





Academics with ADHD: Making the university workplace more accessible for neurodivergent people

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ADHD PARALYSIS

LOOKS LIKE



FEELS LIKE

I should clean. I really should. Ugh, there's so much stuff. I know I'd feel better after... but it'll take so long. Okay. Just get up off the couch. DO IT. Why isn't my body moving?! I shouldn't have put it off this long. Maybe I'll just do it tomorrow. But I said tomorrow the last two weeks. Why can't I just do it? My parents' house is so clean, am I just a bad adult? I feel like I'm being so lazy. But I'm trying as hard as I can! Maybe I can download a cleaning app. I mean, I already tried that and quit it within three days, so I don't think that would be different. Maybe I should invite someone over to help. No, that'll just require me to shove everything into a closet forever. I really need to get up. I know things might be a bit messy, but it's basic stuff, I feel like I can handle it. I struggle with the thought of picking up things. I want to organize your room, but I'm so embarrassed to ask for help.



adddd.com

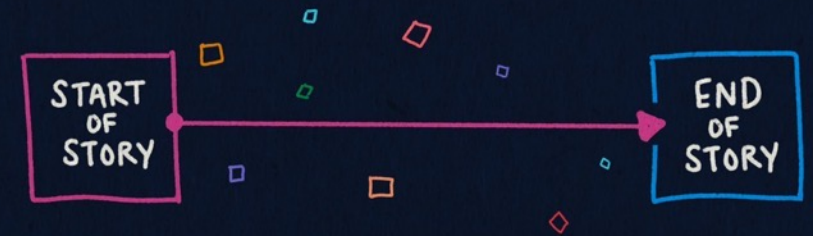
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@danidonovan

How to tell my story

- **Part I**
What is (my) ADHD
- **Part II**
ADHD & the Workplace
- **Part III**
ADHD Support

NON-ADHD STORYTELLING



ADHD STORYTELLING



I have ADHD
Who? Me?



Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRS-v1.1) Symptom Checklist

Patient Name	Paul Peters		Today's Date	Oct 22, 2020			
Please answer the questions below, rating yourself on each of the criteria shown using the scale on the right side of the page. As you answer each question, place an X in the box that best describes how you have felt and conducted yourself over the past 6 months. Please give this completed checklist to your healthcare professional to discuss during today's appointment.			Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. How often do you have trouble wrapping up the final details of a project, once the challenging parts have been done?							X
2. How often do you have difficulty getting things in order when you have to do a task that requires organization?							X
3. How often do you have problems remembering appointments or obligations?						X	
4. When you have a task that requires a lot of thought, how often do you avoid or delay getting started?							X
5. How often do you fidget or squirm with your hands or feet when you have to sit down for a long time?						X	
6. How often do you feel overly active and compelled to do things, like you were driven by a motor?				X			
Part A							
7. How often do you make careless mistakes when you have to work on a boring or difficult project?							X
8. How often do you have difficulty keeping your attention when you are doing boring or repetitive work?							X
9. How often do you have difficulty concentrating on what people say to you, even when they are speaking to you directly?				X			
10. How often do you misplace or have difficulty finding things at home or at work?		X					
11. How often are you distracted by activity or noise around you?						X	
12. How often do you leave your seat in meetings or other situations in which you are expected to remain seated?					X		
13. How often do you feel restless or fidgety?						X	
14. How often do you have difficulty unwinding and relaxing when you have time to yourself?							X
15. How often do you find yourself talking too much when you are in social situations?		X					
16. When you're in a conversation, how often do you find yourself finishing the sentences of the people you are talking to, before they can finish them themselves?		X					
17. How often do you have difficulty waiting your turn in situations when turn taking is required?		X					
18. How often do you interrupt others when they are busy?		X					
Part B							

What is (my)

ADHD?

Diagnosis

The 3 ADHD-Types

mostly
Hyperactive -
Impulsive



Combined



mostly
Inattentive
(formerly "ADD")



What is (my) ADHD?

ADHD - HI Aliens are what most people think of when they hear ADHD.

They're Hyperactive in talking or movement, impulsive and are always looking for new paths in life. Emotions can boil up fast as they are very passionate!
They might blurt out one or two inappropriate things in their fight against injustice.

(also ADHD-PH)

ADHD - C is probably the most "confusing" type, as they show Symptoms from both sides, not really belonging into one category.

Not being quite "Hyperactive" enough to fit the stereotype, this ambiguity might be why they have a hard time realizing they have ADHD.

ADHD - I can be the hardest to detect due to the lack of visible Hyperactivity.

In fact, they might appear to move unusually slow, as they try to deal with their hyperactive mind. This makes them amazing observers. They might not notice when being talked to, but will notice even the most trivial things.

(also ADHD-PI)

ADHD-Alien.com

What is (my)
ADHD?

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS
WHO HAS ADHD?

~~EXTROVERTED~~ ~~YOUNG~~
CAN BE INTROVERTED ANY AGE

~~BOY~~ WHO ~~FIDGETS A LOT,~~
ANY GENDER MIGHT NOT BE HYPERACTIVE

~~STRUGGLES~~ IN SCHOOL,
MAY EXCEL

AND ~~CAN'T PAY~~ ATTENTION
HAS DIFFICULTY REGULATING

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5. How often do you fidget or squirm with your hands or feet when you have to sit down for a long time?						X	
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Part A							
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18. How often do you interrupt others when they are busy?			X				
Part B							



Anxiety

What is (my)
ADHD?

Diagnosis

What is (my)
ADHD?
Anxiety

How ADHD causes Anxiety

& How Anxiety masks ADHD



I was constantly late thanks to time blindness



Now I can't relax before appointments and arrive way too early



I always forgot what I wanted to say and kept switching topics



So I never talk about myself anymore



I was always told I'm too loud and interrupt people



So I try to be quiet and not say anything out of place



I always got in trouble for losing things



So I obsessively check my belongings every few minutes

How ADHD causes Anxiety

& How Anxiety masks ADHD



I got told that I don't try hard enough



So I try harder at the cost of my health



I have a hard time re-organizing and deciding spontaneously



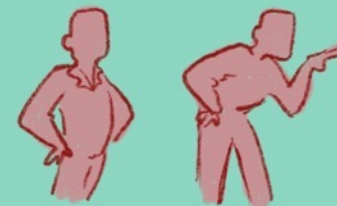
So I obsessively prepare and plan every little detail



I always got in trouble for being hyperactive and clumsy



So I forcefully don't move at all



All the things I misunderstood and got told I did „wrong“



Make me fear more rejection. So I became a people pleaser

What is (my) ADHD?

BEFORE MY ADHD DIAGNOSIS @adhdactually

What if it turns out I don't have ADHD and I'm just looking for an excuse for my laziness?

AFTER MY ADHD DIAGNOSIS @adhdactually

What if my acting was so good in my assessment, that I tricked my ADHD specialist into diagnosing me?



[@adhdactually](#)

IT'S NORMAL AFTER GETTING A LATE DIAGNOSIS OF ADHD TO FEEL RELIEVED AND...

[@adhdactually](#)



That your ADHD feels worse somehow (some traits are more noticeable after diagnosis!)



Upset & angry that you weren't diagnosed earlier.



Confused whether or not to share your diagnosis with family, friends or work.

[@adhdactually](#)



Overwhelmed by all the information out there!



Worried about trying medication

[adhdactually.com](#)



Excited about the future!

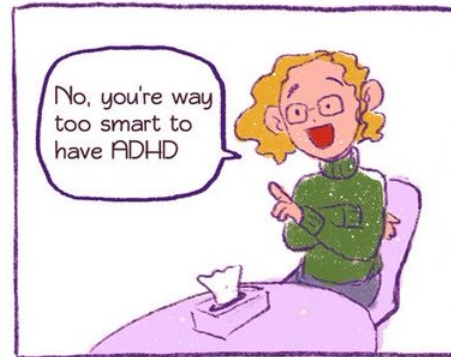
People whose judgement over ADHD you should trust



