DIG COACHING PRACTICE, LLC™
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A New Motivational Theory to Restore Equilibrium

Motivation is hard for people to wrap their head around. It's an **emotional topic**. Our **cognitive bias** distorts our understanding of it! In simple terms, motivation is the **internal force** that influences what you choose to do — and what you choose not to do.

Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out® has **derived** a new theory of motivation based on Dr. Russell Barkley's model.

Motivation as a Two-Level System: Two competing motivational forces:

- The Automatic Brain motivation, which manifests in our emotional urge to seek pleasure, escape pain, conserve cognitive energy, and minimize effort.
- The effortful Executive Function brain motivation is the emotional desire for achievement. It is conscious and purposeful. It manifests as flat, dull, or mundane and gives you the ability to sit in discomfort for a longer-term reward.

In this two-level system model, both forces are competing. Motivation reflects the dominant motivational force in any given situation.

- If the **automatic brain** is dominant, motivation is driven by **emotional urges**.
- If the **EF brain** is dominant, motivation is driven by the emotional desire for achievement, by **purposeful control**, giving you the ability to **sit in discomfort** over time toward longer-term goals.

Effectively, **motivation comes down to managing your emotions (emotional self-regulation) and managing discomfort.**

Executive Function Impairment means the ADHD brain is less efficient. Assuming a 50% impairment (50% less efficient), then the **ADHD EF brain requires twice the motivation** for the same output **produced by executive functions if done "in mind." This impacts motivation as illustrated in this table:**

	Neurotypical	**ADHD***	**ADHD***
Motivation	10 units	10 units	**20 units**
Output	**10 units**	5 units	**10 units**
*Assumes 50% impairment			

Compared to neurotypicals, there is a ***disequilibrium* between the two motivational forces** in those with executive function (EF) impairments. This **imbalance favors** the motivational force of the **automatic brain**. **Why?** Because the EF brain is less efficient; it must work harder to compensate—and that **extra effort carries an emotional cost.** The result is a **motivational imbalance that favors the automatic brain**.

The **goal is to restore equilibrium via motivational compensation mechanisms. This can be done in three ways**:

- **Willpower**: Using emotions to manage emotions. **Brute force**. This works against the motivation disequilibrium and results in **fatigue, burnout, and avoidance**.
- **Reward**: Meaningful rewards that **amplify emotions to endure discomfort** in the face of the impairment, amplifying stress.
- **Accommodations**: A means of providing assistance. There are two kinds:
  - **Compensatory Accommodations**: *Assistance by modifying the external structure (altering time, environment, and **expectations**) to allow performance. **Does not relieve the internal impairment;** it compensates for it. It does not restore balance.*
    - Helps you operate despite inefficiency, like extra time. Same stress, just more time.
    - *Shifts the **emotional cost from acute short-term to chronic long-term.***
  - **Adaptive Accommodations:** A means of providing assistance to systemically relieve the impairment.
    - Provides systemic relief, reduces effort and emotional cost, and brings functionality.
    - The byproduct of this systemic relief is **emotional relief and is longer term**.

CONCLUSION: *Adaptive accommodations are **far more effective in sustaining consistent performance over time towards a goal in the presence of an impairment**, thereby restoring equilibrium to the impaired ADHD brain.* This conclusion supports the Intangible Accommodation Axiom (https://digcoaching.com/PDF/Intangible_Accommodation_Axiom.pdf) derived via Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out®.