


Live Online Training

Understanding ADHD in Adolescents Who Display Harmful Sexual Behavior

Thursday, February 27, 2025
11:00 am - 2:15 pm (ET) / 8:00 am - 11:15 am (PT)

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Society

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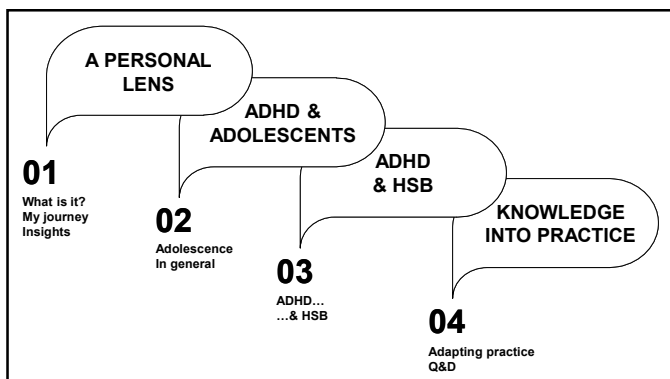
1	Social Worker & Criminologist
2	Consult to Wales Forensic CAMHS
3	Director TRM Academy
4	Adoptive Dad to Gruff & Annie

JONNY MATTHEW
MSc BA(Hons) Dip(SO) Dip(Crim) Dip(SM)
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JM

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**A PERSONAL
LENS**

01
What is it?
My journey
Insights


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**A PERSONAL
LENS**

01
What is it?
My journey
Key insights

- **What is it?**
- **My journey**
- **Insights**

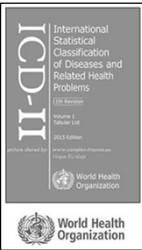


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**A PERSONAL
LENS**

01

- **What is it?**




International
Statistical
Classification
of Diseases and
Related Health
Problems
11th Revision
Volume 1
Mental and
Behavioral
Disorders
2018 Edition
World Health
Organization



DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL
MANUAL OF
MENTAL DISORDERS
FIFTH EDITION
DSM-5
AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION

See blog: "What Exactly Is ADHD?"



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A PERSONAL LENS

• **What is it?**

01

...a neuro-developmental condition that commonly affects children but can persist into adulthood. It is characterised by persistent patterns of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity, which can significantly impact an individual's daily functioning and quality of life.

See blog: "What Exactly Is ADHD?"



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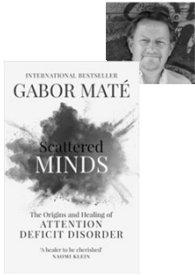

A PERSONAL LENS

• **What is it?**

01

AETIOLOGY?

- Genetic &/or epigenetic?
- Trauma-genic/developmental


8

01 INATTENTION

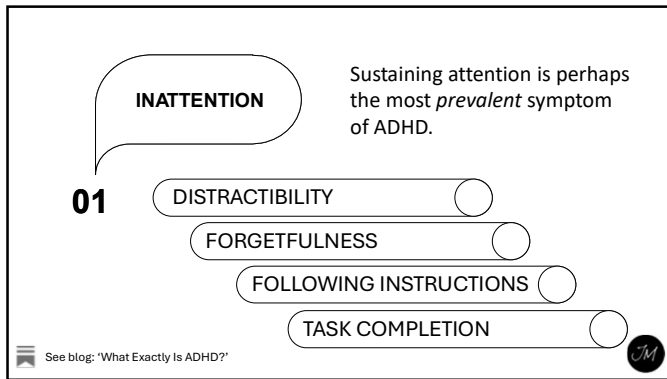
02 HYPERACTIVITY

03 IMPULSIVITY

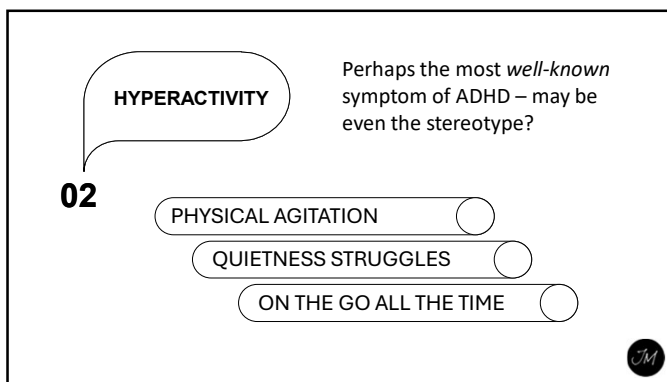
See blog: "What Exactly Is ADHD?"



