

4 ways to prosper with ADHD

**Easy and practical tips
to make your life better**



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Welcome to your workbook!

I'm Steffi, and I'm an ADHD coach with ADHD. This workbook aims to help you make your life better, through setting it up to be more YOU-friendly. I know what it's like to feel trapped by ADHD! Over time, I've found ways to prosper, and I believe that you can too.

The demands of productivity invite us to compare ourselves with others. Personal growth and positive thinking are brilliant, but don't make ADHD symptoms go away. What if your aim wasn't to somehow 'be better', but to feel free to be yourself?

You don't need to (and honestly can't) turn into someone else. But understanding your unique version of ADHD will help you give yourself the support that makes things easier.

I've designed this workbook so that you can use it in any way you like. Fill it in, try things out, reflect on your results - or just read through it and let new ideas form in their own time. Each of the 4 ways to prosper with ADHD has:

- an explanation
- some examples
- a page of prompts for you to respond to if you want, to lead you through a process that helps put the ideas into action.

You don't need to have an ADHD diagnosis to benefit from the ideas. You're probably already practising them in some areas! Identifying strategies that have worked in the past will give clues around the kinds of things that are worth trying again.

I want to encourage you to become curious about how you work. Observe yourself. Ask for feedback from trusted people. Research, talk with other neurodiverse people, and find the patterns in your challenges and strengths.

Most importantly: Try things, and keep what works!

How to use the prompts

Ideas

In this space: Brainstorm - let it rain! You're probably great at coming up with ideas, so take the opportunity to enjoy it. The internet is an amazing source of inspiration if you look at articles and content generated by people with ADHD.

One thing to try

In this space: Because we want sustainable benefits, it can be good to change only one thing at a time. Otherwise you may trigger hyperfocus on a complex system, which works for a week and then fails once the novelty wears off! Use your ability to see through complexity to what really matters, and aim for something as simple and targeted as possible.

How I could make it work

In this space: When you think through details, see the steps, and anticipate and solve obstacles, you're more likely to follow through. Think about prompts such as alarms; they help you remember and be motivated. Do you need any objects, systems, or support? Use your problem-solving skills to make it easy or fun, or build in an exciting deadline. If you get stuck, imagine that you're solving the problem for someone else!

Results

In this space: After you try your chosen idea out, analyse the results, so that you can learn the kinds of things that tend to help you. If something doesn't work, that's okay: this is also great information. Keep your eye on the prize! Activate your determination - if you keep going, it's inevitable that you will discover things that make your life better.

Number 1:

Change your environment to suit you

Explanation

You may have spent your whole life trying to change yourself to suit the world around you. How about giving yourself permission to change your world to be a better fit for your ADHD self?

Start with the things that drain your energy, or that have a negative impact because you avoid them. Things that seem small to others can feel overwhelming to neuro-diverse people. It could be a sensory quality, like how a drawer slides or finding daily sounds too intense. You might struggle with certain kinds of effort (like walking downstairs to put laundry in a basket).

You may have been shamed for struggling to do things that others just 'get over'. I say: Don't get over it, change it!

Examples

- ★ Put a table or set of hooks by the front door, and 'train yourself' to always put your bag and keys on it.
- ★ Have a 'Sort later' basket to throw clothes at the end of the day, to keep the floor clear until you're ready to sort them.
- ★ Store things as close as you can to the place that you'll use them, so you don't waste precious motivation finding stuff.
- ★ Learn how to set up your email inbox to suit you, so that you don't lose important messages.
- ★ Put together a 'work uniform' with a few similar but different items that can all go together interchangeably.
- ★ Have a bag permanently packed with what you need for a regular activity, with a list inside to check before you go.
- ★ Find a new job, role or manager if your current one can't be made into a good fit for how you naturally work.

Number 1:
Change your environment to suit you

Ideas

One thing to try

How I could make it work

Results

Number 2: Choose and use external supports

Explanation

ADHD comes with gaps in 'executive functioning', such as planning, remembering, and being organised. You may exhaust yourself trying to do things the way that you think a 'proper adult' should be able to. Instead, it can be liberating to accept yourself as you are, and set up supports outside your brain.

External supports can be life changing. They can also feel boring, until you learn from experience how powerful they are. A great place to start is by planning your day. Planning lets you work out what's going on, and leave clues for yourself for later.

If you tend to forget the boring things, trying to hold them in your brain is a massive waste. Let your daily plan, calendar, checklist, to-do list, alarm or reminder system do that work for you, so you can get on with the interesting stuff.

