

The Many Faces of ADHD

A glimpse into the lives of people with ADHD



Charlotte Hjorth & Chris Bysell Hamrin

Abstract

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www.ADHDkompagniet.dk & www.Strength2Grow.se

The Many Faces of ADHD

A glimpse into the lives of people with ADHD

Charlotte Hjorth & Chris Bysell Hamrin

Professional Certified ADHD Coaches

Foreword

The Many Faces of ADHD - A Glimpse into the Lives of People with ADHD, a new book, is a great starting point and resource for anyone who has, or may have, ADHD. It is also an excellent educational resource for a loved one supporting an individual who has ADHD.

The Many Faces of ADHD is the most engaging and informative book on ADHD I have read yet. The format of the book is thoughtfully designed to maximize learning for all individuals with ADHD, as well as the loved ones who support them. The beautiful, unique, eye-catching visuals grab your attention and are so powerfully connected to the content of each page that you will find yourself immediately learning and deepening your understanding of ADHD.

This book will provide you with a comprehensive overview and understanding of ADHD, the symptoms, the manifestations, and the diagnostic process. The language of this book is clearly written, easy to understand, and is supported by practical examples. It will also equip you with a foundational overview of ADHD that affects different age groups, including: children, teenagers, young adults, middle-aged adults, and senior citizens.

By reading and referring to this book, you will gain a deeper understanding of ADHD as a unique brain wiring; not just a disorder of deficits that defines what's wrong or broken in you. Rather, you will understand ADHD as a special circuitry made up of many diverse patterns and options that work exceptionally well. This is the perfect book to get you started on that journey.

The Many Faces of ADHD is an important foundational learning resource and tool that has been thoughtfully planned for many years by two of the world's outstanding certified ADHD coaches. Charlotte and Chris are truly leaders and pioneers in the ADHD coaching profession. Their book is an innovative, educational contribution that will provide all who read it with a deeper, more practical understanding of ADHD.

I highly recommend *The Many Faces of ADHD - A Glimpse into the Lives of People with ADHD*. This book is one of the most effective and empowering ADHD resources I have read in a long time. I can assure you that you will refer to it frequently. It will provide you with a powerful, easy to understand, scientifically supported educational resource to broaden and deepen your understanding of ADHD. It will help give you the confidence to pursue the successful management of your own ADHD so that you can create a more successful and fulfilling life.

David Giwerc

Founder and President, ADD Coach Academy, ACTP, AACTP

Master Certified ADHD Coach (MCAC), Professional Association of ADHD Coaches, (PAAC)

Master Certified Coach (MCC), International Coach Federation (ICF)

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Abstract

Author Charlotte Hjorth



Charlotte Hjorth is a mother of a young adult with ADHD and, at the age of 43, she was diagnosed with ADHD herself. Her experience as a mother of a child with ADHD coupled with years of living with her own undiagnosed ADHD (followed by a diagnosis and treatment) has taught her to accept, embrace, and manage her ADHD.

Her desire and passion are the driving forces behind her goal of making a positive difference in the lives of others. Charlotte is an inspiration for those, who wish to make changes in their lives and pursue their goals and dreams.

Charlotte is the first Professional Certified ADHD Coach in Denmark and was the founder of ADHDkompagniet in 2007. She received her training from the ADD Coach Academy, USA, the only fully accredited and world-leading ADHD Coach training program.

In 2008, Charlotte founded the Danish ADHD Awareness campaign. In 2013, she received The Aalykke Award for her fiery and contagious commitment to everything that has to do with ADHD and for her great effort in articulating and communicating the challenges of people with ADHD.

www.ADHDKompagniet.dk



Author Chris Bysell Hamrin

Chris Bysell Hamrin is a parent of two young adults, one of whom has ADHD. Learning about and gaining an understanding of her son's ADHD, has helped her accept and embrace his diagnosis and made it possible for her to create a foundation of structure and support at home.

In order to advocate for her son, she has collaborated closely with schools and professionals. Her experience as a mother of a child with ADHD coupled with her knowledge, passion, and professional experience, enables her to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Chris is the first Professional Certified ADHD Coach in Sweden and was the founder of Strength2Grow in 2007. She has received her training from the only fully accredited and world-leading ADHD coach training program at ADD Coach Academy, USA.

