

# A Workbook for Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

***"When you help someone up a hill, you are that much nearer the top yourself."***

Two of my very first clients, as a personal performance coach, told me they had something called ADD. In an effort to be the best coach I could be for these individuals, I began to read as much as I could about Attention Deficit Disorder and attend as many workshops as I found available, which weren't many. Both these individuals challenged my skills as a coach time and time again, and it was from them, I learned the most. I have coached many ADDers since then, and find it still just as challenging and rewarding. They are my favorite clients. They are energetic, impulsive, creative, intuitive, fun, stubborn, fearful, zany, loud, quiet, restless, courageous, and more. They are their finger prints, and I love them all. When I first began coaching, I knew without a doubt, that my fullest potential would be in helping others discover theirs. I now know that it is my ADDers, who help me discover mine, and it is with this interactive coaching course that I acknowledge that.

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# INTRODUCTION

*"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."*—Morrow.

This workbook is designed to provide a vehicle for the adult with Attention Deficit Disorder to use in designing their own game plan to meet life's daily challenges with joy and ease. What works for me, may not work for you, and vice versa, which is why some of the suggestions given are opposites of each other. I firmly believe, that if at first you don't succeed... try something different!

The A.C.T. model is composed of three parts. They are:

Part I: A. is for Assess the situation.

Part II: C. is for Commit to a game plan.

Part III: T. is for Take action.

Part I will provide you with information about attention deficit disorder and the co-morbid states that often accompany it. It will allow you to recognize your weakness as well as your strengths and what

resources you will need to make yourself grow. The exercises in this part will help you to discover what it is you can do to make life with ADD less of a struggle and more enjoyable. You will examine how to enhance your self-esteem from all aspects of who you are. In this section you will discover the leader within and learn more about other aspects of yourself. Through this process you will discover what beliefs are limiting you and perform an exercise to replace those beliefs with ones that are more appropriate for who you are in the world, and what you truly value. By doing a "perceptual positioning" exercise, you will discover strengths within that will be most beneficial in easing the ADD struggle. This section will guide you in listening to the voices of your inner self, to live each day more harmoniously. It will help you to get clear and focused on your vision for a game plan, and last but not least, it will help you feel comfortable and at ease with getting organized and staying motivated.

Part II will be a series of questions and exercises to strengthen your commitment toward progress by setting some goals and defining what it is you want to do. It is a model designed to help you create a game plan that's right for you. You will learn how to create your own strategies for personal growth and success.

Part III is the bulk of the course. It is an eclectic collection of things to do and try. If in part one, you discover that memory enhancement is a much needed resource for you to move forward, and decide in part two that one of your goals is to focus on making improvements in this area, then there are helpful hints and things to try to improve your memory. If stress and anxiety attacks are limiting your full potential, and you chose make working on this a priority, then there are several breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques to try. This is the part that's to be

used cafeteria style. Take what you want and leave the rest. Some sections you will return to often and some will go unused, but there is something for everybody in this part. Just remember that motivation gets you going, but habit gets you there, so use this section until your video display wears out.

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## PART I: ASSESS THE SITUATION

***"Life is not so much a matter of holding good cards, but sometimes of playing a poor hand well."*** — Robert Louis Stevenson

### What Is ADD?

So you have Attention Deficit Disorder? Let's take a look at what it is. It's neuro-biological and like the book says, you're not lazy, crazy, or stupid. It's hereditary, so a lot of adults are just discovering they have ADD soon after their children's diagnosis is made. The DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual) of the American Psychiatric Association now has a definition for adult ADD. They begin by stating that the three criteria for diagnosis must have been in existence since childhood or age 7 and must have caused constant and debilitating problems for that individual since that age. That's the first good piece of information you can take from your diagnosis to help you move forward. You are strong and you have endurance. Buried under all those years of struggle, are important experiences and much wisdom. You've made it this far, and now you're ready to use what you've learned to go forward, creating new behaviors that will make the day to day challenges of life less of a struggle and more enjoyable.

The three behavioral criteria for attention deficit disorder are: 1) inattention or distractibility, 2) impulsivity and 3) hyperactivity, or as so often displayed in adults, restlessness. Let's take a look at all three.

### **Inattention (Distractibility)**

Adults who have the inability to regulate attention or concentration while performing a task, manifest this in many



ways. You may be distracted by external noises such as conversation, music, or the activities of others, or you may find that your own internal thoughts are the primary source of distraction. It could be a combination of both internal and external distractions that limit your concentration. Not all individuals are distracted by noise and you may find that music in the background enables you to concentrate better on what you are reading.

The results of being distracted can be as varied as the distractions themselves. You may get details confused, you may forget appointments, you may need to re-read things several times, or ask to have things repeated. You may start out very organized, but in a very short time be disorganized and unable to finish what it was you started, because you lost track of time. You may jump from one project to the next without completing any of them. You may take several folders out of the file cabinet and never use or put back any of them, or you may take a half a dozen sweaters out of the drawer, only to run out of the house sleeveless. You may take all day to write one simple letter to Aunt Millie at Christmas and find it under a pile of papers next Easter; or worse yet, you mail it, along with your purse and all your credit cards.

