

Intro:: ([00:00](#))

Having an ADHD brain is a mixed bag. Sometimes it's good news. And sometimes, well, it's not. Even ADHD professionals have trouble with their ADHD. They try harder and harder and harder to overcome the chaos that's ADHD. And finally, they overcome the barriers of ADHD and they become what we call at ADDA, ADHD heroes. And that's what TADD Talks are all about this year. Your favorite ADHD professionals sharing their ADHD stories. So, join us here at ADDA, the Attention Deficit Disorder Association every single day of October, because it's ADHD Awareness Month. Here's the next inspiring story.

Ari Tuckman: ([00:49](#))

This is Dr. Ari Tuckman, uh, coming from Westchester, Pennsylvania, lovely Westchester, Pennsylvania. And I am doing my TADD talk here for ADDA called Strategies Are Great, But. And what I'm going to talk about is how I evolved as a psychologist who specializes in ADHD. So, I started out way back in like 1999, so many, many moons ago. And what I'm going to share is kind of what that journey was like for me. And hopefully offer some ideas that are helpful, not just for, um, you know, clinicians, but also for folks who have ADHD or their spouses or parents or family members or loved ones or whoever it is that you are. So, um, back in the day when I started out, um, I had this joke that if you knew three things about ADHD in adults, you were the expert in town, right? Now you have to know five, maybe six, I don't know, right?

Ari Tuckman: ([01:51](#))

So like ADHD in kids is pretty well covered, right? Lots of folks knew about ADHD in kids, but man, in the late nineties, early two thousand, hardly anybody knew about ADHD adults as if like you turned 18, you know, you could, I don't know, you know, get drafted in the military. You could buy cigarettes and suddenly your ADHD disappeared as if like the world worked like that. So, but so, you know, I kind of saw this big unmet need, this population that really needed folks who could specialize and provide something of service. I was really kind of diligent, you know, like fresh out of school, wanting to do a good job. I obviously still do, I would think. Um, but you know, so back in the day I tried to learn as much as I could about ADHD. So, like I read books, I went to the local Chad meeting. I went to the big conference. Um, I don't think there are a lot of webinars back then. I don't think there are any webinars back then. I think there were like, teleclasses audio only kind of thing, but, but I sought out as much information as I could.

Ari Tuckman: ([02:42](#))

And initially it was just about like memorizing stuff. So here are the symptoms of ADHD and the diagnostic manual, here are strategies that work. So, like, um, I don't know that old classic ADD friendly ways to organize your life. So, I kind of devoured that. I memorized all these strategies and like, they all sort of made sense, right. And let's be honest, like good ADHD strategies are frankly just good strategies for anybody. Um, I learned about medication, and I saw like the really great benefits that medication for ADHD can provide. And, you know, things felt like they were going somewhere.

Ari Tuckman: ([03:34](#))

And I was like, yes, this is good. I can be effective. I can help my clients lead better lives, feel better about themselves, etcetera, etcetera. Um, it wasn't amazing, right? Like struggles remain, but like things, you know, it felt like there was some benefit. Then I started learning about executive functions. I was like, Ooh, what are these? And you know, then different kinds of attention. So, like sustained attention versus freedom from distractibility and you know, things like that. And I was like, whoa, now it really makes sense. And I was really kind of excited about it. Then I found Barkley and his stuff, and I was like, oh man, this guy's a genius. Clearly, he's going to have all the solutions to all the problems of life for folks with ADHD. And yeah, I mean, absolutely understanding ADHD or understanding the executive functions and how they affect ADHD and frankly, how they affect everybody.

Ari Tuckman: [\(04:31\)](#)

Like absolutely it led to better strategies, right. So, I could offer better strategies. I could, you know, kind of fine tune and tweak the nuances, so to speak so that my clients with ADHD indeed did perform a bit better in their lives. And that was a good thing. Um, did a bunch of writing about it. Um, one of my books is on executive functions. I did a bunch of presenting on it. Um, I did an entire presentation on what's called prospective memory, which is that ability to remember. So, like, Ooh, when I get to work tomorrow, I have to call that person back. Or, you know, at next year's conference in, in 11 months, I will do this instead. Right. So, it's that remembering forward into the future. I did an entire presentation just on that. And it was exciting. Um, I've sort of evolved from executive functions.