Chris has been contributing to ADHD Awareness in Sweden as well as globally for many years.



www.Strength2Grow.se

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to:

- Create awareness, provide information, and build a balanced perspective about ADHD
- Debunk the myths, misconceptions, and misinformation about ADHD
- Build a better understanding of children, adolescents, adults, and their families with ADHD
- Provide ideas and suggestions for making changes

This book will provide you with:

- Science based information about ADHD
- Anecdotal experiences
- Strength-based perspective

DISCLAIMER – THIS BOOK DOES NOT PROVIDE MEDICAL ADVICE

The information obtained in this book is for informational purposes only, and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or medical treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other professional healthcare provider with any questions you may have. Also, before undertaking a new healthcare regimen or changing an existing treatment plan, never disregard professional clinical advice, based on this information. The information provided does not recommend or endorse any specific diagnostic tests, medical products, clinical procedures, professional opinions, or other information that may be mentioned.



Abstract



Who is this Book Intended for?

Whether or not you have ADHD yourself ...

- have a family member or friend with ADHD
- are working with or together with people with ADHD

or even

- might think you could have ADHD

... this book is for you.

“

*Many people think they know what ADHD is all about.
Unfortunately, they don't know what they don't know.*

~ Charlotte Hjorth & Chris Bysell Hamrin

”

Abstract

A 3D illustration of a neural network. The background is filled with numerous neurons, each with a central cell body and multiple branching processes. Several of these neurons are highlighted with a bright red glow, indicating active or firing states. The word "Abstract" is overlaid on the image in a large, white, outlined font, positioned diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right.

Abstract

The ADHD Brain is Wired Differently

The ADHD brain is attracted to novelty and things of interest. Individuals impacted by ADHD can't pay attention to tasks or topics that are considered boring, repetitive, or uninteresting, no matter their importance.

Dr. Nora Volkow of the National Institute on Drug Abuse wrote in JAMA in 2009 that she had found evidence from brain imaging studies, that dopamine neurotransmission is disrupted in the brains of people with ADHD. These deficits may underlie core symptoms of inattention and impulsivity. There is also mounting evidence that people with ADHD may have motivation and reward deficits.

Therefore, it's important to be aware of how easily the ADHD brain might shut down or become defensive and angry. This could be due to frustration from being told "you must, you have to, you ought to, you should", or doing things the individual has no interest in, and isn't able to "make" themselves do.

Seeking factual information and gaining knowledge about ADHD will open lines of communication and will allow the person with ADHD to better explain his/her issue and request the necessary support for their unique situation.

Individuals with ADHD often think and process information differently than other people because of the inherent differences in the way the ADHD brain is wired.

~ Charlotte Hjorth & Chris Bysell Hamrin

The Debate is over ...

Abstract



ADHD IS REAL

It is well known within the medical, psychological and educational organizations; that in fact ADHD is underrecognized, underdiagnosed and undertreated.

ADHD is highly treatable and both children and adults would greatly benefit from appropriate treatment and support.

Abstract

16 Myths About ADHD

1. ADHD is not real. It has simply been invented by pharmaceutical companies and psychiatrists
2. Only children have ADHD
3. ADHD is overdiagnosed and overmedicated
4. ADHD is the result of bad parenting
5. Adults with ADHD are just lazy and stupid
6. ADHD is caused by poor diet
7. Adults with ADHD don't want to take responsibility
8. Children will outgrow their ADHD
9. Only boys have ADHD
10. ADHD medication leads to drug abuse
11. ADHD is a result of eating too much sugar
12. People with ADHD won't amount to anything
13. ADHD isn't associated with any other conditions
14. ADHD is just a lack of willpower
15. All children with ADHD are hyperactive
16. ADHD only affects school performance

... and How and Where They Show Up

- Misconceptions are often based on inaccurate information and data, not supported by science
- There is poor understanding due to a lack of knowledge
- Unsupported facts turn up in the media (TV, radio, articles, social media)

Therefore, it is important ...

... to learn about and understand ADHD facts based on current research and available data

... to acknowledge and accept people with ADHD for who they are

“

Family is the most important thing in the world.

