Ascension

Adult ADHD Tips

ADHD is typically a disorder associated with childhood, but what happens when these kids grow up? For many, this diagnosis receives better attention before adulthood, but coming of age does not magically make symptoms go away. So what is an adult with ADHD to do while struggling with symptoms?
One symptom that typically affects day-to-day functioning is organization. In order to help with this, create systems of organization. This may include using a day planner, calendar, or apps for organizing your day to help remember tasks, scheduling time to do tasks, color coordination for tasks/items, and having set locations that an item is placed when not in use.

Going along with this, creating and maintaining structure and routine can be helpful. Having a set time for tasks or typical events can give a helpful association and create ease for remembering and going through with tasks. If a set time isn't as feasible, creating a routine based around events can be helpful, as well (such as doing dishes after dinner or getting things ready for the next day before you go to bed).

Sometimes tasks feel dauntingly large, making it difficult to start. It can be helpful to break things down into smaller and more manageable bits. This might be taking breaks after certain amounts of time, or having smaller tasks that contribute to the larger tasks. This can look like working for 20 minutes, taking a break for 5 minutes, then working for another 20 minutes. For smaller tasks, it might be writing notes, then making an outline, then working on the first paragraph of a writing task. Work with what patterns you notice in yourself for being able to do tasks, rather than against them.

In addition, being able to minimize distractions can be helpful, cliche as it may be. The right music might help get you in the groove, but a loud space with a lot going on can be detrimental to getting things done. Being able to avoid notifications or clutter in your area can avoid distractions while trying to get things done.

While this brief overview can be helpful, if things feel unmanageable or overwhelming, it's okay to reach out for professional help. EAP can be a good starting point to help. Get in touch by calling 1-800-540-3758 or email eap@ascension.org.