

Why a Support Group for Partners of People with AD/HD?

When partners of folks with ADHD attend a support group, what's on the agenda?

Okay, venting sessions do occur – especially after, say, the partner with ADHD has gone on a particularly costly E-bay buying binge.

In large part, however, partners seek a support group to better understand their ADHD partner and, in many cases, salvage a relationship marred by years – if not decades – of misunderstanding and hurt. They hope to stop being exasperated and start learning new strategies.

Lest we forget: Many partners knew nothing about adult ADHD prior to the relationship. (Their ADHD partners didn't, either!) Sure, books on the subject prove invaluable, but nothing beats real-life examples: “Oh, you mean *that's* ADHD impulsivity, too?” new members will ask in amazement. “You mean he or she isn't doing that just to drive me insane?”

With each new “a-ha” moment, members gain a different perspective. Soon, the confusion subsides and real learning takes place.

“Listen in” to an online support group via these snippets:

“My understanding ADHD meant that I could gain a firmer grip on reality. I came to know exactly what I was dealing with, instead of being perpetually confused by the chaos. From that point, I could stop reacting and start acting.”

“When I first came to this group, I had so much anger. I actually felt like I was spitting fire when I would vent here. Now I've been able to separate things out.”

“I've a long way to go to understand and cope with my dear husband, but I've progressed more in 2 weeks being in this group than in the previous 8 years.”

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I feel like a new world of possibilities has opened up. I feel true hope for the first time in many years.

“The more my husband understands his ADD and the more I share and read with my two online ADD support groups, the better things are getting.”

Practical information fills the conversations as well – strategies for better communication, financial management, household chore delegation, finding good care providers, and co-parenting with their partners.

Bit by bit, members can start focusing less on ADHD and more on enriching their lives, re-gaining a sense of themselves that had become “lost in the fog.”

Best of all, the group provides a community of people who need no explanations and always offer a sympathetic ear. Sometime, this opportunity to be heard and alleviate feelings of isolation makes all the difference.

One long-time member puts it this way: “Before I found this group I thought I was all alone with absolutely no one to understand the dynamics that my partner's ADHD created in the relationship (including the therapist). But here I've found that everyone is in the same boat and we're all trying and exploring our different options. I am eternally grateful to this group – it's what has kept me going since I've joined 4 years ago!”

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