

Attention- Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

INATTENTIVE

OFTEN DOESN'T
SEEM TO LISTEN
WHEN SPOKEN TO
OR ZONES OUT
DURING
CONVERSATIONS.

You **may** try **hard** to **pay** attention, **but** your **mind** frequently **wanders**, **especially** **when** **the** lecture **is** long **or** **the** topic **is** less **engaging**. **Even** **when** your **professor** **or** **classmates** speak **directly** to **you**, **you** **might** miss **parts** of **what** **they're** saying, **nodding** along **but** **not** fully absorbing **the** information.

OFTEN STRUGGLES
TO STAY FOCUSED
DURING LONG
TASKS OR
ACTIVITIES, LIKE
LECTURES OR
CONVERSATIONS.

During long lectures, **you** **may** often struggle to stay focused. **At** the beginning of class, **you** might **be** engaged **and** taking notes, **but** **as** **the** lecture goes on, **you** find your **mind** drifting. Sometimes, **you** start doodling, fidgeting **with** your **pen**, **or** thinking about unrelated topics, making it **hard** to keep track of **what** **the** teacher is saying.

OFTEN OVERLOOKS
DETAILS OR MAKES
CARELESS
MISTAKES IN
SCHOOL, WORK, OR
OTHER TASKS

You **may** understand **the** material, **but** **you** **may** often lose points on assignments **or** tests for skipping parts of questions, misreading instructions, **or** making minor calculation errors. These mistakes aren't due to lack of knowledge—they simply happen **because** **Sam's** focus sometimes skips over details.

Often doesn't finish
tasks, like
schoolwork or chores,
because they lose
focus and get easily
distracted

You may it down to work on a science project, but halfway through, her phone buzzes with a notification. Curious, Mia checks it, and suddenly she's scrolling through social media or watching videos without realizing how much time has passed. When she remembers the project, she tries to get back into it, but the focus she initially had is gone, and she finds it hard to pick up where she left off.

OFTEN STRUGGLES
TO ORGANIZE TASKS
AND ACTIVITIES, WITH
MESSY WORK, POOR
TIME MANAGEMENT,
AND MISSED
DEADLINES

You may have a backpack is filled with loose papers and notebooks in no particular order, making it hard to find assignments or notes. You frequently underestimates how long tasks will take, starting projects late and needing to rush at the last minute. This lack of planning leads to missed deadlines and incomplete work, despite your best efforts

OFTEN DOESN'T
COMPLETE TASKS
LIKE SCHOOLWORK
OR CHORES, LOSING
FOCUS AND GETTING
EASILY DISTRACTED

You may often starts your homework with enthusiasm but quickly loses focus. You sit down to work on a math assignment but get distracted by your favorite video game nearby. After playing for a while, you remembers your homework and tries to get back to it, but your mind wanders again, and you find yourself scrolling through social media instead.

OFTEN MISPLACES
THINGS NEEDED FOR
TASKS, LIKE SCHOOL
MATERIALS, KEYS,
OR PHONES.

You **may often** rush out the door in the **morning**, only to realize you **can't** find your **keys** or **phone**. At school, you **might leave** your **notebook** in the **library** or forget **where** you placed your **textbooks** between classes.

OFTEN GETS
EASILY
DISTRACTED BY
OUTSIDE THINGS
OR UNRELATED
THOUGHTS

You **may be** working at your computer in a **bustling** office, you frequently shifts your attention to passing conversations, sounds from a nearby construction site, or the movement of coworkers around you. Even in a quieter setting, your mind can wander to unrelated thoughts, like weekend plans or a new idea for a hobby you're interested in

OFTEN FORGETS
DAILY TASKS, LIKE
CHORES,
ERRANDS, OR
APPOINTMENTS.

You **may plan to do** laundry, pick up groceries, and attend a study group, but by the end of the day, you realize you only managed one of those tasks. You **may often** forget about appointments or runs late because you loses track of time.

