



35 Tips On Managing ADD/ADHD



PILLS DON'T TEACH SKILLS – eBook 35 Tips



Bio:

As a person who has experienced ADD first hand and how negatively it can impact a person's life, Jeff Hamilton's knowledge and experience with ADD has extended beyond most medical doctors. He has dedicated his efforts since 2003 to understanding, learning and training his brain to meet and beat the challenges of Adult ADD.

In doing so, Jeff created Pills Don't Teach Skills the blog in 2005, a personal story of winning the battle against Adult ADD. Jeff wanted to share the experience with others, in hope that it can serve as an example and inspiration that ADD can be effectively managed.

Today, his site reaches approximately 80,000 unique monthly visitors and will reach over 100,000 per month in 2011. The blog led to the creation and publishing of his book Pills Don't Teach Skills, available on his blog and at Amazon.com.

Jeff is a working professional in the sales/marketing field, single father, community volunteer, works out daily (run, gym, bike, hike, ski etc.) and enjoys a rich life of tremendous friends and family. In addition, Jeff has received the following media & speaking attention:

- 2010 Top Health Blogger Award: Wellsphere.com ADD & ADHD Community
- Blogger Award Best of 2007 HealthCentral.com
- Contributes Mental Health ADD/ADHD content to Wellshpere.com, HealthCentral.com, Psychology Today and Twitter (@Add4Adults)
- Feature article on Jeff in ADDitude Magazine (print & online)
- Full page article on his story in the Vancouver Province (available upon request), article was picked up and ran in 150 Can-West newspapers nationally across Canada
- Interviewed on the Tina Oliver radio talk show on CFUN Vancouver (Podcast available on blog)
- Book presentation to CHADD Vancouver (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Disorder) North America's leading non-profit organization serving individuals with ADD and their families.
- Presentation to the Vancouver ADD Support Group on time management
- Jeff Hamilton interviews extremely well with the media and is very comfortable and articulate with speaking in public.
- Jeff is also available for media interviews and book promotions throughout North America



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Introduction:

Managing ADD/ADHD and learning to correct and improve the situation is a lot of work, don't think it isn't. I've worked hard at doing so since 2003 and am proud of what I have accomplished. Having said that, the work never stops and we must continue. The good news is, ADD/ADHD can be managed, we can learn new skills and our brains will retain these learning's.

Pills Don't Teach Skills is a very fitting title for my blog and book. When I started the process of overcoming ADD, I heard this phrase and it made a lot of sense. Too many people think if they take a medication for ADD/ADHD the challenges will disappear. That is simply not the case. Medication can be an effective step for some people, however there is a world of education, life skills and self improvement that needs to take place in combination. Pills don't teach us the skills, they place our brains into a state of being able to learn and retain information.

With that, I wanted to offer as many tips as I could regarding what I have found to be effective for me, in learning to manage ADD. I hope that you will find these tips helpful. Please remember, this is based on my personal experiences. I am not a doctor. Please seek proper medical advice specific to ADD/ADHD before you consider medication.

Attitude

1. Attitude is everything.
2. Put a sign up by your desk, or somewhere you will see it every day that reminds you, attitude is everything.

Symptoms and Behaviors

3. Research and understand what the symptoms of ADD/ADHD are and how it is impacting you.
4. Try utilizing an online ADD/ADHD screening tool to learn more about your symptoms.

The Wake Up Call

5. Accept and embrace the fact that you have ADD/ADHD. By doing so, you will realize what you need to focus on and that there is an incredible positivity in having it.

Counseling and Medication

6. Seek out a true ADD/ADHD medical doctor, counsellor or coach. Professionals with specific skills, training and dedication to ADD/ADHD will serve you well.



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7. Understand what your medication options are thoroughly before commencing to be sure you choose an option that is right for you. Medications will impact people in different ways and what is right for someone else, may not be right for you.
8. Realize the strength family and friends are capable of providing you. Lean on your family and friends, they are here to help.