Ari Tuckman: [\(05:26\)](#)

I've kind of taken it a step further. Now I think a lot about how ADHD impacts the ability to see time and feel the future. And that led to a whole bunch of other strategies. I mean, it all kind of dovetails and there's absolutely themes and good ideas and concepts. I kind of run through all of it, but they all became like more and more developed, more and more nuanced, and just, I don't know, like more targeted, I think, frankly. And it was good stuff, right? And it still is, like I'm still all about like good strategies, whether we're talking ADHD or, you know, whatever. Um, and yet, at the same time, despite all the awesome strategies, despite all the potential benefits of medication, you know, like life remains. You know, things are still hard, things are still frustrating and boring and annoying. And we still, all of us, we still all have our moments where God, you know, just didn't do the right thing at the right time.

Ari Tuckman: [\(06:31\)](#)

Sure. Folks with ADHD have those moments more often than folks without ADHD, but like we all have those moments. So, so what do we do? Right. Like as a clinician, as a psychologist, like I want people to feel better. I want them to do better in their life. I want them to feel better about how they do in their life. And there was always that kind of nagging, I don't know, frustration that feeling bad about the fact that like, I couldn't do better for the people that I was seeing. And more and more, I mean, not, this is like totally a brand-new concept, but like more and more, I sort of came to the point of like, you know what living well with ADHD. Yes. It is about strategies. Like you do need to do some things better. You can't keep showing up late at work and expect your boss to be cool with it.

Ari Tuckman: [\(07:22\)](#)

Right. So, like you got to at least show that you're working hard at it, but you know what, some of it is also like, look, this just is what it's going to be. Right. And frankly, we all have that stuff. We all have the things about ourselves that we wish were different. The things about our circumstances that we wish were different. Right. It's easy to focus on the things that we can do something about, and we should, but it's not the whole story. And I think feeling good about yourself, feeling good in your life also involves recognizing, you know what, this is always going to be hard for me. Right. So yes. Take responsibility. Yes. Show that you're taking it seriously, but also don't try to be something you're not, and don't promise what you can't deliver. I think that this is important. And again, it, it, it is a universal, but I think ADHD or other things, whatever.

Ari Tuckman: [\(08:15\)](#)

But here we're talking ADHD. I think ADHD like highlights it, it makes it a bigger deal, but it's still a universal deal. And I'm going to encourage you to learn as much as you can about ADHD partially because again, good strategies, right. Don't reinvent the wheel. But also, because knowing, oh, this is a part of who I am, or this is a part of my romantic partner or my kid or my family member or whoever, you can take some of the sting out and it can make it a little bit easier to kind of feel okay. And to recognize, you know, what, I don't need to be all things to all people. I'm okay the way I am, I'm working hard. I'm doing the best I can. Some people won't be for some people, it won't be enough. And maybe that means that you're not doing enough, but you know what, maybe it means that they're a little too hard to please.

Ari Tuckman: [\(09:10\)](#)

And sometimes we need to make a choice. We need to think about, is this someone that I want to please? Because sometimes, you know what, maybe the answer is no, maybe them being pleased is something that they need to figure out for themselves. And me being perfect or me always being on time or me being whatever, maybe that is too much to ask. And maybe it's not the way that they're going to feel pleased. Right. So, so hopefully here, in addition to all the other awesome TADD talks that everybody's going to be doing all the other great stuff ADDA does, um, hopefully this has given you a few ideas to think about and to kind of be diligent, to work hard, to push hard, but also recognize what are the limits and what you don't maybe have to do. So again, this is Dr. Ari Tuckman delivering my TADD talk for ADDA called, Strategies Are Great, But... Have a good day.

Outro:: [\(10:07\)](#)

Thanks so much for joining us for TADD talks this year. I'm sure you enjoyed these inspiring stories and there's so much more. In fact, why don't you join us for the 2021 virtual ADHD International Conference November 4th through the 6th. And you might want to consider joining ADDA as well. It's a great investment for a small amount of money as little as \$5 a month. And remember, when you feel like hope is gone, look inside you and be strong and you'll finally see the truth, that a hero lies in you.