

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.

Alan Graham: [\(00:49\)](#)

Hi, I'm Dr. Alan Graham. I'm a psychologist, an ADHD coach, and a trainer of ADD coaches and I'm coming to you from my office at ACP Consultants in the Chicago area. I'm really excited that ADDA has invited me today in order to talk with you and share the story of one of my clients who has done a great job in managing his ADHD. So, I'd like to introduce you to Mark, a graduate student in education. He and I have worked together for a number of years. So, we're going to do an interview and you'll get to know him. Hi, Mark.

Mark: [\(01:39\)](#)

Hi doc, how you doing?

Alan Graham: [\(01:39\)](#)

I'm good. So, what would you say your life goals are?

Mark: [\(01:48\)](#)

Yeah, a big question. I think my life goals really are, in regard to like ADHD at least, or to be able to function in a way that allows me to be successful and happy, but to also not be hindered in a way that prevents me from being happy. I think that to be more concrete in what my goals are, I am currently trying to become a secondary education teacher. So, for my future I would like to be in education, whether that means to remain being a high school teacher or to move on to higher ed or to become an administrator, I don't know. But, with the things that I face, I really hope to be able to strike a nice medium and be able to hold expectations for myself to both what I'm able to do and, like what I would think would make me happy. So yeah, I feel like that's a very, very broad question, kind of difficult to answer.

Alan Graham: [\(03:13\)](#)

Sounds good, Mark. So, what would you say are the biggest challenges you've faced in getting to where you've gotten to at this point?

Mark: [\(03:25\)](#)

I think that the biggest challenges really have been, being honest with myself about what hinders me and what it takes to remedy my issues. I know that if I don't have a routine, I'm not going to be able to track things properly and I'm not going to be able to stay on top of my tasks. I also know that I really don't enjoy things such as planners and writing things down and being extremely organized. They are things that are difficult for me, and I don't enjoy doing it, but I

have to be honest, other things such as medication, these are things that I don't like. These are things that I would wish no one would have to do every single day.

Mark: [\(04:26\)](#)

But I am honest with myself and know, and I wasn't always this way. I know that as far as folks on the wheel, I need to do all of those things that contribute to my success. And if I don't, if I start, you know, not having a fixed routine, if I start not taking my medication regularly, if I don't put in place a system to keep track of dates and times, if I don't do those things, I'm not going to be successful. And I have had difficulties and struggles and setbacks because I haven't been honest with the fact that I need those things. So, I think that the first real step for anyone who, who truly suffers from ADD is to really just be honest and accept that you struggle with things and that some things are just not going to be super easy for you.

Mark: [\(05:25\)](#)

I know I have poor attention to detail. I know that my executive functions are not as good as other people's, I know this. And I definitely went through a period of time where I had a chip on my shoulder about, well, you know, now I'm in college I don't need to take my medication, or you know what, people just don't get me or I'm fine or I've grown out of this. And whenever those quite frankly, dishonest remarks or, or ideas come into my mind, I don't do well. So yeah, I think that honesty and acceptance are a huge part of staying consistent and taking care of yourself. I know I'm probably not supposed to be speaking very long about this, but you know, someone who has diabetes, they need to keep track of their sugars, someone who has ADHD they need to keep track of things that are going on in their life. They need to keep track of events and details and keep track of things that they're saying and doing and controlling their impulses. And those are things that we have to monitor just as any other medical condition,

Alan Graham: [\(06:49\)](#)

So Mark, what happened that you were able to get to this point where you could say those things to yourself, so you could manage those challenges?

Mark: [\(07:02\)](#)

Yeah, I don't mean to like scare anyone when I say this, but failing. Obviously growing up and failing and seeing what works and analyzing, oh, wow when I did this, this happened and there are many, there wasn't any one event. But I know that in college, there's a very specific point where I said I need to let the school know about my disability. I need to take advantage of those disabilities, or, you know what Mark, you can't just go to coaching or therapy and not talk about your ADD. Or not go frequently. There are certain things, certain straws that will break the camel's back and if a failure has occurred and it was significant enough, I was able to get to my senses and say, I'm not letting this happen to myself again.

Mark: [\(08:06\)](#)

So yeah, I think that as we grow up, we understand that if we don't take certain responsibilities we're not going to succeed. Growing up I always had a team of people, very fortunate to have parents that were very involved and who were able to, even if I didn't care, keep me afloat, but

as you get older, that's not the reality of the situation. So, for me at least I had to make sure that when I did fail I understood why I did and to put something in place.

Alan Graham: ([09:00](#))

It sounds to me, Mark, that what you did is that you found a support system that works for you to help you to do the things that you need to do to reach your goals. And I think that's awesome.

Alan Graham: ([09:19](#))

Yeah, I just want to say that we have to stop because our time is up. But I really appreciate your willingness to participate in talking about this, to be able to share this on ADDA's TADD Talks, about the journey that people with ADHD go through. So, I'm Alan Graham, psychologist and ADD coach. And if you want more information about me or the work that I do with ADHD adults, you can find me online at www.addvisor.com or www.acp10.com. Or you can send me an email at alan@addvisor.com. So, thanks so much and good luck to everybody, and thanks a lot, Mark.

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

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.