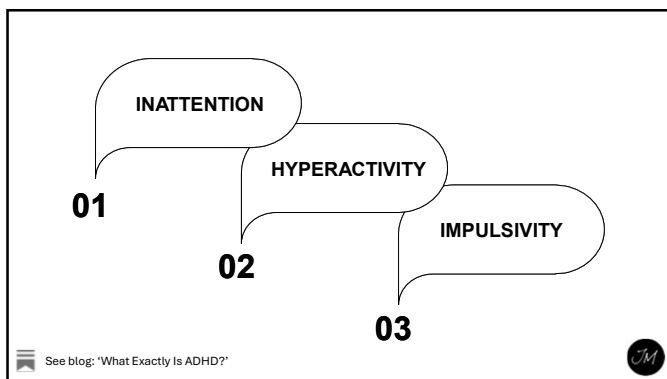
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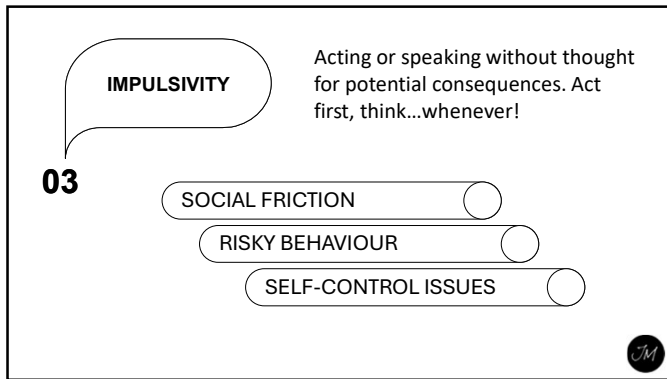
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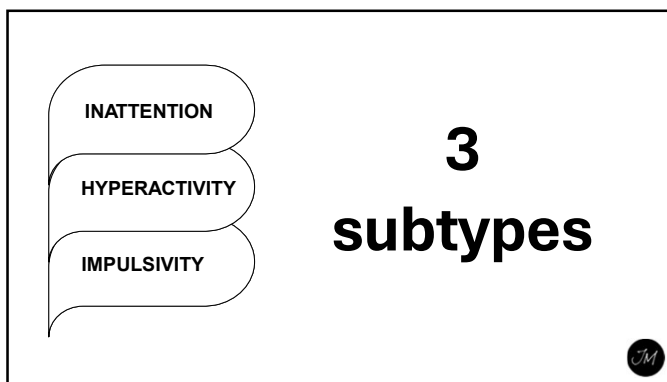
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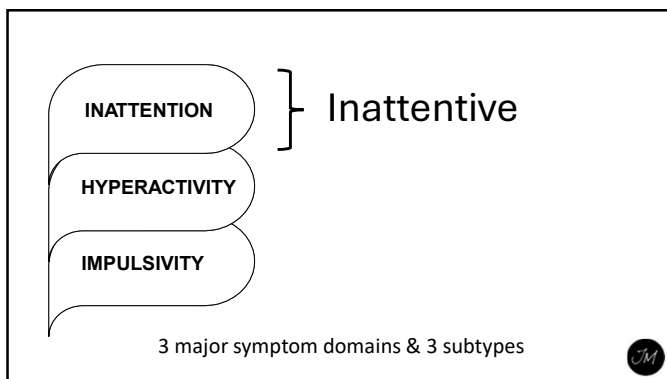
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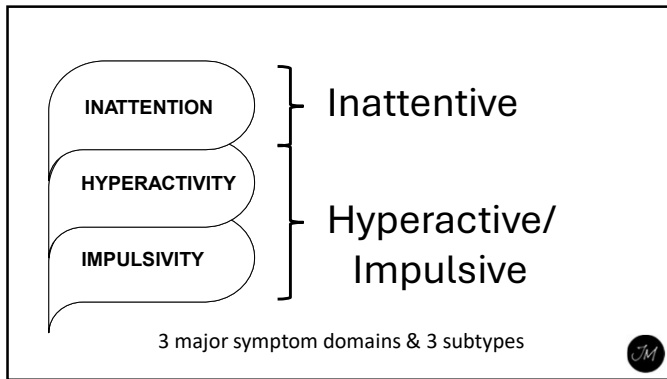
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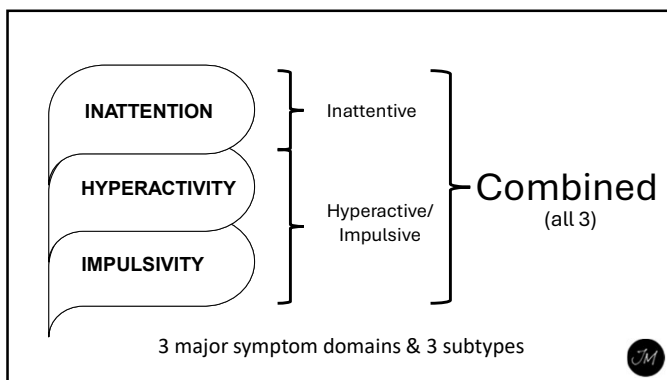
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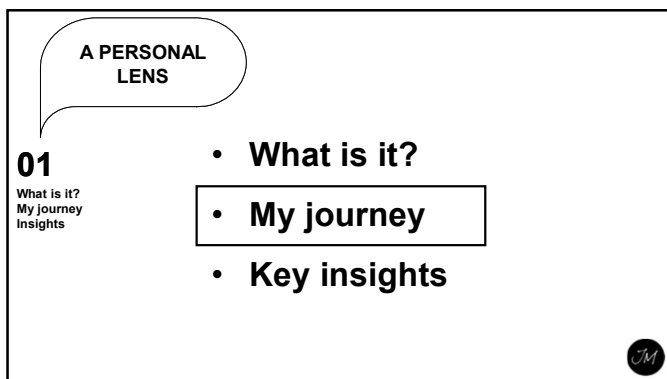
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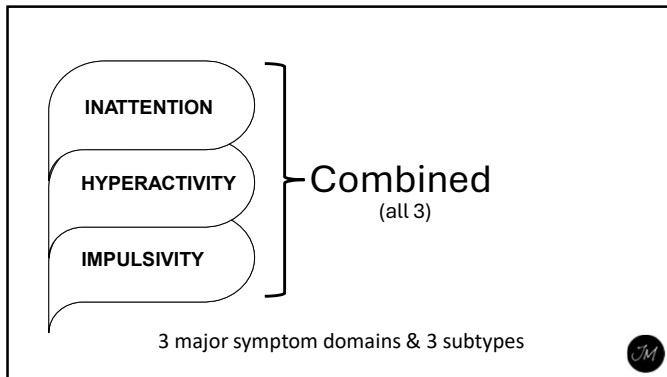
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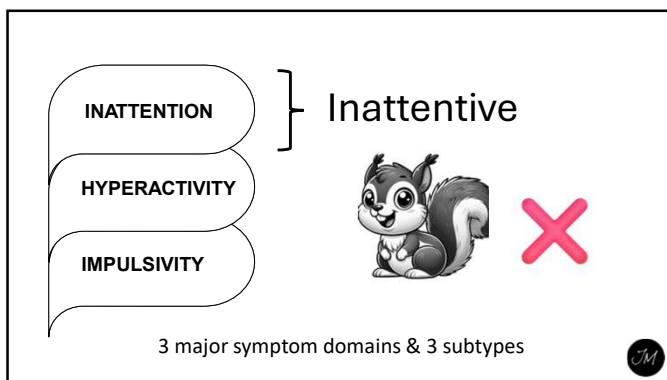
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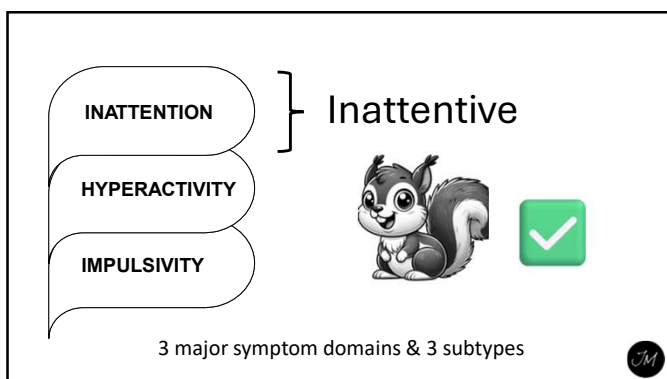
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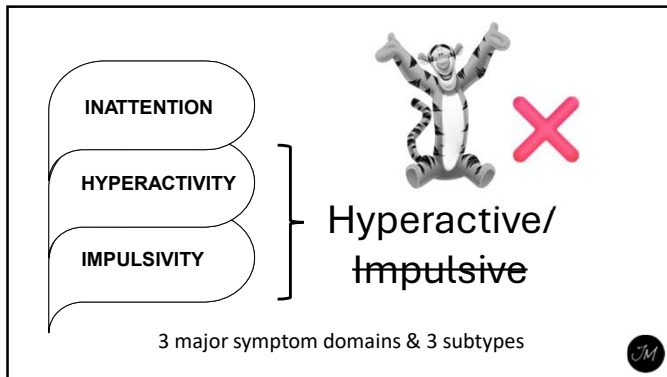
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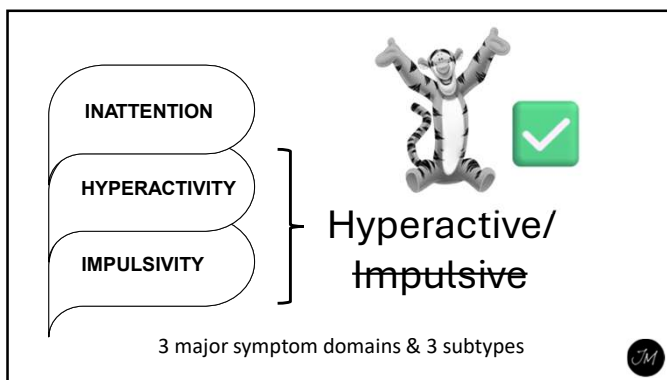
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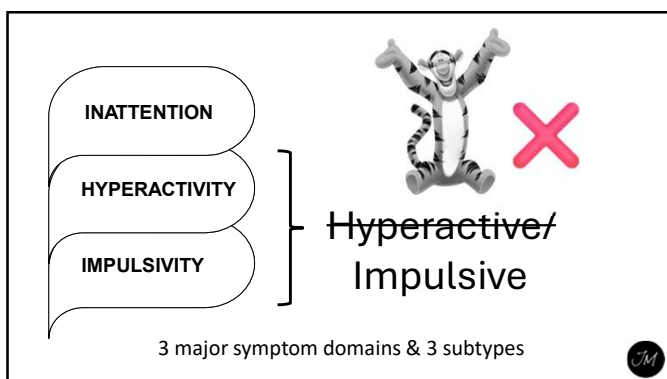
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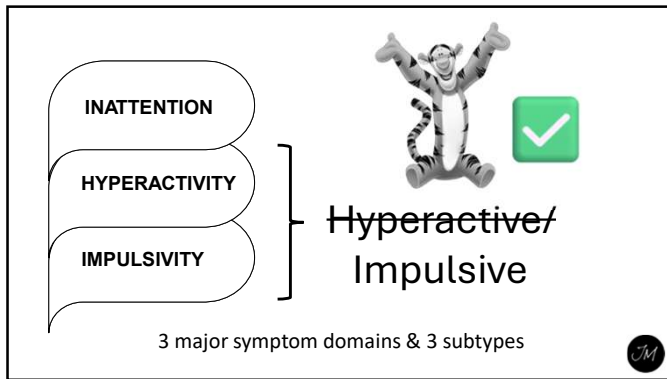
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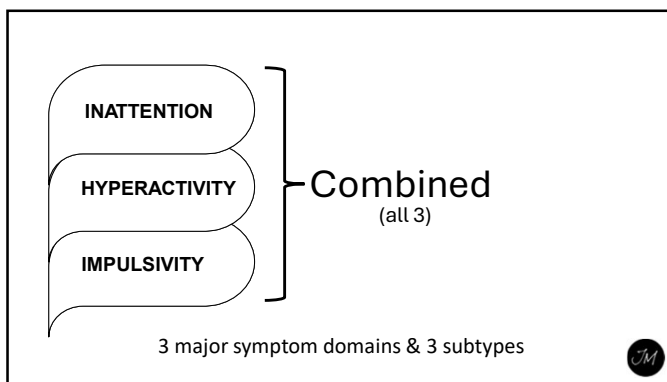
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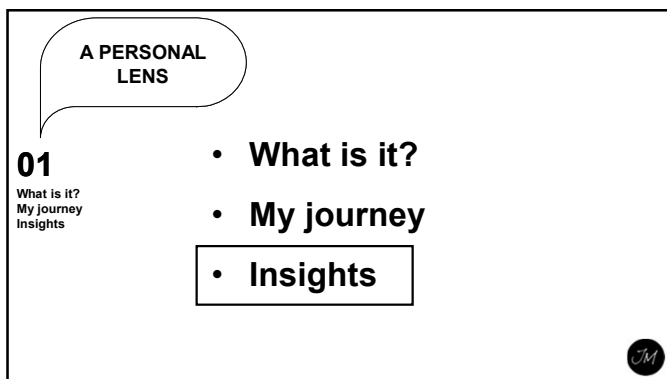
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In general...