Record what distractions and resulting behaviors annoy you most. Think about which two, you'll feel most pleased resolving first, and put a star by them. Example: I get up early to go running every morning and get so distracted, that I never make it out the door.

**Distractions And Resulting Behavior To Be Modified:**

In this next section describe what it *will be like* for you to be focused on the two most important activities starred above. Be very specific about what you will be *seeing, hearing and feeling* as you incorporate this new behavior into your routine. *Describe only what is necessary* to stay focused on the activities you choose. Do not describe what distractions you will avoid, as you are well aware of those. Example: I will be very focused on my daily exercise routine. Every morning I will wake up saying, "You can do this. It's good for you and you'll feel great when it's over." I will be grabbing my favorite purple running shorts off the bed post, where I put them the night before, and changing into them first! I will see myself putting on my running shoes and going out the door while my neighbors are still sleeping. I will feel cool and invigorated by the fresh morning air.

Description of how I will be focused On One Important Task At A Time:

## **Impulsivity**

Adults who demonstrate impulsivity manifest this characteristic in many ways also. You may seem to act before you think something through, often unaware of the consequences. In conversations, you might interrupt or blurt out an answer to a question that was asked to someone else. You might butt in on another person's activity and or take right over without being asked. Most likely you

detest waiting in lines and won't take turns. You may have had problems such as impulse buying or relationships that start off way too fast and end just as quickly. Often, you might jump right into a project without reading the directions and then abandon it half way through, throwing a temper tantrum or hurting yourself because you took a risk without sufficient knowledge about safety. Impulsive adults are often accident prone, abrupt, restless, easily frustrated, impatient, hasty, easily excitable, rigid to new ideas and bored.

Not to despair! These are the same qualities that make ADDers creative, intense, intuitive, exciting, fun and passionate about life. It's what makes you artists, writers, inventors, leaders, actors, scientists, athletes, radio talk show hosts, and more. Albert Einstein and Thomas Edison are just two of many who had ADD. Remember that, "creativity is impulsivity gone right" and unique thinking styles give us the variety that spices our lives.

Below, list how impulsivity interferes or limits you and put a star by the two that will be improved the most by focusing on them first. Example: I often don't complete the errands I need to do, as I impulsively leave long lines, telling myself I'll stop by later, and then I never do.

**Impulsive Responses To Be Modified:**

In this next section describe *what it will be like* for you to be reflective, thoughtful, and patient when responding, using the two examples above that you would like to change first. Once again be as specific and descriptive as you can. Describe what you will be

*seeing, hearing and feeling* as you perform this new behavior. Example: I will be very patient in the line at the grocery store. I will be breathing deep and slow to calm myself, and I will be browsing through a magazine from the rack near by, or talking with the person in front of me in a slow, calm, voice about how busy the store is today. I will be smiling and enjoying the moment as I listen to the music over the loudspeaker, using the time productively, doing a muscle relaxation exercise with my shoulders and neck.

Description Of How I Will Be Patient And Reflective With Appropriate Responses:

## **Hyperactivity**

Hyperactivity in adults is often expressed as a restlessness or a powerful urge to move around rather than stay in one place and study, work, read, or watch television. Quiet activities may be hard for you to do and talking incessantly while fidgeting or engaging in some kind of excessive ongoing motion such as foot tapping, hair twirling, rocking, or bouncing may be the norm for you. You may find yourself reading, while watching TV with the radio on, as you talk to your mother on the phone. Yet, some of you may find noisy, busy environments intolerable. If you live alone, you may be unaware that you toss and turn and mumble in your sleep. Not all adults with ADD are hyperactive. Of the three core symptoms, this is the one that is least likely to persist in adulthood, especially in women, as we are taught from childhood on to be quieter and less active.

Record below hyperactive behavior you engage in that may be

limiting, but be sure to list them only if they are a problem. If you work alone and boogie back and forth across the room between paragraphs of the great American novel you are in the process of writing, you're not "annoying", because there's no one there to annoy! However, if you laugh at rude jokes making those loud snorting noises, you may want to work on your PC Laughing Skills 101 first. When alone and with good friends, go ahead, have fun, and be zany, that's what friends are for. Save the quiet, polite, stuff for public where it's appreciated. Once again, put a star by the two behaviors you'll be most pleased to modify into productive appropriate activities. Example: At stop lights, I bite my nails without thinking, and then later I'm always angry I ruined them.

