Keeping ADHD Positive:

Nurturing the Spirited, Imaginative and Playful Nature

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Today’s Goals

- I am going to help you understand the incredible Spirited, Imaginative and Playful “gifts” common in individuals with ADHD
- I am going to help you think about “Differences in Ability” rather than “Disorder” or “Disability”
- I will teach you how the “Differences in Ability” lead to misinterpretations, unrealistic expectations and damaging responses
- I will challenge you to think about how you can nurture the incredible nature of individuals with “Differences in Ability to Regulate”

How Common is Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?

- 7.2% children under 18
  – meta-analysis of 175 research studies globally in children and adolescents (Thomas et al. 2015).
  – 129 million — number of children worldwide who have ADHD.
- 3.4% adults
  – (Fayyad et al. 2007)

What is Read’s Definition of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?

- An individual’s difference in ability to regulate:
  – Attention
  – Activity
  – Arousal
  – Behaviors
  – Thoughts
  – Emotions
Remember: “Difference in Ability”

Common Problems as a result of the “difference in ability”

Inattention  Impulsivity  Hyperactivity

My Difference in Ability to Regulate My Activity causes others to see me as . . .

• Too Fidgety
• Too Restless
• Too Loud
• In Constant motion
• Too easily excitable
• Talking too much
• Behaving Badly
My Difference in Ability to Regulate Attention

*causes others to experience me as...*

- Disorganized
- Avoiding tasks that require focus
- Losing things
- Distracted
- Forgetful
- Not very careful
- Transition poorly

My Difference in Ability to Regulate My Self

*causes others to experience me as...*

- Thinking Weird
- Too Impulsive
  - Blurt out
  - Interrupt
  - Overreact
- Too Emotionally intense
- Behaving Badly
- “Bratty”

My Differences in Ability

*causes others to experience me as...*
Changes to our Thinking

- Not an “inability” to pay attention
- The “difference in ability” to regulate attention
- Emotional immaturity due to developmental delay in the brain circuitry involved in inhibition and self-control
- 3 to 5 year lag in emotional maturity

Shaw et al. 2007

Remember: “Difference in Ability”

When you can’t reach the top shelf
Prefrontal Cortex

Regulates individual’s ability to stay focused, sustain attention, control impulses, and make decisions.
The 2007 National Survey of Children's Health (NCSH) found that 33% of the children with ADHD had 1 coexisting condition, 16% had 2, and 18% had 3 or more (Larson 2011)

### Coexisting Disorder
- Learning Disability: 45% with ADHD, 5% without ADHD
- Conduct Disorder: 27% with ADHD, 2% without ADHD
- Anxiety: 18% with ADHD, 2% without ADHD
- Depression: 15% with ADHD, 1% without ADHD
- Speech Problems: 12% with ADHD, 3% without ADHD
The 3 Gifts

Spirited

Imaginative
**Playful**

- Full of energy, enthusiasm, and determination
  - Synonyms: lively, vivacious, vibrant, full of life, animated, sparkling, sprightly, energetic, enthusiastic, passionate, determined, resolute, purposeful, feisty, spunky, gutsy, peppy
  - Antonyms: timid, apathetic, lifeless, cold, dull, fearful, inactive, indifferent, lethargic, meek, shy, timid, tired, unenthusiastic, unexcited


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**lively**
vivacious

vibrant

full of life
energetic

enthusiastic

passionate
determined

purposeful

feisty
spunky

gutsy

peppy
• Having or showing creativity or inventiveness
  – **Synonyms:** creative, visionary, inspired, inventive, resourceful, ingenious, original, innovative, unorthodox, unconventional, fanciful, whimsical, fantastic, Seussian, offbeat, zany
  – **Antonyms:** Unromantic, usual, dull, uncreative, unimaginative, uninventive, unresourceful

creative

visionary

inspired
inventive

resourceful

ingenious
unconventional

fanciful

whimsical
fantastic

Seussian

offbeat
zany

Playful

• Fond of games and amusement, lighthearted
  – Synonyms: cheerful, comical, frisky, jolly, lively, full of fun, frolicsome, sportive, high-spirited, light-hearted, exuberant, perky, mischievous, rascally, tricksy, lighthearted, jokey, humorous, good-natured, whimsical
  – Antonyms: apathetic, behaved, depressed, dispirited, grave, inactive, lazy, lethargic, lifeless, sad, serious, unhappy

  http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/playful

cheerful
comical

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cheerful
sassy
offbeat
gutsy
ingenious
sassy
high-spirited
unorthodox
energetic
 spillsome
resourceful
outspoken
joyful
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So how do you nurture the nature?
What Adults Must Do!

- Develop a DEEP Understanding of the Differences in Abilities in ADHD
- LOOK and SEE and APPRECIATE the Incredible Spirited, Imaginative and Playful Gifts!
- Modify Expectations to fit the Differences in Abilities
- Provide Unconditional Love and Admiration and Support of the Incredible Spirited, Imaginative and Playful Gifts!
- Create Structure to Develop Positive Change in Ability to Regulate
- Create Opportunities for Practice and for Success
- Advocate, Advocate, advocate
- Model Our Own Process of Change
  - Insight, Intention, Structure, Practice, Elevation
  - Breath, Think, Rest, Hydrate, Nourish, Move, Express, Behave, Connect, Build, Tend, Seek!

Preparing for Change

Insight
Individual Exercise

What is your Current State (on a scale of 0 to 5) when 0 is the Ideal State in the center of the diagram and your score on each domain is how much change you must make to move from your Current State to your Ideal State.

The Work applies regardless of the condition . . .

So remember to ALWAYS . . .

Look, See
Admire, and
Nurture
the Incredible Spirited, Imaginative and Playful Nature!