- **Lean in**
- **Empathise**
- **Be kind**

3 major symptom domains & 3 subtypes



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It's *PROBABLY* not...


- personal or intentional
- insulting or rude
- avoidant or evasive

But it *IS*... (subjectively for them)

- infuriating
- shame-inducing
- overwhelming






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Approach suggestions...

- **Breath** – don't rush to judge
- **Pause, wait** – they'll refocus
- **Quiet** may ease them back
- **Ask, 'are you OK?'** (or whatever)
- **Break the drift** in some way


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‘My mind/brain is like...’


INATTENTION

HYPERACTIVITY

IMPULSIVITY



- A TV with constantly changing channels
- A web browser with 100 tabs open
- An endlessly scrolling phone screen
- Someone talking way too fast to take it all in




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Approach suggestions...


INATTENTION

HYPERACTIVITY

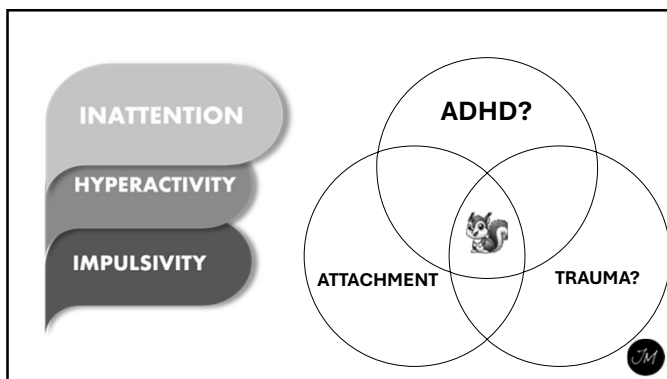
IMPULSIVITY



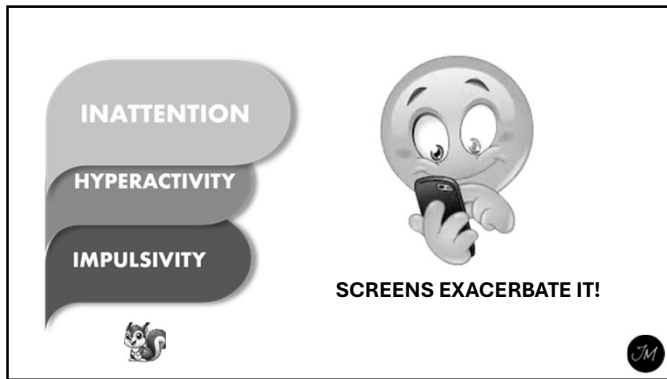
- **Breath** – don’t rush to judge
- **Pause, wait** – they’ll refocus
- **Quiet** may ease them back
- **Ask, ‘are you OK?’** (or whatever)
- **Break the drift** in some way
- **Let it go...**
 - If they don’t refocus
 - Or they walk off
- **Remind yourself** – *‘it’s not about me’*