Uncle Rob at the family dinner ❌



Karen with the essential oils ❌



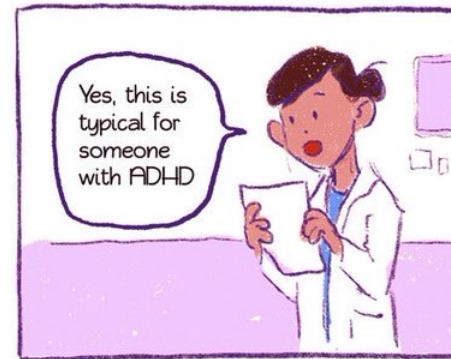
Your checklist loving therapist ❌



The mean, bully you ❌



Your gut feeling (you know the one) ✓

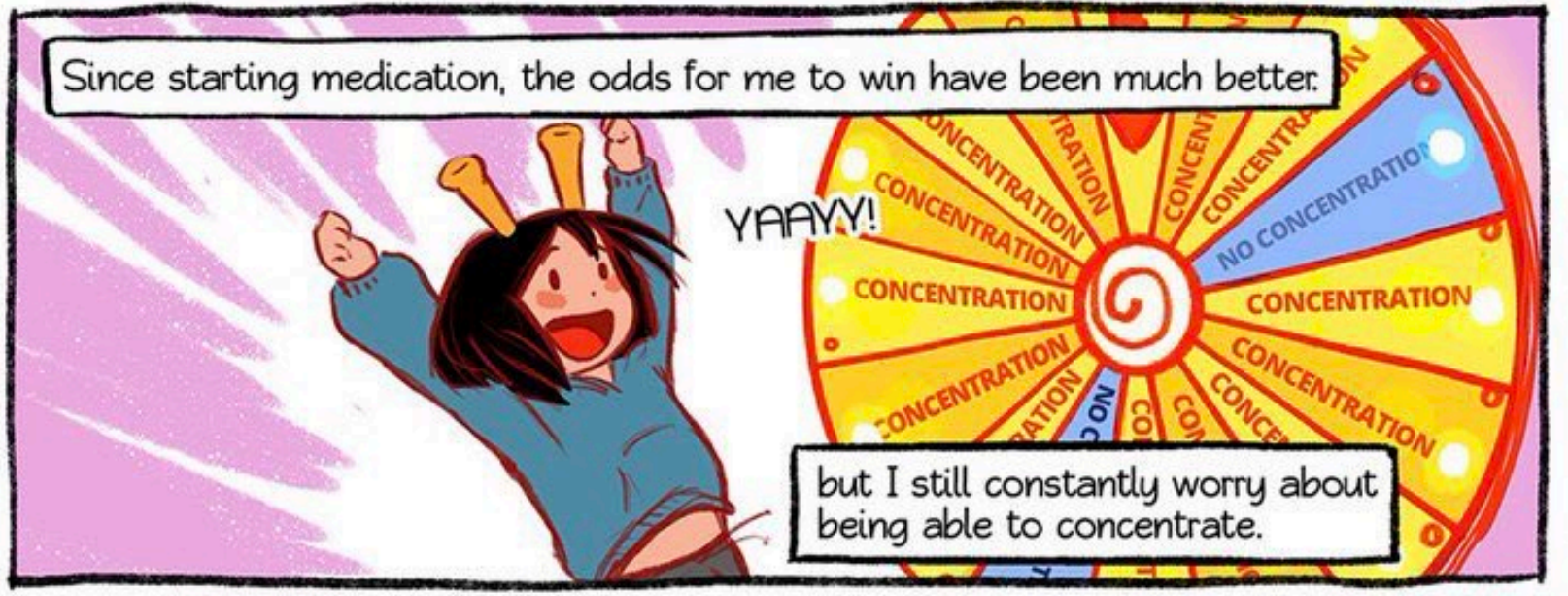
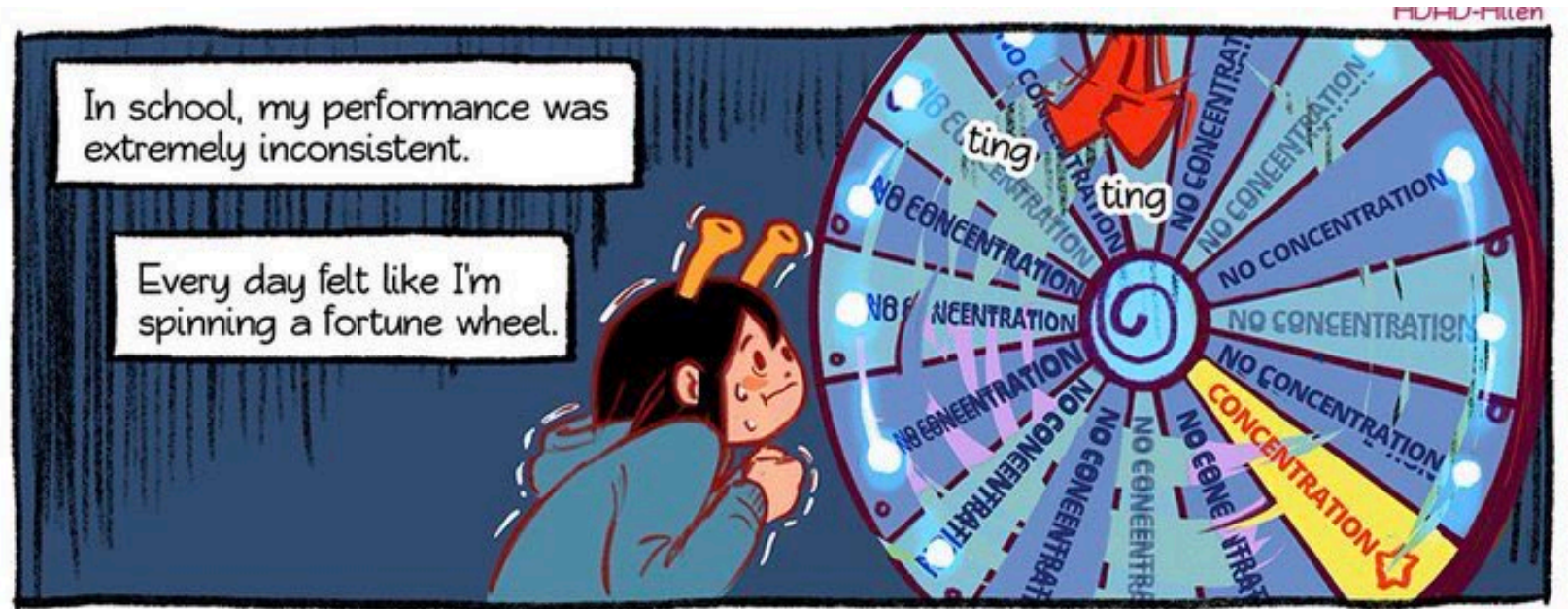


Doctor specialized in ADHD ✓

What is (my)
ADHD?

Treatment

What is (my) ADHD?
Treatment



What is (my)
ADHD?



Rach with ADHD
@AdultingADHD



I used to think that I lacked discipline, but all along I had undiagnosed ADHD.

2:18 PM · Apr 25, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

233 Retweets **21** Quote Tweets **1,669** Likes



Squish / April 🐙🐟
@ndpoet



1/ Dear colleague/friend,

The thing about ADHD, and the thing a lot of folks without ADHD don't seem to grasp is that it is not simply a matter of trying harder. We already try a lot harder than folks without ADHD, because we have to, often just to tread water in our lives.

10:53 PM · Apr 26, 2021 · chirr.app

1,334 Retweets **167** Quote Tweets **4,919** Likes

ADHD & the Workplace: Recognition

So I have ADHD, and—

ADHD isn't real.

...what

And even if it is real, it's SO over-diagnosed.

Yeah, bye.

IT'S ALL A PLOY BY **BIG PHARMA** TO GET OUR KIDS HOOKED ON STIMULANTS

adhd.com

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@danidonovan





Lazy people don't tend to work as hard as they can to avoid being called lazy.

**Lazy people often don't obsess over the task they're avoiding, with their mind begging them to 'just do the thing!'.
@adhdactually**

Laziness doesn't often occur with feelings of shame and inadequacy.

Laziness is NOT the same as Executive Dysfunction.