Subtle Symptoms

- Time **B**lindness (**P**oor concept of **t**ime),
- **F**eeling and **d**isplaying emotions **m**ore **i**ntensely than **o**thers
- **T**rouble **f**inding **m**otivation (It's **n**ot **t**hat **y**ou **d**on't have **t**he **s**kills, **f**ighting **t**he **b**oredom is **t**he **h**ard **p**art is the **h**ard **p**art

HYPERACTIVE

OFTEN TALKS EXCESSIVELY

You **m**ay **o**ften **t**alk **e**xcessively, especially **w**hen **y**ou're **e**xcited **o**r **a**nxious. In **c**lass, **y**ou **m**ay **f**requently **i**nterrupt **t**he **t**eacher **t**o **s**hare **t**houghts **o**r **a**sk **q**uestions, **s**ometimes **w**ithout realizing **y**ou're **s**peaking **o**ut **o**f **t**urn. **D**uring **g**roup **a**ctivities, **y**ou **d**ominate **c**onversations, **e**agerly **s**haring **i**deas **a**nd **p**ersonal **s**tores.

OFTEN FIDGETS
WITH OR TAPS
HANDS OR FEET
OR SQUIRMS IN
SEAT.

While listening to your teacher, you might tap your pen on the desk, bounce your leg, or shift in your seat every few minutes. When you try to sit still, you feel restless, almost like you have extra energy that you need to release.

OFTEN UNABLE TO
PLAY OR ENGAGE IN
LEISURE ACTIVITIES
QUIETLY

While drawing or working on a craft project, you may often hums, talk to yourself, or makes sound effects, narrating what you're doing out loud. During group activities, you might get loud with excitement, even in situations that are meant to be calm or quiet.

OFTEN RUNS ABOUT OR
CLIMBS IN SITUATIONS
WHERE IT IS
INAPPROPRIATE. (NOTE: IN
ADOLESCENTS OR ADULTS,
MAY BE LIMITED TO
FEELING RESTLESS.)

When sitting still is required—like at family dinners or during a movie—you may often shift in your seat, tap your legs, or asks to get up for a quick walk. Your restlessness makes it hard for him to stay put for long periods.

Is often "on the go," acting as if "driven by a motor" (e.g., is unable to be or uncomfortable being still for extended time)

When at home, you may rarely be sitting down for long; you might be tidying up, pacing around while on the phone, or moving from one activity to the next without taking a break

Often interrupts by answering before a question is finished or can't wait to speak in a conversation

When talking with friends or participating in class, you may frequently answer questions before they're fully asked, jumping in with what you think the person is about to say. This habit of responding quickly sometimes leads to misunderstandings if you answer incorrectly or before all the details are given.

Often has difficulty waiting his or her turn (e.g., while waiting in line)

When you line up with your classmates for lunch, you may often become visibly restless, shifting from foot to foot and looking around anxiously. You may repeatedly ask the teacher how much longer it will be or try to move ahead in line, feeling impatient and unable to wait quietly.

Often interrupts or intrudes on others, joining conversations or activities without permission