**Hyperactive "Annoying" Behavior To Be Modified:**

**In this last section describe what *you will be doing*, when hyperactivity is no longer in rampant control of every muscle fiber at will. Describe what you will be *seeing, hearing, and feeling* as you experience this new activity. Once again, there's no need to describe what you won't be doing, such as biting your nails at stop lights, just describe in as much detail, as possible, what will be happening. Example: At each stop light, before my car comes to a halt, I will take a deep breath and relax, by lifting my chin and throwing my shoulders back. I'll smile and think of how proud and satisfied I'll feel walking out of the beauty salon after my first manicure two weeks from tomorrow and how nice it will be to hear my sister say, "Sandy, Your nails are beautiful. Where did you get them done?"**

**Description Of How I Will Be Calm And Relaxed:**

**Co-Morbid States**

Co-morbid states are conditions that exist simultaneously, and interventions, therapies, and activities to help one condition may, or may not, be of help to improve the other, so additional resources and professional help may need to be sought for improvements and progress to be made. Depression is commonly a co-morbid state with adults, as well as eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder, drug abuse, alcoholism, manic-depressive disorder, anxiety and panic disorders, phobias, and seasonal affective disorder (SAD). It is also common for very bright adults with high IQs and ADD to have learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. Speech therapy, vocational training, and other remedial assistance can and should be sought. A list of resources for additional information and assistance is provided at the end of this workbook. Consulting a specialist, or two, to determine how to get your needs met, is a very proactive, responsible, kind, and loving thing to do for yourself, and those who care about you.

If you think you may have accompanying disorders that also need attention, begin by listing who you are going to call to find out more information and get additional assistance. True strength lies in knowing when to ask for help. Use the following to list names and numbers of organizations and people, who you can benefit from, by consulting with. The list may include therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, support group contacts, clinics, speech therapist, vocational therapists or any other specialists that will meet your needs for self development.

The "I Care About Myself" Resource List:

## **Discovering Your Strengths**

You have come this far and have used a variety of resources, you may or may not even be aware of, that can be developed and strengthened even more. The following is an exercise designed to lessen your struggles and move you forward. It will help you to discover your hidden strengths while maximizing the ones you are already aware of; giving you new perspectives of how to best use your inner resources for further growth.

### **Perceptual Positioning Exercise**

This exercise consists of speaking from three different perceptual positions, as described below, that are further categorized into past, present, and future. Following are instructions for each. Plan on setting aside one full hour to do this exercise.

#### **The Trusted Friend Position:**

When you are in this position, you will speak as a trusted life long friend, who would never say or do anything that would hurt you in any way. Your trusted friend is supportive and encouraging in *just the way* you would like a trusted friend to be. Your friend is nurturing, kind, loving, and understanding. He/she has been there through the years, through thick and thin. As you design this perceptual position from which to speak, give it incredible qualities. Make this position the best friend ever, by taking all the

best qualities from people you know and admire, and rolling them all into one beautiful person. This person is the safest person ever to have as a friend and you are grateful, for you know this friend has your best interest at heart.

### **The Neutral Observer Position:**

When you are in this position, you will speak as a neutral observer, who knows a little bit about who you are and what you've done, but doesn't know you really well. This position has no vested interest in you or your future. This position just listens to what is being said from the other positions and makes an observation, giving a neutral comment. The only intent of this position is to provide you with useful information.

### **The Me Position:**

When you are in this position, you will speak freely as yourself. You will speak about what you are seeing, hearing and feeling. You will speak from your experiences as they have been shaped by your environment. You will speak honestly, openly, and directly, saying what comes to mind first.

### **Future Position:**

When you are in this position you will speak from the future, *as you wish it to be*. If your future aspiration is to become organized, then you will be speaking as though this is a "done deal." You will speak as though you have the skills and motivation that it takes to be organized without struggling. If confidence and high self esteem are what you desire, then you will speak from the future position as having obtained and internalized these qualities. When speaking from the future, inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity will no longer be causing you "constant and



debilitating problems," as you have acquired new behaviors and developed new strategies that are successful.

### **Present Position:**

When you speak from this position, you will be speaking with knowledge of the past and knowledge of what is desired for the future. You do not know what the future holds, only what you know is desired, and what you hope is possible.

### **Past Position:**

When you speak from this position, you will randomly pick a time in the past to speak from. Choose what ever time comes to mind first. It may be adolescence or it may be age three that seems like an appropriate and interesting choice. Once you choose the age from which to speak, do not speak about experiences or learnings beyond that age or let those experiences influence what is being said. Pretend to be only the age you choose and act like that age as you speak. See, hear, and feel things like you would if you were that age again and the clock were turned back.

