

NOT Broken

by Linda Walker

Sixteen years ago, right around this time of year, I was shopping for school supplies with my youngest daughter. I'll always remember my adorable 6 year-old telling me with the saddest look in her eyes, "I wish I was normal." It took everything I had to hold back the tears. Diagnosed with ADHD the year before, despite ADHD medications and a structured home environment, she was still struggling in school. The prospect of going back to school, reminded my normally happy, excitable little girl that she was "broken."

A year and a half later, my husband was diagnosed with ADHD and began taking medication. We'd invested money we didn't have in his diagnosis and a course to learn more about ADHD, but still our lives were chaotic. Exhausted by the workload of my job, almost all the household chores and everything that goes into managing household with two kids in school, our constant fighting and the endless hours of homework with my daughter, I remember being resigned to living a life of continuous struggle.

Back then, few, if any, successful people came out of the closet with their ADHD. Eventually, a few recognized personalities and successful business people did declare their ADHD and told us they succeeded, and promised that we could too, though few offered the path that led to their success. For many of us, it seemed that the answer was mostly magic.

Luckily, my husband did find someone who told him that ADHD coaching could work. The enormous positive impact of the early ADHD coaching that Duane received later inspired me to become an ADHD coach myself. As I began working with my first clients, I realized that a big part of my role was to help them move beyond resignation to develop the belief that they were NOT broken. I vowed that one day, I would find a way to inspire other struggling ADHDers, to give them the courage and hope it takes to keep moving forward.

Later, I enrolled in the Landmark Education course, Self-Expression and Leadership, a program in which you use the creation and management of a community-based project to allow you to develop and practice your leadership skills. This was the perfect opportunity to honour my vow, and so, the ADHD Heroes project was born. An entirely volunteer-run project, we created the ADHD Heroes project with its tagline, From Struggle to Success: the Heroes Are in the Stories. Our mandate is to find successful ADHDers and share their stories with the world.

ADHD Heroes include people with ADHD from all occupations and lifestyles. Their only qualification is that they have demonstrated success in an area of their lives, despite, or because of, their ADHD. Because ADHD

struggles often affect entire families, we also include non-ADHD spouses of successful ADHDers, as we know that many spouses play a major role in their ADHDer's success; we want to recognize their invaluable contribution, but we also want to capture and share their secrets.

ADHD Heroes is a growing and evolving Web site that you can contribute to in any number of ways. You can read the stories you'll find here shortly and provide feedback, you can share your own story to provide hope, inspiration and motivation for others facing similar challenges, or... and this is what we need most at this early stage of the project...

You Can Volunteer

You can volunteer your expertise, your enthusiasm, your special skills and your time to help define the future of the ADHD Heroes Project. You, and people just like you, will create the ADHD Heroes project. In fact, we can't build it without you.

What will ADHD Heroes become in the future? It will become whatever you can imagine. People just like you are creating ADHD Heroes; it is, and will continue to be a work in progress. With your help, it'll keep growing. Together, we'll create something bigger than all of us, something "greater than the sum of its parts."

We need your help. If the ADHD Heroes project inspires you, please visit www.adhdheros.org and register.

Linda Walker is a professional ADHD Coach who helps entrepreneurs, artists, ADHD adults and other creative geniuses live their best life. Learn powerful, non-traditional strategies to instantly boost your productivity so you can free time and energy to unleash your Creative Genius: www.productivitymythsbusted.com.