

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.

Casey Dixon: [\(00:49\)](#)

Hello and welcome to TADD Talks with ADDA. I'm Casey Dixon coach for high achievers, with ADHD at Dickson Life Coaching. Here at Dixon Life Coaching we believe that adults with ADHD can transform their ways of thinking and doing to boost their physical, emotional, and occupational wellbeing. No matter how much their ADHD has gotten in their way. This is why this year's TADD Talk topic; The Hero's Journey is so perfect. ADDA tells us that a hero is someone who, as a professional who works with those with ADHD and has ADHD has overcome the barriers or many of them of having ADHD. When I heard about this topic, I couldn't wait to introduce you to my friend, Melanie Sobocinski, who is one of our team coaches here at Dixon Life Coaching. Hi Melanie.

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(01:40\)](#)

Hi Casey. So, I'm Melanie and I have been struggling with ADHD my whole life. And I didn't know it until just recently. I have a PhD, but it took me longer than most of my classmates. And I worked as a professor. I went through the whole tenure track, but I struggled, and I eventually got off and left academia because while there are reasons that I have to say were ADHD and I started my own business, became an ADHD coach. Still no diagnosis. It wasn't until my youngest kid was diagnosed just a couple of years ago. And that diagnosis landed badly. We were seeing absolutely no way of getting cooperation with treatment. And I decided that mommy needed to go first. I needed a diagnosis and I needed somebody who would be nerdy enough to spot the ADHD in me because I looked good to the outside world.

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(02:50\)](#)

Really good. I can keep my act together for hours and days at a time. So, I started talking to people in my community. I had several people tell me they didn't think that ADHD was a real thing. And so, I had to find somebody nerdy, nerdy enough to spot it in me and nerdy enough that I could learn new things about ADHD from them. Fortunately, I live in a university town, and I happened to remember is that Sari Solden and Michelle Frank were both in practice in my town at the time. And I connected with them, and I had the most amazing diagnosis experience. And I came away feeling validated. Like I understood myself better. Like I had more ways of spotting all the way that ADHD had woven into my life from yes, back when I was in elementary school. When, again, nobody's spotted the ADHD. I can't tell you how awesome it has been to know that what's going on is ADHD. It has a name, it has patterns. It has a community and supports that made all the difference. I mean, the struggle is still real. I still have my days that are not quite the way I wish they would run, but things are so much better now. Yeah.

Casey Dixon: [\(04:27\)](#)

And this is such a common story with people who are on the outside looking really successful. I mean, you started your own business. You were a tenure track professor. You had a PhD it's very difficult sometimes for even themselves to recognize that ADHD is one of the things that is creating so much struggle. So, I'm wondering what it was about getting a diagnosis that was so amazing and sort of opened you up to new possibilities.

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(04:57\)](#)

Well, it really gave me a clear path forward to let go of the inner critic. I could say not why am I such a, you know, why didn't I? I'm like, I know why. I know exactly why it's, what am I going to do to manage this reality? And it gave me access to some new tools. I mean, medication was a game changer. I don't know how I made it 40 odd years without knowing for sure that all the compensation techniques I developed across the decades, including getting coached, including using timers like crazy. All of those things are tried, and true ADHD supports and then to use them intentionally in knowing that that's the diagnosis made a huge difference in just how effective they and how thoughtful I was able to be with them. How intentional.

Casey Dixon: [\(06:01\)](#)

Yeah. I love that. And being an ADHD coach and then getting your diagnosis is such an interesting story. And I'm wondering how being an ADHD coach has helped you to manage your ADHD.

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(06:18\)](#)

So it meant that when I landed with a diagnosis first for my kid and for myself, I was starting at a higher level of knowledge and I realized I needed to go much deeper and much wider than the DSM. I needed to get involved with the community. And I needed to read widely, and, you know, not just in the popular literature the popular literature has great stuff in it, but the research literature is where the goodies the gems are. And that really helped me connect a lot more patterns.

Casey Dixon: [\(06:55\)](#)

How are things coming together for you now?

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(06:57\)](#)

Um, well, it's just going so well. I mean, my kids in middle school and thriving and getting the right supports, I've got the most amazing support team and the most amazing crew of people to work with and to coach. I mean, it's just, it just feels like I'm rocking and rolling and yeah, there's hard spots, but nowhere near as hard as it was pre diagnosis.

Casey Dixon: [\(07:30\)](#)

Right. And that is such an important message. I think for people listening to hear, is that if you're in a spot where it is sort of a dark part of your journey, that it does get better, if you're connected with the right people and getting the right supports, um, such a big powerful message. And I'm wondering if you could sort of offer those folks, your three favorite ADHD game changers.

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(07:55\)](#)

Well, I think I already mentioned the timers, timers, timers, timers, and alarms everywhere being intentional about my day. So, I know when to set them, that's huge. Sometimes it takes me three and four timers to get out the door at the right time, but it's worth it because then I looked like and put together and it's totally an act, but hey, I'm willing to fool the world. Um, another big, big, big one is mindfulness finding the right kind of mindfulness, grounding, breathing meditation. Um, you know, Casey, you know, I've been a big fan girl of your Mindfully ADD for a long time. That's sort of a really big one. And I'm going to make you blush Casey, but my other favorite one is the micro changes to keep the novelty coming. And I, that on our Dixon life coaching website, isn't that currently the freebie, the micro-changes?

Casey Dixon: [\(08:57\)](#)

If somebody is interested in learning about micro changes, You can download the little micro worksheet for free off of there and learn about micro changes for yourself. So, anything else that you'd like people to know about your hero's journey?

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(09:16\)](#)

You know, the quest continues. Who knows what the next challenge will be, but I feel like I've got a robust tool kit to manage whatever it should happen to be.

Casey Dixon: [\(09:28\)](#)

I'm so glad you could join us today for ADDA's TADD Talk about Melanie's journey. I know that you can relate, and I hope you feel more empowered after hearing her story. I'm Casey Dixon, and I also know that being a high achiever with ADHD can be hard. You learned how to excel on the outside while you struggle on the inside. And the serious paradox of being a high achiever with ADHD is our five-lesson online course made especially for you to deepen your understanding of what it means to be a successful high performer like Melanie, who also happens to struggle with ADHD. I want to invite you to learn more about life as a high achiever with ADHD and how to write your own hero's journey to learn more about the mysterious paradox of being a high achiever, go to [dixonlifecoaching.com/highachiever](https://dixonlifecoaching.com/highachiever). And if you want more information about me, Melanie, our other team coaches, and our work with ADHD adults, just find us online at [dixonlifecoaching.com](https://dixonlifecoaching.com). And finally, thank you, Melanie, for openly sharing your hero's journey.

Melanie Sobocinski: [\(10:31\)](#)

Thanks Casey, for inviting me.

Outro: [\(10:37\)](#)

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, so 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.