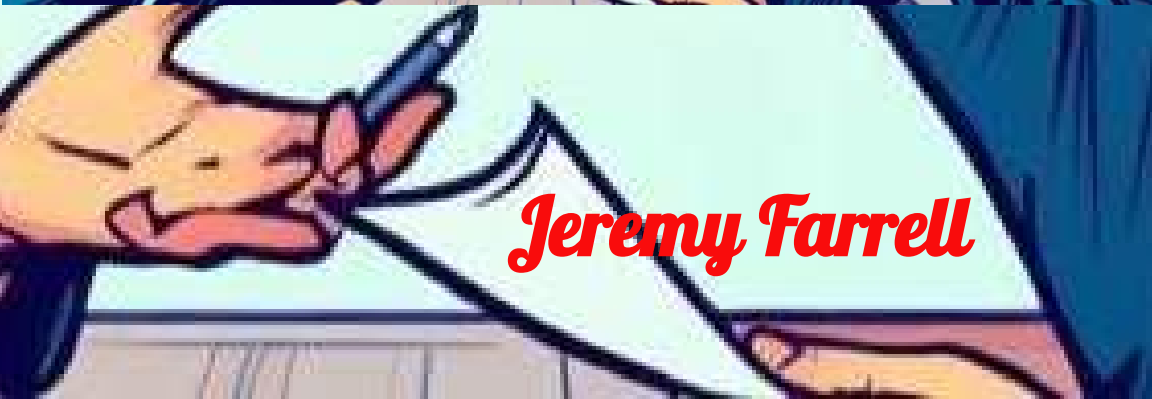


# *Navigating ADHD Together*



*Jeremy Farrell*

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### *Living and Loving with ADHD*

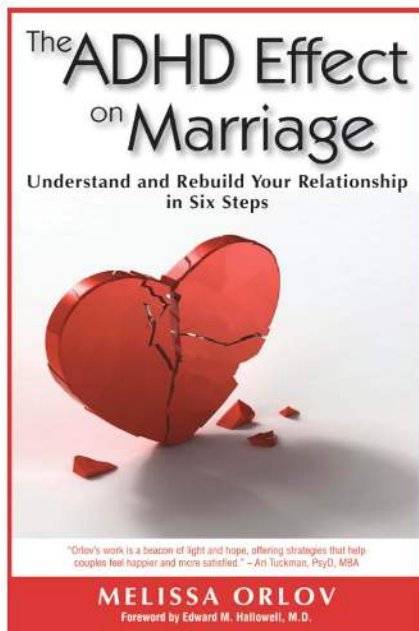
Supporting someone with ADHD often means showing love in ways that matter most: patience, humour, flexibility, and reassurance. Little acts of understanding—like a gentle reminder, a shared laugh, or a moment of encouragement—can make a big difference. Remember, love is best shown through consistency and patience. Celebrate small wins together, and keep showing up for each other, even on tough days. Your support is a powerful expression of love.

However, of course very important, is that you are probably already in need of support, counselling or coaching. You cannot provide the support your partner needs if you do not have a supportive and loving environment for you. Seek the necessary support – be transparent with key people on what you are trying to do.

As you go through these worksheets, think deeply on how to go forward with love and curiosity.

## *'The ADHD Effect on Marriage' extract*

This is an extract from the first chapter to the book by Melissa Orlov called *The ADHD effect on marriage*. We provide this quotation as part of a recommendation to purchase the book but most of all to show that how you're feeling is not uncommon and is not just the opinion of the growth lab. We have not structured the course to mirror this excellent book because we have included the influence of other learnings and experiences in the course in a condensed way.



## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*“Marriage is affected by ADHD like all marriages range from highly successful to completely disastrous. It is safe to say though that those distorted by ADHD symptoms sits squarely in the worst of times. Pain and anger abound. During the worst times you can barely talk to each other. When you do you rarely agree or see things the same way you are frustrated that you've gotten to this point and you're incredulous that you haven't been able to make things better.*

*Both of you have begun to suspect that your spouse doesn't really want to improve things. If he or she did wouldn't things have gotten better by now? If you are married to a person who has or might have ADHD, you might feel ignored and lonely in your relationship.*

*Your spouse never seems to follow up on what he agrees to do so much so that you may feel as if you really have another child in your home instead of an adult.*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*You feel you're forced to remind him all the time to do things. You nag and you started to dislike the person you've become. The two of you either fight often or have virtually nothing to say to each other that either of you finds meaningful. You are frustrated that your spouse seems to be able to focus intently on things that interest him but never on you.*

*Perhaps worst of all you feel intense stress from not knowing whether you can rely on him and feeling saddled with almost all the responsibilities of the household while your spouse gets to have all the fun. If you have ADHD or you think you do you, may feel as if the person you married is buried deep within a nagging monster that lives in your home. The person you had cherished has been transformed into a control freak trying to manage every single detail of your life together.*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*No matter how hard you try you can never do well enough for your spouse even if you are successful elsewhere such as in your work. The easiest way to deal with her is simply to leave her alone. You are willing to admit that you make mistakes sometimes but so does she and certainly no one is perfect. You wish she would just relax once in a while and live life as a happy person instead of a harpy. If either of these descriptions sounds familiar you are suffering from what I called the ADHD effect.*

*Your courtship was happy and exciting and often fast but your marriage has been completely different. You may feel desperately unhappy and lonely and your partner isn't even aware of it even if you've tried to talk about it. You fight and nag much more than you expected and life often seems depressingly up and down and out of control. The underlying reason could be that ADHD symptoms and the responses both of you have to those symptoms have been destroying your partnership.*

*The good news is that understanding the role that ADHD plays can turn your marriage around.” Copyright Melissa Orlov 2010. Limited extract for educational purposes.*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

This is the end of the extract of the book. It can be found online at most book retailers.

### *ADHD Defining Adult ADHD*

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is increasingly recognized in adults. Historically, ADHD treatment primarily targeted children; however, there is now a growing awareness of adult ADHD, which is empowering for many individuals, although the shortage of professionals able to diagnose it results in extended wait times for assessments.

Adults with ADHD often present with a unique set of challenges that can impact their personal and professional lives. By recognizing and addressing these symptoms, coaches can better support their clients in reaching their full potential.

# *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder wherein certain areas of the brain develop differently, causing issues with attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. Previously referred to as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), the significance of hyperactivity and impulsivity has led to its current designation as ADHD.

Some people prefer to conceptualize ADHD not as a disorder but as an "unorder," indicating a different method of organizing thoughts and actions rather than a deficit or defect. This "hidden disability" often results in easy distraction and veering off course, such as becoming engrossed in internet browsing when intending a brief search.

The attention deficit is most visible in the outworking of the executive functions of the brain, responsible for planning, memory, focusing, and task organization. Individuals might begin their day feeling organized, yet as they tire (some faster than others, depending on the type of work they do), their symptoms can intensify. Intensification of symptoms is not seen as an 'intensification' of delivery though – it is seen as a deterioration of performance, attention, or distracting behaviour in meetings.

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

As one tires, your partner can be more impulse driven. This impulsivity manifests in acting without thorough consideration, such as sending an email in anger without pausing to reflect or making spontaneous online purchases later regretted. Working in isolation, you don't get to casually ask a colleague to review a reactive email you are about to send – classic impulse-driven behaviour. (A cognitive behavioural therapy tool is to remember how to stop and recognise your emotions, maybe with a structure for this, and that you should wait before reacting.)

The 'Hyperactivity' manifests as observable behaviours such as difficulty sitting still for prolonged periods. Restlessness may ensue after approximately 20 - 25 minutes, compelling movement even if only a short time has elapsed. The authors' experience of this is in how difficult it is to manage one's productivity working from home, where distractions are visible mostly to oneself only.

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

Another common symptom of ADHD in adults is difficulty with organization and time management – sometimes so strong as to be called ‘time dysmorphia’. Your partner may struggle to keep track of appointments, deadlines, and tasks, leading to feelings of overwhelm and stress. As partners, we can help our partners develop strategies for managing their time effectively, such as using calendars, to-do lists, and reminders.

Through a combination of strategies, tools, and ongoing guidance, you can help your partner navigate their challenges and achieve their goals with increased confidence.

