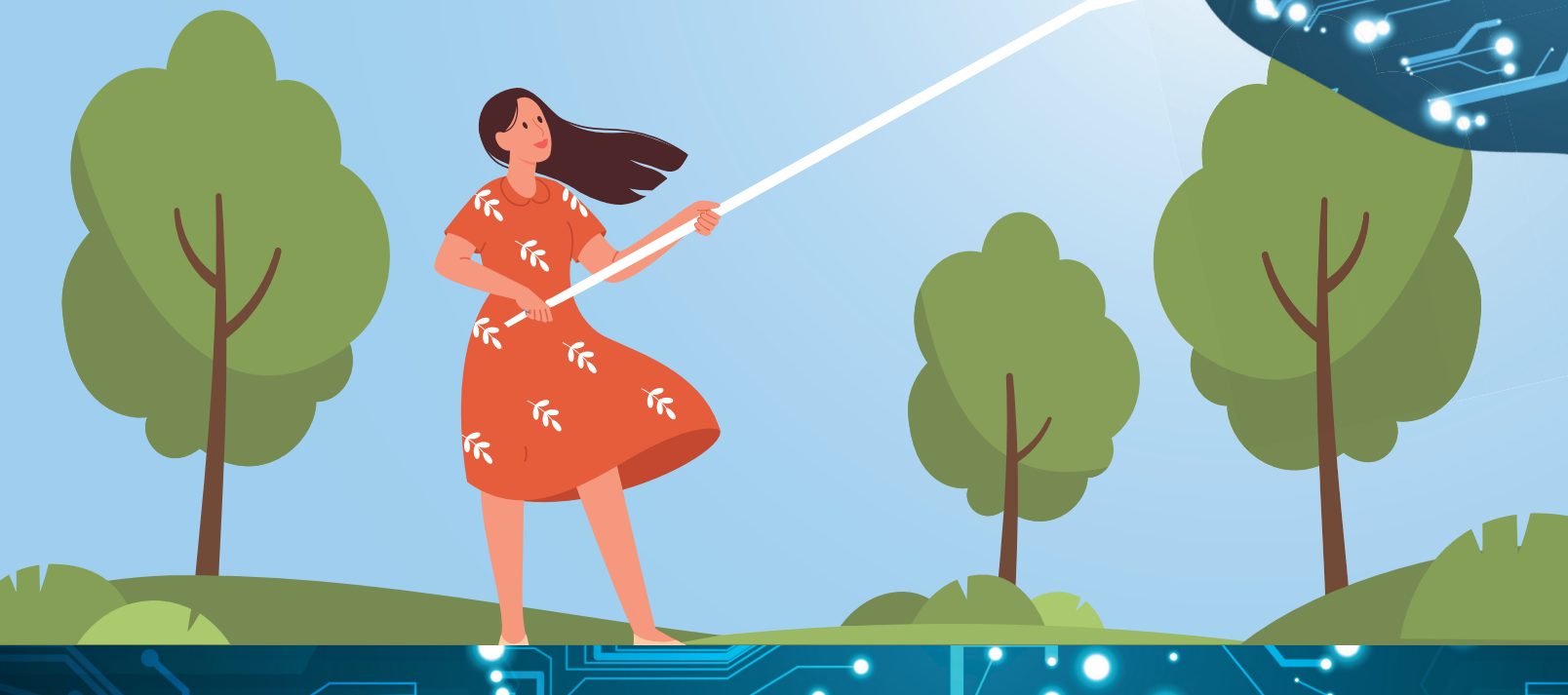


Harnessing Artificial Intelligence to Live Better with ADHD

Suzanne Sophos, CMPSS



Living with ADHD presents unique challenges, from staying organized and managing time effectively to ensuring our communication is logical and focused. As artificial intelligence tools continue to evolve, they offer powerful ways to streamline these tasks, reducing overwhelm and cognitive load. AI is uniquely suited to address ADHD’s challenges by offering structure, focus, and personalized support—right where it’s needed most.



In CHADD's support groups across the country, more and more adults are sharing how AI tools are helping them break down overwhelming tasks, manage their schedules more effectively, more deeply understand topics they're passionate about, and stay focused on their priorities. These tools provide customized reminders, organize information, and even help with writing and communication, enabling ADHD individuals to create tailored strategies that improve their daily lives.

