

## Problems with Attention

*Do you have a hard time getting places on time, or keeping track of your schedule,  
your commitments, your paperwork, your life and career goals?*

*Is your office a pile of piles? Your life full of crises?*

*You may want to know more about Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and how to handle it.*

- In general, people with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) have:
  - a short attention span for routine tasks
  - are easily distracted and side-tracked
  - have challenges with organizing themselves in space and time
  - struggle with follow-through
  - need to improve their ability to internally supervise themselves and their behavior
- People with ADHD tend to be overwhelmed or to have given up. They can be depressed or anxious because of the stress in their lives that are increased because of ADHD symptoms.
- Many people with ADHD symptoms have never been hyperactive: these people have been criticized for being “lazy” or “dumb,” and are more likely to have signs of depression because of the self-esteem problems associated with a chronic sense of failure and overwhelm.
- Several sub-types of ADHD have been identified:
  - Classic: inattentive, distractible, disorganized, hyperactive, restless, impulsive
  - Inattentive: easily distracted with a low attention span but not hyperactive; often sluggish or apathetic
  - Over-focused: excessive worrying, argumentative, compulsive, locked into spirals of negative thoughts
  - Temporal Lobe: quick temper and rage, periods of panic and fear, mildly paranoid
  - Limbic: moodiness, low energy, social isolation, chronic low-grade depression, hopelessness
  - “Ring of Fire”: angry, aggressive, sensitive, inflexible, periods of unpredictability & grandiose thinking.
- It is estimated that about 6% of the population could be diagnosed with ADHD, but only 2% receive treatment. Women are just as likely to have these symptoms, but are diagnosed four to five times less often. And it is not just a condition of childhood: over half the children diagnosed are estimated to continue to have symptoms into adulthood.
- ADHD is correlated with a higher percentage of incidences of interpersonal problems, motor vehicle accidents, and emergency room visits. It is also thought to be a main precursor to addictions and self medication, to school dropouts, and is linked with an over representation in prisons.
- ADHD can be an insidious condition: brain imaging indicates that when people with ADHD try to focus and concentrate, the parts of their brain that are needed to do this actually shut down. It is considered by some to be a brain dysfunction affecting the prefrontal cortex and others areas.
- The good news is this condition can be improved with treatment! You can learn to have more focus, more control over your behavior, and more sense of satisfaction and mastery in your life:
  - Learn to notice your ability to focus, organize, follow-through, and relate. Awareness is vital!
  - Learn cognitive and behavioral strategies to help with mood, organization, self-esteem and control.
  - Learn more about the dietary, exercise, sleep, relaxation, and social aspects for improving your focus.
  - Learn more about the potential positive use of medication if your symptoms are profound.