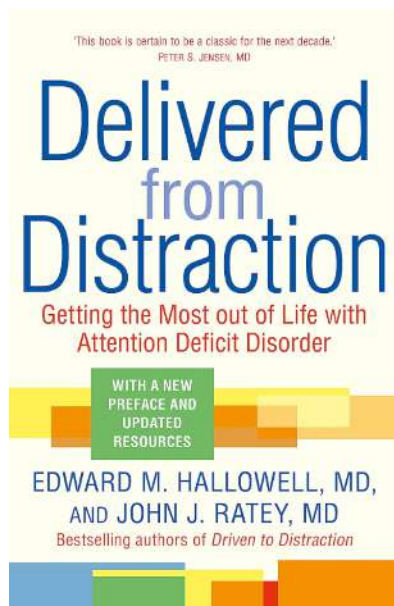
This workbook is provided as part of our course on 'Living and loving with ADHD for friends and family.'

Click here to join the interactive learning experience

### *Delivered from Distraction extract*

This extract from Ed Hallowell's book delivered from distraction is provided as a recommendation for buying the book and also to illustrate some of what is discussed in this course relating to living with ADHD as well as relating to other people.

*If there is a separate disorder called 'can't wait in lines disorder', I've got it. Cannot is the wrong word, I guess, because life does not require me to wait in lines, and I managed to do it without going berserk and getting arrested. It's just that I hate to wait. When I have to wait I tend to act, often in ways I wish I hadn't.*



## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*I am short on what you might call the intermediate reflective step between impulse and action. Like so many people with ADHD I lack tact. Tact is entirely dependent on the ability to consider your words before uttering them. We ADHD types become like the Jim Carrey character in liar liar where he cannot lie. I remember in the 5th grade I noticed my math teacher's hair in a new style and blurted out Mr. Cook, is that a toupee you are wearing? I got kicked out of class.*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*As you might imagine, intimacy can be a problem if you've got to be constantly changing the subject, pacing, scratching, and blurting out tactless remarks. My wife has learned not to take my tuning out personally, and she does say that when I'm there, I'm really there.*

*When we first met, she thought I was some kind of a nut, as I would bolt out of restaurants at the end of meals or disappear to another planet during a conversation. She has since grown accustomed to my sudden comings and goings. I am lucky I married her.*

*There is another truth about ADHD. It takes a lot of work just to do the trivial tasks like staying silent or resisting telling the policeman who stopped us that he looks just like Elmer Fudd.*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*Many of us with ADHD crave high stimulus situations. In my case, I love casinos and horse races. I deal with this passion by not going often and when I do go, I bring a modest sum that I can afford to lose. And lose I usually do! Obviously, a craving for high stimulation can get a person into trouble, which is why ADHD is prevalent amongst criminals and self-destructive risk takers. ADHD is also often found among the so-called type-a personalities, as well as among manic depressives, sociopaths, violent people, drug abusers, and Alcoholics.*

*But it is also common among creative and intuitive people in all fields, and among highly energetic, interesting, productive people. You can find high stimulation in being a surgeon, for example, or a trial attorney, or an actor, or a pilot, or a trader on the commodities exchange, all working in a newsroom or in sales or in being a race car driver!*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*Usually, the positive side of ADHD does not get mentioned when people speak about it. The tendency is to focus on what goes wrong, or at least on what has to be somehow controlled. After all, that's why people seek a diagnosis and why they seek help. Something is wrong. But once the ADHD has been diagnosed, and the child or the adult has learned how to take care of whatever was wrong, the brain offers up an untapped realm.*

*You can start to use all the great plans and ideas you've been storing up for years. Now the adult or the child who had been such a problem, such a nudge, such a general pain in the neck to himself and everybody else, starts doing things he'd never been able to do before. He surprises everyone around him. He also surprises himself. I use the male pronoun, but it could just as easily be she. Now that we are looking for it and realised that hyperactivity does not have to be part of the picture, we are seeing more and more ADHD among females.*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*People with ADHD often have a special feel for life, a way of seeing right into the heart of matters, while others have to reason their way along methodically. This is the person who can't tell you how he thought of the solution or where the idea for the invention came from, or why suddenly he produced such a painting never having painted before, or how he knew the shortcut to the answer for the geometry problem. All she can say is she just saw it, she could feel it.*