Laziness ≠ ADHD

@adhdactually

ADHD & the Workplace: Recognition



GETTING STARTED

"TO-DO LISTS"

NON-ADHD

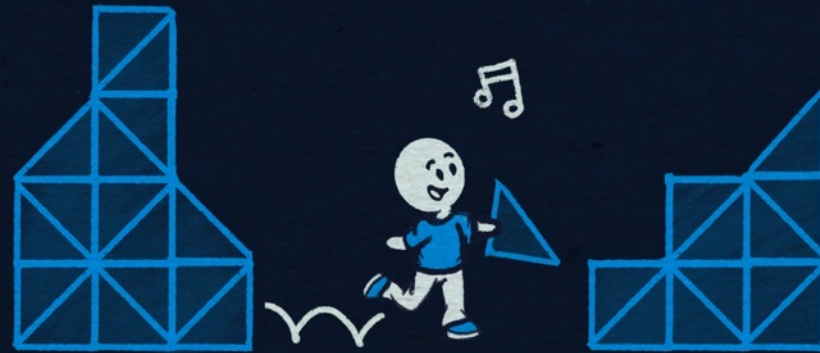
ADHD

TO-DO

DONE

TO-DO

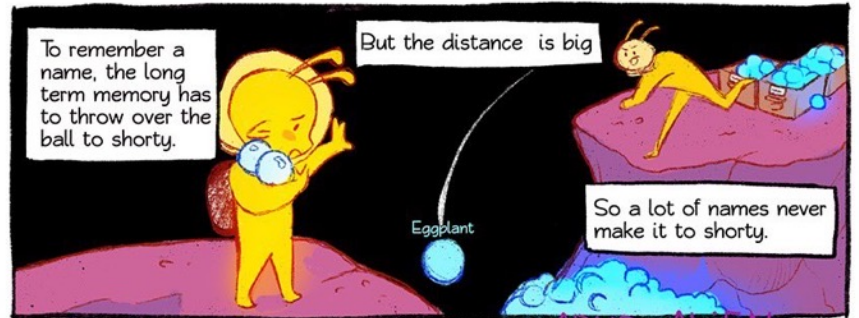
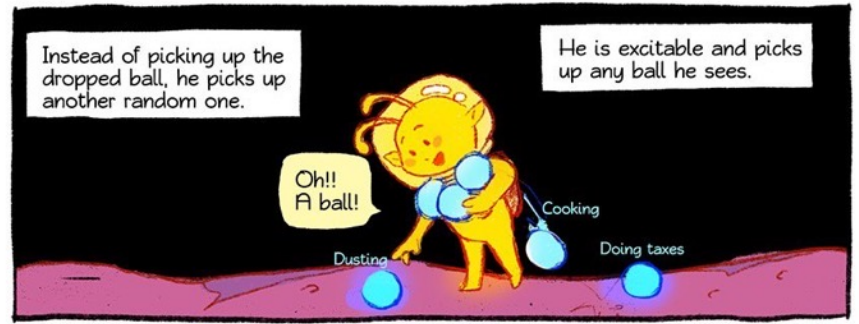
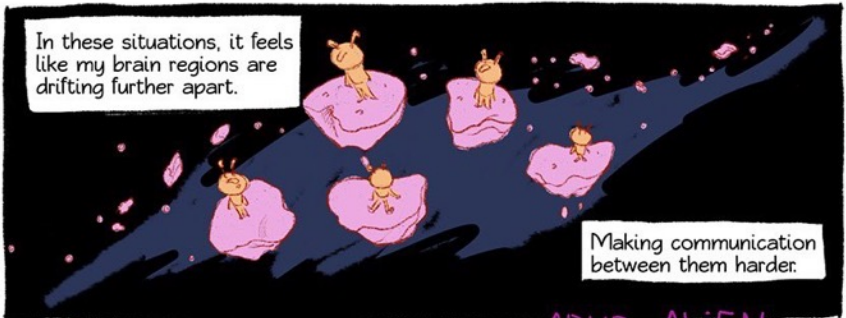
DONE



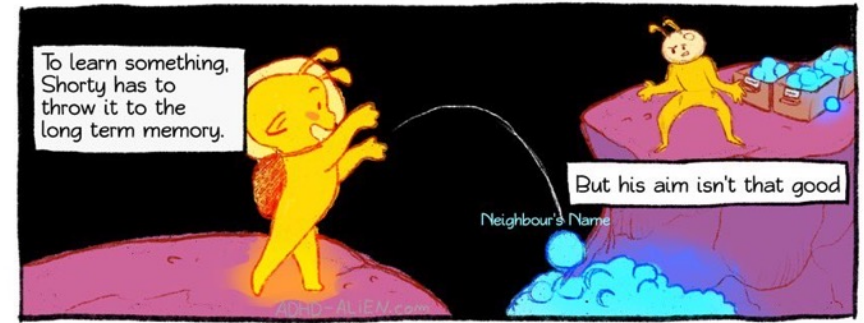
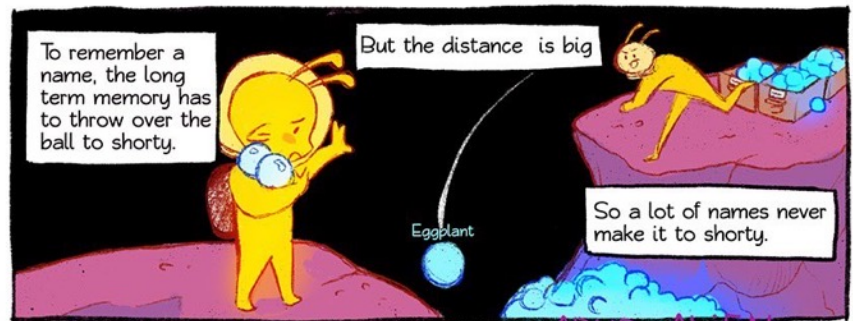
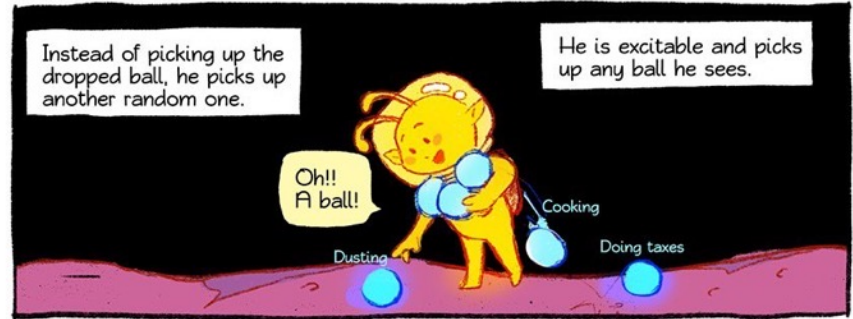
ADHD & the
Workplace:
Task
Initiation



