

Understanding ADHD and Impulsive Spending:

Strategies for Managing Financial Impulsivity



Part of the Understanding Neurodiversity Mini Series
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Introduction

Living with ADHD can present unique challenges, including difficulties with impulsivity that can extend to financial decision-making. Impulsive spending can lead to financial stress and instability if left unchecked.

However, by understanding the connection between ADHD and impulsive spending and implementing practical strategies, you can gain control over your finances and improve your overall well-being.

Understanding ADHD and Impulsive Spending:

Impulsive spending happens when we buy things on the spur of the moment without thinking about the future impacts. It's often driven by wanting something right away or by strong emotions in the moment.

It may be that you see something shiny, or find a hobby you must take up immediately with all of the options and elements it involves.

This handout aims to provide insights into ADHD-related impulsivity and offer a range of tips and solutions for managing impulsive spending behaviours.

"The following is for informational purposes only and should not be considered financial advice."

Practical Tips and Solutions:

1. Budgeting and Planning:

- Create a realistic budget that accounts for essential expenses, savings goals, and discretionary spending. If you have the financial ability, create a impulse spending budget. It doesn't need to be much, as if you don't spend it, it will add up. You can find free budgeting tools at [Money Saving Expert](#).
- Use budgeting apps or tools to track expenses and monitor spending habits regularly. There are free ones like [Plum](#) or [Snoop](#) which use opening banking to categorise your spending automatically.
- Look at your Direct Debits - make sure you understand what is leaving your account. You can also request that the companies move your payment date to the week after you get paid.
- Plan purchases in advance and avoid impulsive buying by sticking to a predetermined shopping list.

2. Delay Gratification:

- Implement a "cooling-off" period before making significant purchases to allow time for reflection and evaluation.
- Practice the 48-hour rule: Wait a day before making non-essential purchases to determine if it's a genuine need or impulsive desire.

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3. Set Financial Goals:

- Establish short-term and long-term financial goals to provide motivation and direction for spending habits.
- Break down larger financial goals into smaller, achievable milestones to track progress effectively.

4. Identify Triggers and Cues:

- Recognise situations, emotions, or triggers that may lead to impulsive spending, such as stress, boredom, or social pressure.
- Develop strategies to cope with triggers, such as engaging in alternative activities, seeking support, or practicing mindfulness techniques.

5. Practice Mindful Spending:

- Before making a purchase, pause to assess whether it aligns with your values, needs, and long-term goals.
- Consider the potential consequences of the purchase on your finances and overall well-being before proceeding.

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6. Limit Access to Impulse Purchases:

- Remove or limit access to sources of temptation, such as unsubscribing from marketing emails, or leaving credit cards at home.
- Delete shopping apps from your phone and other devices.

7. Seek Professional Help:

- Consult with a financial advisor specialising in ADHD to develop personalised strategies and solutions for managing impulsive spending behaviours.
- Explore therapy or ADHD coaching to address underlying issues contributing to impulsive behaviours.
- Contact a Debt Management Company, there are companies that will look at your situation and advise you of the best way forward.

Conclusion:

Living with ADHD and managing impulsive spending can present significant challenges, but with awareness, planning, and proactive strategies, you can regain control over your finances and make more informed decisions.

By implementing the practical tips and solutions outlined in this handout, you can develop healthier financial habits and work towards achieving greater financial stability and well-being.

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A large, dark blue silhouette of a human head in profile, facing left, serves as the background for the text. To the right of the head, a silhouette of a person is climbing a ladder that extends from the bottom right towards the top right. Inside the head silhouette, there are smaller silhouettes of a plant with a large circular leaf and some geometric shapes like a cube and a sphere.

My name is Rebecca Moley, I am a certified Life Coach with lived experience of ADHD and Autism and a corporate background in Training, Finance and Technology.

I offer online sessions to people who want to make change in their lives and need a helping hand to do so.

The services I provide are; life coaching, neurodiverse coaching, career coaching, and business coaching.

If you would like to find out more, please visit my website www.calmhorizoncoaching.co.uk or follow me on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).