**Step #1.** Label nine 3 x 5 cards for the following positions:

Position #1: Me - Present

Position #2: Me - Future

Position #3: Trusted Friend - Future

Position #4: Neutral Observer - Future

Position #5: Neutral Observer - Present

Position #6: Trusted Friend - Present

Position #7: Trusted Friend - Past

Position #8: Neutral Observer - Past

Position #9: Me - Past

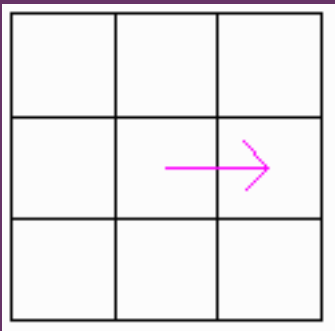
These are the different "perceptual positions" from which you will be speaking from during this exercise. You will speak as if you were that person in that period of time, using the appropriate pronouns and verb tenses to reflect the "perceptual position" you are speaking from. Example: When you speak from position #3, or your friend in the future, you might say something like: "your name, I've seen you come along way since you were first diagnosed with ADD and although there were times when you thought life would always be a struggle, I knew you had the determination to find strategies that would work for you to make life easier. Just look at your office now and remember what it looked like five years ago. It was a mess then and now you have a filing system you actually use. You've come a long way since you worked out a comfortable game plan that helps you balance your life. You've worked hard, and accomplished a lot, and you make me proud to be your friend!".

**Step #2.** Lay the cards out on the floor in a square with each card at least 1 ½ to 2 feet apart in the following manner:

Friend Past #7	Friend Present #6	Friend Future #3

Me Past #9	Me Present #1	Me Future #2
Observer Past #8	Observer Present #5	Observer Future #4

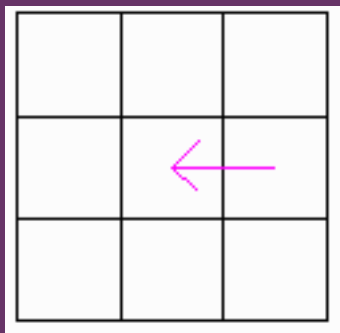
**Step #3.** Begin the exercise by standing in the first perceptual position, following the instructions given below for each new position, in the order that they are listed. As you speak from each position, say as much as you would like, recording only key words that will bring back to you the essence of what was said. If you prefer to make an audio tape of this exercise, you may do so, making a verbal notation of each position before you speak from it. Having the whole exercise transcribed to read later can be very powerful.



**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #2. This position is you in the present, facing your future. State honestly and openly what it is you want. Cut to the chase on this one, keeping it to something that is both theoretically possible and will resolve "a constant and debilitating problem"

caused by your ADD. Example: Stating that you want to be 6 inches taller, when you are way past puberty, is out. Stating that you really want to be able to communicate more effectively with your family, friends and co-workers is definitely workable material for this exercise. Other examples would be wanting to be organized and on time. Maybe your most desired outcome is to be as cool as a cucumber under fire. Record below what you would like your future to be like. Describe what it is you will be doing, and how you will be doing it, in as much detail as possible.

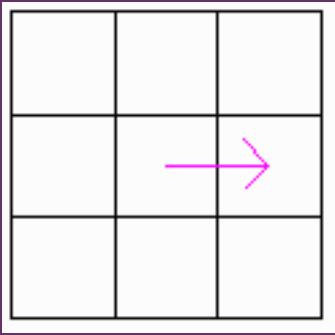
## What I Want Most:



**Position #2.** Stand in position #2, facing position #1. This is you in the future and you are speaking to you in the present about what happened, how it happened, and what it's like now that things are the way you desired them to be. Record the essence of what you say below. Example: "Two years ago, I

never would have dreamed it would be so easy to be on time, but I kept trying different strategies and was determined not to give up. Now I have systems in place that are easy to use and a time management plan that keeps me on track. I've learned the fine art of saying no politely. I'm not running around at the last minute always behind schedule. I start and finish projects early. I feel a real sense of accomplishment knowing I can do what I say I'm going to do and get it done when I say it will be done. I'm clearly focused on my goals and can see now how I had to cut back on the amount of things I was trying to do to keep on schedule."

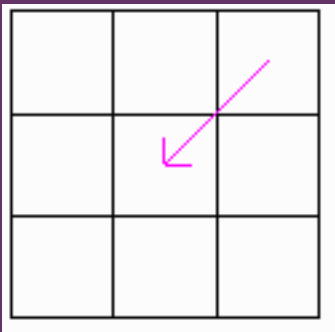
## What I Did To Get What I Wanted, And What It's Like Now:



**Position #1.** Stand in position #1 facing position #2. This is you in the present facing toward you in the future and hearing what was said about accomplishing your desires. What does it feel like to hear what was just said? Comment from the present about what the future you just said.

Example: "I'm glad to hear it will be so easy. Right now nothing seems easy, but I haven't learned how to say no politely, yet. That one may require a bit of practice, as it sure doesn't come natural yet."

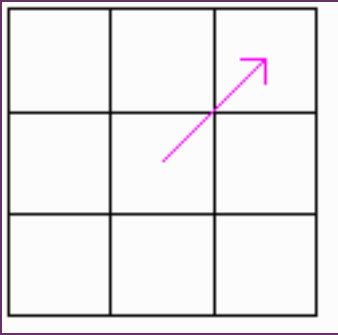
### **Response:**



**Position #3.** Stand in position #3 facing position #1. This is your trusted friend in the future who has seen you get what you want, and has been there every step of the way supporting you.

