

2022 ADHD CONFERENCE

SESSION ABSTRACTS

October 22 & 23, 2022

CSI ADHD: Why CSI – Comorbid Symptom Investigation – Is Key in Cracking Diagnostic Mysteries and Building a Case for Integrated Treatments - Dr. Doron Almagor MD, FRCPC

ADHD is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder. When ADHD is revealed through an assessment, clinicians and patients often close the case without looking further. However, science says that ADHD often rolls with with comorbid suspects that deserve careful consideration. A case-closed approach before other possible conditions are investigated— conditions like Depression, Anxiety, Learning Disabilities, Tourette Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Eating Disorders and Substance Use Disorders —means allied suspects may be missed. When additional diagnoses escape detection, challenges continue for those with ADHD since treatments can never be fully comprehensive, integrated, or helpful without targeting all the usual and relevant suspects. Until ADHD and potential comorbidities are investigated fully, clinicians and patients should consider the diagnostic case unsolved and ongoing— especially if the goal involves planning integrated treatments for successful outcomes.

Panel Discussion of People with Lived Experience – Life with ADHD and Co-occurring mental health conditions such as Anxiety, Depression, PTSD, Substance Use Disorder, Sleep Disorder, ASD, and many more

This session will be an open and honest discussion with people who live with ADHD and at least one other mental health condition. We will discuss their experiences getting assessed, diagnosed, and treated, as well as some of the challenges life brings when you have multiple mental health conditions. More info to come.

Treating ADHD and Comorbid Disorders – Guidelines for Concurrent Treatment – Dr. Joan Flood

Building on the talk given by Dr. Flood in 2021 (Medication Management through the Lifespan), this session will review the most common medications prescribed for ADHD with an emphasis on addressing the need to treat concurrent comorbid disorders such as depression, anxiety, oppositional defiant disorder, autism, personality disorders, and more. At the end of the session, participants should:

1. Be aware of the most common medications to treat ADHD from childhood to senior years.

2. Understand that ADHD is usually associated with comorbid psychiatric disorders which may need treatment in tandem with ADHD treatment.
3. Appreciate medical and psychosocial treatments for ADHD and comorbid disorders.

ADHD and Self-Care: *From Paradox to Possibility* – Dr. Megan Smith, Ph.D.

If you feel like “ADHD” and “self-care” are a contradiction in terms, this workshop is for you. Many people with ADHD exhaust themselves trying to keep up with the demands of day-to-day life. Some feel like they are met with failure at every turn, despite their best efforts and intentions. Others achieve a high level of success, but at a cost to their health and well-being. Regardless of where you may fall along this continuum, if you struggle with self-care, this workshop can help. We will look at key areas of health and well-being, how they can impact us in various areas of functioning (e.g., mood, resilience to stress, ADHD symptoms, etc.), and we’ll then examine some *realistic, manageable, and ADHD-friendly* ways to improve our self-care skills in those areas that are impacting our well-being the most. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped with a variety of practical tools and strategies to help them improve their self-care skills.

You or a Family Member Have Just Been Diagnosed with ADHD... Now What? – Heidi Bernhardt, RN

The doctor or psychologist has just informed you that you or your child has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD. You may be shocked, or maybe you have suspected it for some time. Either way, unless you have been down this path before, you have a long list of questions and concerns. Your medical professional gave you a quick overview of ADHD, but you are now looking to the Internet for more information, and others are giving you a great deal of unsolicited advice. How do you know what’s sound advice and what’s not? What do you tell the school, your work, friends, and family? What about getting a psychoeducational assessment? What about treatment? Does everyone with ADHD require medication, and what about all those natural treatments? This presentation will answer these questions and more, guide you to your next steps, teach you how to become an informed consumer, and advocate for your child or yourself.

