Understand the Impact of Your Surroundings

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ADHD-Proof Your Life

How safe is your house? Sure, you probably have smoke detectors to stop a fire before it gets started. If you have kids, you block the steps with baby gates and cover the electrical outlets. You know better than to let a pipe leak without fixing it, and you always call someone when your furnace makes a funny noise. It seems that your physical health is ensured in your house.

What about your mental health, though? Whether you realize it or not, your surroundings play a significant role in your symptoms. If your setting is ideal, your symptoms will be better controlled and easier to manage. The opposite is true also. If your surroundings are the epitome of chaos and confusion, your mental health symptoms will increase.

Naturally, you want your attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms to be cool, calm and under control. Look around at your home. Does your home match the symptoms you want or the symptoms you fear? The difference is easy to spot. The same is true in the workplace. Read on to learn how to set a goal, assess your settings and make meaningful changes to improve your ADHD symptoms.

Setting a Goal

Setting a goal related to your home and its impact on ADHD is a required step. How badly do you want change? Committing to a change halfheartedly guarantees failure. Adults with ADHD need to be very clear and deliberate with their intentions. Because of this, your goal must be planned and well thought out. Decide how negative ADHD is in your life. Consider how your life has been damaged by ADHD and what you have lost.

Now that you know where you are, ponder what steps you are willing to take to improve your symptoms. At the same time, be realistic about the time, energy and effort you can afford to put into the modifications. Stay away from goals that you cannot accomplish. If you are still reading, it means that you know the importance of changing your symptoms and believe in your ability to make a difference. Nice job!

Assess Your Space

With your new commitment, begin by looking around your spaces. Take an inventory of the rooms in your home, especially the ones that you are in the most. Does your kitchen look like the kitchen of someone with ADHD? Does your bedroom keep you distracted and disorganized? Does your dinner table have enough room to put a plate on it or is it covered with junk mail and newspapers?

The process of assessing your space allows you the opportunity to know where to start. If you feel that nothing is organized or that the process is beginning to feel too overwhelming, start in the least disorganized place to gain experience and practice. Bringing in a trusted friend or family member can do a world of good as they have the ability to see your world with a fresh perspective. They can objectively look at something that is quite subjective

to you. Write down your thoughts and compare them to the feedback they have for you.

Next page: organizing your life.

De-clutter and Sort

This step involves you and a garbage can, preferably a big one. People with ADHD tend to have a lot of extraneous stuff. It covers your tables, your chairs, your beds, your desks and your floors. The stuff is without purpose and serves no function. It is not like you are a hoarder that has difficulty throwing things away. It is that your inattention and distractibility tell you that your time would be better spent doing something else.

Move through your home room by room to rid yourself of all the necessary clutter. Do not let your impulsivity or hyperactivity, control this task, though. Speed is not the goal. Even if it takes you two weeks to de-clutter, it is time well spent. The risk of working too quickly is that you throw away important information or documents that you will be needed later.

Allow a friend to assist in the process, but avoid letting someone do it for you. De-cluttering your home is a valuable skill. Having someone else do it for you stops your learning process. This is your chance to hone a weakness into a prized talent. Study under their guidance.

Hopefully, the de-cluttering process yielded positive results. If it did, you may find yourself wondering what to do with the leftover items. Mail, bills, bank statements and important paper are now uncovered from masses of useless garbage. What are you going to do with them?

This is the time to bring an organization system into your life. Your system can be a filing cabinet or assigning specific locations to items. The type of system does not matter as long as you can maintain the system through consistency. Set a pattern to create routine of putting information in its place whenever it is brought into the home.

Modify the Media

To someone with ADHD, TV, internet and video games are some of the best things in life. After all, these forms of media offer constant stimulation while requiring little mental effort. Certainly, spending small amounts of time watching a favorite show or reading an article about your mental health is not a problem. In fact, it is a nice break in your day. The problem arises when you find yourself losing large chunks of time to staring at a screen.

ADHD requires that you pay more attention to yourself and the world around you. Too much indulgence in media leads to avoidance, escape and ignoring your surroundings. This avoidance, escape and ignoring means that problems are left to grow and build like a pile of bills that need paid on your table. Don't tell yourself that you will get to the important matters after your next mission is completed in your game or after you binge through the next season of your TV show. Instead, work to set limits for yourself and your media based on your current usage. If you are spending hours each day in front of a screen, begin to systematically reducing by 15 minutes each day until to arrive at a better spot. Be sure to turn off the TV when you are not watching and put the tablet away. Again, your trusted friends and family will be a valuable resource for finding the desirable amount of screen time.

Check the Fridge

The contents of your refrigerator may be sabotaging your attention and hyperactivity without your knowledge. People with ADHD don't want to spend a lot of time cooking or shopping. Convenient foods are not usually rich in the nutrition that your body needs to combat your ADHD symptoms. Consider these options to make your fridge ADHD-proof:

- Protein – Eating meats, eggs, nuts and beans that are high in protein help to regulate your blood sugar. Spiking blood sugar will result in more hyperactivity while crashing blood sugar will end with inattention.

Protein, especially for breakfast, will level out fluctuations.

- Fish oils – Hyperactivity, impulsivity and attention all improve with increased fatty acids found in fish. If fish isn't for you, look into supplements high in specific fatty acids called DHA and EPA. These can improve overall brain health while limiting symptoms.
- Iron – People with ADHD tend to have lower levels of iron in their blood. Check with your doctor about your iron level that they measure as ferritin in blood tests. If it is low, work more red meat, turkey and chicken into your diet.
- Multivitamins – Some other needed minerals like zinc and magnesium are important for everyone not just people with ADHD, but they can be hard to get enough of in a normal diet. Using a multivitamin can help you fill in the gaps left by your diet.
- Food sensitivities – Pay attention to what you eat and how you feel after you eat it. Some people have food sensitivities without being aware. Track your ADHD symptoms to find trends based on your diet. It could be a certain food that sends symptoms through the roof. Pay close attention to gluten, casein and artificial colors and flavors as some find links to ADHD.

Conclusion

ADHD does its best to control your life and prevent you from doing your best. It is time to look at the role you play in your ADHD experience. Which side are you on? Working to actively ADHD-proof your life places power and control squarely in your hands. You can lessen your symptoms and improve your life through simple modifications. Turn your attention to ADHD.