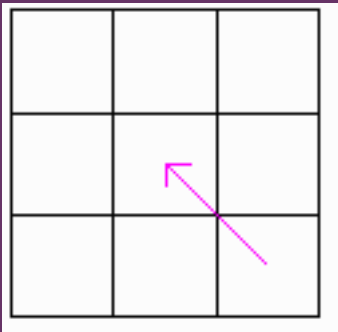
Comment with whatever comes to mind first and take notes on it below. Example: "\_\_your name\_\_, I never once doubted you could do it. I know how hard you tried and how many times you got frustrated along the way, but you stuck with it until you found what worked. It's good to see you so happy and It's good to know you'll be on time!"

### **Supportive Comment From Friend In The Future:**



**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #3. Comment on what it was like to hear what your friend in the future had to say.

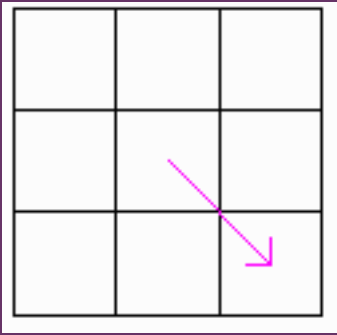
### Response:



**Position #4.** Stand in position #4, facing position #1. This is the neutral observer in the future who has seen your accomplishments and heard everything that has been said so far in this exercise and will make a comment from the future that will give you useful information. Example: "I was totally

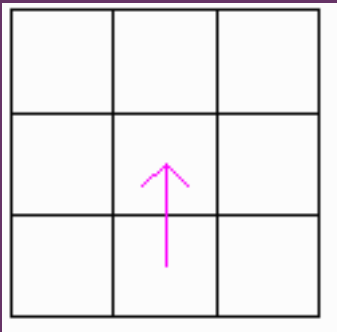
unaware that being organized and on time was something so important to you and was surprised to see the change. I always thought that you just didn't care, and that if you did, it would be easy for you to do something about it. You are more determined than I ever knew."

### Useful Information From Neutral Observer In The Future:



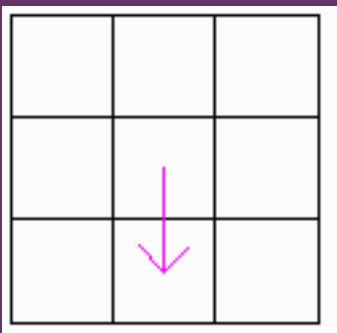
**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #4. Comment on what it was like to hear what the neutral observer from the future had to say.

**Response:**



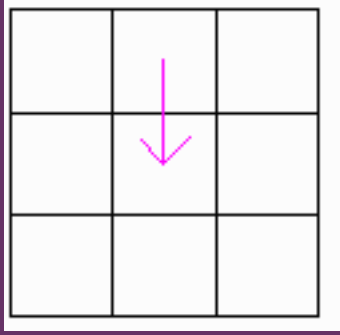
**Position #5.** Stand in position #5, facing position #1. This is the neutral observer in the present who has seen your accomplishments from the past and knows what you desire for the future and will make a comment that will give you useful information.

**Useful Information From Neutral Observer In The Present:**



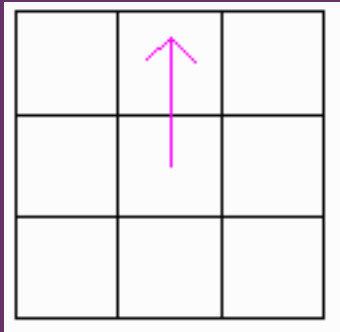
**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #5. Comment on what it was like to hear what the neutral observer in the present had to say.

**Response:**



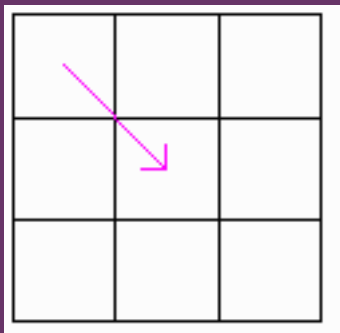
**Position #6.** Stand in position #6, facing position #1. This is your trusted friend in the present who has seen your accomplishments and knows your desires for the future. This friend has been there every step of the way supporting and encouraging you and has something to say.

### Supportive Comment From Friend In The Present:



**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #6. Comment on what it was like to hear what your friend had to say.

