**Short summary of ADHD and classroom strategies**

Summarised from 30 Essential ideas about ADHD by Dr Russell A. Barkley PhD

* It is a developmental disorder.
* There is only one type of ADHD but the severity varies
* Can be divided into 2 sub-groups: either with or without conduct disorder. With conduct disorder means that early on the child starts to lie, cheat,steal, fight and prey on other children. This is the best predictor for psychopathy. ADHD in itself does not contribute to psychopathy.
* SCT (Sluggish Cognitive Tempo) was always grouped with ADHD but it is not a tpe of ADHD. The symptoms are opposite. See notes at end of summary)
* Disorder of self-regulation arising out of neuro-genetic causes.
* This is a serious disorder as some profoundly unique human traits are not emerging as they should
* ADHD children cannot stop their inappropriate behaviour
* Fail to develop appropriate inhibition behaviour . Emerges in pre-school years. First sign is usually hyperactivity. Will be physical and verbal. Often intrusive and disruptive. Cognitively impulsive- does first thing that pops into his head. Does not consider consequences. Restless. This hyperactivity declines with age, and is nearly gone by adolescence. In adulthood it is an internal state of needing to be busy, but is mainly a business of the mind (ideas).
* Affects social acceptance. Most children are rejected by close friendships by second grade.
* Failure of persistence. This is labelled as “attention deficit” .
* It is a failure to direct behaviour forward in time , i.e. towards tasks/goals/things that need to get done.
* Due to a problem with the frontal lobe of the brain
* Failure to resist distractions
* Respond to distractions more than other people
* Compelled to react to a noise that others will ignore as irrelevant
* Failure to re-engage the incompleted goal after a distraction
* Has to do with working memory
* Working memory is the ability to remember what we are doing ; consciously holding in mind (what and when) of what we are doing.
* Thus they skip from one incomplete activity to another
* They cannot think about changing their behaviour in the short or long term, so they do not stop and think about consequences. They are unable to learn from their behavioural mistakes. It is an inability to to direct behaviour towards themselves.
* This comes from an impairment in the following 5 **executive abilities:**

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| **Executive function delay** | **By changing the environment you can help compensate for the impaired executive abilities.** |
| 1. Working memory and self-control

The child cannot hold things in mind. No internal clock or sense of time.  | * Use external, physical forms of information

e.g. sticky notes, signs, symbols, charts, cues, reminders, lists- in the visual fieldFind a substitute for working memoryJournals are better than digital devices because ADHD child forgets to charge it or turn it on, leading to frustration and delay in the classroom situation- for child and teacher. * Must have clock or timer that signals the passage of time
* Day planner will help for longer time periods,e.g. homework/assignments/studying for tests in advance
* Break projects that are done over time time into baby steps

Use a reward chart/system of some kind to get things done |
| 1. The mind’s eye.

People usually build in a pause between an event and what you intend to do about it. It is like playing a DVD in the mind about what is happening. (Visualising/mind’s eye). ADHD child cannot visualize well. Therefore, they cannot use hindsight to help in a current situation. Cannot look back to anticipate what might happen in this situation, based on a situation in the past.  |  |
| 1. Mind’s voice

By age 5 the ability to talk to yourself usually starts to develop, and by age 10 it is a voice in your head helping you to control yourself by telling yourself what to do. In ADHD children, if it is there, it is very weak. Therefore, ADHD children cannot follow instructions or rules.  |  |
| 1. The mind’s heart.

This is the ability to manage emotions so that we are more socially acceptable. But the ADHD child:* Is emotionally impulsive, impatient excitable and emotional.
* is quick to anger.
* Has a low frustration tolerance.
* Displays emotions much quicker than other people.
* Fails to regulate normal emotions.
* Fails to self-soothe/self-calm.

This often leads to defiance, arguing and hostility.Our emotions are our source of self-motivation, so ADHD children cannot self-motivate.They are dependent on their environment and its immediate consequences for how long and how hard they can work.This is why some tasks keep their attention for hours, e.g. video games which have built-in consequences at short intervals.Not doing homework has delayed consequences which means nothing to them because they are not self-motivated.This is not willful; not a choice. It is a neuro-executive failure.  | All motivation is external.Offer something to this child to work.“If there ain’t no deal, it ain’t getting done.” |
| 1. The mind’s playground

The ability to plan and problem solve includes the ability to simulate multiple possible future options. This is the highest executive function in humans.ADHD children do have these abilities, but they are QUITE delayed. Therefore, they do not have a sense of time and thus it is a disorder of time management.(This is also why they cannot do mental arithmetic as well as others because they cannot manipulate what is in working memory, because working memory is impaired) | Make problem solving manual, physical.e.g. use fingers, abacus, counters, numberline or calculator to do maths problems.e.g. for essay child writes a thought per card in any order. The teacher reorganizes cards and then child writes story. Works well on PC in Word where you can cut and paste. |
| 1. Other ways to help the ADHD child
 | * Deal with behaviour in little fits and starts and persist and be consistent. Do not try to “glue” little bits into a bigger goal.
* Stop teaching so many skills. Spend more time changing the point of performance, i.e. using what you know.
* Increase accountability. Do not delay consequences. (“Wait till your dad gets home” will have no effect.)
* Remember that NO ADHD TRAITS are due to the rearing environment. You did not cause it.
* 1 in 20 cases of ADHD cases could be exacerbated by food additives and changing the diet has no effect. (But a healthy diet is always a good idea)
* Omega 3 does not have any effect but may have other health benefits.
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* ADHD rarely occurs alone. These children are at risk for having one or more other learning disorders.
* So other disorders may also need to be treated.

A LOT more information on the videos:

<https://youtu.be/1qxUU8LUZoM?si=22NNAxmjQ19VDTkU>

I did not include notes on important insights; what happens if it is left untreated;

The following has been grouped with ADHD, but is not ADHD

**Sluggish Cognitive Tempo (SCT)**

These children do have an attention problem, but their symptoms include:

* Problems processing information
* Problems with focused attention
* Possibly a long-term memory storage problem
* Socially withdrawn, reticent, shy
* Apprehensive
* Often prone to social anxiety
* Do not have an inhibition disorder.
* No self-regulation disorder.
* No executive deficits
* Prone to maths disorders
* Do well in social skills training.