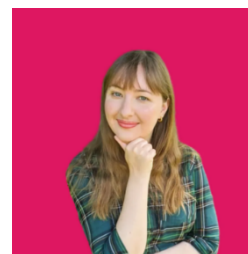




**enhance**  
facilitation ltd

- Quality relationships
- Meaningful work
- Inner harmony



## EFL Brieflet: Engaging with ADHD

*They say a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind. What then is an empty desk a sign of?  
Albert Einstein (understood to have experienced ADHD)*

### ADHD or HEAPS: High Energy, Activity, Potential and Sensitivity?

Understanding of the incidence and experience of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder is increasing over time - it needs to. At least 5% of adults directly live with the experience, the range and effects of which vary greatly. Plus, it has at last been recognised that women are just as likely to be affected as men. As the understanding of ADHD increases, so does the ability to recognise, engage and accept it as part of our community's diversity. It therefore helps if we can engage with it constructively within the coaching context. It is hoped that this crib-sheet of possible behaviours that might be encountered in the coaching environment provides a useful foundation for collaborative coaching relationships that enhance the continued growth and purpose of coachees who live with ADHD.

### Common Challenges

- Frequent, often untrue, sense of underachievement due to higher levels of self-criticism
- Easily bored, craves stimulation, takes risks
- Can be easily distracted or sidetracked (But fidgeting can help increase concentration)
- Sensitivity to rejection, often alongside anxiety and depression
- Can hyper-focus on special interests
- Struggles with anger and impulsivity
- Difficulty concentrating on tasks that aren't stimulating - associated procrastination
- ADHD can include dyslexia which can make reading and writing more difficult
- Time blindness and working memory issues can lead to unrealistic goal setting
- Difficulty in getting organised; procrastination
- Can have a restless mind that feels 'driven by emotion'
- Struggles with observing and following some social cues, expectations and norms
- Can act impulsively at times
- Has trouble following authorised procedure and can be oppositional
- Working memory struggles; forgetful; can't retain information; sudden blank mind
- Often accompanied by clutter or hoarding
- Parallel challenges, e.g. substance misuse, gambling

### ADHD Strengths

- Highly energetic, a good leader, entrepreneurial
- Intuitive, insightful, enterprising, creative, thinks outside the box
- Tenacious, problem solver, can take risks
- Trusting, forgiving, warm-hearted, strong sense of justice, supports the under-dog
- Super sensitive, empathetic
- Loyal, never forgets a good friend or deed
- Good sense of humour, the life of the party
- Can hyper-focus on favoured activities, computers, computer games, sport etc
- Does well in creative and high-stress jobs such as firefighting, sales, and the arts

*Waiho kia pātai ana, he kaha ui te kaha Let the questioning continue  
The ability of the person is in asking questions (Māori whakataukī/saying)*

Where leadership is a team responsibility

Coaching

Psychosocial support

Supervision

## Steps Towards Success

- Understand that mistakes and failure are a normal part of life
- Learn to problem solve and grow from experience
- Do what you love. The people who succeed are those in careers they really love
- Recognise that your ability to hyper-focus can be your biggest strength, giving you the perseverance and energy to succeed
- Notice and attend to the importance of exercise. Especially outdoor activity which allows you to cope with your ADHD stress and supports working memory

## ADHD and FAMOUS

Henare Kaa (Dillastrate), Richard Branson, Simone Biles, Winston Churchill, Billy Connolly, Albert Einstein, Whoopie Goldberg, Bear Grylls, Michael Phelps, Robin Williams...

Using Coaching to engage with ADHD	Benefits of Coaching for ADHD
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Goal development</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Identify ADHD struggles and develop goals</li> <li>ii. Break goals into manageable chunks</li> <li>iii. Elicit the ADHD issues behind the struggles</li> <li>iv. Identify obstacles</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <u>Time management</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Estimate how long a task will take</li> <li>ii. Learn to prioritise important tasks</li> <li>iii. Create routines to support time-blindness</li> <li>iv. Create and keep in mind rewards for finishing - and starting 😊</li> <li>v. <b>Delegate what you procrastinate</b></li> </ol> </li> <li>3. <u>Organisational skills</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Identify hidden subtasks</li> <li>ii. Focus on and apply your strengths</li> <li>iii. Make everything in the work environment more accessible</li> <li>iv. Identify and remove distractions</li> <li>v. Understand importance of organisational skills to support executive functioning</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. <u>Social skills</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Develop confidence to ask for help</li> <li>ii. Create systems for maintaining relationships, esp. with close others</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing potential distractions</li> <li>▪ Enhancing decision making</li> <li>▪ Managing impulsivity</li> <li>▪ Setting boundaries</li> <li>▪ Valuing strengths</li> <li>▪ Increasing focus</li> <li>▪ Managing relationships</li> <li>▪ Handling ‘admin’</li> <li>▪ Creating routines for executive functioning struggles</li> <li>▪ Reducing feeling of overwhelm</li> </ul>

## Sources for your further interest

<http://www.adhd.org.nz>  
<http://www.lifecoach-directory.org.uk/articles/adhd-coaching.html>  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2628311/>  
<https://www.unconventionalorganisation.com/meet-our-adhd-coachess>

**Sam Farmer** is Owner-Director of Enhance Facilitation Limited and strongly advocates that leadership is a team responsibility. Strength-based and Values-focused in his approach, he is passionate about collaborative coaching. As well as offering professional supervision, he facilitates psychosocial growth conversations with professionals working within high emotional impact contexts. He is a registered psychologist, has regular professional supervision and is bound by the Psychologists’ Code of Ethics.

**Skye Rapson** is a neurodiverse Academic, ADHD Coach and the Founder of Unconventional Organisation. She has worked in the field of adult education for over seven years. Skye has studied in various fields, including Psychology, Sociology, and Public Health, and is now a Doctoral Candidate in Population Health.

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