

# SELF-COACHING QUESTIONS

## Understanding ADHD Symptoms

### ADULT ADHD

**People will often have difficulty:**

- Getting started on a task or project
- identifying action steps and proper order of steps to complete a project
- Inhibiting internal thoughts and external distractions
- Shifting focus too frequently or hyper-focusing too long
- Planning ahead and building time awareness
- Organizing thoughts
- Organizing and tracking belongings
- Self-monitoring behavior and learning from past outcomes
- Processing information too quickly or too slowly
- Maintaining focus during conversations
- Building and maintain relationships
- Managing emotions
- Using time management tools such as a calendar and memory tool
- Consistently directing focus and forgetting priorities/goals

### Coaching Questions for *Memory*

*Adults living with ADHD often report that memory is impacted by too much mental clutter.*

- What has my attention right now and why?
- Is there something I'm avoiding or forgetting to do? How would I know?
- What tools will I use to remember/capture this information long enough to apply it and/or create a new habit?
- Am I using a calendar and reminders? (which are effective when used). When was the last time that I used my calendar?

### Coaching Questions for *Time Awareness*

*Adults living with ADHD often struggle to plan in accordance with the passage of time.*

- How long will this task take me?
- How much time do I have left before I need to stop or switch gears?
- Am I focusing on the right thing at the right time? How would I know?
- Am I thinking best-case-scenario (not giving myself enough buffer time) or should I give myself more time to complete the task?
- Should I apply the "Rule of 3" today?
- How can I make time management skills more enjoyable? (The ADHD brain is curious and playful- use it!)

### Coaching Questions for *Focus*

*Adults living with ADHD have trouble focusing when a task is low interest and tend to "hyper-focus" when a task is high-interest. Both have negative consequences.*

- Why am I focusing on this right now?

- Is this a priority to me? Why is this a priority?
- Should I be doing something else with my time?
- What is driving my focus right now? Internal structure (this is what I choose to do) or external structure (deadlines, consequences, commitments)? How can I merge both to increase my motivation to focus?
- If I want to shift my focus to another action- What is the first step (sequence skill) to shift my focus and take action.
- If I'm hyper-focusing, can I apply the micro-sequencing skills that I learned in session to break and practice self-care (move around, go to bathroom, take a break, get a glass of water).

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### Coaching Questions for *Emotion Regulation*

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*Adults living with ADHD often report that their emotions guide their actions.  
Emotions are often described as intense and difficult to regulate.*

- What is my perspective on the situation? How is it different from others?
- What is the story I'm telling myself about why this is happening?
- Is there anything impacting how I'm feeling today?
- Am I "holding" this emotion (emotions tend to pass quickly unless your mind replays memories that re-expose you to the feeling)?
- What action can I take to decrease the intensity of my emotional state?

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### Coaching Questions for *Impulse Management*

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*ADHD is an information processing disorder. (It's in your brain but it's not connecting)*

- Am I pausing to consider my goals or acting on my immediate desire? How would I know?
- Should I or shouldn't I act on this? Is the action in line with my values?
- What are indicators that I'm focusing on the right thing right now?
- If I'm being impulsive, what's the first step to not do this?
- Can I pause and return to this later? How will I remember to return to it?
- What would the future me say about what I'm about to do?

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### Coaching Questions to *Build Awareness*

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*Adults with ADHD often express frustration that they repeat the same mistakes. Learning new habits requires pausing action long enough to consider your options. Otherwise lessons from the past will not influence decisions in the present.*

- Have I made the same mistake over and over again? Why?
- Will my sense of self (self-esteem) be impacted by this decisions? How?
- Do I feel driven by an immediate drive (impulsivity) or chaotic, overwhelmed state (difficulty organizing thoughts)? Remember, overwhelmed (a common feeling) is simply too much information, too fast. Slow down, step back and organize your thoughts. What skills can you apply to organize your thoughts?