

Making Decisions

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT ADULT ADHD?

Email them to attention@chadd.org and highly qualified experts will respond.



I have trouble making decisions. I get too caught up in all the details and can't decide. How do I sort through it all?

Prioritization can be a challenge for adults with ADHD. Deciding what to do, what not to do, what to do first, and what to do next—sprinkled in with all the details—can end up feeling like one big, equally important, confusing mess. To help you sort through it all, follow these four steps:

- 1. Plan.** Take time to plan and make a decision when you are well rested.
- 2. Options.** Brain dump all your options onto individual sticky notes, focusing on the end result of each option.
- 3. Sort.** Now that you have your options, consider the pros and cons of each. You may want to write these on different colored sticky notes, for instance blue for pros and yellow for cons. Consider your values or what's important to you when creating these pros and cons.
- 4. Time.** Set a deadline in which to make the decision and share it with others. For people with ADHD, it is common to procrastinate while wanting to make a thoughtful decision until it once again becomes an impulsive decision about which we are not confident.

Following these steps will help you sort through the distraction of the details. Then you will make a decision that you know has been well thought out.

Laurie Dupar, PMHNP, RN, PCC | Psychiatric nurse practitioner, Senior Certified ADHD Coach & ADHD coach trainer, author

What can we do about my young adult son's aggressive outbursts?

I can definitely understand why this would be a concern for you—aggression can be really destructive to trust and relationships. This needs to be addressed, especially if he is also being aggressive outside of the home, such as at school, or work, or with romantic partners. If he minimizes the severity of the aggressive outbursts or blames others, then your first job is get him to see that this is a serious problem and that he needs to work on it. If he keeps denying it, then for safety's sake, he may need to find an alternative place to live or you may need to put limits on his visits (for example, he can't drink at the house if that is a trigger). Individual therapy may help him learn better ways of dealing with the emotions or situations that set him off. Some family therapy may be helpful to better identify those triggers. You may also want to have his diagnosis re-evaluated, in case you are missing something and, if so, his medications may also need to be reviewed.

Ari Tuckman, PsyD, MBA |
Psychologist, author, presenter





**I keep struggling working for others.
Should I just work for myself instead?**

The question you have to answer before this one is this: If your current boss let you work the way you prefer to work (for example, late at night instead of in the office all day) would you be better at your job? It's one thing to say, "I can't work for someone else," and it's another entirely to be great at what you're doing on your OWN. In the end, if you're in an environment where you're not thriving, and an environment change might do the trick, then yes, you might consider going out on your own.

If, however, the problem is deeper than that—that is, even if you were on your own, you don't know that you'd be able to handle the job—then the question becomes whether or not you're doing the right thing. If you don't love what you're doing, or worse, if you hate it, you'll never be good at it. In that case, it's not just as simple as "working for yourself."

To summarize: Figure out if you love what you do. If you don't, change. If you do, consider working for yourself, if you're sure that you can do it better than allowed by the situation you're currently in.

Peter Shankman | Entrepreneur, bestselling author, and dad

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.

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