*What is the treatment all about? Anything that reduces the static and strengthens the true signal. Just making the diagnosis helps muffle the static of guilt and self-recrimination. Building certain kinds of structure into one's life, like lists, timetables and healthy habits of sleep, diet, and exercise can sharpen mental focus. Working in small spurts rather than long hauls helps. Breaking down tasks into smaller tasks helps.... Marrying the right person and finding the right job are probably the two most important treatments for adults....*

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

*Many other steps can help, like applying external limits on your dangerous impulses. Wear seatbelts when you drive. Observe the speed limit. Use a planner don't just own one. Find support from other people instead of going it alone. Find someone to be in your corner to coach you, to keep you on track.... We who have ADHD need help and understanding from others. But then who doesn't? We probably need more than the average person, as we can be especially exasperating and difficult. We may make messes wherever we go, but with the right help, those messes can be turned into realms of reason and art.*

*So, if you know someone like me of any age who's acting up and daydreaming and forgetting this or that and just not getting with the programme, consider ADHD before he starts believing all the bad things people are saying about him and it becomes too late."*

Delivered from Distraction Copyright Ed Hallowell. Short extract for educational purposes.

## *Through Their Eyes*

ADHD isn't a lack of discipline or motivation. It's a difference in how the brain manages focus, emotion, and decision-making. Adults with ADHD often live with years of misunderstanding — they may appear disorganised, forgetful, or inconsistent, when in fact their attention system is interest-based, not importance-based.

Recognising this shift changes everything. You begin to see behaviour not as defiance, but as difficulty; not as avoidance, but as overwhelm.



“What looks like carelessness is often exhaustion from trying to manage life in a world built for neurotypical brains.”

Your goal is to learn to observe, not diagnose — and to develop empathy that leads to collaboration. Key Ideas: ADHD is not about laziness or lack of willpower. It's about executive function challenges: time, focus, working memory, and emotional regulation.

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

Reframing ADHD as a neurodivergent wiring helps reduce blame and guilt.

Build empathy by viewing your ADHD family member's experience differently.

- ADHD is not about laziness or lack of willpower.
- It's about executive function challenges: time, focus, working memory, and emotional regulation.
- Reframing ADHD as a neurodivergent wiring helps reduce blame and guilt.

***Answer the following questions in your journal or print this e-book.***

*When does my ADHD friend/partner/family member seem most energised or at ease?*

*When do they appear most overwhelmed or distracted?*

*What assumptions do I make about their  
motivation or intentions in those moments?*

*How might those assumptions change if I viewed ADHD as a neurological difference rather than a personality flaw?*

*What might 'understanding' look like in action?*

## *Co-Design Map*

This exercise is for reflection, not diagnosis. Use these prompts with curiosity and kindness.

People with ADHD often benefit from external structure more than verbal reminders. Instead of repeating requests, try using shared calendars or planning sessions. Visual and shared systems—like a family calendar on the fridge or a digital app—help everyone stay on the same page. These tools reduce misunderstandings and forgotten commitments, making home life smoother.

Discuss together which systems work best for your household and remember: consistency is key to maintaining harmony.

***Answer the following questions in your journal or print this e-book.***

*What routines cause the most stress or chaos?*

*What systems help us both (reminders, cues, shared calendars)?*

*What's one habit or system we can test for the next week?*

*How can we make accountability supportive, not parental?*

*What helps us celebrate small wins?*

## *The ADHD Wheel of Concerns*

For each of the 12 symptoms

Enter a score from 0 (zero) to 10 (ten) in the relevant column (ADHD or non-ADHD)

- 0 or 1 = No concerns at all (0 or 1 is at your preference for scoring)
- 10 = Maximum critical concern (possibly tipping point item)