Coaching

9. ADD/ADHD coaching is a key part of the management, learning and healing process. Seek out a certified and experience coach with training specific to ADD/ADHD.
10. Get an ADD/ADHD coach. Don't procrastinate or over think it, just do it! It changed my life.

Meds Are Not Enough

11. Too many people think if they take a medication for ADD/ADHD the challenges will disappear. That is simply not the case. Medication can be an effective step for some people, however there is a world of education, life skills and self improvement that needs to take place in combination.
12. If you chose to utilize medication, investigate and ask questions to ensure you make an informed and educated decision regarding what is best for you. Make sure your doctor or psychiatrist really knows ADD/ADHD, many have not been trained in diagnosing and treating ADD/ADHD.

When Medication Has Done Its Job

13. Track your behaviour changes before and during taking medication, in a log of daily activity results. It is important to gauge your progress and make informed decisions regarding medication and your actions to win a battle against ADD/ADHD.

Power of The Mind

14. Look deeply and honestly inside yourself and ask, what do I need to improve on to start winning the challenge against ADD/ADHD?
15. Try some meditation and concentration exercises. Set realistic goals.
16. Take some time to really understand what your mind is capable of. Learn about your thought process and the things you are both pleased and challenged by when your mind is at work.



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The Brain's Capability

17. Knowing what your brain does and how this relates to ADD/ADHD is important. This understanding will allow you to learn more about you and achieve success.
18. Having ADD/ADHD and not understanding the neurobiology of ADHD is like having diabetes and not understanding how your blood sugar works. Learn about it.
19. Do some research on what powers the brain, things like food/nutrition, exercise and challenge yourself to power your brain in the most beneficial way possible for you.

Behaviour Changes

20. To understand your behaviour changes, you must first acknowledge and accept what your behaviour weaknesses are. Create a log of this and track it daily. I found using Brown's Model of ADD was a great way to set up my monitoring criteria.

Empathy and Sympathy

21. To truly empathize and sympathize at a deep level, will allow you to develop and maintain rewarding and lifelong relationships in all areas of your life.
22. Think of two ways you can be a little more empathetic and sympathetic.

The Work Doesn't Stop

23. If anyone stops growing or learning, that person is in big trouble! Whether you have ADD/ADHD or not, we all need to continue to evolve and become better people.
24. Revisit your progress regularly. The work will never stop and by not using a checklist to make sure you are on track, you could run the risk of becoming complacent and falling back into old habits.

Time Management

25. We really can't manage time, we can only manage our selves in time periods.
26. Try an experiment, write down a list of five things you need to do this week. Prioritize them and schedule them throughout the week. Once you have completed "to do" tasks, reflect back and ask yourself if using time management and organization helped you?
27. Schedule it! Whether it's on a wall calendar, on your computer in a program like Outlook or on your handheld device like an iPhone or Blackberry. Schedule it, everything.



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Kids (if you are a parent)

28. What can you do to be more aware and alert with parenting? Continually ask yourself this question.
29. Try planning and scheduling activities well in advance with children. It relieves the pressure to plan spontaneously and the kids become more fulfilled, happy and receive the attention they crave. It makes parenting much smoother too.

Exercise & Nutrition

30. Exercise and nutrition are the building blocks of both physical, mental and emotional health.
31. Begin your exercise regimen slowly and steadily, and have plenty of patience. Don't over do it. Trying to do too much too fast could lead to muscle strain, back problems, or any other number of joint or muscle problems.
32. Remember the old phrase "you are what you eat". Proper nutrition and exercise need to be seriously considered. Try to plan out your meals and snacks in one week increments. This will eliminate last minute scrambling for meals and avoid quick fast food.

Learning To Relax

33. Most people don't know how to relax. Learning a new way to relax and planning that relaxation activity regularly throughout the week will deliver benefits.
34. Identifying when you need to relax.
35. Schedule a time or two in your every day routine to relax. It can be as simple as breathing, taking a break from work or even meditating.

Good luck and remember, ADD/ADHD can be beaten!