

EVIDENCE-BASED ADHD EDUCATION

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR PROVIDER ABOUT ADHD

A simple guide to explaining what's actually happening in
your life



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YOU ARE NOT THE PROBLEM — THE EXPLANATION USUALLY IS.

Most people walk into an appointment and say things like:

“I’m forgetful”

“I can’t focus”

“I feel all over the place”

And while those are real experiences...

they’re often not enough on their own for a provider to make a diagnosis.

**ADHD is not diagnosed based on symptoms alone.
It is diagnosed based on how those symptoms are
affecting your daily life.**

This is called **functional impairment** —

and it is one of the most important parts of an evaluation.

This guide will help you explain that clearly.

WHAT YOUR PROVIDER NEEDS TO HEAR

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

“I’M FORGETFUL”

“I CAN’T FOCUS”

“I FEEL
OVERWHELMED”

WHAT ACTUALLY HELPS

I miss deadlines at work
and it’s putting my job at
risk

I start tasks but can’t finish
them, and it’s affecting my
performance

→ My responsibilities pile
up and I shut down — I’m
falling behind

The goal is simple:
Connect the symptom → to the real-life impact





LET'S MAP WHAT'S ACTUALLY HAPPENING

Work / School

- Am I missing deadlines?
- Am I underperforming compared to my ability?
- Have I been warned or struggling to keep up?

Home / Daily Life

- Do I struggle with bills, chores, or organization?
- Does life feel constantly chaotic or unfinished?

Relationships

- Has this caused tension with a partner, family, or friends?
- Do people get frustrated with me for things I “should” be able to do?

Emotional Impact

- Do I feel overwhelmed, frustrated, or discouraged often?
- Do I feel like I’m “failing” at things others manage easily?

Safety / Risk (if applicable)

- Have I had accidents or close calls due to inattention?
- Am I making impulsive decisions that affect my well-being?

WHAT TO SAY IN YOUR APPOINTMENT

*You don't need to be perfect.
You just need to be clear and specific.*

**"I think I may have ADHD,
but more importantly, this is how it's affecting my life..."**

EXAMPLE:

"I struggle with focus, but what's really happening is I'm missing deadlines, my finances are disorganized, and it's affecting my relationship."



IMPORTANT TO KNOW

This guide is intended for education and preparation only and is not a substitute for a medical evaluation.

A qualified provider will consider multiple factors before making any diagnosis.



*You deserve to be
understood —
this helps you explain your
experience more clearly.*

NEED HELP PUTTING THIS INTO WORDS FOR YOUR SITUATION?

I OFFER SHORT EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

designed to help you organize your thoughts, better understand what you're experiencing, and feel more confident and prepared going into your appointment.

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