

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

If it's October (which it is) then it must be ADHD Awareness Month (which it is) and it's ADHD Awareness Month, it must be time for TADD talks from ADDA. They're kind of like TED talks but shorter, snappier, ADHD-friendly, if you will. And this year they're all about executive function. You know ...that front part of our ADHD brains that helps us plan and prioritize and remember what we're doing and follow through. Or not. So here's your chance to hear from 31 different experts. It's just another way ADDA supports adults with ADHD. Let's listen in..

Sarah ([00:39](#)):

Hello and welcome to TADD Talks with ADDA. I'm Sarah Kesty, CEO of Brain Tools Coaching, coming to you from San Diego, California. I host the executive function podcast and I'm thrilled ADDA invited me to be with you today to talk about you guest IT executive function. At this year's TADD talks, you will hear so, so many great strategies for improving and augmenting your executive function. It's almost like you're getting a buffet of great ideas. What I want to provide for you, my friend, is the platter upon which to keep that buffet the fork with which to consume these great ideas. Because in order to improve your executive function, you have to use executive function. I remember when I applied for my very first job at a local party store called Wishing well with the exception of the bin called Lucky Rabbit's Feet. That store was one of the funniest places you could think of, and I wanted to work there really badly.

Sarah ([01:56](#)):

But the thing was, I had to have a job and job experience to get my first job there. I had to have my first job in order to get my first job. Building your executive function is a lot like that. It takes executive function. To grow your executive function, you have to tap into yourself awareness in order to find your weak spots. And self-awareness is an executive function. You have to use your organizing and prioritizing also both executive functions to figure out where to start and your self-management to get started and sustain your effort all while using strategies for maintaining your energy and focus, which is demonstrative of yep, executive function. So it's no surprise that our human brains have some bumps in the executive function road. It takes the very skill set we are trying to improve in order to make improvements. This very meta perspective isn't meant to be discouraging.

Sarah ([03:13](#)):

In fact, you may see it as a little validating that this executive function journey is indeed challenging and you're no ordinary human. You have a brain with ADHD that can think outside the box and outside of the box is where you can augment your executive function skills and customize your path. In these A talks, you are hearing great strategies and you'll likely want to use them all right away. And in the past, this hopeful rush of dopamine space is maybe where you've stayed. You've had all the intention and ideas, but none of the actions and follow through. Yeah. Hey, we've all been there to take yourself across the bridge between knowing and doing from intention to action. Let's process through some executive function. Thinking together on this journey. You'll need to know where you're starting. Doing an executive function. Inventory online can give you great data, but it can also shut down your brain when you see the long list of lacking skills.

Sarah ([04:32](#)):

So instead, let's agree that we're growing executive function just as we move through the world one step at a time. PS, I hear your outside of the box brain thinking right now that you could jump with two

feet or roll or crutch. Keeping me on my toes. Yeah. We're growing one executive function skill at a time. So where do we start? How do we prioritize? You can start with any flavor of urgency. What's one spot in your life that needs to be improved asap? That's the urgency of time. Or where are you most frustrated? You can tap into an urgent emotion. Where are others most needing you? Or even where are you losing money or time? Tapping into urgency encourages some focused juice in your brain and can help you move from wanting to doing so. You've prioritized one, One area that you'd like to improve.

Sarah ([05:41](#)):

Great. The fun next step is to match up one strategy that you'd like to try and this year's tad talks have you covered. As you listen and choose your top strategy, try to visualize how that strategy will look, how it will feel, how it will sound in your life, what colors, sites, items, people, actions do you imagine happening? What are you doing or not doing? As you improve this executive function skill, visualizing the actualization of the strategy will bridge you into our next step, creating a plan. When you visualize the strategy in action, each scene you picture can become a step for you to complete. You know how it's so hard to get started when tasks seem overwhelming? Getting the task, your new strategy into concrete steps and writing them down <laugh> will help your brain see that the smaller steps are indeed pretty doable and that will decrease your stress response and help you engage.

Sarah ([06:53](#)):

It's like brain magic to make chunks, conquer ties and write them down. Look behind you. You've traveled so far down this executive function path, but you're a little tired and if you're honest, you can't really see the end of the trail and your feet kind of hurts. So can you relate? You're in the messy middle. After starting a strategy, sometimes our brains disengage. They get bored. That original dopamine boost fades as the novelty decreases and it's totally normal to need a little drop of fun here. To make your strategy stick, you may have to take it to the I see you interest, connection, and urgency. This is where your creative brain really shines. You get to think of ways to increase the interest factor. Things like color music treats in games. You can increase the connection component like working with others or video chatting or body doubling and urgency too, like playing beat the clock or using timers or adding a little bit of competition.

Sarah ([08:12](#)):

The attention ICU can give your strategy a transfusion of sorts, helping you stick with it long enough for it to become a habit. I never did get a job at wishing well party store, by the way. Instead, I paved my own way through babysitting and volunteering until I founded my own company. Was it an easy path? Nope. Full of starts and stops, you bet. But it was worth all the hard work, strategy, creation, and of course executive function growth. I'm glad you could join me today for ADDA's executive function, TADD Talk. I'm Sarah Kesty, host of the Executive Function podcast and CEO of Brain Tools Coaching. If you want more information about me or my work with ADHD adults, find me online at [sarahkesty.com](http://sarahkesty.com).

Speaker 1 ([09:11](#)):

Hey, congrats you did it - listened to the entire TADD talk! And if you think this is great info, there's even more at the 2022 international ADHD conference. It's a hybrid conference that happens November 16th through the 19th live in Dallas, Texas, simulcast on the web as a virtual event. Find out more at ADDA - that's [add.org](http://add.org), where you can catch ADHD webinars, join peer support groups, and get ADHD classes. It's

truly priceless, but membership costs less than \$8 a month. Okay. Enough of the chatter... we'll see you tomorrow with more executive function information.