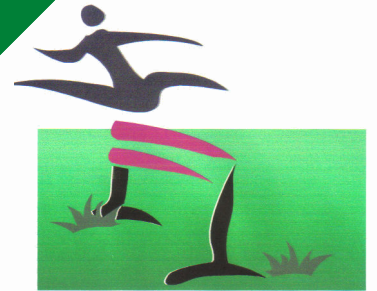


OCTOBER 2022 | ISSUE NO. 66

# BMC JOURNAL

The monthly newsletter of  
Behavior Management Consultants



**I overachieved to mask my  
ADHD. It's common for  
women.**

---

Growing up, my undiagnosed ADHD symptoms made me feel like something inside was broken or disconnected. A diagnosis in my early 20s, along with the right medication to manage symptoms, improved my life significantly – so much so that I carried on believing I had finally been “fixed.” But living under such a heavy misapprehension only perpetuated the overwhelming cycle of frustration, shame, silence and anxiety I felt before. No matter how I tried, I could never seem to truly fix myself.

Girls and women with ADHD like me have long been left in the dark, fending for ourselves in a never ending battle to mask our symptoms to meet societal expectations. Twenty years later, I’m finally learning the ways inattentive ADHD affects every aspect of my life. I’m also gaining the validation and understanding needed to break the cycle and appreciate everything I am: A person who doesn’t need fixing after all.

**AN ADHD DIAGNOSIS IN MY 20s CHANGED MY LIFE. FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FELT “NORMAL”.**

**I WAS RELIEVED TO KNOW MY BRAIN WORKED DIFFERENTLY FOR A REASON, AND I FOUND THE RIGHT MEDICATION TO MANAGE MY SYMPTOMS.**

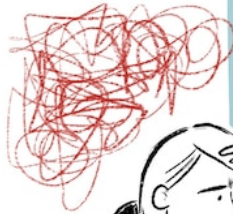


**IT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME BELIEVE I HAD BEEN “FIXED.”**

**BUT RECENTLY, MY ANXIETY BECAME UNMANAGEABLE, AND I REALIZED IT WAS CONNECTED TO MY ADHD.**

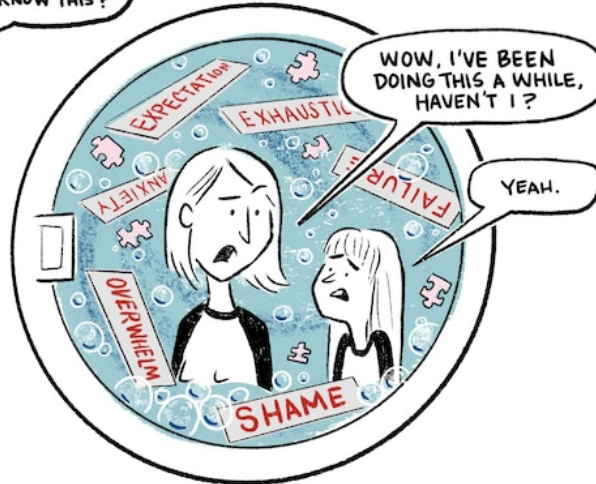
Women with ADHD are four times more likely to experience General Anxiety Disorder.  
*Journal of Affective Disorders*  
February 2022

**I WENT ON TO LEARN THAT MY OTHER STRUGGLES WERE, TOO.**



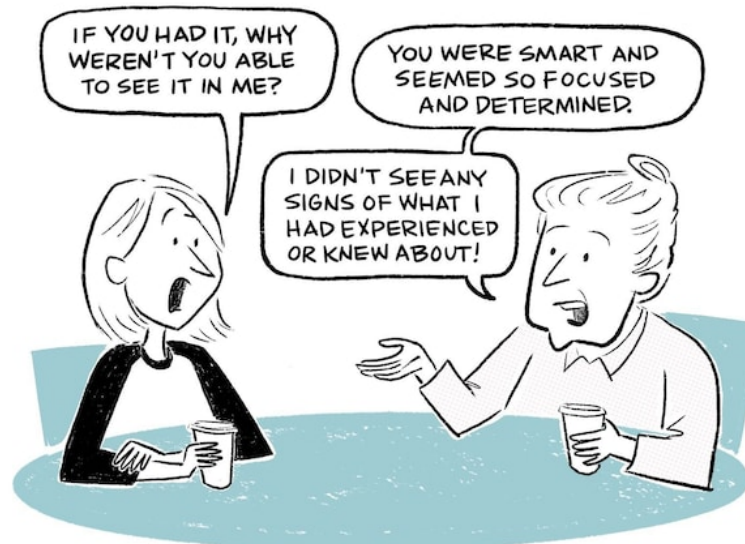
HOW DID I NOT KNOW THIS?

