

ADD - ADHD

Introduction

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The brain is dependant on chemicals that the body produces and can only function correctly if there is a balance between the chemicals that flow through it. In laymans terms - certain chemicals give you energy, the feeling of euphoria that make you feel positive and make you want to be active, want to work, study, participate in sport, etc. Certain chemicals make you feel tired, restless and even negative. They can influence your potential, your productivity and need to participate.

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- Symptoms

At school everyone is aware of somebody that has trouble concentrating - their attention is easily distracted by something else - it often seems as if they are in a different world, or that they are daydreaming. In the meantime the lesson continues, and when the "daydreaming" is over, they have more than often lost the thread of the lesson. This "daydreaming" (attention deficit) can last anything from a couple of seconds to a couple of hours, without the person realizing the amount of time that has passed. This "daydreaming" isn't necessarily a wanted behavior, but in many cases has got something to do with the chemical composition of the brain. The chemical that promotes communication is typically not enough, this then causes the communicate to halt or too get redirected to another braincell that then reroutes it.

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Other symptoms that appear throughout the youth, is anxiety, depression, aggressiveness and hyperactivity. All the symptoms are due to the chemical composition and chemical releases in the brain. If the person becomes tense, impulsive decisions are made that can lead to, especially at school level, their academic performance suffering, and even influence their social interaction with classmates - the interaction of the teacher with such a pupil's participation in class, the class' reaction to such an incident, as well as their ability to communicate becomes impeded or discredited.

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- Other Symptoms

The ADD-ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) youth often also shows signs of reading disorders, like dyslexia, but it is usually the attention deficit, the reading of a certain word or phrase, that triggers the brain to wander somewhere else and then forces the person to read and then re-read the same sentence or paragraph before they understand what they have read. It takes understanding, especially from teachers at school level, towards these students, to understand that they have to be given the opportunity to read through the comprehension test, or even the exam paper. More time is needed and therefore those that have been diagnosed with ADD-ADHD are given longer periods to write their tests or exams. If someone is diagnosed with, for example, dyslexia, they are not allowed to penalizeÂ them for spelling or grammatical errors. Some may even make use of an amanuensis (someone neutral, who then assures that the person understands the question, and then pens the answer that is given), to complete an exam or test.

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- Impulsiveness

ADD-ADHD tends to be called the "impulsive"-syndrome, because the person tends to be very impulsive due to the chemical imbalance - looking away suddenly whilst in the midst of a conversation, the daydreaming, the rude "chip-in" when someone else is talking, aggressiveness that in short-temper says something that isn't well thought out, that leads to regret and even the unbelieving that they had said it.

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- Treatment

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- Medication

The chemical composition of the body can, however, be corrected with the use of the correct medications to correct the chemical imbalance. Because these chemicals are artificially added to the body, it stimulates the production of chemicals that are essential to the central nervous system and brain functions. Due to the fact that these artificial compounds are quickly removed from the body, the required balance is created to function normally.

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- Neurotherapy

To increase the communication in the brain, the help of neurotherapy is often called in - electrodes are connected to the brain and through studying the response of the eyes to movement on a computer monitor the communication between brain cells are stimulated and finally increased. The effect of both chemicals and neurotherapy seems to be the best option.

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- Diet

The diet of a person with ADD-ADHD is dependent, like any other person, on a healthy, balanced diet, with the important addition of vitamin B-Complex, zinc and magnesium. Avoiding of sugars is also recommended, as sugars tend ferment in the body and this then causes the necessary chemicals to be destroyed and then worsens the chemical imbalance, or at worst, recreates the imbalance.

Â Solution

Again it is very important that society and especially the people that are involved with the education of the young people are thoroughly educated about the existence of ADD-ADHD and that they do not break down the self respect of the person further than it is done by the social circle that they are in. These young people often have the potential to be another Einstein, Beethoven, Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, Alexander Bell, Isaac Newton, Bill Gates or even film stars like Dustin Hoffman, Robin Williams & Tom Cruise, or even performers like Elton John, Madonna, Mick Jagger or Stevie Wonder. When they are given the opportunity, and with the correct therapy, they could and would be able to make a great contribution to society.

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By giving these young people the opportunity to be more relaxed during exams and tests, their potential often comes to the fore, and they then discover their potential that they can nurture and develop further. Their self respect is built up and they often start achieving above average.Â

Â Personal

"I would like to thank the Lord, for my parents, brothers and sisters (and for my wife and kids the past 30 years), who have given me the structure wherein I could discover my potential, despite the numerous teachers that didn't believe that I would reach any goals in life - according to them I should never have achieved my Doctorate. When I discovered 2 years ago, that I could control my ADD-ADHD through various techniques, through the use of medication, it has opened up a whole new life for me. I can, and especially my wife and kids, can see the difference. Now I can start using my energy fully for my work and research." - Dr. Willem Semmelink

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For help with ADD-ADHD, feel free to visit: <http://www.teresawolfaardt.co.za/> (Terese Wolfaardt is a Educational Psychologist. She has a private practice in Pretoria. Registered at the Health Professions Council of South AfricaÂ and a member of the Psychological Society of South Africa.)