~ Princess Diana

”



How does ADHD Show Up?

In order to be diagnosed with ADHD, one needs to demonstrate significant problems within at least two of the following settings: school, work, social relationships, leisure time, outside school, and work.

ADHD symptoms persist across the lifespan, with estimates of 50-65% of children with ADHD continuing to experience severe pronounced symptoms and related impact into adulthood. However, symptom patterns change as people with ADHD age. For example, while children with ADHD are more likely to exhibit problems with hyperactivity, adults with ADHD are more likely to demonstrate problems with inattention, self control, organization, and time management.

Research shows that adults with ADHD suffer significant consequences and impairments in multiple domains of their lives. These impairments are situational, variable, chronic, and they significantly interfere with functioning in many aspects of the person's daily life. Research also suggests that people with ADHD show abnormal activation of the reward pathways in their brain, which may explain the challenge in delaying gratification.

The following pages will explain in more detail where and how ADHD might show up for children, adolescents, young adults, and adults in different situations. Also presented are a few suggestions for how to support the various individuals.



Just by looking at a person – you won't be able to see if they have ADHD.

~ Charlotte Hjorth & Chris Bysell Hamrin





“

56% of the girls with ADHD who were surveyed said that they felt better after finally having a name for what they felt. Only 15% said they felt worse.

~ Patricia Quinn, M.D.”

Abstract

Girls with ADHD

The idea that girls do not have ADHD has been a misconception for many years. Research shows that for every three boys with ADHD, there are two girls. Girls have been underrecognized, underdiagnosed, and undertreated due to lack of knowledge and understanding of how ADHD is manifests in girls. Many girls have therefore been misdiagnosed in the past with anxiety and/or depression instead of ADHD.

The following are examples of how ADHD challenges might appear in girls (in addition to challenges mentioned on the page “Children with ADHD”):

- Poor performance at school, acting shy and withdrawn in class, pretending to understand something and therefore not asking questions
- Poor organizational skills, perfectionism, and performance anxiety
- Overcompensating and being perceived as “well-functioning”
- Excessive talking, poor self-esteem, anxiety, risk-taking behavior
- Difficulty establishing and maintaining friendships, especially with girls
- Hyperactive, tomboyish behavior, with a preference for interacting with boys
- Greater defiance towards their mothers than against teachers and other adults

In order to support girls with ADHD, it is important to learn about and understand ADHD, and to establish a close relationship with the girl by showing genuine interest and respect for her. These girls are often very sensitive and will blossom when they are both encouraged and cared for.

Adults with ADHD

Research shows that between 2-4% of adults have been diagnosed with ADHD. Many adults with ADHD are undiagnosed and unaware that they have it, and could benefit from treatment. Many adults also experience struggle to manage day-to-day responsibilities (e.g., getting started on and completing household chores or maintenance tasks, paying bills, organizing things, poor time management).

The following are a few examples of how the challenges of ADHD might appear in adults:

- Poor attention and excessive distractibility, keeping up with long conversations
- Difficulty remembering appointments, forgetfulness
- Higher levels of physical and mental restlessness
- Excessive impulsivity, saying or doing things without thinking about the consequences
- A history of academic and/or career underachievement
- Chronic stress and worry due to failure to accomplish goals and meet responsibilities, which often leads to intense feelings of frustration, guilt, or blame
- Inability to see things from another perspective
- Highly likely to engage in thrill-seeking behaviors

As an adult, you can learn to embrace your ADHD. By identifying your strengths, interests, and values, you will better understand yourself and be able to self-advocate for what you need to be able to succeed. By learning to manage and balance your life, you will gain increased self-worth and improved quality of life.

“

*ADHD is not about knowing what to do,
but about doing what one knows.*

~ Dr. Russell A. Barkley

”

Abstract



“

*It is **never too late** to be diagnosed and treated for ADHD.*

~ Charlotte Hjorth & Chris Bysell Hamrin

”

Abstract



Seniors with ADHD

No formal research has been done on the senior population in regards to ADHD. However, the children, teenagers, adolescents, and adults who are currently being treated for their ADHD will age. More seniors are being diagnosed with ADHD, but it can be challenging to distinguish the ADHD symptoms from the traits of natural aging such as a decline in memory and cognitive function. Therefore, many seniors might be suffering alone, and not know the reason why.

