

CHADD Ask the Experts

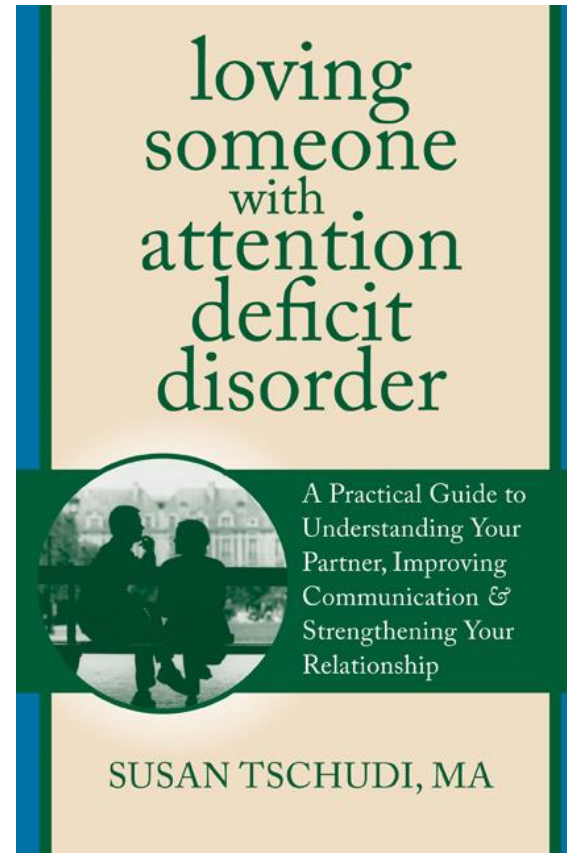
Live in Harmony *Tips for the Non-ADHD Partner*

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***Loving Someone with
Attention Deficit
Disorder:
A Practical Guide to
Understanding Your
Partner, Improving
Communication and
Strengthening Your
Relationship***



www.lovingsomeonewithadd.com

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Tips for the
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Which is it? ADD or ADHD?

- ADHD, Predominantly Hyperactive/Impulsive Type
- ADHD, Predominantly Inattentive Type
- ADHD, Combined Type

What causes ADHD/what doesn't

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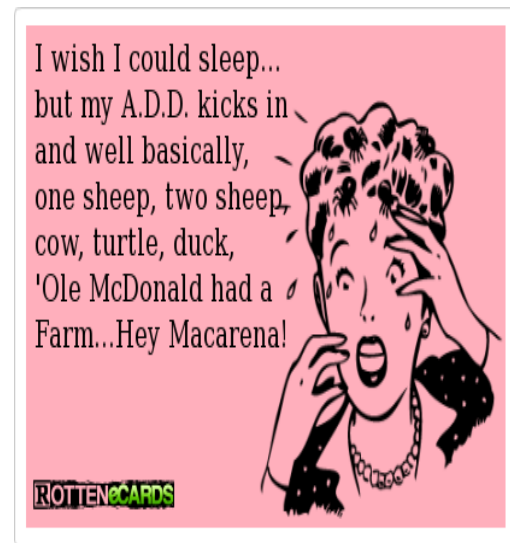
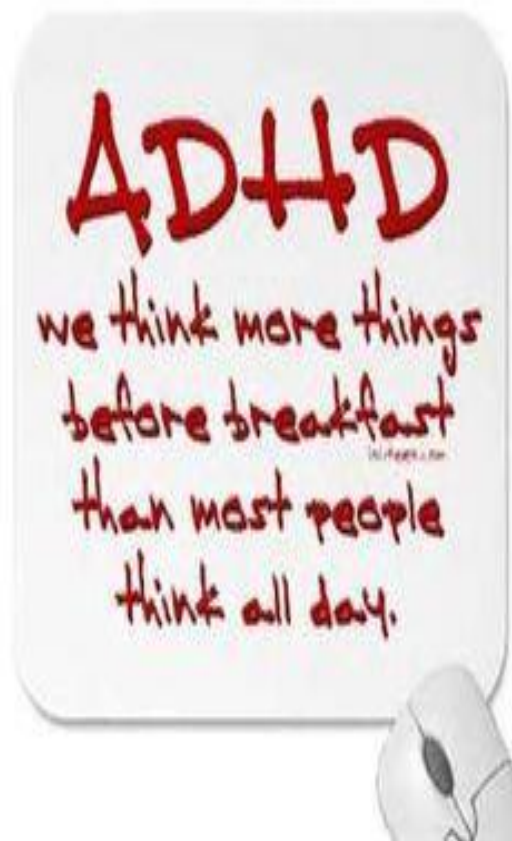
- *Common characteristics of Adult AD/HD*

- **Inattention**

- **Impulsivity**

- **Restlessness**

- **Distractibility**



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Part One

3 Roadblocks to Relational Success

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Roadblock

Anything that prohibits a relationship from being mutually satisfying and fulfilling.

