



# Identify YOUR Top Five Hurdles to Managing ADD/ADHD

"The range of what we think and do is limited by what we fail to notice. And because we fail to notice that we fail to notice, there is little we can do to change, until we notice how failing to notice shapes our thoughts and deeds." ~ Daniel Goleman



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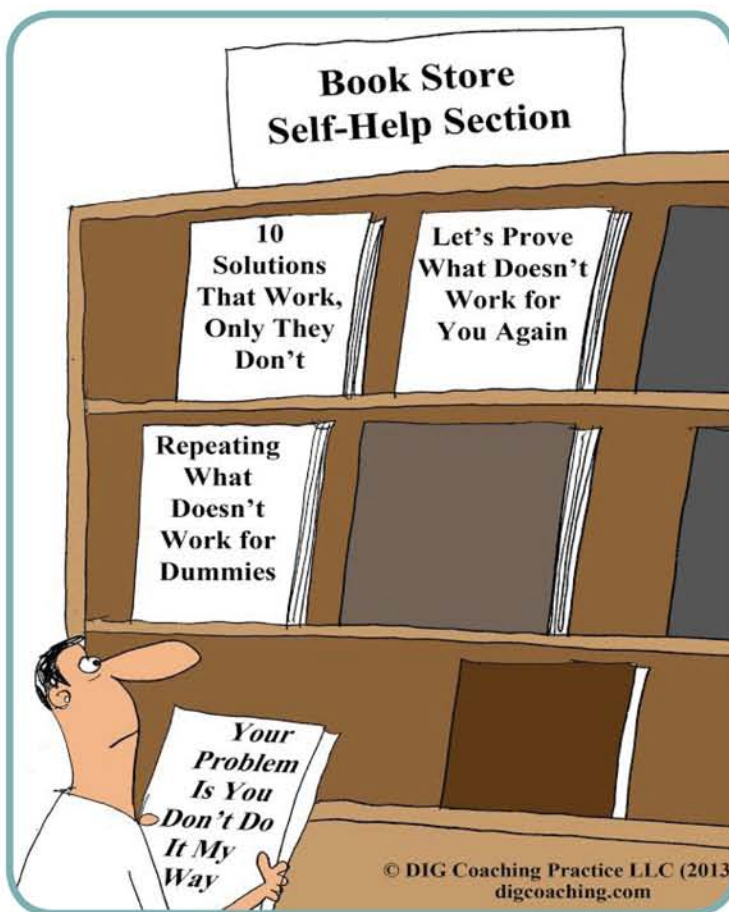
# Pay Attention the Right Way

As an ADHD coach since 2007, Jeff Copper focuses on adults who have been diagnosed later in life. Jeff also hosts a weekly radio and talk show focused on ADD/ADHD and has helped hundreds of clients understand how their minds work in relation to focusing on attention.

Attention is as simple as it is complex to understand and thus very misunderstood. What you attend to defines your experiences, your version of reality, and even science. The key is this. If your attention is focused on the wrong thing, you are going to get the wrong solution.

In this aBook (Attention Book), Jeff will share five key insights on managing attention and ADD/ADHD learned from conducting more than 300 interviews with attention experts.

It all starts with attention.



If the solutions in the bookstore aren't working, maybe it's time to attend to things differently.

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# #1 – Self-Regulation

Attention Deficit Disorder – deficit of attention; right? Wrong! ADD/ADHD is a self-regulation issue. Key things to regulate include attention, emotions, and motor movement.

## It explains:

- Why children with ADD/ADHD can attend to video games for hours.
- Why adults can lose track of time absorbed in a project or surfing the Internet late at night.
- Why emotions are as much a part of ADD/ADHD as attention.
- Why some individuals need to move or fidget in order to focus.

## Why is this distinction important?

- If you're attending to ADD as a deficit of attention, you will find deficit solutions. Put differently, you're attending to the wrong thing/solution.
- By understanding that ADD/ADHD is a self-regulation issue, you'll have the opportunity to notice that there are things you always attend to.
- What surprises most is that the issue isn't engaging your attention on these things. The issue is NOT attending to them or, more simply, restraining your urge to attend to them. This creates the opportunity to use what you can attend to as a means to get around things you can't seem to focus on.