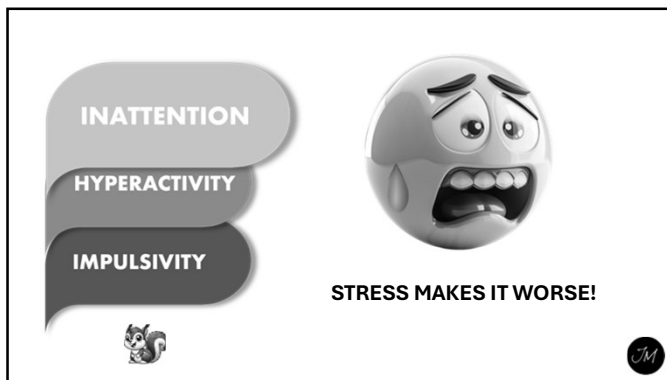
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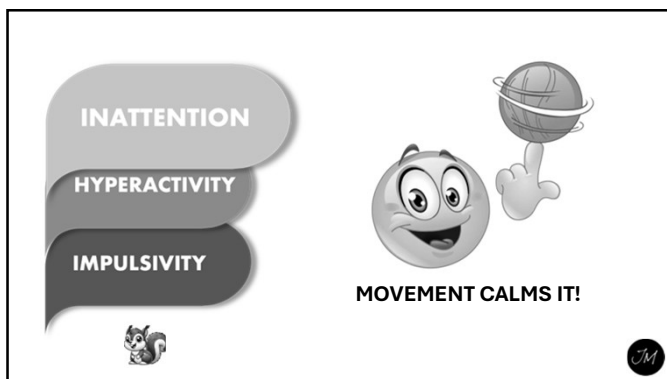
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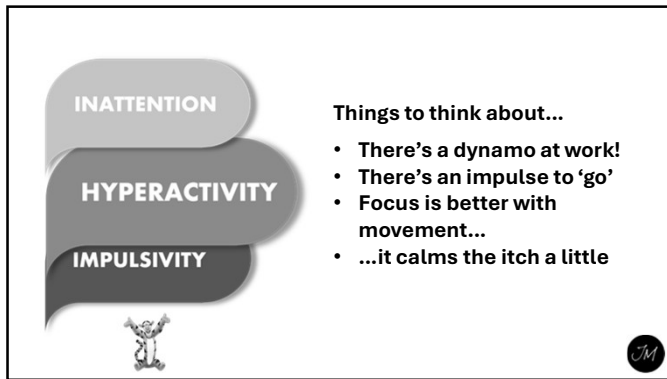
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INATTENTION

HYPERACTIVITY

IMPULSIVITY

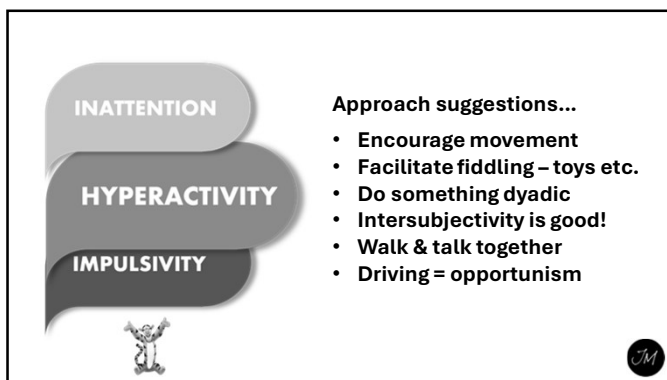
Things to think about...

- There's a dynamo at work!
- There's an impulse to 'go'
- Focus is better with movement...
- ...it calms the itch a little

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INATTENTION

HYPERACTIVITY

IMPULSIVITY

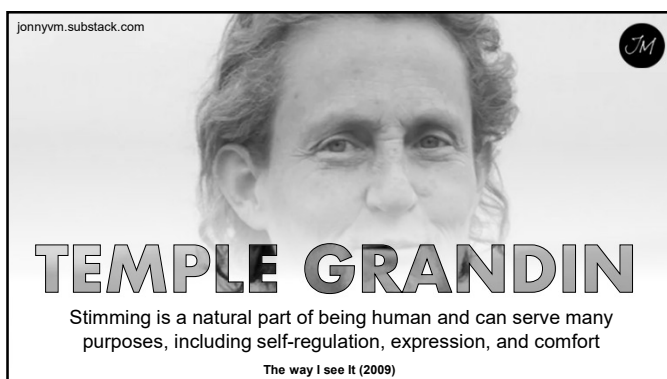
Approach suggestions...

- Encourage movement
- Facilitate fiddling – toys etc.
- Do something dyadic
- Intersubjectivity is good!
- Walk & talk together
- Driving = opportunism

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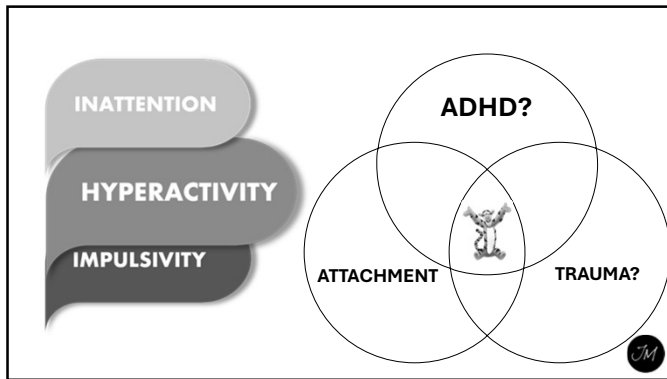
TEMPLE GRANDIN

Stimming is a natural part of being human and can serve many purposes, including self-regulation, expression, and comfort

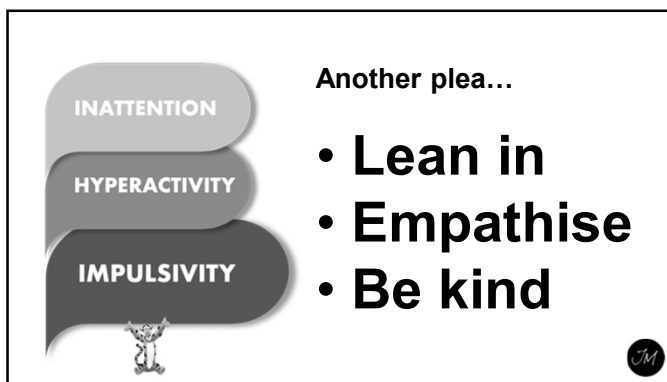
The way I see It (2009)

