

COUNSELING CORNER

NEWSLETTER— APRIL 06, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you have been staying safe, and staying healthy this last week. With the challenges of continued school closures due to COVID-19 for the rest of the academic year, we want you to know that you are not alone and that we will continue to journey together for your child's academic and holistic growth. If there is any way we can better serve and support you as a school community, please let us know!

We hope you continue to stay safe, stay healthy, and stay encouraged during this time!

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ADHD's Impact on Friendships

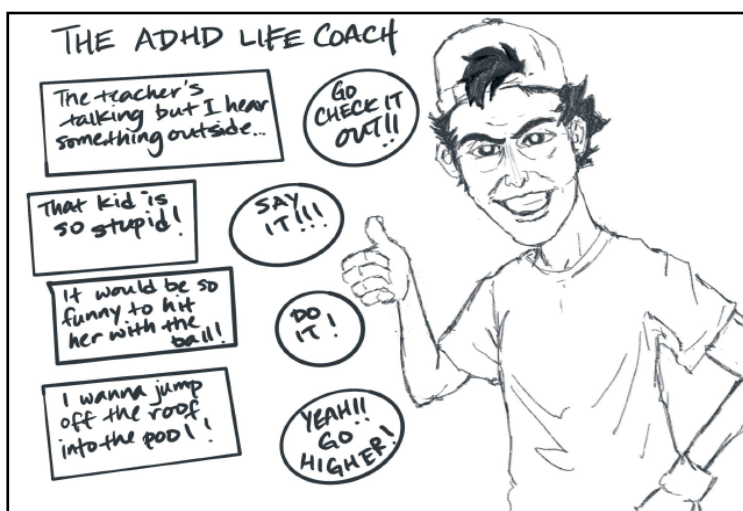
Understanding ADHD and Behavior

As we mentioned last week, neurologically, the ADHD brain has difficulty filtering the information our body constantly perceives. The typical brain will prioritize and focus on the important information, and then react accordingly. However, the ADHD brain will often not filter or prioritize information and will react to nearly all the sensations that the mind perceives. There is one exception to this rule, and I will briefly address this in the section, "Reframing the Issue."

Inattention — Last week, we briefly mentioned the first impact ADHD has on behavior, and that is the child's distractibility. If it is a task they are not interested in, the ADHD child will be very unfocused and easily distracted. The brain's inability to prioritize sensations and thoughts that enters into the mind may also lead the child to be hyperactive and/or impulsive.

Hyperactivity — Since the ADHD brain doesn't prioritize thoughts and sensations according to the task at hand, **all** thoughts and sensations that the person perceives becomes important. The child will focus and re-focus on every thought or feeling their senses are telling them, and you will see them scratching this, rubbing that, peeling this, smelling that, moving this, tapping that, and so on and so forth. Their body is engaging and reacting to all the perceived sensations, which lead also to this next behavior.

Impulsivity — Our metaphor of a CEO of a company from last week falters here. We understand this analogy because, as adults, we know the disorganization and chaos that could ensue when there isn't a person making executive decisions for a large organization. For the ADHD child, there is no awareness of this. The barrage of incoming thoughts are not perceived as intrusive, and every perceived thought is given fair attention. If the brain is not functioning like an executive, it will also **tell** the rest of the body to **react** to every whim, every thought, and every perception, which will lead to a lot of impulsive behaviors. These behaviors are reactionary and are not planned, so often times, consequences of their behavior is not even considered or given any forethought. It is like the cartoon below.



Reframing the Issue...

As I hinted on the first page, the ADHD brain will often not filter or prioritize information, reacting to nearly all the sensations that the mind perceives, creating a great amount of inattention and distractibility in the child, with one exception...

If the child is given a task or activity that they are incredibly interested in, they will hone onto that task or activity and be amazing at it! Often times, ADHD becomes an ability that helps them excel in their jobs, leading them to be very successful. Check out this article from Frobos magazine, written by Dr. Dale Archer, a psychiatrist who also studies business and human behavior, titled, "[ADHD: The Entrepreneur's Superpower](#)" (May, 2014). Business mogul, Richard Bronson, Ikea founder, Ingvar Kamprad, and JetBlue founder, David Neeleman have all incorporated their ADHD to their success.

So, all that to say, ADHD is a superpower when we learn to harness it and integrate it effectively into our lives.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND ADHD

This [article](#) from addadult.com talked about the following famous people with ADHD:

Adam Levine; singer, songwriter, Maroon 5 lead.

Simone Biles; American gymnast with 4 gold medals.

Jim Caviezel, dx with ADHD and dyslexia at 25. Reported that he felt "stupid" because he had to study so much harder.

Ryan Gosling was reportedly unable to read and was dx with ADHD and was put into a special needs class.

Michael Phelps; most decorated Olympian of all time (22m).

Channing Tatum; had ADHD and was a slow reader.

PRACTICAL TIPS TO HELP MANAGE ADHD BEHAVIOR AT HOME

- Regular daily exercise. Having your child in organized sports or martial arts will also help with the hyperactivity and impulsivity.
- Prompt the child to "STOP" and "THINK" before they decide to do something. Help them think through consequences and then decide if it is a good idea.
- Reinforce positive behavior. Have your child think of a reward they would like to earn. Set a goal, such as, "Will listen to instructions without having to repeat more than 2 times." When you catch them achieving this goal, immediately reinforce the behavior visually — putting marbles in a jar, put a sticker on a chart, or whatever you decide to use to keep track of positive behavior. Once the child has reached an agreed amount of marbles, stickers, etc, give them the reward! Make sure the goal you set is accomplishable — not too hard.
- Do you have any other thoughts or tips? I would love to hear them!!

If you have any thoughts, questions, ideas, or input, please feel free to email me at:

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I would love to hear from you!

Take care and be safe,

Jonathan Hsu, LMFT

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