**LIVING WITH A FALSE SENSE OF "NORMALCY" HAS KEPT ME IN THE SAME VICIOUS CYCLE MY WHOLE LIFE!**



**BUT NOT KNOWING THIS ISN'T EXACTLY MY FAULT.**

**ADHD IS HEREDITARY, BUT SO MANY WOMEN GO UNDIAGNOSED OR MISDIAGNOSED. I ONLY RECENTLY LEARNED MY MOM HAD BEEN DIAGNOSED IN HER 30s.**



**THE U.S. DIAGNOSIS RATE OF ADHD AMONG CISGENDER MEN IS 69% HIGHER THAN CISGENDER WOMEN.**



EARLY ADHD STUDIES WERE BASED ON THE BEHAVIORS OF WHITE HYPERACTIVE BOYS.

AS A CALM, QUIET AND SENSITIVE DAYDREAMER, I OFTEN RETREATED TO MY IMAGINATION. IN 5TH GRADE, I BEGAN COMPULSIVELY PULLING OUT MY EYEBROWS...



EVERYONE TREATS ME LIKE I'M WEIRD.

SYMPTOMS IN GIRLS WITH INATTENTIVE ADHD ARE USUALLY ANXIETY AND MOOD-RELATED. BECAUSE THOSE TRAITS ARE STIGMATIZED, WE TEND TO WITHDRAW.

IN JUNIOR HIGH, I DEVELOPED DEBILITATING STOMACH CRAMPS AND HAD TO BE HOMESCHOOLED.

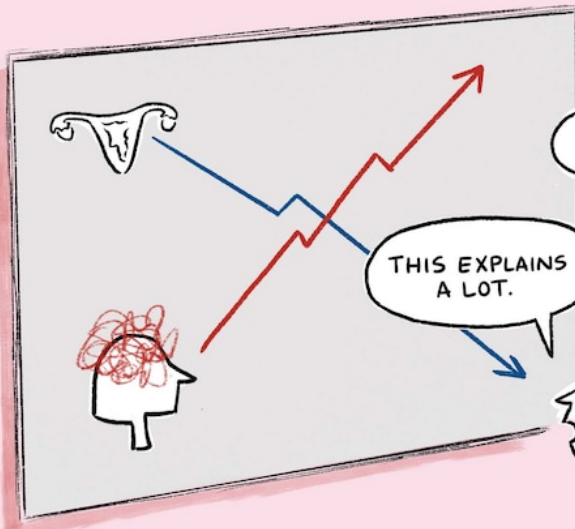


EVERY ADULT THINKS I'M MAKING IT UP. I WANT TO BE INVISIBLE.

IT DIDN'T HELP THAT I WAS ALSO FLOODED WITH PUBERTY HORMONES...

EW.

ADHD SYMPTOMS ARE WIDELY THOUGHT TO BE CONSISTENT OVER TIME, BUT THIS ISN'T TRUE FOR MANY WOMEN. OUR SYMPTOMS INTENSIFY AS ESTROGEN DECREASES, AND WE EXPERIENCE PMS MORE ACUTELY.



RIGHT?!

THIS EXPLAINS A LOT.



ALL OF THIS EXPOSES US FURTHER TO NEGATIVE STIGMA.



LIKE MOST GIRLS, I LEARNED EARLY ON ABOUT SOCIETAL GENDER EXPECTATIONS. ADHD HAS PREVENTED ME FROM MEETING ANY OF THEM EASILY, IF AT ALL.



RESEARCH SHOWS THAT GIRLS AND WOMEN ARE HIGHLY MOTIVATED TO HIDE OUR ADHD SYMPTOMS.



MY STRENGTHS HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED TO HIDE MY ADHD "WEAKNESSES," TO PROVE I AM UNAFFECTED AND "NORMAL."

I'M FINALLY UNDERSTANDING THAT "NORMAL" IS A MYTH AND DIFFERENT IS NOT INFERIOR. DIFFERENT IS DIFFERENT — AND MEANINGFUL.



I'VE BEEN PUNISHING MYSELF FOR BEING UNABLE TO CURE SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE CURED.