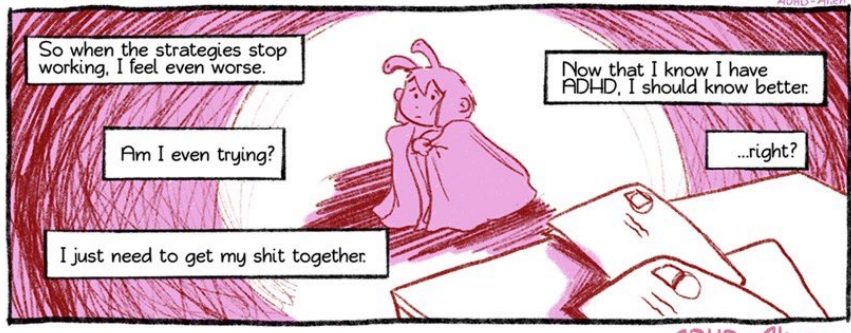
ADHD & the Workplace: Working Memory



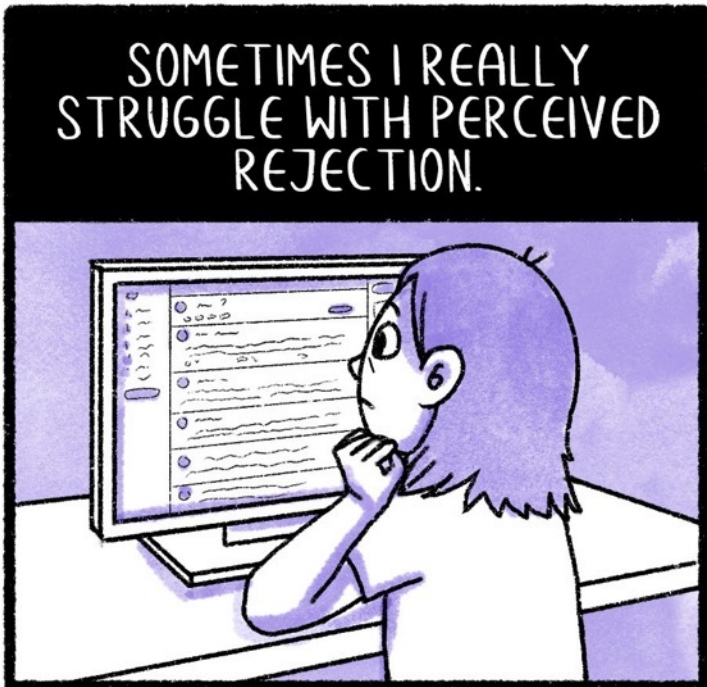
ADHD & the Workplace: Working Memory



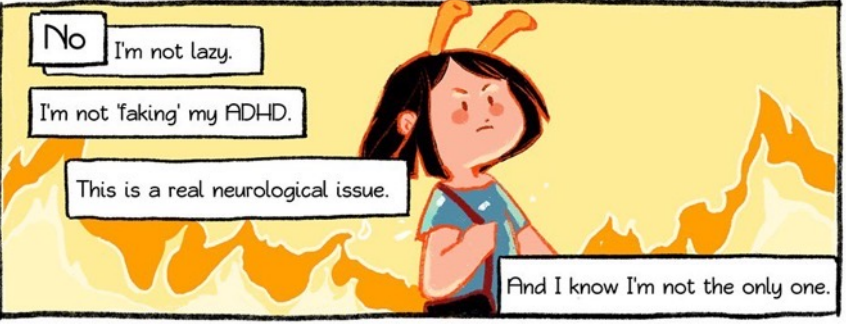
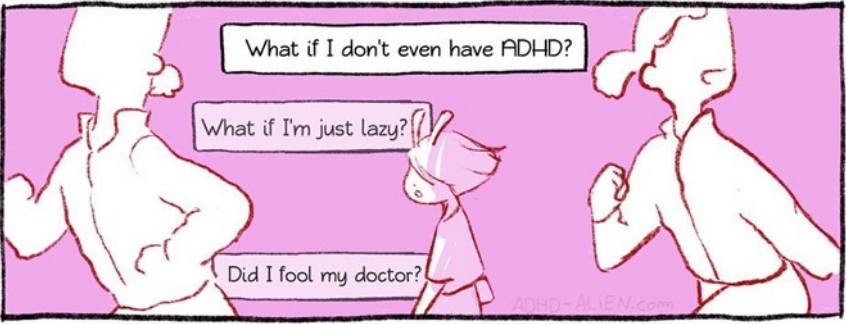
ADHD & the Workplace: Task Organization



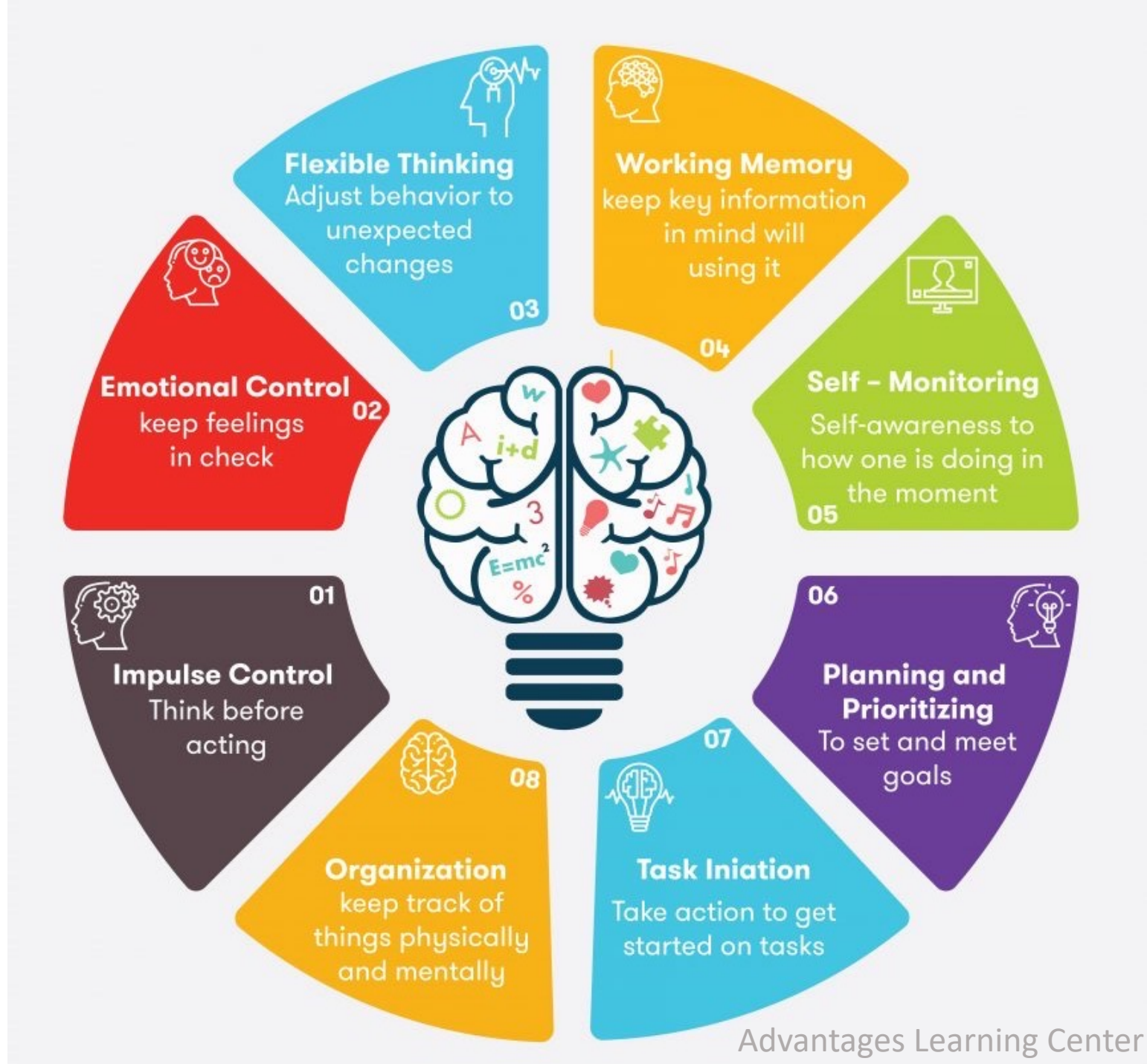
ADHD & the Workplace:
Perceived Rejection