TM

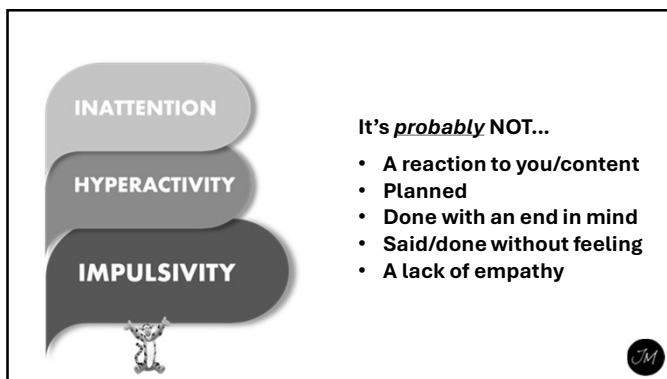
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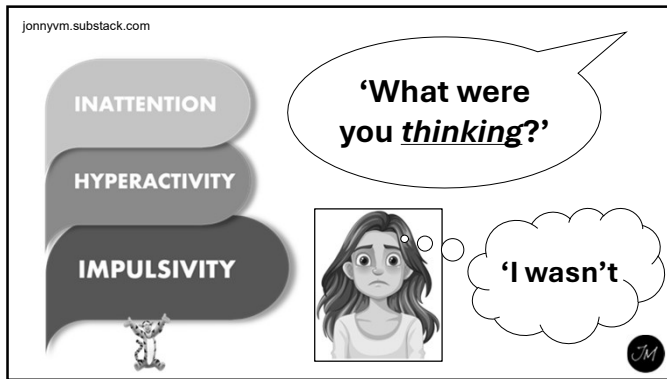
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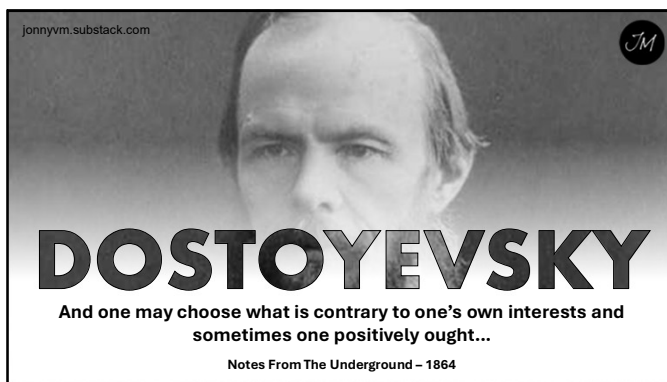
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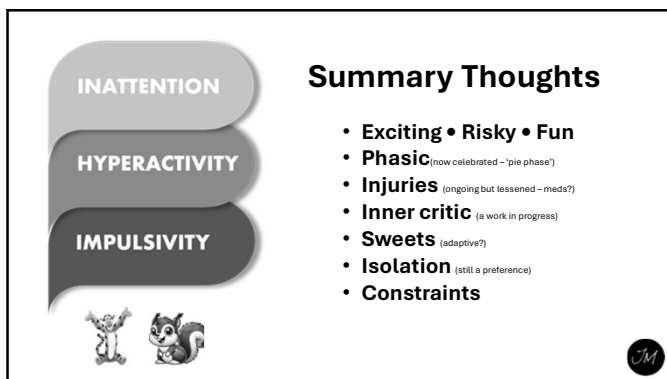
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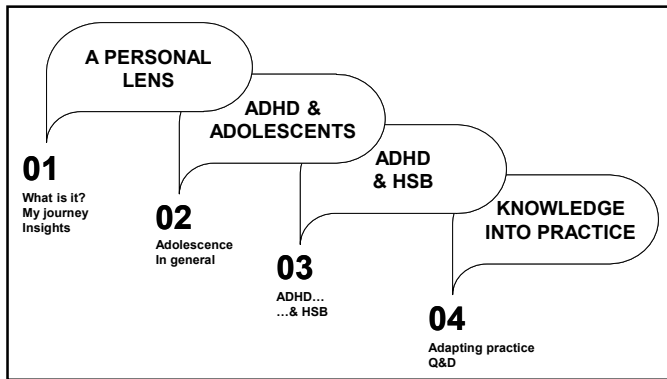
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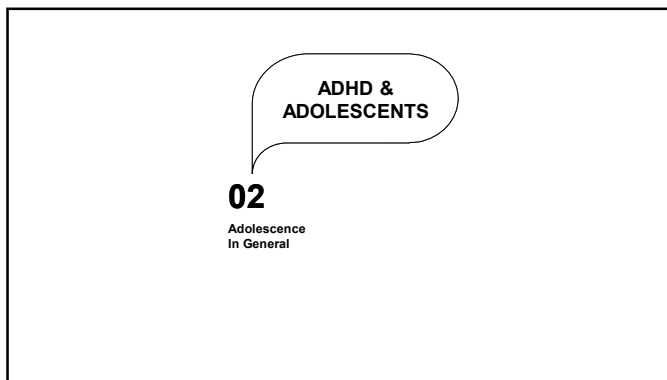
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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

02

Friendships & Social Support
(Rokeach & Wiener, 2020)

115 teenaged participants aged 13-18 with and without ADHD:

- ADHD kids – friendship ratings reduced over time
- Non-ADHD kids – rating increased as they aged
- Girls in *both groups* reported more support than boys
- Girls & boys in both groups reported same sex friendships as more supportive AND more conflictual

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ADHD &
ADOLESCENTSFriendships &
Victimisation

(Becker et al., 2017)

02

Implications of peer rejection of children with ADHD:

- Increased risk of academic failure & school drop out
- Increased risk of depression & anxiety
- Increased risk of substance/alcohol misuse
- Victimization by peers (any kind – 57% ADHD 1 x wk +)
 - Physical victimisation – 14% (boys more than girls)
 - Reputational victimisation – 17% (no gender diff.)
 - Relational victimisation – 51% (no gender diff.)



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ADHD &
ADOLESCENTS

Peer Victimization ↔

(Chou et al., 2018)

02

287 ADHD adols. were assessed for bullying
victimisation/perpetration:

- Teens with ADHD more likely to *be* bullies
- More likely to threaten peers, BUT...
- Prevalence rates:
 - Pure victims – 14.6%
 - Pure perpetrators – 8.4%
 - Victim/Perpetrators – 5.6%



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ADHD &
ADOLESCENTSADHD, Adolescence
& Dating

(VanderDrift, 2019)

02

General findings: (self-report)

- ADHD associated with greater relationship difficulties
- Hyperactive symptoms associated with negative responses to bad behaviour
- In BOTH groups, inattentive symptoms associated with
 - Less constructive responses to partner bad behaviours
 - Greater interest in relational alternatives (new partner)



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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adol. & Intimacy
(Norvilitis et al., 2015)

02

Young adults with inattention tended to: (self-report)

- Reach dating milestones at a later age,
- Have lower number of steady dating relationships,
- Feel less comfortable or assertive in particular situations,
- Use fewer relational
- Problem-solving techniques,
- Spend less time on their relationships, and
- Express love & affection less than individuals with fewer inattentive symptoms



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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adol. & Intimacy
(Norvilitis et al., 2015)

02

Those with hyperactive/impulsivity symptoms tended to: (self-report)

