

ADD: One Of God's Many Blessings

By Juli Allison Kimbley

Probably most people reading this might ask: how can ADD be a blessing? As a mother of one “diagnosed” with ADD, I am here to contend that it can indeed be a blessing. Let’s explore this idea.

God created us all different, as evidenced by our fingerprints—tall, short, heavy, and so on. It is this difference in each of us that makes us unique. We are all individuals and we should embrace our individuality.

When most people think of Attention Deficit Disorder, they think of someone unable to concentrate; but my experience has been that this individual has the ability to, what I call, hyperfocus. Hyperfocus is the ability to concentrate all his attention on one thing. When something interests this child, his ability to concentrate is phenomenal. On the other hand, if he is not in a hyperfocus mode, he is easily distracted. He can also be considered very impulsive. His excess energy makes him appear hyperactive.

When not hyperfocusing on something, he is in a constant scanning mode, looking for something of interest, absorbing everything in his surroundings, noticing more about a room than the average child. He will flit from one thing or another until he has hit upon something of interest. This is why when you give this child something like a handheld game, he can spend hours on it. He has the ability to beam all his attention onto it, tuning out everything else around him.

When the child is hyperactive he may interfere with those around him because of his constant motion. This is the type of child that gets the most negative attention. Some are hyperactive because they need the extra stimulation to keep their brains in motion. It is this continual physical motion that stimulates the brain and focus

Attention Deficit Disorder, in my opinion, is improperly named. “Deficit” implies that something is missing. It is not that anything is missing; these people just think differently. Actually, they are blessed with the ability to highly focus on a problem and see solutions that the average person does not see because the average person gave up on the problem a long time before. It is this type of person that can find the answers to questions and solve problems facing their world.

My Personal Experience

I felt that unnecessary medication for my son was not what God wanted. I had known other parents who chose to medicate their children, but I felt that I had to make the decision that was right for the child God put under my care. I chose no chemical or psychological intervention, and learned a few things that helped him deal with some of these manifestations of ADD. I hope these things might help you or maybe someone you know.

Routine

Routines can be adapted for any age and any circumstances. If it takes the average person

21 days to develop a task into a habit, it will take this person a little longer— not because something is wrong, but because of the way their brains work. Once it is habit and no longer something they have to think about, they will do it without thought; and when they begin to realize how much they are accomplishing without having to think about it, they will begin to want to develop their own routines.

Limiting Choices

Limiting choices will help this child focus as there will be fewer things around to distract him. I have found that clutter has been one of the biggest hindrances to my son. If he had things to distract him, then he would be less likely to do the activities at hand.

Caffeine?

We did allow our son to drink coffee and chocolate; the caffeine seemed to help him focus on the mundane. Daily chats with his teacher began to show a correlation in his caffeine consumption and ability to concentrate.

Caffeine has a different effect on people and it can mimic the same symptoms of ADD, but it worked for us. The caffeine seemed to have the opposite effect on him as it does for the typical person. Instead of making him more hyper, as in the case of his cousins who would bounce off the walls when given caffeine, it helped him stay calm and focus on those mundane things that bored him. We kept a log of good days and bad days and the amount of coffee or chocolate he consumed—noting the amount of work and attitude throughout the day—and I found with him there was a definite correlation.

My Child, the Grown-up

Now my son is grown and in college, and I've never regretted my decision. As an adult, he has learned to live with his tendencies toward inattention and to embrace his individuality. He has learned that his brain has provided him a vast playground! There are no limits to what can be done within the walls of his imagination. So if you feel that your child has tendencies towards ADD, keep in mind that some children are just naturally busy because they are children; they will grow out of it one day and be productive adults. But if perchance they do have ADD, then hang on and enjoy the journey! This is truly a unique individual. Nurture him; help him find ways to keep on track, and above all, thank God for the blessings of ADD!

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