

# 9 Tips For Families to Survive with an ADHD child



## 7 Elements of Self-Control



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Essentially, **ADHD IS AN EXECUTIVE FUNCTION DEFICIT DISORDER**, that causes the symptoms of attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

The umbrella term “ADHD” is simply another way of referring to these issues.

What are the seven executive functions?

## 1. **Self-Directed Inhibition: The Mind’s Brakes**

This is the most important ability that humans have developed, no other animal can pause and think the way we do.

The famous psychologist Brodsky who wrote the book “the ascent of man” credits the ability of man to inhibit the success of our species. To delay responding to an event. This delay led humans to develop internal speech and the ability to internally change our own behaviour. The inability to inhibit and have a good brain braking system is the cornerstone of the problem with ADHD.

The ability to inhibit actions and impulses and think before acting. “Like your parents taught you to “think before you act”, “count to 10”

Analogous to a pause button between an event happening and your response.

This gives the child time to think and be proactive rather than reactive to events.

A child having trouble controlling impulses can appear thoughtless, selfish, irrational or immature. By pausing and thinking, better choices are made.

A child with ADHD May wake up in the morning and see their PlayStation and start playing a game rather than get dressed for school, causing the family to be late.

## 2 **The minds mirror. Self-awareness:**

The ability to look at “inside” ourselves and be “honest” about our behaviour.

The ability to look “outside” ourselves in the environment and how it changes and impacts our behaviour. We observe our actions and change them depending on the situation, whether we make a mistake.

For most of us, we are able to adapt our behaviour to be appropriate for the changing environment.

Children and teens with ADHD are less able to modify what they say and do and feel and end up running on autopilot even when the circumstances require a change of direction.

Like a driverless car, going through traffic lights and stop signs without attention to the dangers.

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### 3. Self-Directed Imagery: The Mind's Eye

We all have a GPS system in our brains that allow us to call up the past and use visual images to plan a destination in the future which is foresight. Like playing “mini YouTube videos” of our past experiences

It's called your working memory.

It's like a GPS. It has two parts one uses images or maps, and the other is voice; it tells you where you are going.

Working memory is like a ram in a computer. It holds information while you are working and thinking about the task at hand.

Working memory is different from long-term storage memory.

Knowledge is uploaded from the brain's back to the frontal cortex or thinking brain into working memory.

An example would be your child being asked to go and get dressed and ready for school; she goes into her room, sees her cell phone, and spends the next 30 minutes texting.

In the classroom, a complex comprehension in an English class. Your child finds this problematic because several pieces of information needed to be held in mind while answering a question.

Often distractions with daydreaming and other thoughts prevent the task from being completed.

Working memory is holding in my hand the instructions on the task at hand.

### A SENSE OF TIME AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Children and teens with ADHD caught in the now. Their time is now and not now. Time doesn't seem to influence their behaviour.

They cannot complete tasks on time. Problems with deadlines. They are uninterested in the future, and consequences reactions will have with poor time management.

They do not think about events before they happen

ADHD children are caught in the now.

A child with ADHD has a relatively narrow window into the future of time and can't think far ahead.

### 4. Self-Directed Speech: The Mind's Voice

Animals can only talk to others, however humans are able to talk to ourselves in order to change behaviour. Childhood is a process of talking aloud and with age the speech becomes internalised.

ADHD kids ‘Just keep talking’ and have delayed internal speech.

The ability to give yourself a “pep” talk and “advise yourself” “listen to your inner voice.

Younger children develop rules for yourself to follow. ‘Sticking to a diet’ rather than cheating. Children with ADHD don't stick to rules.

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### 5 Minds Heart EMOTIONAL SELF CONTROL( Minds Heart)

Being able to pause and split incoming information into emotional and non-emotional content. We can then respond more rationally. ADHD kids have problems regulating their emotions and are more emotional. They seem more emotionally immature. A 4 year old has difficulty waiting for a treat until later but you would expect a 9 year old to be able to wait without an angry reaction. Emotional advantages in performing arts.

The average day of a child's life is filled with frustration and emotionally challenging events. These events can provoke strong emotions.

Children with ADHD are likely to react quickly with a primitive initial emotional response without showing restraint.

ADHD children have difficulty moderating emotional responses.

They seem to wear their emotions on their sleeves.

Easily hurt or offended.

They appear to be self-centred, demanding, aggressive and immature.

Other children may start to avoid your child with ADHD. Unfortunately, they do not understand problems with emotional self-control and ADHD.

### 6. Self-motivation( Minds Fuel Tank)

This is linked to emotional control. Control of emotions and keeping them private and internal helps us decide if they are positive or negative. Those that can internalise their emotions can automatically internalise their motivation. This is called drive, persistence, ambition and willpower. When we create our own motivation we don't need external rewards to incentivise ourselves that younger children need. We are able to "stick" to our plans. When you hear that children with ADHD have short attention spans when completing a task it is really poor motivation.

Children with ADHD lack self-motivation to get things done, mainly routine chores or tasks that seem boring.

Many children with ADHD are thrill-seekers looking for short-term fun and events; they need extreme stimulation or entertainment to "get going."

Teens with ADHD spend more time on risky activities. Enjoy extreme sports motorcycle racing skydiving. They can also hyper-focus and become addicted to playing sensational internet video games( motivated on the wrong things)

Even when things are initially impressive, they lose their appeal with time as they become more routine and "boring") ADHD children have a problem working for long periods to get further rewards out in the future.

ADHD children need incentives that are rewarded in the short term to achieve goals.

The motivation fuel tank in ADHD is empty or full.

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### 7 Self-Directed Mental Play: The Source of Problem Solving and Innovation

This is related to internal speech and has two parts.

The ability to take incoming large messages and break them down into smaller parts called analysis.

The ability to reorganise and combine the parts into a new outgoing message we call synthesis.

By pausing we are able to analyse and solve problems. Problems with this ability are seen when doing comprehensions or long projects.

Seeing a large task can be overwhelming. Breaking up the task can assist and will seem manageable.

Children with ADHD are distracted by events around them, are easily bored, and less able to keep paying attention to their plans and goals. They appear chaotic and disorganised. They leave things without putting things away after use. They leave dirty dishes and food wrappers in their rooms, misplace cell phones and lose money. Self-hygiene, messy workspaces and disorganised school workstations

People with ADHD simply don't plan things out or problem-solve them very well. This problem has a significant impact on their social and academic success when mental problem-solving is essential.

These tools in the tool box are deficient in ADHD and give rise to all the symptoms and difficulties that you see.

They have a problem with the braking system that leads to problems in all the other 6 executive functions.

Not all children with ADHD look the same and have the same problem in self-control.

Children that are hyperactive and impulsive have problems with emotional control.

Those with inattentive type have bigger problems with motivation but don't have problems with emotional control.

Understanding these 7 functions of the brain is the cornerstone of my approach to helping parents understand their child and why they behave in the way that they do.

By understanding these 7 principles you will have more sympathy and empathy for children or as a teacher and pupil in the classroom.

These principles provide a logical understanding of all the treatment interventions that are needed. The bottom line is the front part of the brain in the brain's brakes and self-control.

As a parent you may start to feel a little uneasy and recognise some of these problems in your own past, after all this is a problem that is inherited in 80% of children.