*“You idiots I was hibernating. Take a pulse next time, for Pete sake!”*

What's Obvious  
Depends On What  
We Attend To  
(WODOW-WAT)

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## #2 – Attending to How

Understand the word “how.” As an adverb, “how” directs your attention. The key is to realize that there are two kinds of “how” – methodical (what I call “buttonology”) and insightful.

Buttonology “how” is executing a prescribed sequence of steps to solve a problem, much like pushing buttons to do long division on a calculator. Just because you got a right answer doesn’t mean you understand how long division works.

Insightful “how” is understanding how something actually works. It is being able to solve a long division problem without using a calculator.

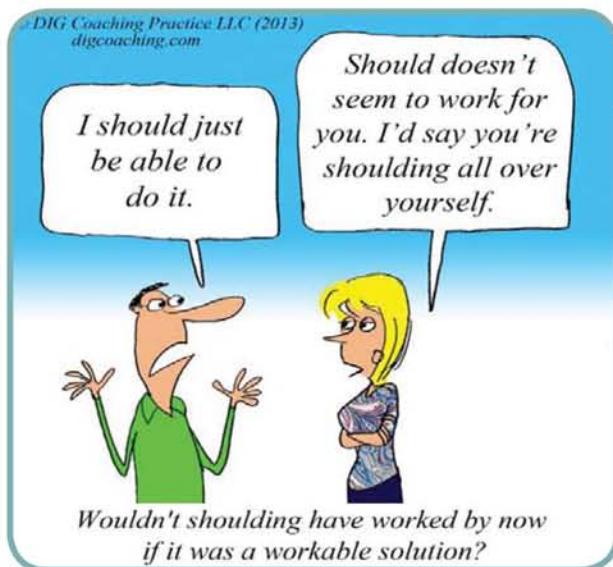
### Understanding “how” explains:

- Why methodical “how” doesn’t always work.
- Why adhering to someone else’s methodical steps on “how” to manage your individual ADD/ADHD doesn’t work. People are not the same, because if they were the methodical solution would work for everyone.

### Why is this distinction important?

- Managing your ADD/ADHD requires insight on how YOU work as an individual, not what may work for others.
- Methodical solutions based on how others work can act as blinders inhibiting you from seeing what works best for your situation.

Progress is possible if you focus ONLY on what works for you! To do that you need to know HOW you work.



If you are “shoulding” all over yourself, you are paying attention to how you THINK you should do it, not how YOU do it.

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# #3 – Attending to Attention

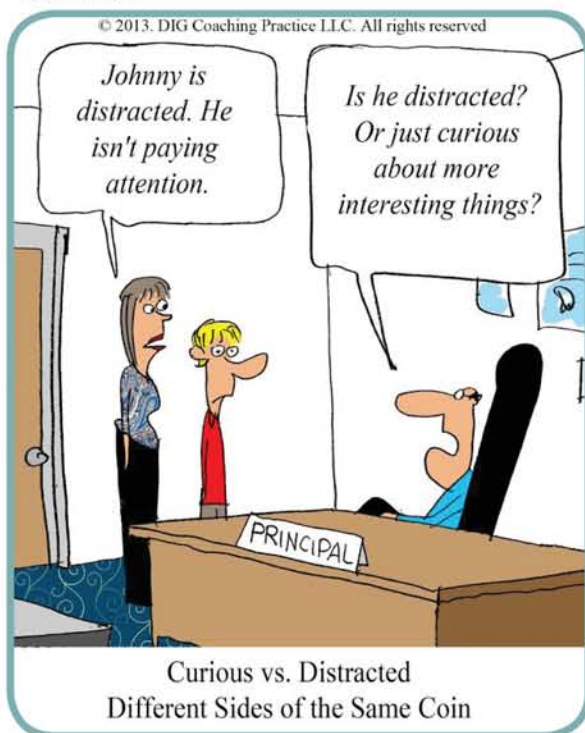
What are you attending to when asked what days start with the letter “T”? Most say, “Tuesday and Thursday.” That’s not accurate. Tuesday and Thursday are objects of attention. Most focus on the object of attention as if it were attention. It isn’t. Say what?

Let me illustrate. Tuesday and Thursday are the objects of attention. What you are really attending to are the days of the week. Consider this, what would the object of attention be if you attended to days other than the days of the week? How about today and tomorrow?