Examples

- ★ Try out some of the incredible phone apps that make daily life admin into a game.
- ★ Project management tools like Asana can help you keep track of and prioritise tasks in more complex projects.
- ★ Calendar apps and tools like Todoist will prompt you to do tasks that repeat regularly.
- ★ Draw a family weekly plan on the fridge with whiteboard marker, so everyone knows who has committed to be where, and when.
- ★ 'Body doubling' lets you motivate yourself by working at the same time as another person (see [Focusmate.com](https://www.focusmate.com)).
- ★ Arrange with a safe person that you can ask to talk things through with them when you get stuck - let them know that even if the issue seems trivial, this can really help.

Number 2: Choose and use external supports

Ideas

One thing to try

How I could make it work

Results

Number 3: Know your states and strategies

Explanation

We talk more freely nowadays about thoughts and feelings, but for neuro-diverse people, it's also useful to think about our 'state'. This is more about what the nervous system is up to.

A state can be as big, like a week of scatteredness or heightened anxiety. Or it might be sudden, like when you forget your password and get so wound up that the whole day derails.

You may already have your own names for some of the states you experience: messy brain, overwhelmed, stuck, obsessed, wound up, lethargic, tripped out... And you probably have a few strategies for helping yourself with certain states. So that means you can develop even more!

Examples

- ★ Work out in advance some words you can say to briefly explain a challenging state and ask for what you need.
- ★ In a phase of hyperfocus, check daily for other priorities. Write out 1-3. Choose a strategy to help do each one.
- ★ Give a name to your most common states, and explain them to the people who support and care about you.
- ★ Have a "Plan B for scattered brain day", such as working in a cafe, or only taking on tasks that have a very clear structure or that interest you.
- ★ Certain states may trigger brutal self-talk. Choose to actively disbelieve the story your mind is telling you. Instead, ask yourself what you need (e.g. care, support, time out).
- ★ Write out your go-to strategies. Put them somewhere you can see them, so you're reminded of them when you need it.
- ★ Track your states over a month and see what patterns you can observe. Include triggers, strategies and outcomes.

Number 3: Know your states and strategies

Ideas

One thing to try

How I could make it work

Results

Number 4: Prioritise what helps your ADHD

Explanation

If you often only have a small amount of energy available for life admin, it makes sense to devote that energy to getting yourself to do the things that help your ADHD. Keep things simple, pick a few things to aim to do consistently, and then set your life up so that they are easy and fun to do.

You are allowed to abandon the words 'I should', and go for 'I choose' or 'I want' instead. If you know that you want to sleep better because that helps you stay focused, and you know that some kind of exercise during the day helps you sleep, then whatever movement you get yourself to do is an absolute win!

Motivate yourself by combining your chosen priorities with whatever interests and excites you. And remember to use external supports to remind you of what to do, and when.

Examples

- ★ Write a list of 'Fun ways to move', and challenge yourself to do any one thing off that list each day.
- ★ Identify what soothes your nervous system - it may be very different to what most other people do to relax!
- ★ If you want to go on a morning walk, leave your exercise shoes by the front door the night before.
- ★ Whatever you choose to do, get yourself the basic stuff that you need to do it (without buying every existing accessory!)
- ★ Print out pictures of your favourite easy healthy meals, and stick them on the door of your fridge.
- ★ Ask a friend to sit with you while you do multi-step online tasks, like renewing your passport.
- ★ Simplify! Consider letting go of tasks, expectations, objects, and even relationships that don't help you or bring you joy.

Number 4: Prioritise what helps your ADHD

Ideas

One thing to try

How I could make it work

Results

Go forth and prosper!

Thanks for reading (and maybe even filling out) this workbook. I hope these 4 ways to prosper with ADHD help you as much as they've helped me.

When I get stuck, I now ask myself, "How can I set things up to help me and my version of ADHD?" This takes me out of my challenging feelings, and into curiosity, analysis, and creativity.

It may take time to learn to trust yourself, as you set up your life to suit and support you. It will probably be helpful to purposefully work to recognise your progress. This will also keep you motivated.

To help you notice your progress, you can ask yourself:

- What feels different, easier, or more interesting?
- What new challenges am I able to take on?
- How am I now bringing my gifts to the world?
- How often am I using my strengths?

You could put a recurring monthly reminder in your calendar with these questions. While you're at it, please remember to celebrate your efforts and successes as often as you can!

If you want help with any part of this, please get in touch. I offer coaching to suit your needs, and online ADHD workshops.

All the best,



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