NOW, I'LL PAUSE BEFORE DIVING INTO THE NEGATIVE CYCLE.



I'LL BE KINDER TO MYSELF AND ALLOW SOME SPACE.



I'LL DO MY BEST TO APPRECIATE EVERYTHING GREAT AND UNIQUE ABOUT ME THAT COMES FROM BEING



I'LL ALSO BE MORE OPEN



---

IT WON'T BE EASY,  
AND IT WILL ALWAYS REQUIRE WORK.



BUT I KNOW LIVING MORE AUTHENTICALLY IS MUCH  
EASIER AND MORE FULFILLING THAN TRYING TO BE  
SOMETHING I'M NOT.





# **Olympians, Professional Athletes, and Sports Legends with ADHD**

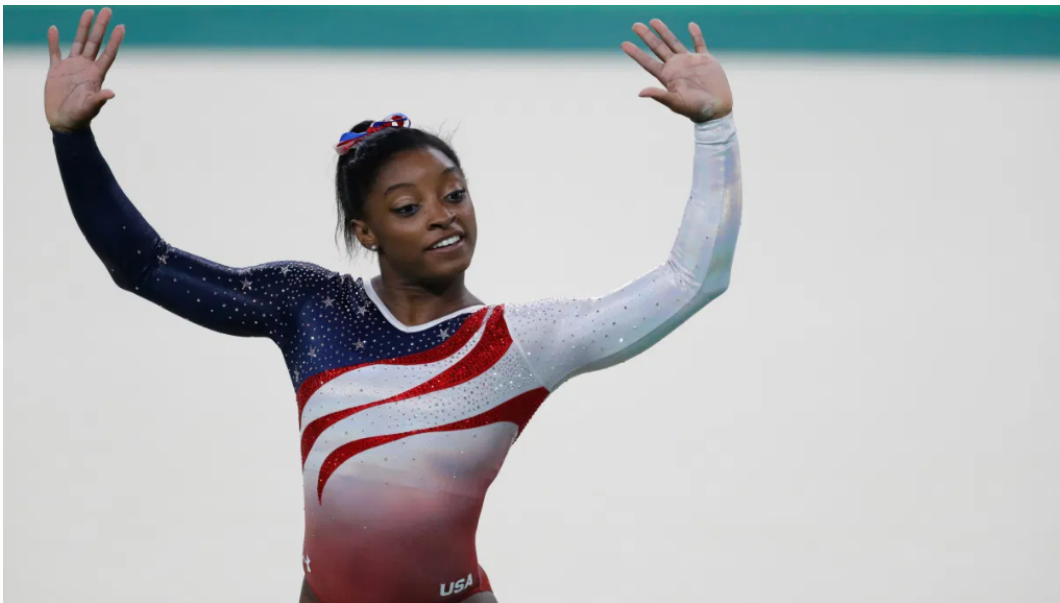
***An ever-growing list of elite athletes with ADHD from across the wide world of sports.***

## **Sports and ADHD: Is There a Connection?**

From baseball and basketball to judo and gymnastics, the sports world is filled with elite athletes who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) - and who have dominated in their respective athletics.

Research suggests, in fact, that ADHD may be more common in elite athletes than it is in the general population; up to 8% of athletes have the condition compared to 2% to 7% of the general population.

Each of the athletes on this list has ADHD - either diagnosed in childhood, in the midst of their professional career, or years after retiring from the sport. Many say ADHD gives them an edge, while others say sports has given them a healthy outlet for their symptoms. Who would you add to this list?



### **Gymnast**

Simone Biles is the most decorated American gymnast in history, with 32 World Championship medals and seven Olympic medals. In 2022, she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, becoming the youngest person to receive the nation's highest civilian honor.

Biles opened up about her ADHD diagnosis in 2016, after Russian hackers exposed confidential medical information about her Ritalin use. "Having ADHD and taking medicine for it is nothing to be ashamed of nothing that I'm afraid to let people know," she tweeted at the time.

## Football Player

Zach Wilson, who played college football at Brigham Young University, was selected second overall by the New York Jets in the 2021 NFL Draft. Wilson was diagnosed with ADHD as a child, and he says symptoms of distractibility and inattention have never interfered with his passion for and focus on football. “I try hard, but it’s a struggle for me because of the attention deficit,” Wilson told Deseret News about college. “When it comes to football, I can do it all day.”



Wilson is a nephew of [David Neeleman](#), the JetBlue Airways founder who is outspoken about his own ADHD.