### Response:

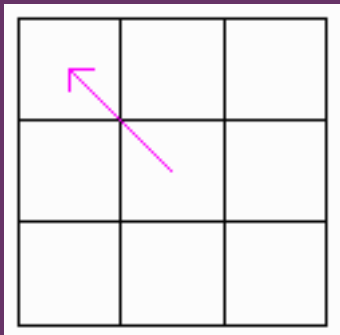


**Position #7.** Stand in position #7, facing position #1. This is the trusted friend in the past, who has known you since birth. Choose a time in the past from which to speak for positions #7, #8 and #9. This friend does not know anything beyond the time chosen from which to speak from. Comment as the trusted friend with what ever comes to mind first. Example: "I know you're scared about going to college your name, but you'll do just fine. You've made it this far. You know I'll still be your friend no matter what happens. Remember how your mom



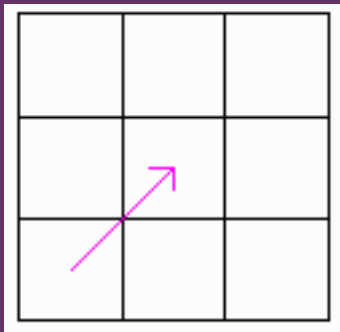
stuck up for you in Mrs. Baldwin's class? She won't force you to finish if you really end up hating it. Your dad might be ripped if you drop out, but he'll get over it, just like the time we got caught skipping school. You'll be OK."

### Supportive Comment From Friend In The Past:



**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #7. Comment on what it was like to hear what your friend had to say from the past.

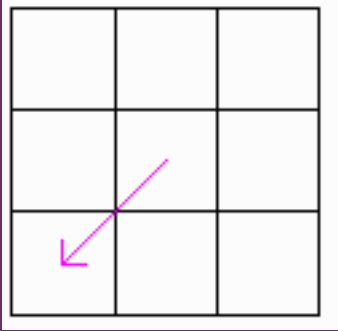
### Response:



**Position #8.** Stand in position #8, facing position #1. This is the neutral observer in the past, who has known of you and your accomplishments since birth and does not know of anything beyond the time chosen for this part of the exercise. Comment as the neutral observer from the past giving useful

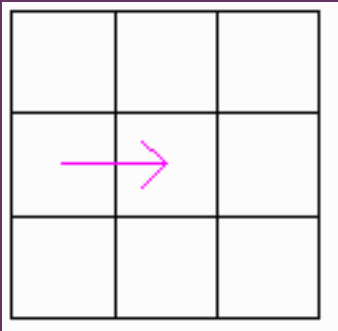
information.

### Useful Information From The Neutral Observer In The Past:



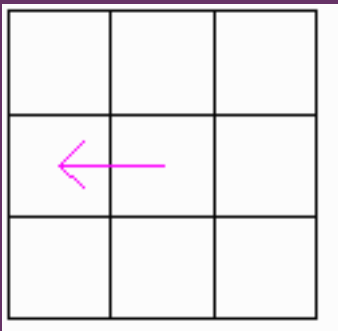
**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #8. Comment on what it was like to hear what the neutral observer from the past had to say.

### Response:



**Position #9.** Stand in position #9, facing position #1. This is you in the past, facing the future. Comment from this position.

### My Comments From The Past:



**Position #1.** Stand in position #1, facing position #9. Comment on what it was like to hear yourself speak from the past.

## **Response:**

**Step #4.** Now that you have completed speaking from each perceptual position and responded to that position, step off the grid and decide if there is anything else that you would like to say from any of the positions. If so, go to that position and speak from it, recording comments and responses below.

## **Additional Comments And Responses:**

**Step #5.** Now that you have completed the exercise and have experienced all the perceptual positions, look back over your notes and record below what you have learned from this exercise. How best can you use the information gained from this procedure to help you grow and cope with the day to day challenges of ADD? What new insights and perspectives do you have about your accomplishments and your abilities? Which strengths have helped you the most? In what new ways can you use those strengths? What's been easy, and what's been hard, and how can you make the hard things easy?

## **New Perceptions And Learnings:**

# Strengthening Your Motivation

Getting motivated and staying motivated is definitely a head thing. As an avid runner, I always like to use the following as an example. Let's say I'm training for my first marathon. I know, without a doubt, that to complete a twenty-six mile run, I've got to get out there and pound the pavement, come rain or shine. If I get up and it's raining out, I can picture myself out there wet, cold, soggy, and having a miserable time, or I can picture myself out there feeling strong and invigorated by the cool, refreshing rain. Which do you think is going to get me out the door, with my running shoes on?

The picture we make in "our mind's eye" determines the degree of motivation we feel toward what it is we would like to do. The best way to motivate ourselves is to picture what it will be like, and imagine how good it will feel, when we are all done, and have accomplished what it is we set out to do. Pretending what you will be saying, and doing, when it is all over, is a very powerful motivational strategy. Elite runners see themselves crossing the finish line first, hundreds of times before it actually happens. The more compelling details we add to our picture, the stronger we can make our motivation.

The purpose of the following exercise is to motivate you toward behaviors that are beneficial in managing your ADD. In this exercise you will design your own unique visualization. There will be five components to this visualization, providing an opportunity to add a variety of compelling details, that will get you motivated and keep you motivated.

## Designing Your Own Vision Exercise

This exercise consists of describing what it is you want from five different aspects. It will help you to define and clarify what your needs are for successfully coping with ADD. It will give you better insight into what you need to do, and how you need to do it. It will allow you to

realize what resources you need to develop more fully to be comfortable and confident with your new coping behaviors.