ADHD & the Workplace: Executive Functioning

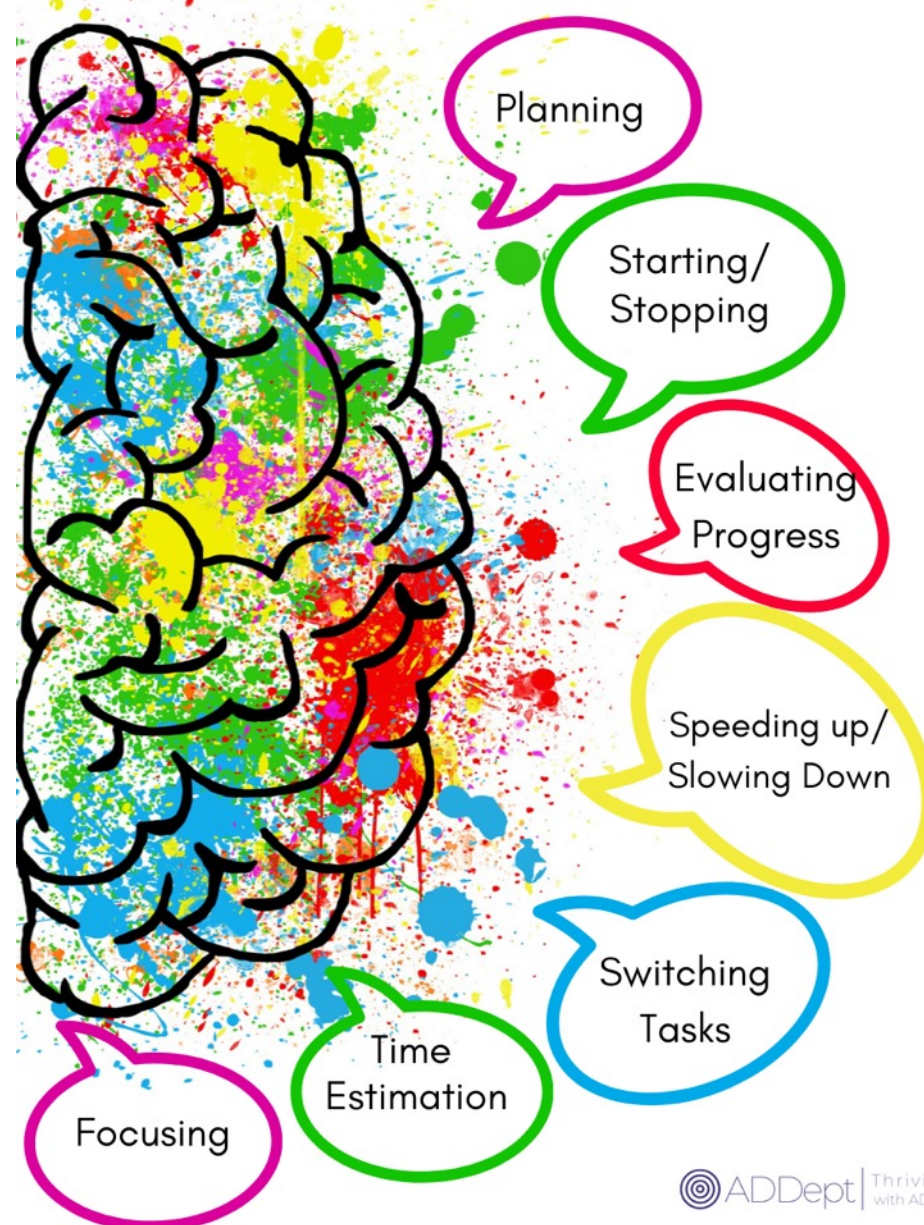


ADHD & the Workplace: Executive Functioning



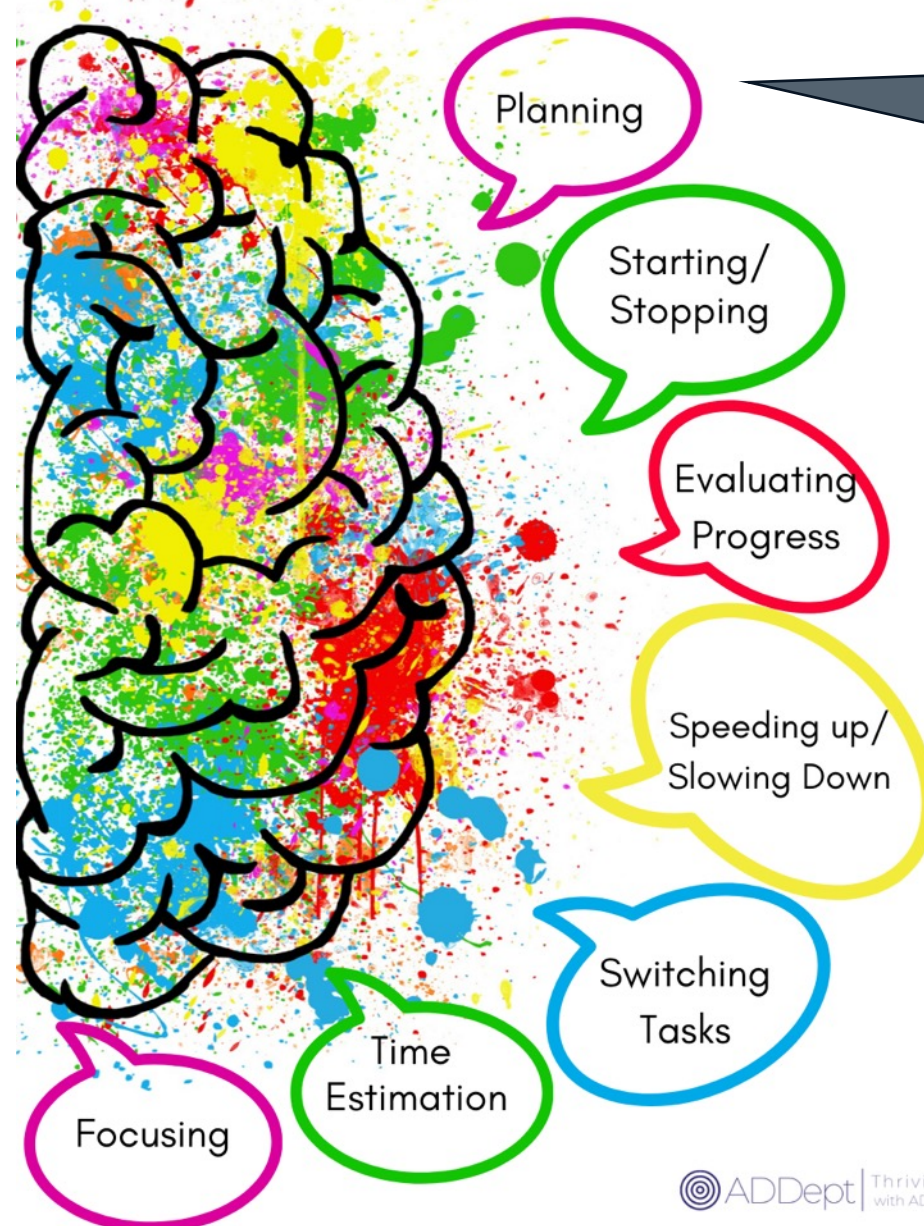
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

ADHD
Support



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

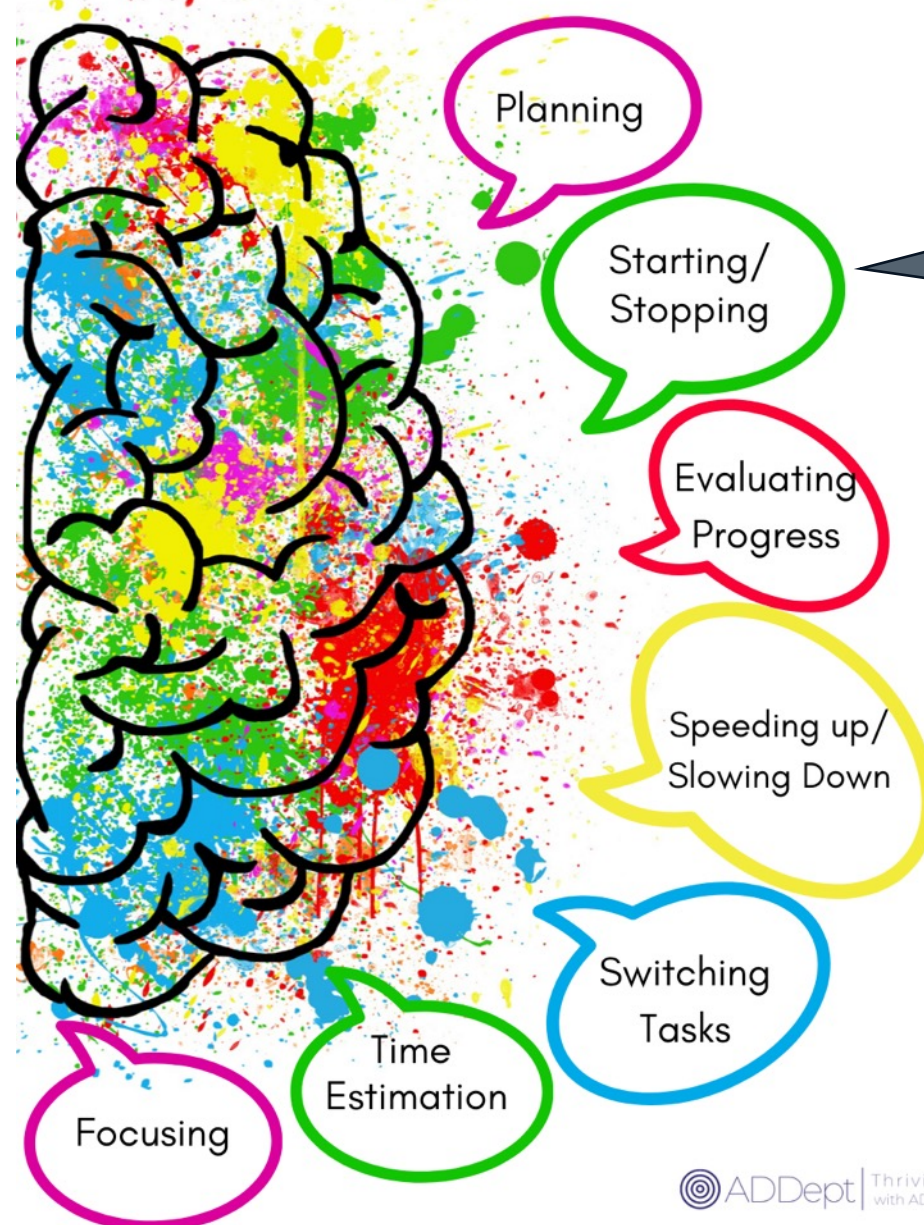
ADHD
Support



Applies to small & large tasks
Provide templates & tools
Review plans together
Work in a team
Assist in breaking down tasks