## Swimmer

With a total of 28 Olympic medals, Michael Phelps is the most decorated Olympian of all time.

Phelps, who was diagnosed with ADHD as a child, remembers “constantly bouncing off the walls.” “All everyone knew, in particular my mom, my sisters, and my coaches, was that I had all this energy and that I could bleed off a lot of it by playing sports: baseball, soccer, lacrosse, swimming, you name it,” he wrote in his book, *No Limits: The Will to Succeed*.



## Basketball Player

Kevin Garnett played for the Minnesota Timberwolves, the Boston Celtics, and the Brooklyn Nets during his storied NBA career, which spanned 21 seasons. He announced his retirement from professional basketball in 2016, and he was inducted into the NBA Hall of Fame in 2020.

Garnett revealed in his memoir, *KG: A to Z*, (#CommissionsEarned) that he has ADHD and dyslexia, and was only diagnosed in “the last years of my NBA career.”



“As a kid, all I knew was that reading was tough and focusing was even tougher,” he wrote in his book.



## Shot Putter

Michelle Carter is a three-time Olympian who made history in 2016 when she became USA's first-ever female Olympic shot put champion. As of 2022, she remains the American record holder in the event.



Carter was diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia as a child. "I was definitely a handful back then," she said in an interview with Understood.org. "I could not sit down long enough to study and to learn." After a 25-year career, Carter announced her retirement from competitive athletics in 2022, but she promised she would not walk away from track and field completely. She continues to run You Throw Girl, a sport confidence camp for girls.

## Sprinter

Justin Gatlin is a five-time Olympic medalist who retired in early 2022 as one of the most decorated sprinters of all time. Gatlin revealed that he had been treating his ADHD with medication for years after a positive amphetamine test led to a temporary ban from competition early in his career.



(He stopped taking ADHD medication after the experience.)

"ADD sucks during training, but coming into finals I actually feel such an energy burst," he told The Independent in 2019. "When I step out onto the track, and I hear so much and I see so many people and my mind gets distracted, I kind of just feel at home actually. It's eerie but it makes me feel good there's so much going on."

## Baseball Player

Andres Torres spent a decade playing for minor league teams, hoping for a big break. His play at last transformed when he began treating his ADHD - five years after he was diagnosed close to the start of his career.



"With the medication, everything started clicking," Torres told The New York Times. "From then on, it changed."

A few years into treatment, Torres signed with the San Francisco Giants, and won his first World Series ring with them in 2010.



# **Are You a High Performing Professional Struggling With ADHD?**

**How you can thrive in a high-profile career, even with ADHD.**

---

Particularly grueling fields such as law or medicine challenge even the most dedicated of students, but if you struggle with ADD or ADHD, your ADHD can work against you and drastically hamper your potential for success. Some high-performing professionals struggle with ADD-ADHD even as they notch up impressive professional and academic accomplishments. If this describes you, you are probably more worn out than you should be and are likely to experience problems maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Having an attention deficit disorder does not preclude you from entering any particular field of expertise or having a fulfilling career. But ADHD invariably makes it that much more challenging to achieve significant professional goals, maintain the level of focus to succeed, and avoid burnout in the process.

You can succeed with ADHD. Getting the support and skills to recognize, understand, and manage your ADHD are key to your success.

ADHD is not linked to intelligence

Attention deficit disorder (ADD) and Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) have no direct correlation with levels of intelligence. Very highly intelligent people can struggle with ADHD just like anyone else. In fact, having a high IQ may even mask ADHD, as a person with increased intelligence may develop ways to compensate that can delay the diagnosis of ADHD.

A person with increased intelligence can struggle with ADHD, without realizing it for years or even decades. The result can include impairment of your day-to-day functioning, damage to professional success, and a negative impact on your relationship. A psychiatrist who works with adult ADHD can help you get the right diagnosis. Treatment can help you achieve greater success, improved emotional health, and even improved physical health.





---

What is adult ADHD and how does it manifest in your life?

ADHD is a condition characterized by an inability to concentrate and remain focused for the time required to function effectively in everyday life. Adult ADHD makes planning and time management more difficult. You may find it more difficult to develop routines, stay organized, and control your impulses. You also may find yourself beginning a task, being interrupted by a second task, or even a third task, and completely losing track or forgetting about the first task. So-called “multitasking” can be extremely difficult and tiring. Taken together, these difficulties in executive function can damage your academic performance and your career.

