

## How I Write With ADHD

**W**HEN YOU THINK OF FOURTEEN HOURS on a plane, what's your first reaction? Chances are "cringe," "eye-roll," or "hell, no" are the first things to cross your mind, along with "lots of sleeping pills" and "wine."

Not for me. For a lucky few of us, fourteen hours on a plane is a gift—a chance to do nothing but focus, zone-in, plug in, and work. For me, at least, fourteen or so hours on a plane are a game-changer.

So, picture the scene—I fly approximately 250,000 miles per year. That's a lot of time in the air, with plenty of time to sit, focus, and, most importantly for me, write.

About a year or so ago, I had a book due to my editor. I was on contract to deliver it on a certain date, about eight months after the contract was signed. I spent the first month diligently doing all the research that I needed to do, and then, like most people with ADD or ADHD, immediately forgot about it.

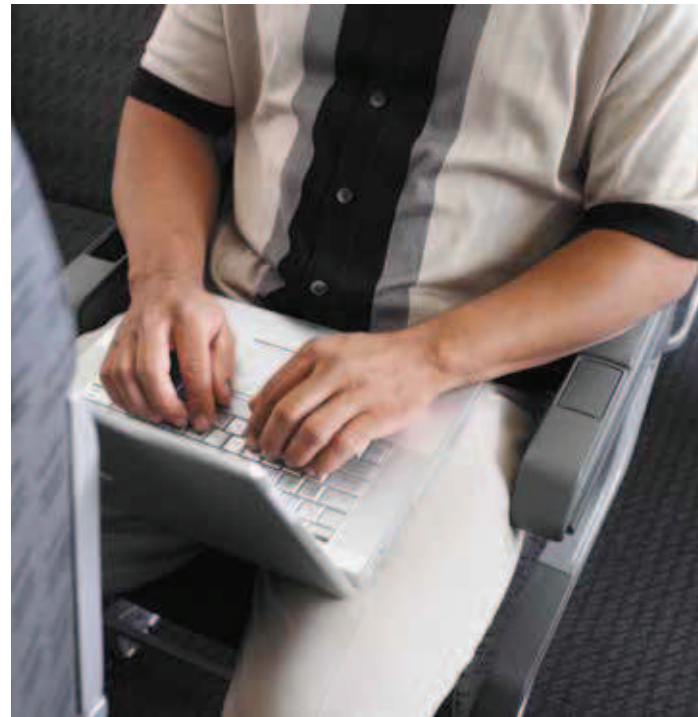
So, when my editor called with two weeks left on my deadline, my response was as you'd expect: "Of course I'm almost done with the book! I mean, duh!"

And of course, I wasn't.

Now, most normal people would sit down, order seven lattes, and get to work. But if you have ADHD, you know we can't do that. If I tried to bang out the book like that, here's what would happen.

Open laptop: "OK. Let's do this. I'm ready to... You know, I should get some food first so I can work with a full stomach. Let's go online and order some, oh, wow, check out that new post on Reddit! I should totally read that and... hey, a Facebook notification! I'll have to look at that when I... Why is my cat looking over there? What's he staring at? Is he going to throw up? I should check. You know, he hasn't been brushed in forever. Let me find the brush and get him... Where is that brush? I have no idea, but hey, the laser pointer for the cat! I haven't used this in forever!"

And it's now two weeks later, and I've defaulted on my book. Yeah, not going to work.



**Unlike normal people who go to Tokyo for the experience of being in Tokyo, I booked a round trip and gave myself a total of two hours in Asia.**

But you know what does? Nontraditional thinking. For me, that's spending some money to make the best use of my time.

Instead of opening my laptop and hoping for the best, I opened my laptop and went to the United Airlines website, where I booked a round-trip ticket to Tokyo for the next day. But unlike normal people who go to Tokyo for the experience of being in Tokyo, I booked a round trip and gave myself a total of two hours in Asia.

parents, teachers, and community volunteers to help sustain it over the long haul. Once BOKS receives email confirmation that the program is approved in your community, the keys to the program are provided.

In collaboration with the American Council on Exercise, BOKS offers both professionals and nonprofessionals a BOKS Kids Fitness Certificate. Upon successful completion of a BOKS training program and exam, the certificate holder is empowered to advise schools on the necessary steps for a successful rollout. The certificate is not a requirement, however, to become a BOKS trainer. BOKS will also launch a virtual online training later this year, so people all over the world can experience the training from the comfort of their homes.

### Recognition and support

With recognition from First Lady Michelle Obama and Let's Move! Active Schools, American Council on Exercise, Partnership for a Healthier America, Alliance for Healthier Generation, Shape America, Institute of Medicine, and the Aspen Institute, BOKS continues to make strides throughout the nation.

Through research studies with National Institute on Out Of School Time (NIOST), Dr. Wayne Westcott and now Harvard Medical School, BOKS is showing people the importance of getting kids moving in the morning. Evaluations by NIOST (2011-2014) and Dr. Wayne Westcott (2014, published in JESO) found that BOKS has a significant impact on physical activity intensity and daily duration, body composition (body fat percentage), nutrition knowledge, test scores, executive functioning of the brain, and school attendance. They've also found that at least 90 percent of parents and children would sign up for BOKS again, and teachers can attest to its positive effects on learning readiness and classroom behavior.


Visit the BOKS website, [www.bokskids.org](http://www.bokskids.org), to learn more about the studies on the program's effectiveness. The program can also find further support from the growing body of research extolling the benefits of aerobic exercise on children's learning and behavior, including its potential benefits for children with ADHD (see references below). To learn about the three-step process for bringing BOKS to your school, visit [www.bokskids.org/enroll-school](http://www.bokskids.org/enroll-school).

Visit the Sparking Life website, [www.sparkinglife.org](http://www.sparkinglife.org), to learn more about how strenuous physical exercise can improve overall wellbeing. You can also read about the different models schools are developing to weave structured exercise programs into the school day. And be sure to watch the TED talk by John Ratey: <http://tedxmanhattanbeach.com/past-events/october-2012-conference-journey-to-purpose/presenters/john-ratey>. 🎧

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Hoza, B., Smith, A.L., et al (2015). A Randomized Trial Examining the Effects of Aerobic Physical Activity on Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Symptoms in Young Children. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 43(4): 655-667.

Ratey, J. (2008). *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.



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