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

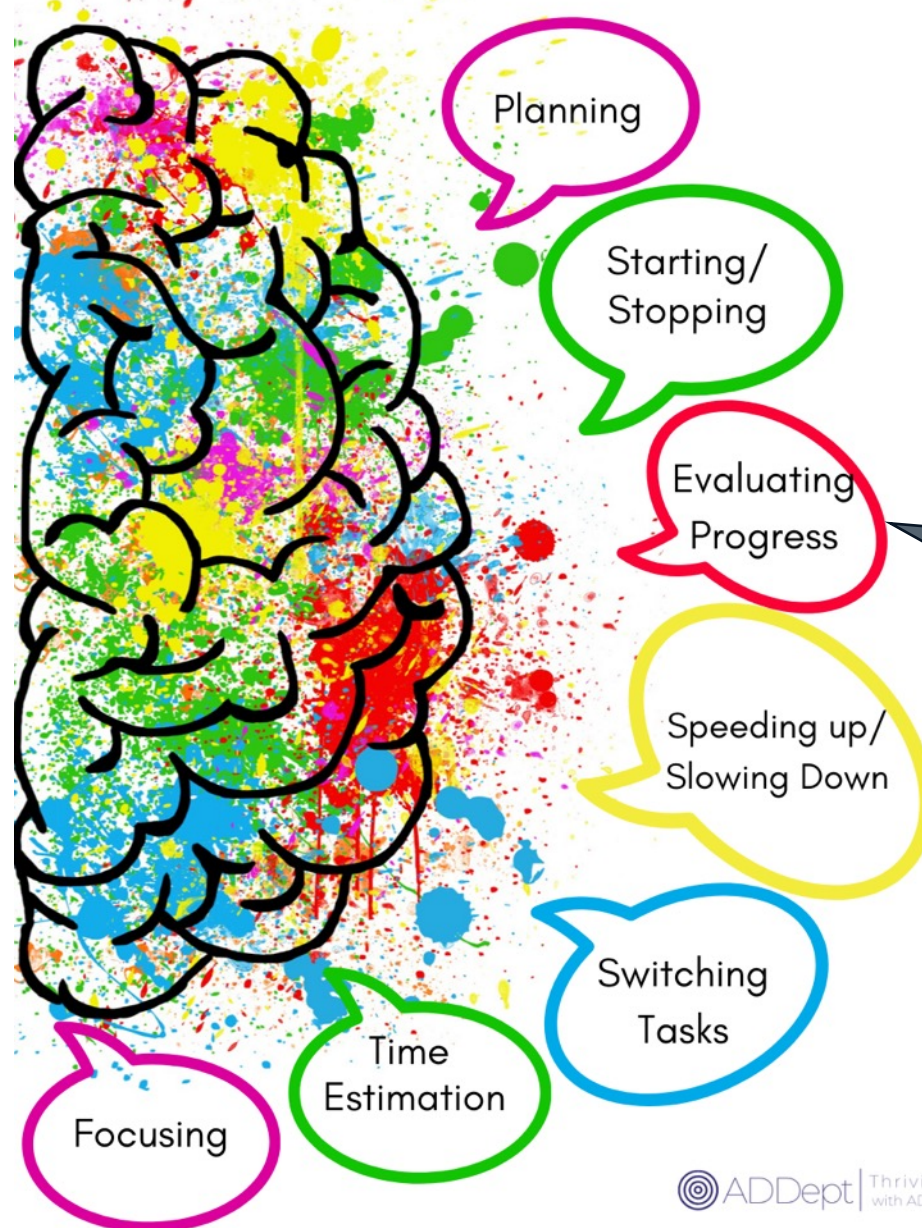
ADHD
Support



Start a task with someone else
Use cues to start tasks
Don't work late or at home
Set a time limit for tasks
User timers (pomodoro)

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

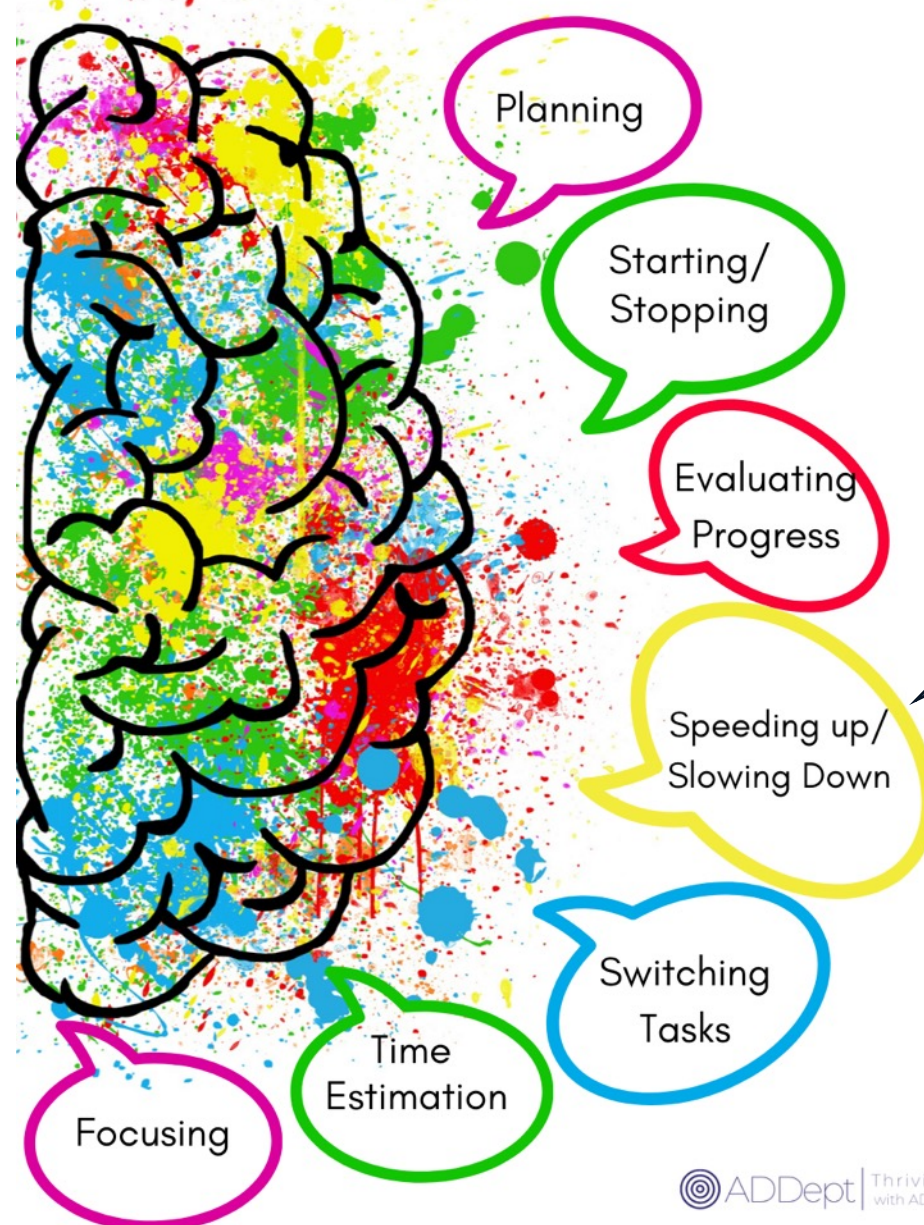
ADHD
Support



Set clear expectations together
Provide evaluation frameworks
Have interim checkpoints
Review together