#### ADHD and academic success

While you might be able to navigate a somewhat chaotic home life, ADHD makes academic success really difficult. If the reality of starting your assignments on time and maintaining the requisite focus enough to stay on track for on-time delivery is challenging, you might well be struggling with ADD or ADHD.

For a certain period of time, you might have been able to persevere with sheer grit and determination through a demanding educational curriculum to earn a degree and even academic recognition. However, even if you've always been a high achiever, you might have noticed that as the demands on your time increased, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the academic standards that you aspire to.

#### ADHD hampers professional success

You might have achieved high academic standards of excellence in school through a combination of intelligence and a reasonable amount of effort. You might have invested more time than your peers in doing school assignments. But as your professional workload increases and you're required to meet multiple deadlines, you may feel that you just can't keep up.



---

If you often feel that tasks take you longer than is necessary, that you're easily distracted while trying to get your work done, or that you often switch between tasks, your effectiveness will drop and your productivity will lag. The result is a bit of a domino effect: a regular backlog of work piling up that you're struggling to keep on top of, and that requires you to juggle ever more tasks.

When you struggle to complete tasks in the time available, subconsciously you will be deterred from initiating new tasks. Your peers and managers will notice that you don't complete tasks on time or refrain from taking on new responsibilities.

#### How ADHD is treated

ADHD affects how you behave and how you interact with the outside world. Your brain releases impulses that travel via neurotransmitters and then via nerves to different parts of your body to govern your behavior. Organizing, planning, paying attention, and impulse control are examples of executive functions that are all controlled by the frontal lobe of the brain.

The way that ADHD is treated is determined by the individual needs and circumstances of the person seeking treatment. Treatment for high-performing professionals and students with ADHD often draws from a set of tools that includes psychoeducation, skills development, psychological counseling, and medication.

If you have ADHD, you might have developed certain adaptive behaviors to compensate for difficulties caused by the ADHD. Creativity and resourcefulness can be very helpful, to a point. If you are buckling under the strain of your workload, treading water to maintain the status quo, or feel that the same repeated challenges are inhibiting your professional progress, it might be the time to address the bigger picture of what's really going on.



IMPORTANT  
NUMBERS



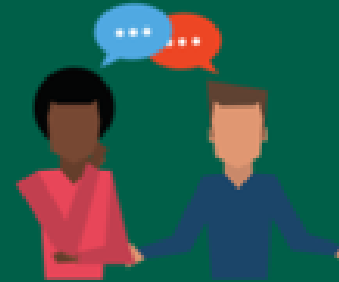
IF YOU NEED  
HELP, PLEASE  
MAKE THE CALL



GET THE SUPPORT  
YOU NEED



YOU ARE NOT  
ALONE



National Suicide  
Prevention Hotline:  
1-800-273-8255

National Domestic  
Violence Hotline:  
1-800-799-7233

Runaway and  
Homeless Teen  
Hotline Help:  
1-800-246-4646



Coalition for the  
Homeless:  
212-776-2000

Drug and Alcohol  
Hotline:  
800-622-2255

Food and Hunger  
Hotline:  
866-888-8777

Homeless Services  
Hotline:  
212-533-5151

Rape Crisis Hotline:  
212-227-3000

National Child  
Abuse Hotline:  
1-800-422-4453

National Teen  
Dating Abuse  
Helpline: 1-866-  
331-9474

Crisis Lifeline for  
LGBTQ Youth:  
1-866-488-7386

Boys Town National  
Hotline:  
800-448-3000

American  
Pregnancy Helpline:  
866-942-6466

---

Behavior Management Consultants believes that, “No Child is Born Bad”. Our mission is to educate, mentor, and assist parents, caregivers, and professionals to cope with, socialize, and identify values important to today’s youth.

The goal is to serve public and private social service organizations including, but not limited to:

- Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs)
- Juvenile Detention Centers
- Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs)
- Public Schools
- Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

We are confident that we will meet our goals thereby ensuring that our clients are being kept abreast in the ever-changing landscape of Human/Social Services.

### **Quote of the Month**

“If you fall behind, run faster. Never give up, never surrender and rise up against all odds.”

– Jesse Jackson



{ your ad  
HERE }

If you'd like to buy some ad space for your upcoming events or business ventures, please reach out directly to Artemus X. Smith for details and pricing. All proceeds go to helping fund Behavior Management Consultants.

Email: [Smith@bmcofnyc.org](mailto:Smith@bmcofnyc.org)