DIG COACHING PRACTICE, LLC™

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ADHD Accommodations Hidden in Plain Sight!

Unmasking ADHD Not As a Behavioral Problem, But Rather an Executive Function Impairment

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ADHD is an executive function impairment. Yet, because executive functioning is intangible and abstract, ADHD is rarely recognized or treated as an impairment. Instead, it is commonly viewed as a behavioral problem. The condition's stigma, combined with the shame many individuals experience, further reinforces resistance to acknowledging ADHD as an impairment. As a result, most interventions focus on changing behavior or teaching skills rather than addressing the underlying impairment.

Executive functions are the mind tools used to solve problems and work toward goals over time. They allow us to plan, organize, regulate ourselves, hold information in mind, and adapt our thinking as situations change. An impairment is a reduction or limitation in functioning relative to what is typical. By definition, impairments are not corrected through willpower, behavior modification, or skills training alone. They require accommodations that reduce or eliminate the functional limitations caused by the impairment.

ADHD is an executive function impairment. Like any impairment, it cannot simply be wished away, overcome through greater effort, or permanently fixed through behavioral interventions. Pragmatically speaking, impairments require accommodations.

Cognitive Ergonomics From the Inside Out® provides a new lens for understanding ADHD by making the invisible visible. It brings tangibility to executive functioning, helping people observe how executive function impairments interfere with real-world problem solving. Once the impairment becomes visible, the need for appropriate accommodations becomes equally clear. Rather than relying primarily on compensatory strategies that help people endure the impairment, Cognitive Ergonomics emphasizes adaptive accommodations that reduce the cognitive burden itself and restores more effective problem-solving.