- Impulsive sex
- Risky sexual behaviour
- Risky anal sex
- Sex with uncommitted partners
- Results were pretty stable across both nationalities of subjects




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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS


ADHD, Adolescence & Intimacy
(Norvilitis et al., 2015)

02



More difficulty establishing close relationships

...but report higher rates of risky sexual behaviour




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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adol. & Intimacy
(Norvilitis et al., 2015)

02




Anxiety? ❌

Intimacy fear? ✅

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RUSSELL A. BARKLEY

Deficient emotional self-regulation is the overlooked ADHD symptom that impacts everything

Clinical neuropsychologist & professor of psychiatry
Author: Taking Charge of Adult ADHD


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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adolescence & Emotions

02 Some reasons why kids with ADHD struggle with their emotions:



- Brain structure & function
- Chemical imbalances
- Impulsivity & self-reg issues
- Sensitivity to rejection (RSD)
- Chronic stress & anxiety

See 'ADHD & Emotions' at jonnyvm.substack.com

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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adolescence & the Body

02

- Emerging sexuality in a time of change
- Sexuality & affect regulation
- Adolescent girls and menstruation...



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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adolescence & the Body

02

Specific oestrogen level comparisons between ADHD and non-ADHD girls are not available, but:

- Research suggests hormonal fluctuations impact ADHD girls significantly, including for example:
 - Increased emotional sensitivity and mood swings
 - Greater difficulty managing inattentive symptoms
 - Heightened feelings of being overwhelmed
 - Less effective medications at certain points in cycle



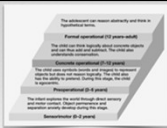
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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS

ADHD, Adolescence & Cognition

02

- May be delayed in development – still concrete? (Piaget)



JEAN
PIAGET'S

Stages of Cognitive Development



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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS


Friendships & Peer Social Support

(Spender et al., 2023)

02

23 studies; 1509 ADHD kids; 1197 controls:

- ADHD-ers had significantly fewer friends...
- Lower quality friendships:
 - Fewer positive features & more negative features
- Poorer friendship interactions



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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS


Friendships & Peer Social Support

(Spender et al., 2023)

02

Reasons posited for poorer friendship experiences in ADHD kids with their peers:

- Social skills
- Social cognition
- Emotional regulation abilities



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ADHD & ADOLESCENTS


ADHD & Friendships

(Walters & Borus, 2020)

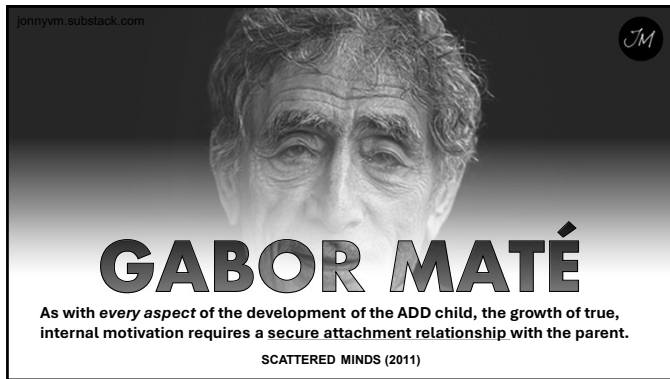
02

Snapshot of the literature on friendships in general: (p.230)

- Teens with ADHD have trouble starting and maintaining friendships and their friendships are shorter in duration than non-ADHD peers
- Adolescents with ADHD have fewer friends than their peers without ADHD
- Kids with ADHD are perceived as less sociable and less likeable by peers and experience more negative interactions with peers than non-ADHD peers
- They are also more likely to exhibit specific social skills deficits that contribute to peer rejection and bullying which in turn may contribute to future negative outcomes, including school dropout, substance abuse, and psychopathology



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**ADHD &
ADOLESCENTS**

Maté's 5 Myths of ADHD parenting

02

Myth 1: The child is just looking for attention

- The child **NEEDS** your attention to know they're loved and to feel safe

Myth 2: The child is deliberately trying to annoy the adult

- The adult is failing to regulate

Myth 3: The child purposefully manipulates the parent

- Sometimes. But usually it's adaptive - it works!

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**ADHD &
ADOLESCENTS**

Maté's 5 Myths of ADHD parenting

02

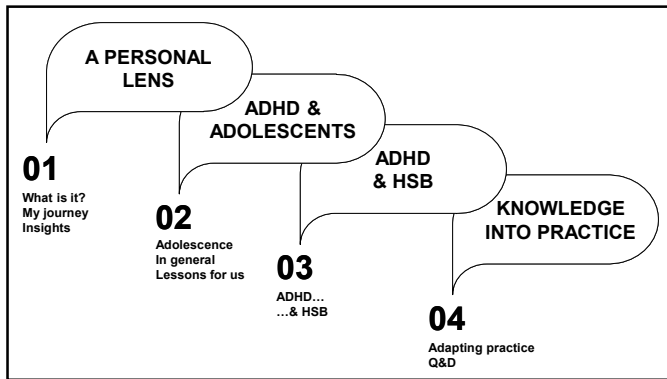
Myth 4: The ADHD child's behaviour causes the adult's tension or anger

- We are responding to them, sure. But says more about *us* than it does about *them*

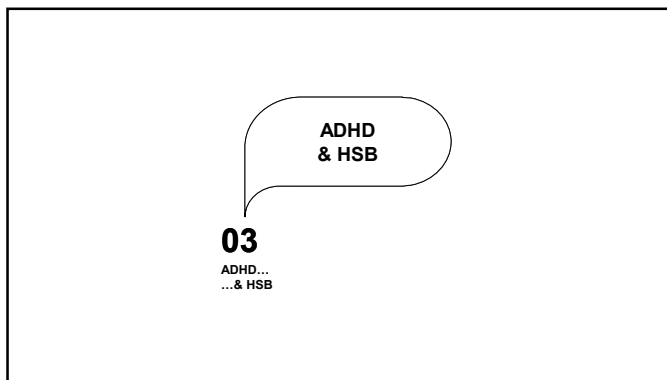
Myth 5: Children with ADHD are lazy

- Rarely, except in the usual teenage sense
- They're often more energetic, creative and intelligent than their peers

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ADHD & HSB

Unsafe sex & ADHD
(Walters & Borus, 2020)

03

Unsafe sexual behaviour more common in adolescents with ADHD:

- Increased numbers of partners
- Higher rates of STIs
- Teenaged pregnancy
- Sexual abuse victimisation
- Sexual abuse perpetration

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**ADHD
& HSB**

Unsafe sex & ADHD

(Norvilitis et al., 2015)

03 US college students with more ADHD symptoms, particularly symptoms of hyperactivity/impulsivity:

- Engage in more risky sexual behaviour (including less contraceptive use)
- More alcohol use before sex
- More intercourse with uncommitted partners
- Impulsive sex & more risky anal sex
- Sex with uncommitted partners
- NB: Inattention was only related to risky acts

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**ADHD
& HSB**

Unsafe sex & ADHD

(Halkett & Hinshaw, 2021)