# *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

- **Poor Financial Management:** Poor Budgeting, late bill paying, impulse spending
- **Unequal Household Chores/Maintenance:** Unequal distribution, poor completion, dis-organization
- **Poor Time Management/Punctuality:** Lateness, missed appointments, planning
- **Neglecting Health & Wellness:** Medication adherence, routines for sleep, diet, exercise
- **Poor Emotional Regulation/Reactivity:** Managing temper, frustration, emotional intensity
- **Low Self-Esteem/Shame:** Feelings of inadequacy, guilt, or embarrassment
- **Anxiety & Depression:** Symptoms of co-occurring mental health challenges
- **Hyperfocus/Neglect:** Intense focus on one area leading to neglect in others
- **Parent-Child Dynamic:** One partner managing/policing the other
- **Communication Breakdown** Feeling unheard, interrupting, repetitive arguments
- **Lack of Follow-Through:** Broken promises, uncompleted tasks, eroded trust
- **Lack of Intimacy (Emotional & Physical):** Overall closeness, connection, desire

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

- 0 = not concerned at all about this
  - 10 = extremely concerned about this
- If your partner will do it with you, hide your ratings until they have done theirs.
- Map the values (if doing it solo) onto the wheel. If we do it together, map the difference between scores. If doing it together, map any difference showing it as a negative (e.g. -4), map them as positive (i.e. 4)
- If on your own, use your scores and judgement to decide the best way to prioritise and discuss.
- If both do it, focus on the gap and not the absolute number. Discuss what might close the gap
- Choose the three priority areas to create an action plan and feed your co-design and structures.

# *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

ADHD consequences	Score level of concern (0=none, 10=Max)		
	Non-ADHD	ADHD	Difference
<b>Poor Financial Management:</b> Poor Budgeting, late bill paying, impulse spending			
<b>Unequal Household Chores/Maintenance:</b> Unequal distribution, poor completion, dis-organization			
<b>Poor Time Management/Punctuality:</b> Lateness, missed appointments, planning			
<b>Neglecting Health &amp; Wellness:</b> Medication adherence, routines for sleep, diet, exercise			
<b>Poor Emotional Regulation/Reactivity:</b> Managing temper, frustration, emotional intensity			
<b>Low Self-Esteem/Shame:</b> Feelings of inadequacy, guilt, or embarrassment			
<b>Anxiety &amp; Depression:</b> Symptoms of co-occurring mental health challenges			
<b>Hyperfocus/Neglect:</b> Intense focus on one area leading to neglect in others			
<b>Parent-Child Dynamic:</b> One partner managing/policing the other			
<b>Communication Breakdown:</b> Feeling unheard, interrupting, repetitive arguments			
<b>Lack of Follow-Through:</b> Broken promises, uncompleted tasks, eroded trust			
<b>Lack of Intimacy (Emotional &amp; Physical):</b> Overall closeness, connection, desire			

# Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook



## *Design Our Dialogue*

Communication can be challenging when ADHD is part of the picture, especially because emotions often rise quickly. One of the most effective tools is to pause before responding—give yourself a moment to breathe and collect your thoughts. Using a calm tone can invite a calm response from your partner or family member. Remember, you set the emotional tone for the conversation.

By modeling pausing, deep breathing, and gentle tones, you help prevent emotional escalation and create space for understanding. Try practicing this together and notice how it changes the dynamic during tough conversations.

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

ADHD conversations benefit from clarity, brevity, and shared accountability — not correction or criticism. ADHD communication often breaks down because of timing and processing speed. Your ADHD partner may interrupt because they're afraid they'll forget their thought — not because they don't care what you're saying. They may forget conversations, miss cues, or appear distracted even when they're trying to focus.

The solution isn't to talk more loudly or more often — it's to co-design communication rules that work for both of you.

***Answer the following questions in your journal or print this e-book.***

*What causes the most frustration in our communication?*

*What helps each of us feel genuinely heard?*

*What patterns make things worse (interrupting, nagging, multitasking, zoning out)?*

*Write 2-3 commitments for improving how you both communicate.*

*What are the best times or settings for serious conversations?*

# *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

Some conversation starters and AI prompts to find more specific to your needs.

## ***Our communication agreement***

- “Let’s both agree to...” (example: “ask before problem-solving,” or “write key points down”)
- “When one of us gets overwhelmed, we’ll ...” (eg use written reminders for key points.)
- “We’ll use humour or a signal to pause when tension rises.”
- "We’ll pause conversations when emotions rise."
- (Add your own commitments below.)

