

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.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(00:50\)](#)

Hi, I'm Inger Shaye Colzie. I am an ADHD coach. I'm a psychotherapist, I'm an executive coach and I run Black Women with ADHD and I'm coming to you from right outside of Philadelphia. And I'm really excited and thrilled to be able to talk to you about my ADHD journey. I thank ADDA for inviting me. So, I hope that this is a story that you can relate to, or it's something that can resonate with you so that it's helpful to you in the long run. So, our hero's journey, which I felt was a really interesting title that they were asking us to do because my journey is not over, but this whole thing with ADHD has been a journey. It's, really interesting. I'll start with when my son was diagnosed because that was really my insight into ADHD. When my son was in about fifth grade, the teacher said, hey, what about getting your child diagnosed?

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(01:55\)](#)

And I was like, really? Okay. We can do that. But when I decided to do that and they gave the rating scale back, it's like, all these boxes I'm checking they are me too. Which was very interesting because at that time I was already a psychotherapist, and like, how would I not know that that's me also? But I didn't, and it was really enlightening to find out. But I didn't do anything about it at the time because I had to take care of my son and explain to the school all day, every day, that ADHD is not a behavioral problem. It is just the way that the ADHD can manifest, especially in school. It just took a lot out of me. You know, being a mom, being a partner, being a daughter, you know, working actually two jobs just became a lot to do.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(02:47\)](#)

And I couldn't really worry about myself, with my ADHD. But a few years later, I started to lose my words. I am a psychotherapist and I talk all the time and I talk all the time anyway, because I have ADHD. So, the thought of not being able to come up with the words I needed to use to help my clients got really scary really quickly. And I noticed at one point when I was doing research that ADHD and menopause can connect. So, I started doing my digging and when I started doing my digging, as we do with ADHD, I found that there is a big connection and many women that's when they do get diagnosed. They either get diagnosed when their children find out, because they know that they felt that in themselves, or they get diagnosed in menopause. I thought I had early onset Alzheimer's. And when I went and got diagnosed, it was like, no, when your estrogen changes, it changes the way your ADHD manifests in you.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(03:50\)](#)

At that time I decided to get medication and it helped some. It actually helped a lot. And when I

got the medication, I looked back at my life and a lot of things just made a lot of sense. When I was four years old, I had to take a test to get a grade like to go right into school and they, no one else had ever taken this test and passed it. So, in 40 years of this test, I was the only one to pass it. So, it's like, she is so smart. But when I went to school and things were not interesting, they were like, she's so smart. She has so much potential, but she's so lazy. And that followed me for so many years. When I went to undergrad, it took eight years to get out of undergrad with no breaks, going summers.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(04:39\)](#)

I had wonderful parents that just kept paying, and shout out to Virginia State University like for taking some of us black students in that sometimes things are a little harder. So that graciousness helped me graduate, but it took eight years to do that. And then when I started in the working world, most of the jobs I had behind a desk, I either got fired or I quit before they fired me because I was uninterested. But I couldn't figure out what was going on. So, I decided to go to cosmetology school before I went to law school. I love that nonlinear thought. When I went there, I really blossomed, and I worked the salon for 25 years. And people would say, you have a degree, you're so smart, why do you work here? It was like, I flourished here. I was able to make a lot of money there.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(05:30\)](#)

I was able to do a lot of things. And in the midst of working there, I decided to go to graduate school and then I got pregnant. So, while I was in graduate school, working two jobs, either pregnant or with a baby I was able to finish on time because then I had a purpose. Then I had my why, the thing I really wanted to do. And I was successful as a psychotherapist, but it just all seemed like so much. Like all the time I felt like I was juggling all balls all the time, being a wife, a mom, a business owner, a friend, and all of the things. And if I kept juggling, it was going to kill me. But if I stopped juggling and tried to put something down, it would all fall apart. So, when I got the diagnosis, it's like, oh, that's what that feeling is.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(06:17\)](#)

That's that feeling of overwhelm that a lot of my clients report to me. After taking the medication for a while, it was like, things are better, but they're still not the best. I got a chance at the 2019 International ADHD Conference to do coaching as a volunteer, be coached for the coach that wanted to show proper coaching in a coaching arc, not the type of coaching where you just pick somebody out of the crowd. And we began coaching about three weeks before the conference. The fourth week, we were going to do it in front of an audience, and I did in front of the audience of about a hundred people. And it was about a hundred white women, which is interesting because I'm a black female. And when I sat down with my coach who I'd never met in person, we did so on zoom before zoom was a thing for everybody.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(07:06\)](#)

When we sat down to do the coaching, I felt like everybody just melted away. And I had a big breakthrough in that big room in front of all those people. And it became more important to have the breakthrough than the worry about the people that were in the room. And when that

happened, it was exciting and scary and life transforming. After that, I turned my sights to ADHD coaching because I felt that everyone that has ADHD needed to have that transformation. I noticed while I was at the conference, there weren't many people of color there at all. And it was very interesting as we were in Philadelphia, which is, you know, has a large black population. And there has to be a lot of people being diagnosed with ADHD, right? That are people of color. So, I said, hey, well, I need to do something about that. So, from that moment on, I changed my focus to black women and black people having ADHD and getting the coaching services, diagnosis, and ability to access medication and proper health care as that is an issue in our community and fighting the stigma of ADHD and mental health in BIPOC communities.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(08:19\)](#)

And so it's just been amazing to have that kind of coaching, to change my life. And it's interesting that many people don't even know what coaching is or like how to get a diagnosis. So being in a group like ADDA was a place where I was able to find those types of things, find out information. And it was really helpful for me getting to the place that I am now. Now I have coaching groups for black women with ADHD, and it's really transformed me to be in a place where people understand you and know you, and don't think you're lazy, crazy, or stupid or weird, or that you're behind that you are where you're supposed to be. You're doing it the way you're supposed to do it. And it's just accepting you and having you accept yourself the way that works for you. That is the story of how I'm able to be where I am.

Inger Shaye Colzie: [\(09:18\)](#)

And I always just like to say that you can live well with ADHD. So many people think that you can't, but you definitely can. When you can manage the things that get in your way, and you can really look at your strengths and lean heavily on them, you can have the life that you really wanted, the life that you would really love. So, I am Inger Shaye Colzie, I am an ADHD coach and a psychotherapist. And if you want some more information about me from my work with adults or black women with ADHD, you can find me at www.ingershaye.com. I'm Inger Shaye on all the social medias, and I will have a free gift if you go to my website for the people that would like a little more information. Thanks. Thanks for your attention. Bye.

Outro: [\(10:08\)](#)

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.