How to be a Successful Entrepreneur When You Have ADHD – André Brisson, P. Eng

Do you understand HOW you instinctively solve problems? Do you understand on WHAT types of tasks you are to spend time on? Do you understand WHY you do things the way you do them? Understanding HOW, WHAT, and WHY you do things will transform your entrepreneurial journey. You have a unique way of doing things. Learn that. Work with that. Identify what you are great at. Delegate and hire out tasks you don’t enjoy. You will gain time and freedom to do the things you do best. You will enjoy it more. You will be able to focus on the tasks and projects you enjoy. André will share his process to understanding HOW, WHAT, and WHY you do things. Create a lane where your ADHD will self-manage because you are doing things you want to do.

ADHD and Friendships: Secrets of Social Coaching for Children and Teens – Lanni Zinberg-Swartz, M.Sc. (A), S-LP (C), Reg. CASLPO

Making meaningful social connections can be very challenging for children and teens with ADHD. Equally challenging for parents is understanding why friendship struggles are so common in ADHD and how to support their children in effective and positive ways. This session will focus on helping

parents to understand how ADHD can impact the ability to make and keep friends, and to learn strategies to lay the foundation for positive social coaching relationships with their kids. Strengths-based strategies to move forward with friendship skills will include understanding and using your child's interests, creating conversations, understanding the friendship ladder and finding the right focus for friendship goals.

Get Proactive About Procrastination - Tanya Keto, M.Ed.

Everyone procrastinates, but people with ADHD are masters at task avoidance. Unfinished tasks – particularly those that are difficult, unenjoyable, and/or have many steps – may actually lead people with ADHD to experience physical and mental discomfort.

Many of the executive behaviours required for completing tasks, such as planning, prioritizing, motivating, organizing, and decision-making are areas where people with ADHD struggle most. Combined with weak self-regulation of emotions and moods, a problem common in people with ADHD, and they easily become overwhelmed and shut down, avoid, or act out. Experts in this area believe that for people with ADHD, procrastination is a way of coping with challenging emotions and negative moods brought on by specific tasks.

Finding the motivation to begin a task and sustain the effort to finish it requires intense self-control. By understanding the difficulties that people with ADHD experience in this area and implementing specific strategies and supports, a person with ADHD can learn to improve their ability to complete tasks. Join Tanya to learn more about research in this area and gain some practical strategies to get proactive about procrastination.

Staying Afloat – How to Manage Intense Emotions – Rhiannon Carter BA, B.Ed., PCC, AAMC

Challenges with emotions start in the brain. Left unmanaged, these can have serious impacts on daily functioning for people with ADHD at all ages and stages of life. In adults, impacts resulting from unmanaged emotions might include loss of employment, relationship conflicts, anger management issues, reduced self-esteem, and ultimately, unfulfilled potential. People with ADHD often experience immediate and extreme emotions that are debilitating. Coping with the emotions and the consequences of unmanaged emotions can be confusing and downright exhausting. So how do we ride out the emotional storms without drowning?

This presentation will introduce specific strategies to help you understand, anticipate, and prevent emotional flooding in a variety of contexts, such as parenting, personal relationships, and the workplace. We will examine ADHD-friendly techniques to identify current needs, assert with clear communication and self-initiate coping strategies.

Learner objectives:

1. Recognize the connection between ADHD, executive functions, and managing emotions.
2. Understand why people with ADHD become easily frustrated, overwhelmed, and excited.
3. Learn how to observe common signs of emotional flooding in self and others.
4. Identify appropriate strategies to self-monitor and self-regulate.
5. Create assertive communication scripts.
6. Explore the potential benefits of positive emotions on mood and motivation.

Show Me the Money! How to Manage Your Cash Flow – Nathalie Pedicelli

It is a well-known fact that adults with ADHD have trouble with money management tasks due to executive function weaknesses. As a result, many people with ADHD struggle with cash flow issues, never really knowing how much money they have in their bank account or if they will run out of funds when things need to get paid. Planning for purchases is unlikely. By using the same methodology as planning future tasks with a planner and simple spreadsheet, adults with ADHD can better anticipate what their cash flow might be at any given time of the year. Calendar formats as an alternative to the spreadsheet will be presented, and some software apps will also be discussed.