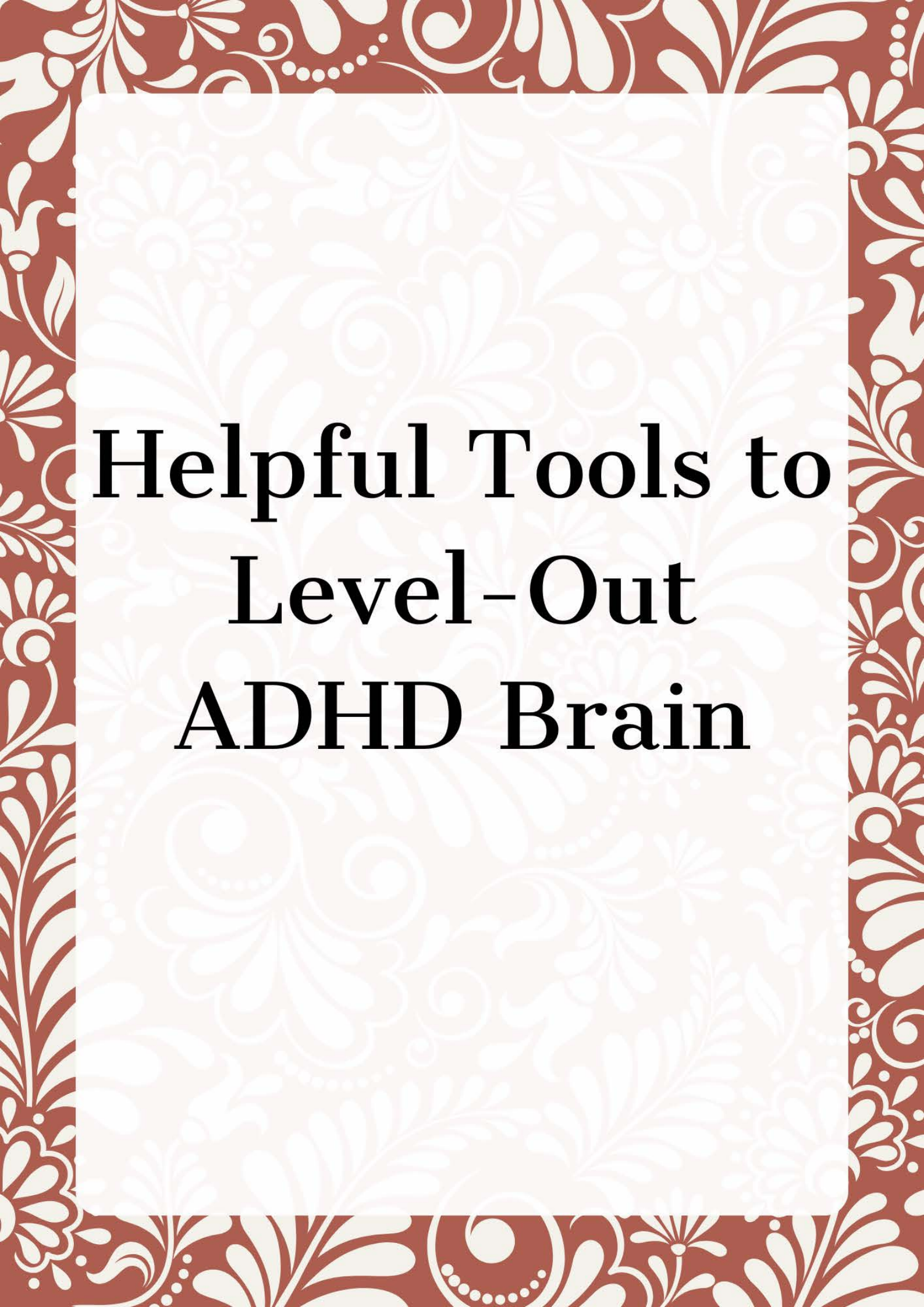
If **y**ou **o**verhear **c**lassmates **d**iscussing **s**omething **t**hat interests **y**ou, **y**ou **m**ay **q**uickly **j**umps into **t**heir **c**onversation, **a**dding **y**our **t**houghts **o**r **o**pinions **w**ithout **a**sking if it's **o**kay **t**o **j**oin. **Y**our **f**riends **m**ight **b**e **m**id-**d**iscussion, **b**ut **y**our **e**xcitement **m**akes it **h**ard **f**or **y**ou **t**o **w**ait **o**r **g**auge if **y**ou're intruding

Often gets up from their seat when they should stay seated, like in class or at work

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Simple Coping Strategies for Managing ADHD



Helpful Tools to Level-Out ADHD Brain

Structure is Key

- *Plan & Prioritize: Use one planner for all reminders. Check it daily at the same time. (You can also put an event in your phone calendar with alerts)*
- *Daily To-Do Lists: Keep tasks realistic, ranked by importance, and broken into smaller steps. Cross off completed tasks for motivation.*
- *End-of-Day Routine: Spend 5 minutes tidying your workspace.*

Organizing It All:

- *Designate Areas: Keep essentials (e.g., keys, papers) in specific spots.*
- *Color Coding: Use colors to organize tasks and expenses.*
- *15-Minute Focus: Work in 15-minute intervals, then decide to continue or stop.*
- *Declutter: If it's unused, let it go. Tackle one area at a time.*
- *Daily Tidying: Spend 10 minutes organizing and keep papers in designated spots.*

Staying Healthy in Mind, Body, and Environment

- *Eat Smart: Rotate enjoyable recipes, stock ingredients, and share cooking tasks.*
- *Move Regularly: Incorporate yoga, sports, or walks into your routine.*
- *Set Boundaries: Avoid overscheduling and say “no” when needed.*
- *Minimize Distractions: Focus on one task, reduce noise, and silence notifications.*