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

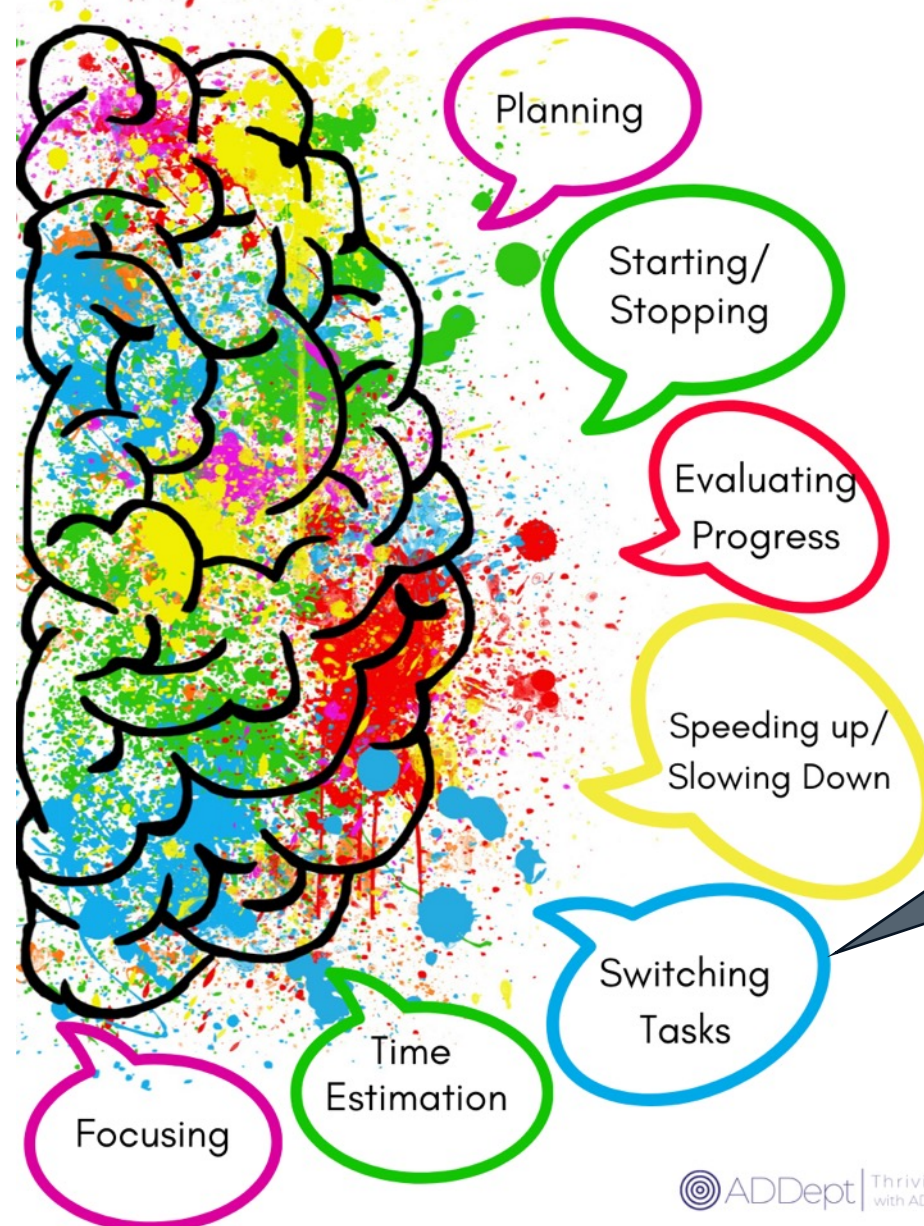
ADHD
Support



Monitor & record task times
Have lag time before shifting

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

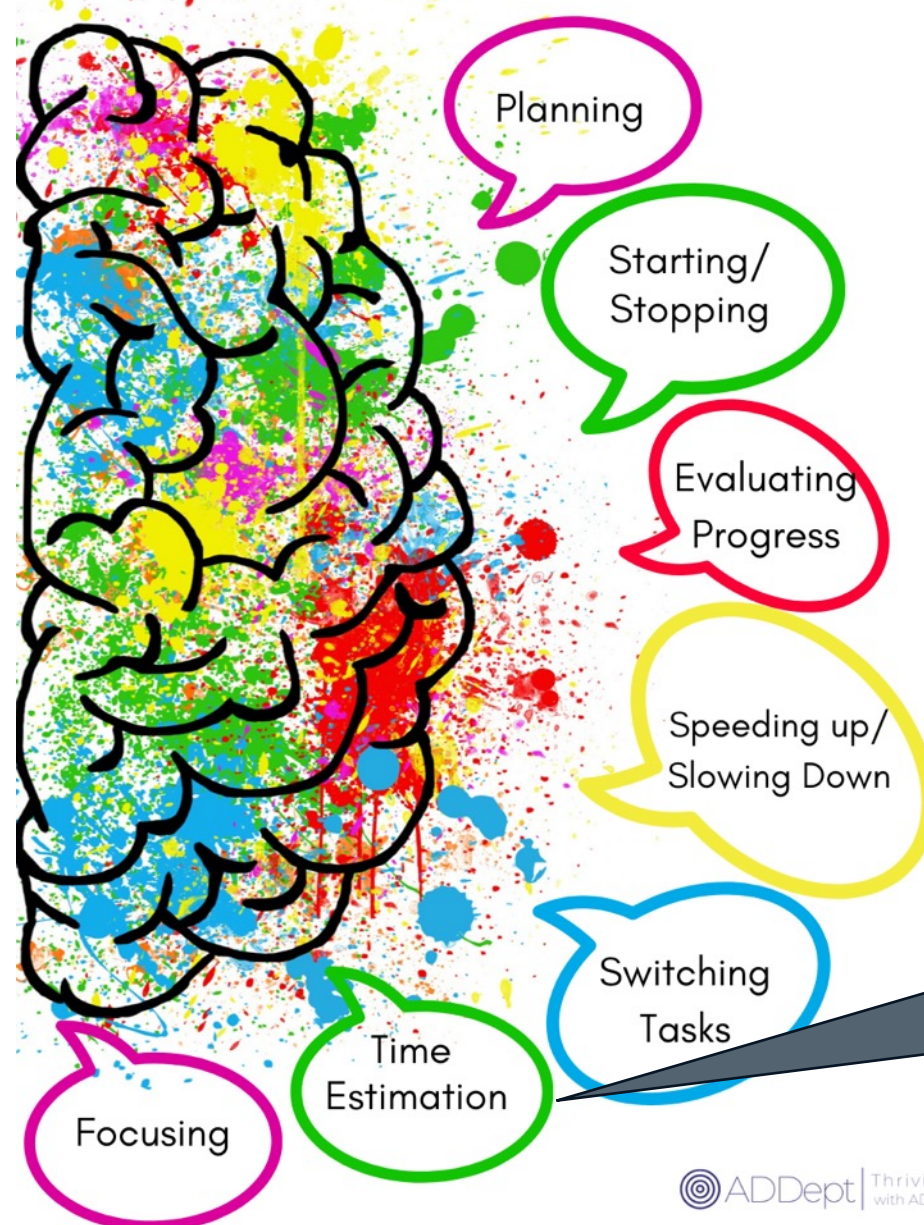
ADHD
Support



Take breaks between switching
Changes places by task
Have advanced warning
“Clear your mind” worksheet
Clean up other work

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

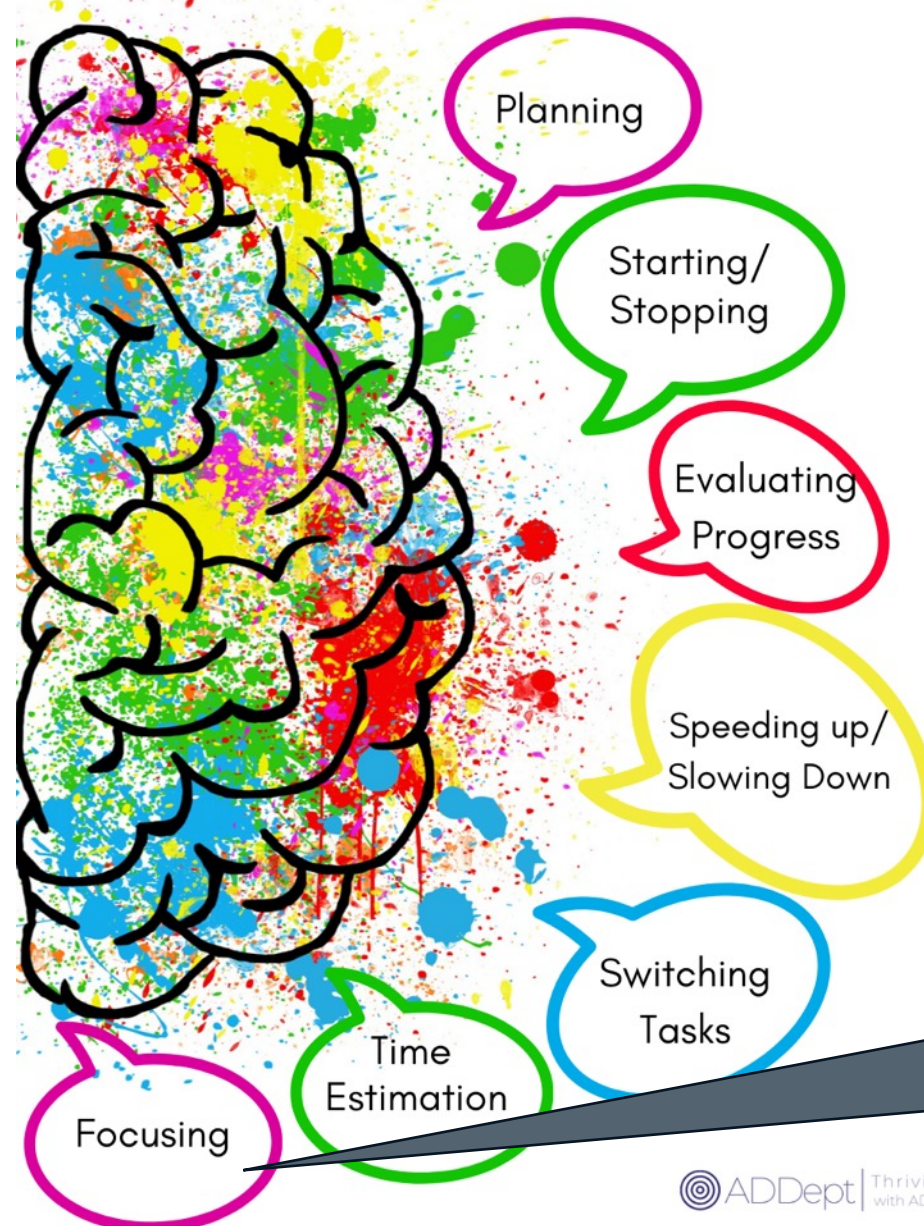
ADHD
Support



Keep track of time for tasks
Estimate time with someone
Always add more time
Externally monitor time

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING TASKS IMPACTED BY ADHD

ADHD
Support



Routine, routine, routine
Avoid cubicle environments
Use headphones
Use physical tools (toys, etc.)
No electronic distractions

ADHD Support

How to assist an ADHD-Alien in succeeding with chores



✓ Do

- ☆ set concrete deadlines with rewards
- 📅 put tasks into priority, what should be done first?
- 👤 start the task with them and let them finish it alone.
- ? find out where exactly they got stuck.
 - No Buttons for starting?
 - Can't decide what to do?
 - Got distracted by what?
- 🏠 make the house and chores ADHD Friendly.