Navigating ADHD with AI: a game-changer for daily life

Artificial intelligence refers to machines and software tools that are developed to think and learn like humans. This means they can handle tasks like problem-solving, recognizing patterns, understanding language, and making decisions—things that usually require human intelligence. AI learns and improves over time by processing large amounts of data, similar to how we learn from experience.

People can use AI in many ways, from managing daily tasks like setting reminders and organizing schedules to helping with more complex activities like learning new skills or making decisions. For those with ADHD, AI can be a game-changer, providing personalized support that makes it easier to stay on track, reduce feelings of overwhelm, and tackle everyday challenges more effectively.

"AI offers an incredible tool to externalize our thinking, acting as a scaffold that can significantly reduce the cognitive load on our working memory," said Yulia Rafailova, an executive function coach. "This added processing power and speed directly supports our executive function—the mental processes that allow us to think ahead, foresee outcomes, and prepare for the future."

Meet your ADHD allies: standout AI tools

AI tools are transforming the way individuals with ADHD navigate daily life, offering personalized support and simplifying complex tasks. Below are some of the most effective AI-driven solutions making a difference in the ADHD community.

- **ChatGPT.** ChatGPT is an advanced conversational AI tool developed by OpenAI. It engages in meaningful dialogue, answers questions, and assists with various tasks. It learns and adapts to the user's preferences over time, becoming a personalized virtual assistant. Over time it can learn to mimic your writing tone and style. You can even create custom GPTs tailored to specific needs, such as loading a manual into your GPT so you can easily ask questions about its contents when you can't count on your own working memory.

"Folks with ADHD can be too paralyzed to even start a writing project," said Brittany Smith, an ADHD and productivity coach. "ChatGPT doesn't get frozen by imposter syndrome or dwell on past failures. It just gets the writing done."

- **Claude.** Claude is another conversational AI tool, developed by AI-PRO, that helps users with ADHD by simplifying decision-making tasks, such as reviewing contracts and creating business plans. It offers support by summarizing complex information and

organizing it in a way that's easy to manage, making it a valuable resource for individuals who struggle with focus and organization.

- **Goblin Tools.** Goblin Tools is a suite of AI-powered tools designed to help individuals with ADHD and executive functioning challenges by breaking down complex tasks, organizing schedules, and refining communication.

“Embracing AI has been a game-changer in managing my ADHD and [my children's] homeschooling,” according to CHADD of Greater Los Angeles member Teri W. “Tools like ChatGPT and GoblinTools help me navigate communication, planning, scheduling, and even teaching with ease, turning overwhelming tasks into manageable ones.”

- **AI Notetakers.** AI notetakers can transcribe meetings, offering real-time summaries—and even lists of action items—to help individuals stay engaged and capture important details. Two of the most common such tools are Otter.ai and the AI features within Zoom.

- **Wearable AI Devices.** Emerging AI-powered pins and lanyards, such as the Rewind AI pin, transcribe conversations, provide reminders for meetings, and help recall important details. These devices extend beyond traditional virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa, offering continuous, real-time support throughout the day.

Transform your day: how AI tools elevate everyday life

For individuals with ADHD, everyday tasks can feel overwhelming, but AI tools offer a unique way to simplify and enhance daily living. Whether it's staying organized, boosting motivation, or improving communication, AI provides targeted solutions that help reduce mental strain and make complex tasks more manageable.

By integrating these tools, individuals with ADHD can experience tangible improvements in their ability to manage executive function, maintain focus, and handle daily responsibilities with greater ease. Here are five ways adults in CHADD's peer support groups report that AI tools are reshaping their day-to-day lives, providing practical support for overcoming key challenges.

- **Mastering executive function.** Tools like Goblin Tools and ChatGPT help with planning, organizing, and breaking down complex tasks. They provide critical support for managing executive functions, ensuring that projects are less overwhelming and more manageable.

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- **Finding motivation when it's hard to start.**

AI tools can provide motivational prompts, set achievable goals, and offer positive reinforcement. ChatGPT, for instance, can simulate accountability by checking in on progress and encouraging users to stay on track.

- **Learning made easy.** AI can function as a personal tutor, offering explanations, answering questions, and providing resources tailored to individual learning styles. ChatGPT is especially useful for understanding new concepts or practicing skills, while Goblin Tools can create study schedules and track progress.

“I haven't used AI as much for managing ADHD directly, but I have used it on topics related to ADHD to try and better understand them,” says CHADD peer support

group attendee Chris S. “I even [used AI to better] explain the relationship between a variety of conditions that seem to frequently be interconnected with ADHD, because the AI has access to significantly more context than I do.”