Balancing the Books

- *Track all expenses. Use a planner for bill deadlines and color-code for clarity.*
 - *You can use apps like Copilot to categorize expenses and get a clearer overview of your finances.*

Learning What Works For You

- *Evaluate your To-Do list progress. Adjust tasks to better fit your time and energy.*
- *Find small ways to reward yourself for completing tasks.*
- *A friendly reminder! Your best is different everyday.*

Manage Impulses Regarding Use of Time

These strategies are most effective when implemented before the impulse strikes. It's more difficult to rein yourself in after the fact than it is to avoid the temptation in the first place.

- Eliminate potentially exciting impulse stimuli before they occur, such as by unsubscribing from email alerts or canceling subscriptions that you really don't have time for.
- Give the devil his due—accept that a certain amount of time each day will need to be spent on relaxing and recharging your batteries. Build that time in so that it doesn't happen at less convenient times.
- Keep visual reminders up to counterbalance the impulse and keep you on task. For example, post up a picture of the vacation spot that you're working towards.
- Use self-talk, such as “slow and steady, one step at a time”, to keep you focused, at least during the times that you're consciously thinking about it.
- Switch gears mentally by purposely thinking of something else when you catch your mind starting to wander.
- Switch gears physically by leaving the tempting situation.

Stay Focused on Short Term Goals

Managing short term goals tends to be easier than longer term goals because it involves a smaller window of time in which you need to stay focused.

- Take the first or last fifteen minutes of the day to plan your activities and set priorities. This becomes easier once it becomes a habit—no exceptions.
- Build in small rewards for completing tasks.
- Learn to ask yourself about priorities before diving into a new task—“Is this what I should be doing now?”, no matter how tempting something is.
- Tie short term goals to larger goals, so there is a feeling of bigger progress with each small step.

Manage Distractibility

Getting off track is a common way that ADHD folks wind up losing time and thereby don't have enough time to do the things that they were supposed to get done. Some of this is big chunks of wasted time, but they can also leak away small bits of time that add up. To the extent possible, it's generally best to set up these strategies beforehand, when they're on your mind, rather than relying on doing the right thing in the moment. Once you're distracted, it's too late.

- Use reminders to keep you on task, whether small taped up notes or large white boards.
- Work to ingrain the habit of frequently asking yourself, "What should I be doing now?". Cue yourself to do this by using a repeating alarm that forces a small break in the progression of time so that you can notice what you are doing and then make a conscious choice as to whether it's the best use of your time.
- Work in a quieter and less visually stimulating place or use a sound machine or fan to provide white noise to screen out other sounds. Alternatively, if it won't become distracting in itself, use the television or music. You can also buy noise canceling headphones relatively inexpensively these days. Foam ear plugs cost virtually nothing, but may block too much sound.
- Try to keep an orderly work space, but if your work space is currently messy, rather than jumping into organizing it, clear it to the side and schedule a time to come back later to deal with it.
- When you find yourself off on a tangent, go back to the original task and finish that before moving on to the next. A certain amount of this is to be expected, so there's no point in beating yourself up about it. Just go back to the previous task.
- Use hyper-focus for good instead of evil by immersing yourself in a project and completing a big chunk of it.
- Break work sessions into smaller pieces with short breaks in between to reduce wandering attention or to prevent crashing and abandoning work all together. However, if you are going to give the devil his due, set an alarm to cue you to return so the breaks don't become longer than the work sessions.
- Employ active learning or active processing techniques to stay involved in what you're doing.
- Work with a partner or in a group if feasible and if there will not be an undue social price paid in resentment from your only partially willing team mates.
- Set aside specific, interruption-free periods of your day for tasks that require extra focus. Preserve the sanctity of this time by closing your web browser, turning off your phone, and turning off your new email alert. If necessary, explain to coworkers or family members that you would prefer that they came back later unless there's an emergency and then put up sign to remind them.
- If a new idea for a project keeps popping up, take a small moment to write it down so that you can return to it later rather than pursuing it immediately.
- If you are simply too distracted at work, then maybe you need a new job.