

Decisions, Dating, and Job Interviews

This is a really broad question, but how can I learn what my family calls “common sense” so that I don’t keep making decisions that get me into trouble?

Let’s look first at your family’s concerns. “Common sense” is a pretty broad category. What issues has your family specifically mentioned to you? Are they things you can realistically work on, or are they things that are just a part of you and your personality? Also, are you receiving treatment for ADHD? Does the treatment seem to be effective? If not, consult with your clinician. Also consider family therapy.

In addition, keep open communication with your family. When a family member appears to be frustrated, you can ask him or her, “What do you need from me right now?” Learning about specific concerns can go a long way toward family harmony, because otherwise, you might wind up working on things that are not actually important to them. Clarity always helps!

Stephanie Moulton Sarkis, PhD, NCC, LMHC | Psychotherapist | Author, *10 Simple Solutions to Adult ADD* (2011)

I just started dating someone. What is the right time in a relationship to disclose your ADHD?

Two years ago, I decided that I would be more upfront about disclosing my ADHD in dating as well as with friends and colleagues. I’m a perfectionist, and for most of my life I have done my best to hide the not-so-attractive qualities of my ADHD in any relationship.

It wasn’t until I started opening up and sharing my ADHD diagnosis, concerns, and quirks with those around me openly, that I realized that I was able to connect more authentically with others. This led to stronger relationships, or on the other hand, allowed me to see if I wasn’t really truly compatible with someone—which was better to know sooner than later. It has made a huge difference in helping me let go of some of that perfectionism and shame that often would stunt or self-sabotage any type of relationship down the road.

Communication and authenticity from the get-go have been game-changers for me. I’d definitely recommend working disclosure into early conversations, when you are just beginning to date someone. It can be done in casual conversations. The more you talk about it, open up, and share, the easier it gets to work into conversation.

Hawken Vance | Art director | Adult with ADHD

Like many with ADHD, I have had too many jobs, of too many types. It’s negatively impacting my ability to get interviews. And then I don’t know what to say about it when I do get an interview. How do I explain this in a way that gives the interviewer faith that I will stick around for this job?

Here are my tips:

- **Write it ALL down.** Make a spreadsheet with the company, your position, dates you held the job, a short description of your responsibilities, and a short



BREHM'S SUMMER PROGRAM

JUNE 25-JULY 22

An immersive summer learning experience
for children with learning disabilities, ages 12 - 18



ACADEMICS



ADVENTURES



SOCIAL AWARENESS

WEEKDAY:

Morning Adventures
Afternoon Academics
Evening Electives

WEEKEND:

Overnight Trips

COMMON TRIPS/ ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

Camping
Zip lining
Certified high ropes courses
Canoeing
The City Museum of St. Louis
Botanical Gardens, St. Louis
Hiking/fishing/boating
Paintball
Sports

For more information, please call (618) 457-0371,
e-mail admissionsinfo@brehm.org, or visit www.brehm.org/summer.

description of what you learned.

- **Connect the dots.** Look at all the positions you held and what you drew from each. Highlight jobs that were even remotely similar to each other. I bet you'll start to notice patterns of experience you never thought were there!
- **Get the interview and spin it.** Make the following your mantra: *"I am confident. I am a positive person. I am a passionate person. I am an honest person. I have something to give. I am worth it."*

Want to know a little secret? In my humble experience, employers prefer hiring someone they connect with on a personal level and feel they can trust, but who might require a bit more training, rather than an *expert* who rubs everyone the wrong way.

While your neighbor might have held a position at their place of work for years, you have had to problem-solve on a much wider spectrum. Try spinning this into the following statement:

- *"Looking for a natural problem solver? Well, they're sitting right in front of you. I have had to find solutions to issues spanning from [one job] to [another position], and I find that my varied experience helps me to think on my feet and act quickly with the confidence that 'I have seen this before and I know how to get the results we're looking for.'" Hear that? Now you're starting to sound like management material!*
- **Strike the words "restless" and "distractable" from your vernacular.** We adults with ADHD are a unique class of ultra-curious men and women. I'm not sure a character trait exists that is more attractive to potential employers than the combination of *deeply passionate* and *insatiably curious*.

Stephen Tonti | Writer, director, public speaker
| Adult with ADHD

Ari Tuckman, PsyD, MBA, is a psychologist, author, and speaker. He serves as a member of CHADD's board of directors and co-chair of its conference committee.