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Roadblock One:

***Overhelping and Excessive
Caretaking***

Overhelping

- *Doing too many things for your partner without consideration*

Excessive Caretaking

- Too absorbed, too wrapped up—almost to an obsessive degree—in managing your partner's life.

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Is This You?

Why do I feel this way?

Why do I do what I do?

Am I doing anything to make it worse?

*Am I willing to make changes for the sake of my relationship?
(EVEN IF IT IS DIFFICULT?)*

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Roadblock Two:

Learned Helplessness

- A person's conditioned belief that he/she isn't capable of doing anything or accomplishing anything.

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Roadblock Three:

The Parent Trap

- Unhealthy communication pattern in which the non-ADHD partner approaches and relates to the partner with ADHD as a parent would treat a disobedient child
- Non-ADHD partner responds in child-like manner
- Includes both verbal and non-verbal communication
- Extremely toxic

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**Roadblock Three:
The Parent Trap**



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Avoiding the Parent Trap

- **Communicate as an adult**
 - Your words express what you need or feel
- **Use assertive communication**
 - Express your needs and wants in a manner that is direct and honest, not hostile or mean

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Avoiding the Parent Trap

- **Assertive Communication Tools**
 - 'I' statements
 - *When I _____, I feel _____, and I would prefer _____*
 - **Avoid Absolutes**
 - *Frequently /More often than not /It seems like a lot of the time*
 - **Play the Broken Record**
 - *Calmly and firmly restate your point (or request) regardless of your partner's responses.*

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Part Two

Strengthening Personal Boundaries

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Strengthening Personal Boundaries

Personal Boundaries:

Our emotional needs and preferences and how they get played out in reciprocal interactions with everyone in our lives, especially our partners.

How do I like to be treated?

What will I allow, and not allow, to be said and done to me?

What seems appropriate to me, both verbally and physically?

What are my priorities?

What is my bottom line?

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Strengthening Personal Boundaries

Strong Personal Boundaries equal a sense of protection and security and creates respect and dignity in relationship.

Poor or weak Personal Boundaries result in feelings of vulnerability and defenselessness and create anger and resentment in relationship.

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Strengthening Personal Boundaries

*Boundary difficulties
in an ADHD relationship*

- *Time*
- *Forgetfulness*
- *Impulsivity*
- ***Distractibility***

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Strengthening Personal Boundaries

Take a *Personal Inventory*

Purpose: Learn how to express your desires, needs, and feelings with more clarity and less emotion

- *What makes me feel content?*
- *What makes me feel productive and effective?*
- *When were the times in my life when I felt most content, productive, and effective?*
- *What gets in the way of my feeling contented, productive, and effective?*
- *How have I tried to change the things that get in the way?*
- *Have those efforts worked?*
- *If not, is there anything that I could do differently in the future?*

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Strengthening Personal Boundaries

Create a *Won't Do/Will Do List*

Purpose: Replace old, dysfunctional ways of expressing desires and needs with ones that are healthier.

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Example of Won't Do/Will Do List

Problem

My husband avoids conversations about money.

What I WON'T Do Anymore

Badger and nag him. Get angry at his avoidance.

What I Will Do in the Future

Have more awareness of the appropriate time to approach him.

Ask permission to have the conversation.

If he avoids the conversation, voice my frustration in a calm manner.

If necessary, make money decisions on my own.

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Strengthening Personal Boundaries

1. Take Inventory
2. Won't Do/Will Do List

Put plan into action:

3. Choose appropriate time
4. Communicate in caring manner
 - Ask permission
 - Use 'I' statements
5. Do follow up*

* Keep options open – you may have to revise plan

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An old Chinese proverb says:

*The best time to plant a tree
was thirty years ago*

*but the next best time
to plant a tree is*

TODAY

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What will you do TODAY to?

*To stop overhelping and
excessive caretaking*

To avoid the Parent Trap

*To create healthier personal
boundaries*

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Q & A

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