




Supporting Lawyers with ADHD: A Coach's Perspective

Mindful of the challenges that lawyers with ADHD face, this session will explore the unique needs of this population and provide practical strategies for supporting them. We will discuss the importance of understanding individual differences and the role of a coach in helping lawyers with ADHD thrive in their professional lives.

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Agenda

- 1 Welcome and Introduction
- 2 Discussion
 - 1 ADHD and Lawyers in Practice
 - 2 ADHD and Executive Skills
 - 3 Common Challenges
 - 4 Supporting Your Lawyers and Students
 - 5 Resources
- 3 Takeaways & Questions

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Welcome and Introduction

Today we will explore the challenges that lawyers with ADHD face in practice and discuss practical strategies for supporting them. We will also discuss the importance of understanding individual differences and the role of a coach in helping lawyers with ADHD thrive in their professional lives.

- 1 What do you need to know about ADHD?
- 2 What challenges do lawyers with ADHD face in practice?
- 3 What can we do to support them?

We will also discuss the importance of understanding individual differences and the role of a coach in helping lawyers with ADHD thrive in their professional lives.

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I. ADHD and Lawyers in Practice

- *: Paradox of high achievers with ADHD
- *: 12.5%* of lawyers (versus 4-5% of adults)
- *: Unique strengths and challenges

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II. ADHD and Executive Skills

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder:

A neurodevelopmental disorder affecting dopamine levels that is characterized by impaired focus, hyperactivity and/or impulsivity.

See the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, (DSM-5) for a clinical definition of ADHD.

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Executive Skills

- Plan & organize tasks
- Prioritize tasks
- Manage time
- Monitor progress
- Set goals
- Manage materials
- Manage information
- Manage emotions
- Manage social interactions
- Manage self

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nalp **Procrastination: Executive Skills at Play**

Emotional regulation	Response inhibition (impulsivity)
Task initiation	Planning and organization
Focus (distraction)	Metacognition



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What ADHD is Not

- "Curable"
- Laziness
- Lack of caring
- Restless schoolboy syndrome

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ADHD – Common Companions

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Masking
- Autism Spectrum Disorder



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Environment, Stress and Attention

Attention Deficit Trait:

High levels of environmental stress can induce ADHD like symptoms among neurotypical individuals.


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III. Challenges for Lawyers in Practice

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- Inconsistent quality of work product
- Time spent to complete work
- Work submitted late
- Poor communication
- Say they want to change but don't follow through



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Practice Management

- Procrastination
- Taking too long
- Distraction
- Capturing time
- Missing details
- Missing deadlines

Internal

- Low self confidence
- Shame and frustration
- Misunderstanding of own ADHD traits
- Feeling like they don't fit in
- Burnout



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IV. Supporting Lawyers in Practice

- ↳ Understanding of ADHD
- ↳ Communication
- ↳ Training (practice management)
- ↳ Practice modification
- ↳ Coaching

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Supporting Students Entering Practice

- ↳ Help students understand their unique strengths and challenges
- ↳ Help students identify jobs where they can leverage their strengths
- ↳ Help students understand and develop their executive skills
- ↳ Encourage students to build up support systems



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Working With an External Coach

- ↳ When to offer coaching support
- ↳ Potential areas for coaching
- ↳ ADHD coaching*
- ↳ Setting up a coaching framework
- ↳ Managing expectations

*This is not a requirement for the certification process. It is a recommendation for those who are interested in coaching.

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Resources and References

Books

Barkley, R. and Benton, C. (2022). *Taking Charge of Adult ADHD* (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.

* Dawson, P. and Guare, R. (2016). *The Smart But Scattered Guide to Success*. The Guilford Press.

Hallowell, E. (2015). *driven to distraction at work*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Web Resources

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD): chadd.org
 ADDitude: additudemag.com

Coaching

The Professional Association for ADHD Coaches: paaccoaches.org

Podcast

The Joyful Practice for Women Lawyers (Episodes #86 - 89, 152): thejoyfulpractice.com/podcast

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Questions?

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Thank you.

Please contact me with questions at

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