How to Avoid Offending People and Apologizing After a Situation

by BRENDA VANTA

ADHD and Offending People

As you're most likely aware, ADHD can affect your social skills and relationships, because of its key characteristics: lack of attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. The way your brain is wired makes some tasks harder for you than they are for others, leading to various issues. For example, having trouble reading other people's facial expressions or body language makes it difficult to interpret optimally what other people want.

Being more impulsive will increase the likelihood that you'll say something without thinking that may offend someone, or simply interrupt the people you are talking to. You may talk much or be so easily distracted that the people you talk to think you don't value what they have to say.

In a relationship, you may be accused of being flaky and unreliable, never on time or forgetful. It's not uncommon to become irritable and quick-tempered. All of these symptoms of ADHD can get you into hot water with the people in your life.

Avoiding Offence

Consider these strategies for keeping out of the doghouse with your friends, colleagues and significant other.

1. **Take care of yourself.** With the right treatment (make sure you include psychotherapy sessions), you can learn more about yourself and how to cope with all these symptoms. The goal is to have fewer, milder symptoms and feel more happy with yourself.
2. **Don't blame yourself.** It's ok to try to look objectively on how your social life and relationships are doing, but don't be too hard on yourself – you don't offend others on purpose; in most situations it is simply a result of your symptoms.
3. **Talk about it.** Let people know you have some troubles understanding them, or talking to them, and ask for patience. If you warn others about your problems, they will likely be more understanding.
4. **Learn from past experiences.** If you notice that some people are offended from a certain behavior (i.e. the way you handled an argument, not being on time), work on those issues first. Your mind has lots of power, use this power. You can avoid getting into an argument by taking few breaths and think 2-3 times before you want to start it. You can set your alarm clock earlier and be more organized to avoid being late.

Apologizing

No need to overthink it – if you've offended someone, be honest and straightforward and just say, "I'm sorry." For best results do it right – the longer you wait to apologize, the harder will be for you.

Apologizing means you take responsibility for your actions. The apology serves as a resolution for both you and the person you offended. It's really up to that person to accept or reject the apology. However, you did your job, you should learn your lesson from that incident, and can let that issue go – it doesn't need to bother you anymore.

Don’t say you're sorry if you don’t mean it, and don’t overdo it and apologize all the time. It has to come from your heart, and not all conflicts require an apology. You have your own needs, and if the conflict rose from not having your own needs met, have a conversation instead.