Tips for Dating Someone With ADHD

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What to Know When Dating Someone With ADHD

We've probably all had our share of bad relationships. Hopefully, we've all had some good ones too, but I think we can all relate to the less than wonderful romances.

In those less than perfect times, would a better understanding of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) have helped the relationship?

I went through a period where I thought that because of my ADHD, I was doomed never to have a meaningful relationship with anyone. I didn't think anyone would ever understand me, or the way my mind worked, to make it last.

Being with someone who has ADHD brings unique challenges.

We may know how wonderful we are, but also know that we can be pains in the butt too. ADHD, in turn, can make us creative, fun, intelligent and exciting, but it can also make us appear forgetful, careless and impulsive.

So what does someone need to know when they date someone with ADHD? What can both parties do to make it work?

Educate Yourself About ADHD

One of the most important things you can do when you love someone with ADHD is to educate yourself. Don't just assume your partner can tell you everything you need to know. Show them that they are worth the time spent learning!

Check out books, articles, and blogs. If you don't understand something, ask!

It's also important to note that while ADHD might be a reason why your loved one does the things they do, it is not an excuse for every problem in your relationship.

What's The Most Important to Know?

There are a few things that will help you navigate your relationship smoothly.

Remember this; everyone has flaws. No one is perfect. Neither person in the relationship is without flaws.

Both parties will also have many positive attributes to bring to the table as well.

- **Find the good.** There are good and bad sides to all traits. Look for the ways their ADHD brings happiness

and benefit to your life.

- **Decide what is worth fighting over.** Not every little thing deserves to turn into an argument. Like my mom always said, don't sweat the small stuff!
- **Join forces and work together.** Where one person has a weakness, the other may have strength. Support one another and find the balance that will make you unstoppable as a team.
- **Be supportive.** People with ADHD need support and understanding. This does not mean you have to be the caretaker with all burden of the relationship on your shoulders, but we sure do appreciate some support and encouragement along the way.

Understanding the ADHD Mind

- **Inattention means distraction.** We can become distracted even when we are interested in what you are saying. A conversation is not the most opportune time to zone out, but we do it. It isn't personal, and it doesn't mean we don't care about what you are saying.
- **Thoughts race.** An ADHD mind is an active mind. Thoughts whirl around like socks in a spin cycle. You may not always be able to keep up with where our minds are going.
- **Emotional regulation is impaired.** It may be one of the things we like least about our ADHD (or I know I do, anyway,) but having ADHD means having poor mood regulation. Sometimes that can lead to emotional outbursts. We aren't trying to be melodramatic, we honestly, sincerely, cannot help it when our emotions get the best of us.
- **Difficulty concentrating.** In times of high emotion, we can often have great difficulty concentrating.
- **Forgetfulness is not personal.** Someone used to love to tell me that if something were important to me, they would bet I'd remember it. That just isn't so. No matter how important things are, we are sometimes going to forget them anyway. This includes appointments, dates, birthdays, anniversaries, and events.

What Can You Do?

Always schedule a time to reconnect emotionally.

Talk to one another with no distractions such as phone, the internet or television. Spend time with one another with no judgment and no criticism. Treat this time as a priority.

Give compliments. Personally, I think the world would be a much better place if we all gave one another more compliments, but trust me, a compliment will mean the world to your ADHD partner.

Being in a relationship can be tough. Being in a relationship with someone who has ADHD can be tougher. In the end, we just want the same things everyone else wants in a relationship:

- Understanding
- Kindness
- Respect
- Trust
- Love
- Compassion

Any relationship must be tended to make it grow. It will have its ups and downs. However, Knowledge of ADHD will help ensure that you are prepared for the bumps in the road and that together you will know how to handle them.

This doesn't mean everything will always be roses or that you will never fight, but with a little foresight you can spend much more time enjoying your loved one than being frustrated by their ADHD behaviors.