

Strategies for Coping With AD/HD At Work

INATTENTION/DISTRACTIBILITY: Schedule work in short chunks of time with many mini-breaks. If possible, reduce distractions by moving work area away from heavily trafficked areas. Remove any distractions possible, such as radios. Face your desk away from the window or other views which may be distracting. Reduce interruptions, by refusing all unnecessary calls or putting others to a voice mail to answer all at once. To keep interested and motivated to the task at hand, set meaningful goals. Know the value of what it is you are doing and keep it exciting and challenging by varying the plan. Be observant to cues that let you know when you are getting bored and change the routine to keep interesting enough to keep your attention. Reduce clutter and surround yourself with pleasant lighting, colors and scents if possible.

HYPER-FOCUSING: Use a timer for activities and allow only what is needed to finish the job.

IMPULSIVITY: Take a deep breath before responding. If angry count to ten. Learn effective techniques for dealing with anger. Adjust your posture first by sitting or standing up straight and throwing your shoulders back in a relaxed movement. Notice your breathing; continuing to breath slowly and deeply from the abdomen. Smile and begin to think of ways in which to respond appropriately, taking your time to use and practice effective communication skills and appropriate responses to criticisms.

ORGANIZATION AND TIME MANAGEMENT: Make a daily "To Do" everyday, being sure to cross the items off the list at the end of the day, making a new one for the next day. Break big projects down into small steps, prioritizing each step and setting a time frame into which it should be done. Solicit the help of a co-worker or coach to keep you on track and accountable. Find a place for everything and put everything back in its place. Use one calendar for organizing your time so there is no confusion and overlap of things to do. Set timers and use reminders to keep on task. Always plan extra time for things that come up unexpected. Don't let perfectionism keep you from managing you time appropriately. Know when "good enough" is acceptable for each circumstance and get on to the next project. Don't dwell on obstacles. Find ways to move past them, saving time. Make a list of things at work that only you can do and start delegating some of the others. Learn delegating. It's a skill just like everything else and can be done very badly with poor results, if you don't know how to do it well.

MEMORY/COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING: Record things in one place, so notes don't get lost. Carry your planner with you and check it often. Use a tape recorder. Use timers. Repeat peoples names and important dates out loud. Make a visual image of what you need to remember in exaggerated, ridiculous detail to "jog" your memory later. Use spell check and other computer programs to assist your memory. Know if you are visual, auditory or kinesthetic learner and use that information to help you learn in a mode that is easier for you.