03 140 Girls aged 12-19 with ADHD. Followed up after 5 & 10 years (88 matched controls – no ADHD). Asked them about:

- Initial engagement in oral sex
 - Sig. younger age of onset & } **COMBINED**
 - Twice as many oral partners } **subtype only**
- Sexual intercourse and Number of sexual partners
 - Not significant

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**ADHD
& HSB**

HSB Recidivism

(Lussier & McCuish, 2024)

03 General observations:

- **Recidivism is always in part a feature of the system it sits within**
 - How 'justice' responds to offending (& so affects offenders)
 - Changes in measurement of what constitutes 're-offending')
- **Early studies (1943/51/54) reported low sexual recidivism rates**
 - So, this is not a *recent* 'decline'
 - Neither is it a feature of 'how we see things now'

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**ADHD
& HSB**

HSB Recidivism

(Lussier & McCuish, 2024)

03 The study findings highlight that the risk of:

- **GENERAL recidivism** (weighted pooled mean = .44 or 44%) is substantially higher than...
- **VIOLENT recidivism** (weighted pooled mean = .18 or 18%) and
- **SEXUAL recidivism** (weighted pooled mean = .08 or 8%).




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**ADHD
& HSB**

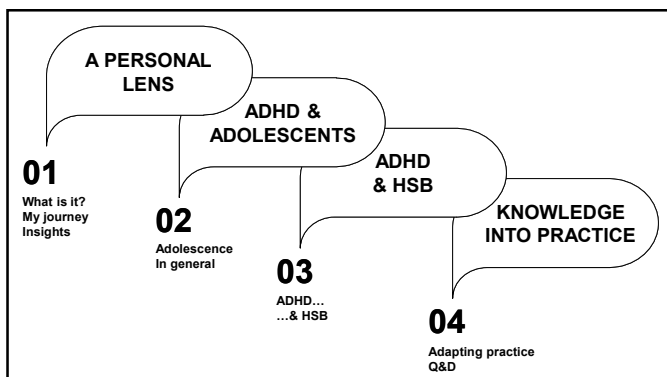
HSB & Risk Assessment

03 ADHD & the impact on risk assessments – may be elevated around:

- Impulsivity
- Substance use
- Conduct problems
- Treatment adherence
- Peer relationships
- Academic performance
- Emotional regulation




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KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE

04
Adapting practice
Q&D



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GABOR MATÉ

My first interview with the parents of ADD teenagers almost always ends with advice that they relax the rules and regulations imposed in the hope of inducing better work habits and behaviors in their child. When it comes to rules and regulations, less is more.

SCATTERED MINDS (2011)

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EDWARD M. HALLOWELL


The best way to think of ADHD is not as a mental disorder but as a collection of traits and tendencies that define a way of being in the world

DELIVERED FROM DISTRACTION (2023)

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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

04



HSB Recidivism
(Lussier & McCuish, 2024)

'Given the low weighted pooled sexual recidivism rate reported in the study, the use of adult-like strategies to increase public safety and prevent sexual recidivism seems misguided...'




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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE


04

See the Struggle
(work of Valerie Sinason)

Secondary & Primary disability (Valerie Sinason)




- Primary disability is the core condition – autism as a neurological disorder – internal and predetermined.
- Secondary disability develops as the emotional and relational aspects of living and developing with the primary disability – external and circumstantial.



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TRENNNA SUTCLIFFE

When you've seen one child with ADHD...
you've seen one child with ADHD

Developmental Behavioural Paediatrician – Founder Sutcliffe Clinic



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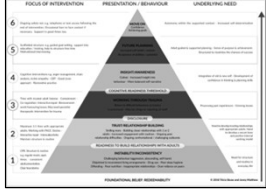
KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Think Developmentally

(Skuse & Matthew, 2015; Wareham & Matthew, in press)

04 Potential Distractions:

- Behaviour/risk
- Impact on other children
- CJS process pressures
- Over-reliance on risk predictors/instruments



Trauma Recovery Model®
(Skuse & Matthew (2015))

www.TRMAcademy.com


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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Think Developmentally

(Skuse & Matthew, 2015; Glendinning et al., 2021; Wareham & Matthew, in press)

04



Trauma Recovery Model®
(Skuse & Matthew (2015))


Instead:

- Manage risk (of course!) but then...
- FORMULATE!
- Ask the 'why' question
- Look at the whole story
- CJS process pressures
- Over-reliance on risk predictors/instruments

www.TRMAcademy.com

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LUCY JOHNSTONE

'Formulation can be described as the process of co-constructing a hypothesis or 'best guess'...about the origins of a person's difficulties...'

Clinical Psychologist, Speaker & Trainer - 2017

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**KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE**

04

Sexual History

(Onugha & Finlay, 2012)

- A number of studies found a link between high-risk sexual behaviour & ADHD
- Retro case note reviews of 50 x 12-18s with ADHD dx: none had a sexual history taken
- Clinicians & professionals of all kinds can help educate ADHD kids in the link between their condition & risky sexual behaviour
- Interventions can highlight this, too, and include proactive measures, input, programmes, etc. to support safe sexual practices



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THERESA CERULLI

ADHD exists alone only about 25% of the time

Co-Founder & Chief Medical Officer ADD Health & Wellness Centers

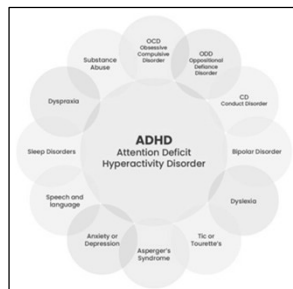
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**KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE**

04

**Stay mindful of
co-morbidities**

(Image source: <https://psychiatry-uk.com/adhd/>)



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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE


Social Skills Training

(Spender et al., 2023)

04

'[The] development of [social] skills are crucial to enable successful peer relationships.

Social skills include both verbal and non-verbal behaviours that support peer interactions such as appropriate facial expressions, sharing, helping others and turn taking.'



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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Social Cue Inhibition

(Walters & Borus, 2020)

04

'Caregivers and teachers should be mindful that ADHD inhibits adolescents' understanding of social cues needed to realize they are bothersome to others.'



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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

ADHD & Dating

(VanderDrift, 2019)

04

- ADHD associated with greater relationship difficulties:
 - Social/relationship skills can help
 - Unmedicated/untreated kids fighting an uphill battle in dating relationships
- Hyperactive symptoms associated with negative responses to bad behaviour:
 - More overtly negative responses – e.g. may lash out verbally/physically
 - Feels more hurtful/unfeeling for the partner?
 - This can drive allegations, confirmation bias, mis-reading the 'meaning' of the behaviour

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KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE

04

ADHD & Dating

(VanderDrift, 2019)

- In BOTH groups, inattentive symptoms associated with:
 - Less constructive responses to partner bad behaviours
 - May try to 'fix' it but not in particularly useful/constructive ways
 - Greater interest in relational alternatives (new partner)
 - May *appear* less interested – a stressor to the partner in itself, may be
 - May *actually* be less tolerant & more likely to give up/bail out – lower relationship life-expectancy?