It could be that they have lived a lifetime of inattention, distractibility, disorganization, impulsivity, memory issues, restlessness, impatience, relationship challenges, communication and learning difficulties, low self-esteem, poor time management, etc. Some might have been struggling with anxiety, depression, alcohol or drug abuse for many years, financial problems, eating disorders, hoarding, criminal conduct, and more.

Many seniors who have grandchildren that have been diagnosed with ADHD, might recognize their own symptoms and behaviors in their grandchildren, which, in turn, might motivate them to find out if they themselves might have ADHD.

As a senior, you can still learn to embrace your ADHD. By identifying your strengths, interests, and values, you will better understand yourself and be able to self-advocate for what you need to be able to succeed. By learning to manage and balance your life, you will gain increased self-worth and improved quality of life.

ADHD in the Workplace

Research shows that adults with ADHD have difficulties in maintaining a job. They change jobs or careers more often than other adults, and also often find it very difficult to meet job-related requirements. They also often get fired from their jobs or quit because they lose interest in the job or get into arguments with their manager or colleagues. They earn less than others with the same education and experience, and are more likely not to get promoted.

The following are a few examples of how the challenges of ADHD might appear in the workplace:

- Not understanding the tasks and how to perform them well
- Not recognizing the need for support or not able to put it into words
- Not showing up, or late, for work, missing deadlines, and forgetting appointments
- Bored with routine tasks, makes careless mistakes and lack of attention to details
- Overworking, and taking on too much work with an increased risk of burnout
- Difficulty interacting with colleagues, missing social cues
- Overly sensitive to feedback
- Not understanding company policies and culture

You can learn to manage your ADHD in the workplace by understanding your ADHD, improving your skills and abilities, and learning to structure, prioritize, organize, and plan your workday. By also creating a supportive environment, strengthening your communication and social skills, etc., you will develop your self-worth, and it will help you stay motivated for better job performance.

“

*Choose a job you love and you will never
have to work a day in your life.*

~ Confucius ”

WORK!

Abstract



Creating Strategies for Success

If you already have an ADHD diagnosis, you would benefit from learning to understand your ADHD and Executive Functions, in order to create strategies that are aligned with your individual strengths, values, goals, and needs, to better manage your life. You will be more likely to make and maintain changes if the strategies are personally meaningful and freely chosen.

You might want to work together with a team of professionals, an ADHD coach, a family member, and/or a friend to ...

- ✓ Understand how your brain works
- ✓ Develop your communication and conflict management skills
- ✓ Discover your unique learning and processing styles
- ✓ Learn to change your thoughts and manage your emotions
- ✓ Create organizational strategies
- ✓ Design essential time management strategies
- ✓ Establish and maintain sufficient support systems

There is no “one-size fits all” solution to managing ADHD. There is no magic pill or easy way to learn new tools and strategies. It often will take time and effort to develop and maintain these strategies. The strategies will need to be tweaked to fit your individual needs. Once you find the strategies that work well for you – it is important to practice and update them to continue moving in a positive direction with your life.



“

I didn't let ADHD prevent me from achieving my goals, and neither should you.

~ Howie Mandel ”

Abstract

Treatment May Include ...

ADHD is highly treatable. Research shows that a multimodal treatment plan that involves a combination of treatments and/or continued support is highly beneficial, depending on the severity of the ADHD and possible coexisting conditions. Following accurate assessment and diagnosis, it is important to adopt a person-centered management approach. A multimodal treatment plan may include two or more of the following:

- Medication
- ADHD coaching
- Building social skills
- Education – learning about ADHD
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Psychotherapy
- Parent training and support groups
- Adult and adolescent support groups

Even those fortunate enough to receive an accurate ADHD diagnosis, often face the subsequent challenge of finding a professional who can provide appropriate treatment and/or continued support.

“

Too often, individuals have been unwittingly working against their ADHD brain wiring and getting such disheartening results that their self confidence is badly damaged.

~ Barbara Luther, Master Certified Coach

”

Abstract