**Component #1.** Describe below, in as much detail as possible, what you want your environment to be like. What kinds of things will be in your environment as you are coping well with your ADD? What will your environment look like and sound like? What will it feel like? Example: My environment is neat and clean. My books are on a book shelf and my papers are in a file cabinet. There are different color folders for different projects. My computer files are backed up on disks and my coats and jackets are hung in the closet. I have a hook for my keys and they are there when I am not using them. My floor is swept. The TV is silent and there is soft rock playing in the background. I have fresh flowers on the table and the sweet smell of a scented candle is in the air. I feel calm and focused as I have only one project out on my desk at a time. Family and friends are in my home often, and there is calm, soft, conversation when they are present. I feel nurtured by my environment. The way it looks and sounds is a reflection of how much I care for myself and those sharing my space.

### **Description Of Your Desirable Environment:**

**Component #2.** Describe below, in as much detail as possible, what behaviors you will be engaged in as you are comfortably coping with your ADD. Describe what you will be doing and how you will be doing it. What will you see, hear and feel as you are engaging in these new activities? Example: To become calmer and more focused, I see myself meditating and exercising regularly, telling myself how important it is and feeling

great about taking such good care of myself.

### **Description Of Your Desirable Behaviors:**

**Component #3.** Describe in as much detail as possible what capabilities you will use to modify inattention, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity. How will you develop these qualities to their fullest and what will they be like? What capabilities have served you well in the past that you can use even more in the future for your personal growth and accomplishments? What new desirable capabilities will you develop in addition to what you already have? What will you be seeing, hearing and feeling as you display these capabilities? Example: My strongest capability is that I am stubborn. I see myself as unrelenting and I tell myself never to give up. I feel strong when I am stubborn.

### **Description Of Your Desirable Capabilities:**

**Component #4.** Describe below, in as much detail as possible, what beliefs and values will help you cope successfully with ADD. What is it that's of value to you? What beliefs will further your progress? Example: I believe that with hard work, I can overcome many obstacles. I see myself accomplishing many new goals because I value determination and hard work. I feel grateful for valuing honesty and diligence.

### **Description Of Your Desirable Beliefs And Values:**

**Component #5.** Describe below in as much detail as possible what you are like on an identity level. Who are you as you cope successfully with distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity? What kind of a person are you now that you have an environment with behaviors, capabilities, beliefs, and values that support you in the way in which you desire. Who do others say you are? How do they describe you? How do you describe yourself? What is most the most important thing you would like to say about you? Example: I am a kind and compassionate person who takes responsibility for my behaviors, my possessions, and my relationships. I am fair and honest, and not too quick to judge others or react harshly. I am creative, exciting, spontaneous, and fun to be around. My friends say I am zany, and unpredictable, but they know they can depend on me for help when they are down!

**Description Of You At Your Best!**

## **Self- Esteem And Growth**

Self-esteem begins with self-awareness. As we begin to form an identity, we also begin to make value judgments about ourselves by making comparisons. Growing up with ADD, and maybe some of the co-morbid states that often accompany it, creates differences that are used as fuel for those comparisons.

The self-critic begins to grow and flourish, and before long, it is out of

control. Self esteem is at an all time low and you may desperately want to be anybody except who you are. "The Shoulds" are in control of your life and you're not happy with what you're doing or how you're doing it. It's that darn downward spiral, and like the vortex of water going down a drain, it's dragging you and everything with it.

That's when it's time to grab the plug and shove it in the drain! The place to start is by telling the self critic to be quiet, so you can listen to your inner voice and hear what's really important to you. It's the time to take a crystal clear look at yourself and what's of real value to you. Last, but not least, it's time to get in touch with the real you, and not the one created by the self-critic.

Let's go right back to the beginning. the part that says self esteem begins with self awareness. We all have characteristics that are outstanding, and some that are a little less than admirable. Even some of our less than admirable qualities, when used in the right context, become excellent resources for growth. A good example is stubbornness. When we are rigid and inflexible in our relationships with others, we can often do damage to those relationships, but when we are striving for excellence and want to play a certain piano piece perfectly, and won't stop practicing until we do, then stubbornness will serve us well.

## **Self- Awareness Exercises**

How aware are you of your best characteristics and your "worst"? What are the ways in which you can use your best characteristics even more often than you do now, and in different situations? What are the ways in which you can use your "worst" characteristics for good deeds that have a benevolent intent?

Listed below are some words that may or may not describe you. Identify



the ones that describe you the best. Also identify the ones that you would like to describe you, and imagine how they might, once you have discovered new behaviors and modified your inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. List below additional qualities that make you unique, in the space provided.