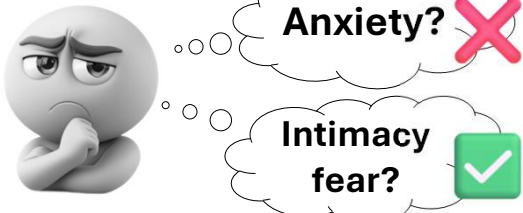
91

KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE

04

Fear of Intimacy

(Novilitis et al., 2015)



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KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE


04

Fear of Intimacy

(Novilitis Marsh et al, 2015)

Inattentive kids had decreased belief in expectations relating to (e.g.):

• Communication	• Acceptance
• Love	• Compromise
• Trust	• Coping
• Support	• Respect




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**KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE**

04



Screens



Stress


Dialing down

- Off, muted or hand them in
- Mindful of pace, volume, movement
- Consider relaxation/breathing
- Leave your phone, too! ;0)
- Regular venue (room if possible)
- Consistent day, time, order of events
- Seating or position in the room
- Engagement & de-brief practices

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**KNOWLEDGE
INTO PRACTICE**

04




Movement

Dialing up

- Explore how physical energy is with *this* kid
- Ask if they have ways of coping with this that work
- Do they stim & does this helps – make it OK
- Does a fidget toy, blu tac, rubber band, etc. help?
- Incorporate movement where it helps...
- Take breaks if that's easier/better (moving during)

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jonnym.substack.com



LAMAR HARDWICK

Stimming is like turning down the radio when you think you smell something burning.
It's a way of turning off the other senses so you can make sure nothing's burning.

AUTHOR, SCHOLAR, PASTOR (attrib.)

97

KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Assess Friendships & Social Support

(Rokeach & Wiener, 2020)

04 Friendships are key for all teenagers navigating the developmental stage they're in:

- Make social functioning *with peers* part of our assessment
- A contextual Safeguarding approach can be useful here
 - Mapping the community & social network (family, friendships, etc.) to gauge the level of active support

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KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE

Managing Emotions

04

Remember:


- Impaired executive function?
- Self-reg problems?
- RSD?

Relationships matter (modeling):

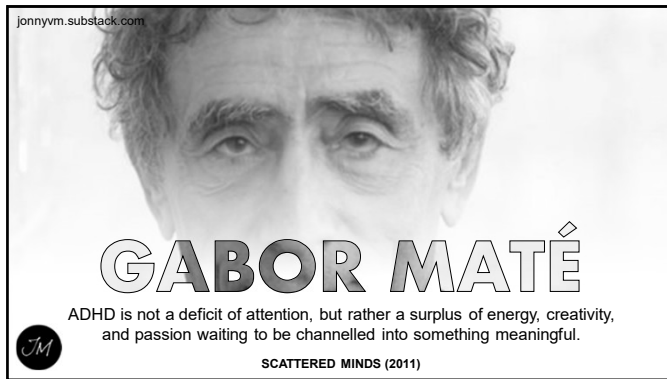
- How *you* respond to *their* emotion
- How *you* model things...
- RSD – is this an issue for them?

Relationships matter (modeling):

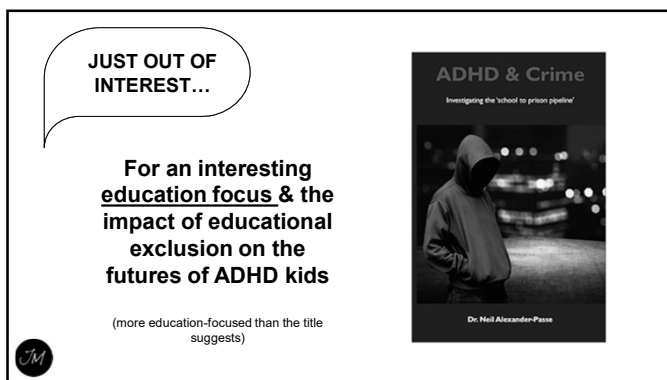
- Teach them how to 'see' emotions
- Teach/show them how to emote safely



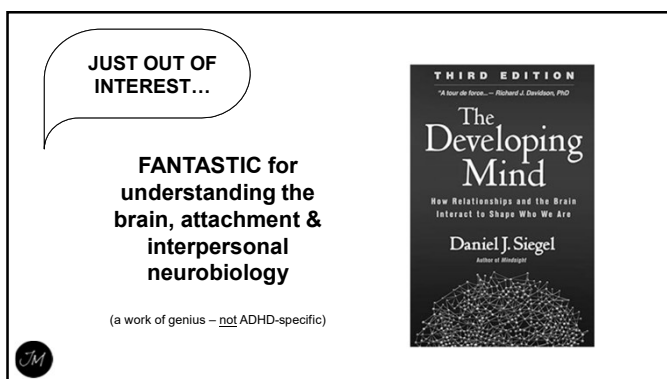
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JUST OUT OF INTEREST...

Interesting work with non-invasive & trans-cranial brain stimulation

Open Access
Volume 6 Issue 1
Review Article

Journal of Pediatrics and Neonatal Medicine
ISSN: 2694-5983

PUBTEXTO

Neuromodulation Interventions in Paediatric Neurological Disorders: A Contemporary Review of Scientific Advancements
Singh SR, Bhattacharjee S and Udupa K*

Department of Neurophysiology, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Hosur Road, Bangalore, India

[Link in the references document](#)

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JUST OUT OF INTEREST...

Best book yet on 'risk' as it relates to HSB/CSE

(balanced, thorough & brilliantly researched – not ADHD-specific)

Children as 'Risk'
Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Children and Young People
ANNE-MARIE MCALINDEN

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN LAW AND SOCIETY

Cambridge

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Temporary website - link in reference document

JonnyMatthew.com

Promoting Recovery for Troubled Children & Teenagers

Jonny Matthew is a social worker, counsellor & co-author of the 'Troubled Children's Guide'


He believes in the idea that the greatest recovery for troubled children & teenagers lies in:

- Helping to share the experiences of this group working with troubled kids & their families
- Helping others who share their stories
- Developing a specific sense of responsibility
- Working with the children, parents, schools & their life


Speaking (3 sessions)
Training (40 sessions)
Consulting (10 sessions)
Writing (10 sessions)

4 Speaking 40 Training 10 Consulting 10 Writing

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AUDIO BLOGS
jonnyvm.substack.com

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NELSON MANDELA

There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul
than the way it treats its children

Nelson Mandela b.1918 d.2013



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Remember, if in doubt...

- **Lean in**
- **Empathise**
- **Be kind**

INATTENTION
HYPERACTIVITY
IMPULSIVITY

Ego Inimicus Est • Soli Deo Gloria
jonnyvm.substack.com

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THANK YOU!

Live Online Training

Understanding ADHD Who S...

Successful

Thursday, 2/25/2025 10:00 AM - 2:15 PM EST

SSafer Society

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