## *Some chat prompts for ChatGPT, CoPilot, Gemini etc*

This is a text placeholder - click this text to edit.

- “Suggest ADHD-friendly communication agreements for couples or families.”
- “How can I express frustration without triggering shame?”
- “Help me write a text to clarify a misunderstanding with my ...”

## *Our Shared Future*

This exercise is for reflection, not diagnosis. Use these prompts with curiosity and kindness.

Focus on splitting tasks by strengths, not just fairness. For example, if one person is great at organizing but struggles with time management, let them handle the planning while the other takes on time-sensitive tasks. Reframe chores as a partnership—think about how you can support each other by playing to your strengths, rather than counting who does what. This approach builds teamwork and reduces resentment, making daily responsibilities feel less like a competition and more like collaboration.

***Answer the following questions in your journal or print this e-book.***

*What strengths do we each bring to this relationship?*


*What do we now understand differently about ADHD and each other?*

---

*What does 'thriving together' look like to us?*

*What habits or systems will we keep refining?*

***How can we remind each other that growth takes time – and kindness matters most?***

 Take time to share your reflections together — the goal is understanding, not perfection.

## *Moments That Matter*

This exercise is for reflection, not diagnosis. Use these prompts with curiosity and kindness.

Emotional safety is the foundation of any strong relationship. Be the safe space for your loved one, not the scoreboard. Replace judgment with curiosity—ask questions to understand, not to criticize. When your partner or family member feels safe, they're less likely to become defensive or feel ashamed. This creates an environment where everyone can be honest about their needs and challenges, leading to deeper connection and trust.

Understanding the emotional toll of ADHD: rejection sensitivity, emotional flooding, shame, and the “masking fatigue” that many adults live with. Adults with ADHD often live with deep emotional intensity. They feel rejection more strongly, experience guilt for small mistakes, and may swing between enthusiasm and burnout.

## *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

These aren't mood disorders; they're emotional regulation differences. ADHD brains have difficulty filtering emotional responses. When misunderstood, this leads to defensiveness, shame, and withdrawal. Learning to recognise the emotion behind the behaviour allows you to respond with empathy instead of criticism.

***Answer the following questions in your journal or print this e-book.***

*Think of a recent moment when you and your ADHD family member clashed or misunderstood each other:*

*What emotions were visible on the surface?*

*What feelings might have been underneath  
(shame, rejection, fear of failure, fatigue)?*

*How did you respond? How might you respond differently with more understanding?*

*Create a 'reset phrase' to use in future conflict (e.g., 'Let's pause and come back when we both feel calmer:').*

## *Summary of commitments*

Taking the final question of each Worksheet, what are you going to do by the end of this week?

*What might 'understanding' look like in action?*

*How can we remind each other that growth takes time - and kindness matters most?*

*How can we make accountability supportive, not parental?*

*Create a 'reset phrase' to use in future conflict (e.g., 'Let's pause and come back when we both feel calmer:').*

*Write 2-3 commitments for improving how you both communicate.*

### ***Goal-Setting Template (ADHD Coaching)***

This worksheet helps clients, with the support of a coach, to define goals that are Specific, Measurable, Aligned, Realistic, and Time-bound, while also including steps for Evaluation and Refinement. By setting clear and structured goals at the start of coaching or each new focus period, individuals with ADHD can maintain clarity and motivation. The process involves breaking down a main goal into actionable steps and scheduling regular reviews to ensure progress and make necessary adjustments, which is crucial for sustaining engagement and overcoming the tendency to lose focus.

For example, a client might set the goal: "Submit all weekly work reports by Friday noon for the next month." They would break this into steps (draft report on Wednesday, review Thursday, submit Friday), identify obstacles (forgetting deadlines), and plan strategies (calendar reminders, accountability check-ins).

# *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

## SMART-ER Goals Worksheet

*(Specific, Measurable, Aligned, Realistic, Time-bound,  
Engaging, Recorded)*

My Goal (specific & clear):

Why it matters to me (motivation):

Steps I can take (break into small actions):

How I'll measure success (what progress looks like):

Deadline / Timeframe: \_\_\_\_\_

What might get in the way?