- **Task management reinvented.** AI simplifies organizing tasks by creating and managing to-do lists, setting reminders, and organizing calendars. ChatGPT and Goblin Tools excel in categorizing tasks by priority and ensuring deadlines are met.

“Folks with ADHD can easily get stuck feeling overwhelmed by a task or feeling like they haven't accomplished anything until it's all done. Goblin Tools can help find a tiny first action to get started and help move past the initial overwhelm,” according to Smith.

- **Communicate with confidence.** Effective communication can be challenging for individuals with ADHD. ChatGPT and Otter.ai enhance communication by drafting emails, improving tone and clarity, and providing suggestions for various communication scenarios. Wearable

AI devices add to this by providing real-time transcription and reminders, ensuring clear and timely communication.

“Email overload is one of the most common job-related ADHD struggles I see with clients,” according to Smith. “It takes so much load off when we don't have to be in the ‘right’ mindset

Twelve AI-Powered Strategies for Mastering ADHD Challenges

Managing ADHD can be tough, but AI tools are stepping up to make life a bit easier. Whether it's getting started on daunting tasks or understanding complex conversations, AI can assist with ADHD challenges you might not have known it could tackle. Here are twelve specific ways AI can help you navigate ADHD-related hurdles you may not have considered.

1 HELP YOU GET STARTED

AI can help you overcome the inertia of starting daunting tasks by brainstorming ideas, organizing initial steps, and providing motivation.

Example prompt: "I'm overwhelmed by cleaning my house. Can you help me break it down and give me a starting point?"

2 DRAFT PROFESSIONAL EMAILS

AI can craft well-structured, professional emails for various purposes, saving you time.

Example prompt: "I need to follow up on a job application. Can you draft a concise email to the recruiter?"

3 PERSONALIZE YOUR WRITING STYLE

Upload samples of your writing to AI, which will learn your style and help you rewrite text to match your unique voice.

Example prompt: "I struggle with being too wordy. Can you rewrite this paragraph to be more concise while keeping my tone?"

4 ORGANIZE YOUR DAY

Create schedules, project plans, and to-do lists to manage your time effectively.

Example prompt: "I have trouble sticking to a routine. Can you help me create a daily schedule that's flexible but structured?"

5 ENHANCE COMMUNICATION

Improve the tone and clarity of your messages for different contexts and audiences.

Example prompt: "I often come across as too blunt in emails. Can you rewrite this to sound more empathetic?"

6 LEARN NEW SKILLS

AI can serve as a personal tutor, offering explanations and resources tailored to your learning style.

Example prompt: "I have trouble focusing on complex topics. Can you explain the basics of [specific topic] in a simple, easy-to-follow way?"

7 BREAK DOWN COMPLEX TASKS

Decompose large projects into smaller, manageable tasks, reducing overwhelm.

Example prompt: "I need to prepare a presentation, but I don't know where to start. Can you help me break it down step by step?"

8 SET GOALS AND STAY MOTIVATED

Receive daily motivational quotes, set achievable goals, and stay on track with positive reinforcement.

Example prompt: "I struggle with procrastination. Can you suggest a daily goal and give me a motivational quote to start my day?"

9 PROVIDE STUDY AND LEARNING SCHEDULES

Create tailored study schedules, break down learning goals, and track your progress.

Example prompt: "I have trouble managing study sessions. Can you create a weekly study schedule with regular breaks?"

10 INTERPRET COMPLEX CONVERSATIONS

AI can help you understand the nuances of conversations, improving social skills and helping to navigate complex interactions.

Example prompt: "I'm confused by this email. Can you help me understand what the sender really means and suggest a response?"

11 SELF-REFLECT AND IDENTIFY BLINDSPOTS

AI can help you self-reflect and raise awareness on patterns and blind spots that might be keeping you stuck.

Example prompt: "I feel like I'm repeating the same mistakes. Can you help me identify patterns in my behavior?"

12 IDENTIFY AND REGULATE EMOTIONS

AI can assist you in identifying and regulating your emotions, offering access to CBT and other tools that address your specific needs.

Example prompt: "I'm feeling overwhelmed and don't know how to manage my emotions. Can you guide me through some CBT techniques?"

to phrase an email properly. Or juggle what we want to say with how to say it within our limited working memory. Instead, we can give it the information and ask the tool to phrase the email to sound professional."

