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COACHING PRACTICE, LLC™
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ADHD Accommodations Hidden in Plain Sight

The late Dr. Thomas E. Brown once said, “As the need for independent work increases, ADHD productivity decreases.” Anni Rogers, stated, “ADHD is amplified or muted based on the environment.” Both quotes are profound, but what would explain their observations?

For 15 years, I've studied Dr. Russell Barkley's construct around ADHD as an executive function impairment and derived a new field of engineering called Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out® (Cog-Erg), which is a promising new ADHD intervention. It has produced some very interesting findings based on deductive reasoning and has revealed accommodations that have been hidden in plain sight for thousands of years. The model produced *The Intangible Accommodation Axiom* (a truth built on truths).

Using foundational truths in the context of Cog-Erg, we are able to use deductive reasoning to produce a new, objectively sound axiom, validating the purpose of Cog-Erg.

- ADHD is an executive function impairment.
- Executive functions are a collection of mind tools used in goal-directed behavior over time to solve problems.
- Problems that require executive function are typically multifaceted and ambiguous, involving multiple variables and uncertain outcomes.
- Planning, organizing, managing time, and making decisions are typically multifaceted and ambiguous, especially in real-world contexts.
- Given that ADHD is an executive function (problem-solving) impairment, it explains why those with ADHD have difficulty with planning, organizing, managing time, and making decisions.
- The leading view in cognitive science is that language evolved as a tool to coordinate social behavior and solve shared problems.
- Direct oral communication and collaboration are fundamental mechanisms by which humans solve complex problems, especially those requiring shared understanding and coordinated action.
- Given that ADHD is an executive function impairment, direct oral communication and collaboration can serve as effective accommodations to support problem-solving challenges.
- **This framework reframes direct oral communication not as a courtesy or preference**, but as functionally necessary support for individuals with executive function impairments, including ADHD. When viewed through this lens, such interaction can be considered a form of cognitive accommodation.

This perspective has meaningful implications for advocacy and policy development, as well as educational practice, and aligns with the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that requires reasonable accommodations for cognitive impairments in school and workplace settings.

In simple terms, language was derived from the need to solve shared problems. Direct oral communications are the most basic form of solving problems. Neurotypicals and those with ADHD have been using this accommodation for thousands of years. What is important is to recognize that neurotypicals use these accommodations daily as do those with ADHD. You could say direct oral communication is the universal accommodation! The significance is that those with ADHD need more of it due to the impairment.

Calling it a universal accommodation is a bold claim. Think about it. When you have problems in school, you go to educators, tutors, or special education teachers to have oral conversations to solve problems. At work, you go to your boss, mentor, or coworkers. Outside of work, you go to counselors, therapists, or coaches. At home, you go to parents, family, or friends. Customer service is a form of direct communication.

When COVID lockdown happened, we were all sent home to problem-solve. As a coach, my phone lit up like a Christmas tree with people struggling with productivity and motivation. Why? Because they had lost access to peers and coworkers where they had direct oral communications. In other words, they lost their intangible accommodations.

This is revealed in the brilliance of Dr. Brown's and Anni Rogers' quotes. Yes, ADHD is muted or amplified based on the environment and is based on access to direct oral communications!

In my final call with every client, I tell them it is convenient for society if you do it their way. Why is that? Because they don't want to do the work. Yes, it is easier if *you* do the work for them. Have you noticed how hard it is to solve problems these days? Websites aren't clear and it is an act of God to talk to a human to solve the problem.

Here is my point. Current ADHD accommodations are centered around giving you more time to suffer. You have to exert effort to solve problems and exert even more effort to compensate for the inefficiencies of the impairment.

This new model brings tangibility to the intangible, revealing accommodations hidden in plain sight. These accommodations are a move away from suffering to mitigating the impairment that provides relief.

It's a new day in the world of ADHD. Let's advocate for accommodations that provide relief from the impairment instead of extended time to suffer. With your help, we can reveal this finding, make a case, and bring an argument to the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) to legitimize the accommodation at work and school!

For intellectuals who want to learn more about this new, exciting paradigm called Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out®, visit www.cognitive-ergonomics.com/.

Please help spread the word and share this new discovery that provides relief, reduces stress, and increases productivity for those around the world with ADHD!

Sidebar

My eyesight is impaired. I use eyeglasses to provide accommodation to mitigate the impairment so I can *focus* and read. In the same fashion, those with an executive function (problem-solving) impairment can have direct oral communications to mitigate the impairment so they can *focus* and solve problems. **Both are accommodations. Both help you to focus**. The difference is that one is tangible and the other is not.

Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out® transforms abstract concepts of cognition into tangible phenomena, revealing **causal relationships** around **intangible accommodations** that **shift how we understand support** for executive function impairments.

Sidebar

Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out®... Cog-Erg for short… is a new field of engineering and a new ADHD intervention. Dr. Russell Barkley's executive function construct is used to define executive functions. AttentionScope®, developed by ADHD coach Jeff Copper, is a collection of metaphors and simulations to bring tangibility to what Dr. Barkley had defined. The definitions and AttentionScope® enable us to make objective observations and engineer ADHD accommodations to provide systemic relief to executive function impairments. To learn more, visit www.cognitive-ergonomics.com.

Jeff Copper Bio

Jeff Copper, cognitive engineer and ADHD coach, is founder of DIG Coaching Practice and host of Attention Talk Radio and Attention Talk Video. He developed *Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out*™, a new paradigm and a new ADHD intervention that takes an engineering approach to identify accommodations for those with executive function impairments. Jeff holds an MBA from University of Tampa, professional designations from ICF and PAAC, and certifications from ADD Coach Academy (ADDCA) and Coaches Training Institute (CTI). He received the 2022 Professional Excellence Award by the ADHD Coaches Organization. His work continues to innovate and redefine ADHD coaching.