have a powerful and devastating effect on every aspect of their lives!

### LOW SELF ESTEEM

Poor self esteem is the most damaging “symptom” of all. The child, and later the adult, usually finds ways to work around his challenges, but it is far more difficult to work around a poor self esteem.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ADULT ADD..... 1
- Low Self Esteem..... 1
- What can we do?..... 2
- Think about it..... 2
- Support + Understanding 2
- ADHASA News..... 3
- Adult ADD Meeting..... 3
- Volunteer Training..... 3
- Office Closed..... 3
- Library..... 3
- Happy Kids Shop..... 3
- SEMINAR DATES..... 3

Why should this “symptom” be so common? It is because these people have invariably struggled with the challenges of ADD since they were children, doing their very best but being told many times every single day that they were not trying hard enough; that the work wasn’t good enough; that they were naughty, lazy and plain bad! Often there was no one they could turn to for support.

We are hurt when we hear one nasty comment, but have you ever considered what it’s like for the ADD child who is verbally hammered every day? We all nurse those incidents in our childhood which still affect us as adults – but what about the ADD adult who still carries such an enormous burden from his earlier years ... and still no-one really understands him. ADD adults, in their thirties, have cried tears of relief when they realise that they are not ‘bad people’... that they’ve never had acceptance because nobody, and least of all themselves, understood the challenges and difficulties they faced on a daily basis. Some of the saddest people I have ever met are ADD adults totally disillusioned with the human race.

**WHAT CAN WE DO?**

A good place to start is taking the advice of Dr Edward Hallowell who suggested *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful ADDers*. In fact they make a lot of sense for all people:

- Do what you are good at.
- Delegate what you are bad at.
- Connect your Creativity with an outlet.
- Get well enough organized to meet your goals.

Ask for advice (Good Advice) where and whenever you can.

Make sure you keep close contact with your friends.

Go with your positive side; run your life with your positive side.

**THINK ABOUT IT:**

**Do what you are good at:**

Think about it ... is there any point in pushing a pen for the rest of your life if you struggle to

write – you’re going to end up hating it! Find your strength and if possible find the kind of employment that entails using your strengths. If you love people and enjoy talking, maybe you should be a salesman. Try to incorporate your strengths into other activities as well.

**Delegate:**

If you are relying on your areas of weakness (e.g. writing or planning) to produce an income, it is inevitable that results can be disappointing. If you were forced to rely on them for most of your life, wouldn’t your life be less enjoyable? If possible, delegate tasks that you are bad at to someone else who has strengths in that area, and who enjoys that particular type of work more than you do. If you are not in the position to delegate, start changing things by reading books or joining courses in order to gain marketable skills in your areas of strength.

ADD/ADHD children may spend 12 - 13 years of their lives in the school system—writing is a common area of weakness for ADD children with many disliking it intensely. Unfortunately most school work depends on it. The irony is that they usually have to go through the school system in order to secure a future in which they can choose to avoid their weaknesses in their work environment, and find something else that they can enjoy and where they can excel.

**Creativity:**

If you are creative and enjoy painting, drawing, sculpting, writing, gardening or cooking, make time to be involved with and enjoy the activity. It would be even better if the family enjoy it too, but don’t expect your partner to have to pick up the

mess or always wash dishes after that sumptuous meal for which you used every dish in the kitchen!

**Organisation:**

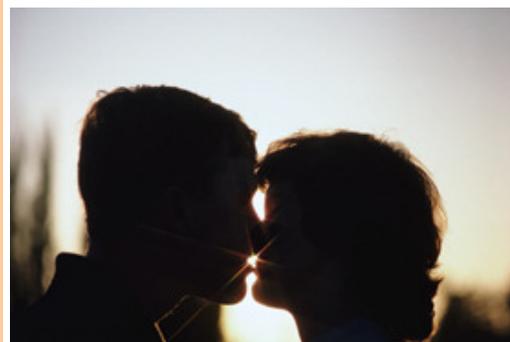
Improved organisation may require assistance from partners, close friends, an educational

psychologist or a coach who will help with structure and strategies. Whichever way you choose it could prove invaluable as you find yourself meeting deadlines more easily, or being more punctual, or find yourself being better able to plan your life. It will help you feel much better about yourself.

**SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING**

ADD/ADHD adults often need tremendous support and understanding and it can be heavy going for their partners. Even so, it can be highly rewarding for everyone concerned. A word of caution though; building your ADD partner’s self image is not to be at the expense of turning yourself into a doormat – it’s better if you both grow in the process.

Ten years ago few people even recognised that adults could be affected by ADD or ADHD and there was little



help for them, not even in the medical field. There was usually little regard or sympathy for them. There is now so much information available and so many resources that a lot can be done to gain insight and understanding, and undo some of the harm. Contrary to what many people may think, dietary information and supplementation (EFAs and multivits) can make a tremendous difference, even in adults. Contact ADHASA for further details.

## THE BRIGHTER SIDE

People with ADD often have many advantages over the rest of the population but we are usually so bogged down with all the problems of ADD that we don't see the gifts. Take time and, if possible, uncritically examine yourself and your partner. Look at some past events and you may be amazed at the latent talents and capabilities in your lives. In a future edition of "Keeping up with ADD" we'll be looking at the positive aspects of ADD/ADHD.

*Heather Pieton*

# ADHASA News

## ADULT ADD MEETING

Calling all ADD Adults!

Diarise Saturday 2 April 2005 for our next Adult ADD meeting!

Terry Wilke impressed everyone at our first Adult ADD meeting with his insight and deep understanding of the condition and he is back to take us further. Find out how we are going to provide more concrete assistance for our Adult ADD members and their families. Be there so that you can give your input as we structure this important Group.

Date: Sat 2 April

Time: 14h00 for 14h30.

Venue: Roedean School, 35 Princess of Wales Terrace, Parktown.

Tel: (011) 886-7668 or  
(082) 854-7534

Entrance Donation:  
R25 visitors and R20 members



## VOLUNTEER TRAINING !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The first Friday Volunteer Training Session takes place on Friday 8 April at Delta Park School, starting at 9h30. We have had an excellent response and so we might be splitting the group and having another training group to accommodate those who cannot be there on a Friday. We will be in contact with the volunteers and, with Sandy in the UK to attend her son's wedding, I might not have everyone's name. Please contact me (Heather 886-7668) if you haven't heard from us by the end of this month.

## OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS

As always, National Office has closed for the school holidays and it will reopen on Wednesday 6 April at 8h00.

We are rapidly outgrowing our office at Delta Park School and looking at different options. We'll keep you informed of any changes that we might be making.

This edition of  
"Keeping up with ADD"  
kindly put together for us by  
Lori Lea (Life Coach,  
specialising in AD/HD) of  
Mind Focus

## LIBRARY

As soon as the new term starts come and have a look at our library which has increased considerably and is available for all members. When you borrow a book you are actually helping us buy the next one: It costs R50.00 to borrow a book but we refund R40.00 when you return it. The difference of R10.00 is put towards purchasing another library book. In this way we can build a comprehensive library on ADD/ADHD to meet your needs! If you have any books on ADD related subjects that you are no longer using, please send them to us – help our library to grow even faster!!

## HAPPY KIDS SHOP

We have increased the range of supplements and sweets in the shop as well as added tapes with learning tips and also to help with concentration. Come along and see for yourself. We have gone through our information tapes (recorded at meetings) and discarded those with poor sound quality, and replaced them with new and superior sound quality tapes. Have a look when you're in the office.

## SEMINAR DATES!!

It definitely is going to be a matter of third time lucky!

We have twice had to reschedule due to clashes with other major events and so please note the final dates for our Annual Seminar: 23 and 30 July. The venue remains Wits University Campus.

Mind Focus cc  
Mind Focus cc

For a COMPLIMENTARY session (1,5 hours) phone Lori now on 082-787-0262 to book an appointment!