Active	Flexible	Intuitive	Punctual	Thoughtful
Adventurous	Forthright	Kind	Quiet	Tolerant
Ambitious	Funny	Knowledgeable	Reliable	Trustworthy
Amiable	Friendly	Literate	Reserved	Truthful
Capable	Gentle	Loyal	Resourceful	Unassuming
Competent	Gracious	Meticulous	Responsible	Unique
Competitive	Gregarious	Moral	Sensitive	Urbane
Concerned	Happy	Motivated	Sincere	Verbal
Confident	Hardworking	Nurturing	Strong	Visible
Creative	Healthy	Optimistic	Successful	Visionary
Curious	Helpful	Organized	Supportive	Vigorous
Daring	Honest	Outgoing	Tactful	Virtuous
Dedicated	Humble	Patient	Talented	Vivacious
Diligent	Humorous	Persistent	Talkative	Warm
Energetic	Insightful	Practical	Tasteful	Willing
Easygoing	Imaginative	Polite	Teachable	Wise
Fair	Intelligent	Precise	Temperate	Worthy

**Fast                      Intense                      Productive                      Tenacious                      Youthful**

List the terms that describe you best:

List the terms that you would like to describe you:

**Additional Qualities That Make Me Unique:**

A good self-esteem exercise wouldn't be complete, unless you recognized yourself for at least three things that you are proud of. True self-esteem is awareness, and appreciation, of what makes you a valuable person in the world, because of what you value. You may have been valedictorian of your class, but are most proud of the time you spent spring break taking out Grammy's trash and making her lunch each day because she fell and hurt her hip. Kudos to you for all the nice things you've done both big and small, but list, just those special three, below:

**#1.**

**#2.**

**#3.**

## **Discovering The Hidden Leader Within**

If you were a born leader, this exercise will just be a check-off list of qualities that describe you best, but if you never considered yourself a leader, this exercise may give you some valuable information about some of your untapped potential and serve as a jump start for your self-esteem. Below is a collection of leadership qualities from a variety of well known personal performance gurus. As you read through the list, notice how many you identify with at some level. Great leaders from the beginning of time have displayed these qualities; the same qualities you're nodding your head at as you read the list. This is the hidden leader within that's recognizing the potential you have for growth in this area. Have fun with the list, and nod as much as you like.

### **Great Leaders:**

- have values and a sense of purpose.
- are mentors.
- can discuss current reality without bias.
- appreciate and praise others.
- work well with others, creating a synergistic atmosphere.
- help others.
- are curious.
- create a vision and share it with others through understanding.
- are cool under pressure.
- are good communicators by being good listeners.
- are able to inspire and influence others.
- respect others and themselves.
- encourage others to succeed.
- create win/win situations with sides that disagree.
- are active.

- are straightforward and simple.
- look at adversity as challenging and adventurous.
- believe in others.
- are hardworking and conscientious.
- are positive, happy people who make others happy too.
- are ethical and trustworthy.
- are humble.
- attract volunteers as followers and do not need to control others.
- let others save face.
- continue to learn and have a willingness to understand.
- value people above all else.

## **Expanding Your Beliefs**

*Minds are like parachutes; they only function when open, and this exercise will help to keep an open mind. When you change your thoughts, you change your world, so use this page a lot.*

There may be times when our beliefs do not support us and our efforts to grow as well as they could. They may limit us in what we would like to accomplish or the way in which we would like to proceed. When this is the situation, an examination of that belief and what is doing for us, or not doing for us, is most beneficial. Analyzing how our success could be enhanced by expanding our beliefs is a very powerful step to take in developing new behaviors. Example: Believing that I'm too old to learn about computers may keep me from taking a computer course and discovering software for scheduling appointments, that will work for me better than the system I currently use. The following exercise is designed to help you expand any limiting beliefs you may have and allow for personal growth.

**Step #1.** List below any beliefs that you think may need to be expanded for you to grow and succeed at coping with your ADD.

**Step #2.** Analyze each belief listed above by asking yourself the following questions of each belief.

- Does this belief enhance my ability to successfully cope with ADD?
- What is this belief doing for my ability to cope?
- What are some of the things I am doing based on this belief that are limiting my ability to successfully cope with ADD?
- How does this belief help my ability to cope with ADD?

**Step #3.** After the above series of questions, you may start to doubt your old belief some. Continue exploring and questioning this belief with the following questions.

- Is my old belief true under all circumstances?
- Does everyone else believe this?
- If not, why not?
- What circumstances and situations do not fit with my old belief?
- What other beliefs have come and gone over the years regarding this subject?

**Step #4.** Now ask yourself the following questions.

- What would I rather believe?
- How will my ability to cope successfully with ADD be enhanced with this new belief?
- How might my ability to cope successfully be impeded with this new belief?
- What is the best thing that could happen based on my old belief?
- What is the best thing that could happen based on my new belief?
- What could stop me from wanting to adopt this new belief?
- How will this new belief benefit my sense of self?

**Step #5.** Replace the old belief with the new one, being sure to keep the benefits of the old belief, as you integrate the new belief with your sense of self.

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**Congratulations on the completion of Course One. Continue with Course Two.**