✗ Don't

- ? give unspecific tasks like "do the laundry"
- 📅 give too many tasks at once, DO spread them out in a calendar or planner
- 👤 make a habit of taking on chores in their stead.
- 🗣️ ask them "why haven't you done xxx?"
- ! compare them to others and enforce a certain way of doing things

ADHD-ALIEN.com

Examples

Remember that we don't need all of these all the time and that some days are better than others!

"Do the Laundry"

When?	Which? Color? White?	Hang? Dry?
1 Button	1 Button	1 Button

Costs 3 Buttons only for decision making

Write down the tasks

- please do color laundry
- until 7pm (when I get home)
- Let's go to the lake after

ADHD unfriendly house

Open Lid 1 Button

Put in Trash 1 Button

Open Cupboard 1 Button

Cost: 3 Buttons

ADHD friendly house

Put in Trash 1 Button

Cost: 1 Button

ADHD-ALIEN.com



ADHD & Work from Home

ADHD &

Switching to having to work from home can be stressful and taxing for many people. Listed here are problems that can additionally be affected by ADHD.



Come on! Let that information into my head!!

It feels like my brain doesn't want to think deep thoughts and I often catch myself daydreaming instead



I fall into excessive snacking, coffee drinking or gaming habits to stimulate and self-medicate

working from home

ADHD-Alien.com
Facebook: ADHDAlien Instagram: ADHD_Alien Twitter: ADHD-Alien



I have trouble prioritizing and lose track of what needs to be done, so work starts to feel overwhelming



It feels like I can only manage either house chores or work, so I constantly feel guilty for not doing enough

ADHD-Alien

ADHD & Work from Home



I often end up not taking any breaks and have problems mentally letting go of work in the evening

Try the pomodoro technique!



It's easier for me to get distracted in virtual meetings than in person, making me miss important information



The stress from having to fight my head all day keeps me constantly exhausted, even when I rest

[f ADHDAlien](#) [@ADHD_Alien](#) [t ADHD-Alien](#)



hm, no fever... so why can't I work?

I can't work and I don't know why or how long, so I get into trouble for not notifying anyone soon enough



My sleeping habits get worse, especially when I don't feel I've done enough or haven't finished a task



My problems working make me question my skills and my ability to achieve anything

[ADHD-Alien.com](#)

ADHD & Work from Home

ADHD &

Switching to having to work from home can be stressful and taxing for many people. Listed here are problems that can additionally be affected by ADHD.



Without colleagues nearby and less accountability, I have trouble starting to work

Try body doubling!



ADHD-Alien

My coping skills seem to stop working and I start feeling powerless

working from home

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Facebook: ADHDAlien Instagram: ADHD_Alien Twitter: ADHD-Alien



Without the routine of having to leave home, it's hard for me to shower and cook regularly



My trouble perceiving time heightens my anxiety. When was that deadline again?

ADHD & Work from Home



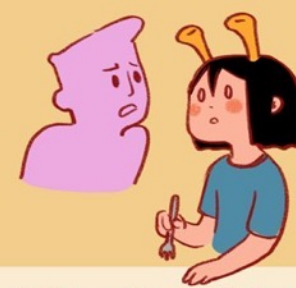
With the lack of stimulation, work starts to feel purposeless and deadlines less important



Without anyone around, I'm bored and thus frustrated faster and have a harder time controlling my emotions



Being distracted by things around me makes me irritated, so arguments happen more often



I find it hard to shift from work-mode to empathy-mode, and it's straining my relationships



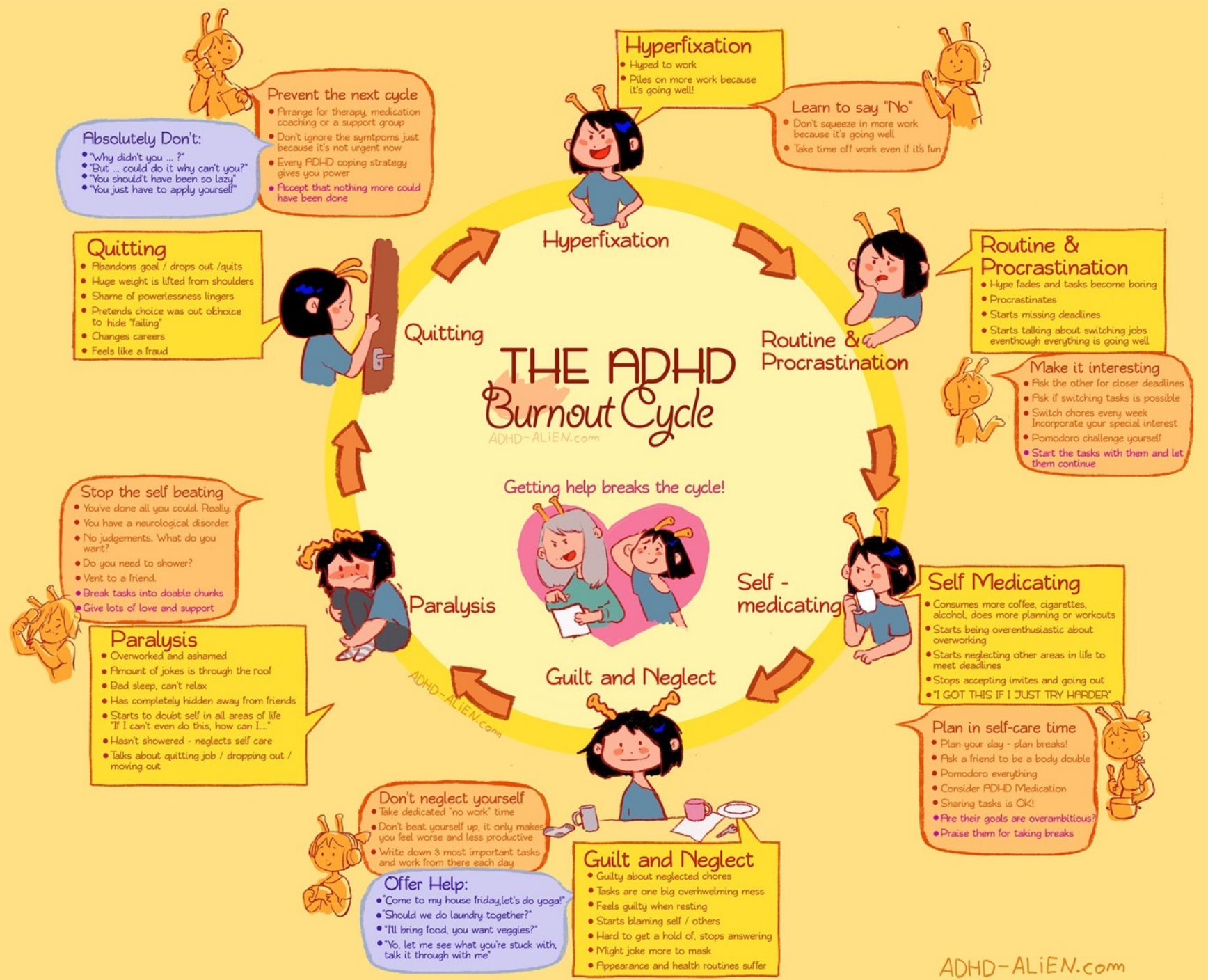
Without my usual social circle I more easily hyperfocus on my negative thoughts



My bad time perception makes it feel like time has stopped and there is no future in sight

ADHD-Alien

ADHD & Burnout



Many Thanks

Thanks to the many ADHD artists and coaches who are part of the ADHD Twitter and Instagram #NeuroDiverseSquad

Thanks to everyone for listening



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carleton.ca/determinants/



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