Building a fairer world: how AI promotes equity and accessibility


AI's impact extends far beyond assisting ADHD individuals with personal management. It is also transforming the workplace—helping create a more inclusive work environment by solving challenges that may limit the contributions of neurodiverse individuals or cause undue stress.

For many ADHD individuals, clear, efficient communication can be a challenge, but AI tools like ChatGPT simplify this by drafting clear, concise emails or reports, reducing the anxiety and cognitive effort often associated with written communication.

This technology helps users organize their thoughts and express themselves more effectively, creating more equitable opportunities for professional interaction.

Goblin Tools provide tailored support by breaking down overwhelming tasks into manageable steps, reducing stress and helping neurodiverse employees meet deadlines without burnout. Similarly, AI notetakers, such as Otter.ai, provide real-time transcription and meeting summaries, ensuring that neurodiverse individuals can fully engage in meetings without the pressure of remembering every detail. These tools are especially crucial in fast-paced environments where missing a key point can hinder productivity. By automating this process, AI ensures that individuals stay focused on contributing their ideas rather than struggling to keep up with note-taking.

Emerging wearable AI devices, like the Rewind AI pin, offer continuous support throughout the day by providing reminders,



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transcribing conversations, and helping individuals recall important details. These devices provide real-time, personalized assistance, extending beyond what traditional virtual assistants like Siri or Alexa offer. Such tools give users the ability to maintain focus, “remember” details from earlier, and manage tasks seamlessly, offering another layer of accessibility that directly addresses the unique challenges of ADHD and other neurodiverse conditions.

By offering targeted support for specific challenges, AI helps level the playing field for neurodiverse individuals. It not only boosts productivity but also fosters a more inclusive environment where all employees can leverage their strengths. As AI tools reduce the hurdles that many face, they promote a more diverse and equitable workforce where individuals can reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully.

Potential pitfalls: caution is key

While AI offers significant benefits for managing ADHD, it's essential to approach its use with awareness and caution. Experts caution that AI should not replace traditional ADHD treatments like medication or behavioral therapy. Over-reliance on AI tools might prevent individuals from developing essential skills, such as organization and time management, that are crucial for long-term success. Balancing AI use with continued skills building is the recommended approach.

“While AI can ease our cognitive load, over-relying on it to do our thinking for us may weaken the mental skills we develop through our own effort and struggle,” said Rafailova. “Over-reliance on AI, especially from a young age, could potentially weaken our capacity for creativity, problem-solving, and resilience. If we can learn to use AI thoughtfully to support our ADHD challenges, it can complement our efforts and provide a valuable scaffold to our cognitive development.”

Another critical area of caution involves privacy and data security. Many AI tools require access to personal information, raising concerns about how this data is stored, used,

and protected. Individuals must be mindful of the potential risks when integrating AI into their routines. Additionally, AI systems may sometimes fail to capture cultural nuances or the needs of diverse populations, leading to biased or inappropriate responses. As with any tool, the key is using AI with awareness and intention, ensuring that it serves as a helpful addition rather than a sole solution.

Embracing AI as a partner in ADHD management

Artificial intelligence is not just a futuristic concept; it's a practical tool that can make a significant difference in how we manage ADHD challenges every day. By integrating AI tools like ChatGPT, Goblin Tools, Otter.ai, Claude, and wearable AI devices into our routines, we can enhance our ability to stay organized, focused, and motivated.

While these tools offer tailored support, it's essential to use them alongside traditional treatments and be mindful of potential privacy concerns and over-reliance. As AI continues to evolve, its role in promoting equity, accessibility, and inclusivity becomes increasingly apparent, making it an invaluable ally in our journey toward better management of ADHD. 🧠



Suzanne Sophos, CMPSS, is a neuro-inclusivity advocate, writer, and certified peer support specialist, specializing in ADHD, autism, addiction, and special needs parenting. She is the president-elect of CHADD, the executive director of CHADD of Greater Los Angeles, and the manager of the ADHD Empowerment Community™ where, for the past seven years, she's hosted the weekly adult ADHD peer support group. Her background includes serving as a social-emotional learning specialist, ADHD educator, and family consultant—all after a long career as a marketing strategist and business consultant for Fortune 500 companies. Sophos has also been trained, certified, and previously served as a foster parent through the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services. Her work is informed by her education, professional experience, and life experience as an AuDHD/2e individual and the parent of an AuDHD/2e child.

ADDITIONAL READING

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