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Red Flags for Adult ADHD

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Everyone has some of these symptoms occasionally, but those with adult ADHD have more of these symptoms consistently and to a level of impairment. These symptoms may be fairly consistent, vary according to the situation or fluctuate without control.

Problems with Attention Regulation

- Not being able to pay attention for a period of time, especially while reading, doing paperwork or working on things that you find boring
- Being easily distracted by things around you – difficulty staying focused in noisy offices
- Unable to pay close attention to details or making careless mistakes
- Hyper focusing and being unable to refocus your attention on more important things, especially when involved in activities that you find stimulating
- Difficulty prioritizing focus to the level of importance rather than interest
- Forgetting to complete tasks even if they frequent activities
- Frequently losing necessary things
- Poor listening skills
- Tuning out while being spoken to
- Difficult focusing when reading

Problems with Hyperactivity

- Fidgeting, finger drumming, leg shaking etc.
- A feeling of internal restlessness
- Feeling that your mind is racing or switching channels frequently
- Unable to relax
- Talking too much
- Craving excitement and seeking out high risk activities
- Trying to do too many things at once

Problems with Impulsivity

- Impulsive spending
- Talking at inappropriate times
- Interrupting or blurting out things
- Making impulsive decisions
- Speaking without thinking – blurting out things that are hurtful or rude
- Being easily bored
- Being reckless without considering consequences

Problems with Executive Functioning

- Difficulty prioritizing tasks
- Disorganization – messy home, office desk and car
- Procrastination
- Trouble starting and finishing projects
- Difficulty with time management – often over or underestimate time required
- Difficulty with planning
- Unable to consistently use hindsight and forethought when making decisions
- Feelings of under achievement
- Starting numerous projects but not completing them
- Delegation of organization duties to partners

Difficulty Regulating Emotions

- Reacting emotionally to a greater degree than others
- Emotional outbursts
- Impatience
- Irritable
- Difficulty staying motivated
- Hypersensitive to criticism
- Low tolerance for frustration
- Moods swings
- Temper outbursts
- Anger may fade quickly or remain longer than normal

Additional Red Flags

- Difficulty with relationships
- Difficulty with social interaction
- Frequent job changes and job loss
- Less job satisfaction
- Less years of schooling, and difficulty in leaning environments
- More school discipline issues
- Holding more than one job
- Choosing jobs that are more active and less detail orientated
- Financial difficulties – difficulty paying bills on time and managing money
- Reduces work performance – missed deadlines, appointments and meetings
- Frequently late for appointments and social engagements
- Substance abuse issues including alcohol, coffee, cigarettes, marijuana
- More frequent driving accidents and speeding incidents
- More frequent physical accidents
- More rule breaking and interaction with the justice system
- Problems with self esteem
- Difficulty coping with stress
- Persistent mild depression
- Worrying when attention is not focused
- Difficulties with consistent thoughtful parenting
- Unable to recognize own behaviour and effect on others