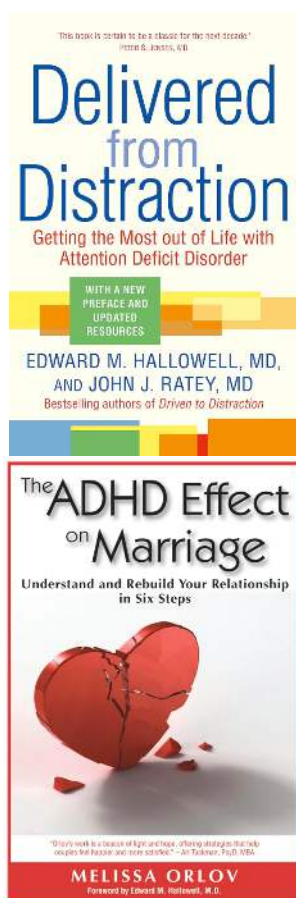
- Potential obstacle: \_\_\_\_\_
- My strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

Support I need (people, reminders, tools):

Reward when I reach it: 🎉

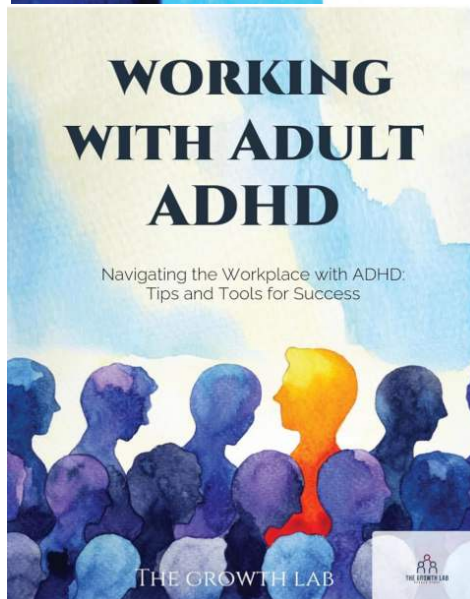
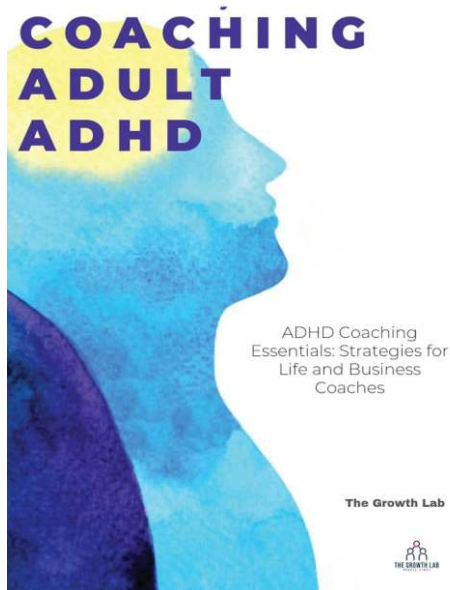
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# *Living and Loving with ADHD Workbook*

Coaching Adult ADHD by Jeremy Farrell





## The Growth Lab

**The Growth Lab is committed to training coaches and developing people who are neurodiverse and neurotypical.**

[!\[\]\(f8021f2863ff022ca9b09416c5c56134\_img.jpg\) Learn more](#)

# *Living and loving with Adult ADHD*

This "hidden disability" often results in easy distraction and veering off course, such as becoming engrossed in internet browsing when intending a brief search. The 'Attention Deficit' of ADHD affects executive functions of the brain, responsible for planning, memory retention, focusing, and task organization. What might 'understanding' look like in action? How can we remind each other that growth takes time — and kindness matters most? How can we make accountability supportive, not parental? Create a 'reset phrase' to use in future conflict (e.g., 'Let's pause and come back when we both feel calmer. The process involves breaking down a main goal into actionable steps and scheduling regular reviews to ensure progress and make necessary adjustments, which is crucial for sustaining engagement and overcoming the tendency to lose focus. For example, a client might set the goal: "Submit all weekly work reports by Friday noon for the next month." They would break this into steps (draft report on Wednesday, review Thursday, submit Friday), identify obstacles (forgetting deadlines), and plan strategies (calendar reminders, accountability check-ins).