## Why is this distinction between attention and the object of attention important?

- The label “Attention Deficit Disorder” is the object of attention. If you attend to it, you get deficit answers. If you attend to what those with ADD/ADHD attend to, you can see they do consistently attend to things based on their own attentional blueprint. (Refer back to #1, Self-Regulation)
- You can’t manage anything if you don’t understand it OR if you’re focused on the wrong thing. Managing the object of attention is NOT managing attention.
- The top 10 list is filled with obvious solutions that are objects of attention. They won’t work if your attentional blueprint differs from normative solutions. (Refer back to #2, Attending to How)

Progress is possible if you focus on attention itself. The objects of attention will just misguide your attention.



Objects of attention are symptoms that are dictated by attention. A student might be more CURIOUS about a cockroach, but a teacher will label the student DISTRACTED because the teacher doesn't want to acknowledge his or her teaching style is boring.

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# #4 – Attention Exercises

Attending to attention is a skill that needs to be practiced and developed. Meditation, mindfulness, awareness, contemplation – all are attention exercises that will improve your ability to manage attention or, more simply, improve your attending skills. Each exercise is about focusing on something and noticing your attention as it wanders and gaining the ability to bring it back to the object.

## Why are attention exercises so important?

- They help us understand and observe the difference between attention and the object of attention.
- Attention exercises bring awareness and the improved ability to pause – to allow the executive functioning mind to override the automatic brain and give it the ability to manage impulsivity, a hallmark trait of ADD/ADHD.
- Learning to pause creates choices. You can choose to continue based on impulsive instincts or you can change your course of direction.

Pausing is the single greatest skill a person with ADD/ADHD can master. Pausing is awareness and gives one the ability to inhibit an action, thought, or reflex. Pausing is a higher form of consciousness.

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Mary's mom had four daughters,  
March, April, May and \_\_\_\_?



If your answer for the cartoon was Mary, great! Most answer June. Why? Because your brain is taking a shortcut and doesn't realize you're attending to the wrong thing.

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# #5 – Attending to the Obvious (two key statements)

*What is obvious depends on what we attend to (I call this a WODOW-WAT). Attend to the days of the week and the answer is obvious, Tuesday and Thursday. Attend to days not in the week and it's obvious the answer is today and tomorrow.*

*If the obvious solutions aren't working for you, you're most likely attending to the wrong thing. If someone else's methodical solution isn't working for you, you are attending to the wrong "how." We are not all the same; if we were, the methodical solution would work for everyone. Attend to "how" (insightful) you are unique.*

Look at the illustration on this page. Did you see the obvious mistake(s)? Most don't or don't at first! Then they see the word "the" twice. The takeaway of the exercise is not that most miss the mistake(s) but that they dismiss the exercise believing they will notice such things on the next exercise or in everyday life. Amazingly, we miss these things all the time. It is like asking the wrong waiter for the bill, or in more complex situations, it can be as serious as missing the detailed language of a contract. The question is how many of these mistakes are you capable of missing? Far more than you can imagine.

## **Why is this concept so important?**

The questions act as diagnostic tools to help you:

- Pause and notice the difference between attention and the object of attention.
- Notice disconnects indicating that something is blinding your attention.
- Question which "how" you are attending to and in what context you are attending to attention.
- Exercise your attention.

The hard part isn't knowing what to attend to; it is acknowledging that your brain takes shortcuts and that you confuse attention with the object of attention.

**Can you find the the mistake?**

**ABCDEFGHIJ**

**LIKE if you found it.**

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# Spinning your wheels and frustrated? Know you are capable of doing more?

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*The diagnosis is you're broken.*



*The prescription is to try harder.*

How many more times do you want to prove that "trying harder" doesn't work?

## Stop investing in and attending to the wrong thing.

Download\* our video workshop, "If Only You Understood Attention!" to shift your conceptual understanding of attention in a way that will transform how you manage it today.

Enter promo code "abook" and get 20% off.

[click here](#)

Or call Jeff at 762-ADD-ADHD (233-2343) or email [jeff@digcoaching.com](mailto:jeff@digcoaching.com) to schedule your free 15-minute coaching consultation!



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