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**Essential Skills for Managing Adult ADD – Part 1: Practicing Excellent Self–Care**

**By ADD Coach Jennifer Koretsky**

**Essential Skills for Managing Adult ADD – Part 1: Practicing Excellent Self–Care by ADD**

**Coach Jennifer Koretsky**

As an adult with ADD and an ADD Coach, I have observed some skills that I believe are essential for successful ADD management. The first of these skills is: Practice Excellent Self–Care. There are many components of self–care that one must pay attention to. Sleep, nutrition, and exercise are what immediately come to mind, but having a good doctor, scheduling in regular "down time," and finding outlets for self–expression are all import aspects of self–care, too.

#### The Basics

On average, do you get the sleep, nutrients, and exercise that your body requires? Sometimes, too little sleep can make you sluggish, but too much sleep can make you groggy. Excess sugar and caffeine can make you moody and speedy. And too little or too much exercise may leave you feeling tired. It's difficult for most Americans (with and without ADD) to balance proper sleep, nutrition, and exercise at all times, but most people agree that the more time they spend paying attention to healthy habits, the better they feel.

#### Medical Care

Some people choose to take ADD medication, and some people don't. This aspect of self–care isn't about medication. It's about your doctors – from your general practitioner to your dentist! Do you like your doctors? Do you feel at ease with them? Do you feel comfortable asking questions?

Doctors are experts in human care, and in order to practice good self–care, you must have some great doctors on your side. This doesn't always come easy. It can take some time to find a doctor with whom you are comfortable, but it's worth the effort. You are worth the effort.

### Mental Care: The Most Important Part

By now you may be thinking that while all of the above aspects of self–care seem like common sense, they are a lot easier said than done. This is absolutely true for most people with ADD. When you live life feeling chronically overwhelmed, it's very difficult to find the time to put these ideas into action. Here's what you can do to set

yourself up for success: take time out. Schedule in "down time" every single day to help keep your batteries charged. Retreat from the chaos of daily life and allow yourself time to relax – alone. Even if you spend only five minutes a day meditating, walking, or just sitting quietly, it will allow you to slow your thoughts and will help you center yourself. Then, when you feel centered, take it a step further and express yourself! Write, paint, sing, talk to your plants, or do whatever it is that allows you to express your feelings and emotions! Keeping your feelings and emotions bottled will weigh you down. Finding healthy ways of self–expression will help free your mind and allow you to spend more energy focusing on the other aspects of self–care.

When you practice excellent self–care, you allow yourself to function at an optimal level. When you operate on an optimal level, you'll find yourself less overwhelmed, and more prepared to deal with your ADD challenges, as well as the stresses of every day life. Excellent self–care is an essential skill for adult ADD management.

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Jennifer Koretsky is an ADD Coach who helps people create peace through ADD management. She partners with clients to increase self–awareness and positivity while finding systems for managing challenges. Jennifer offers private and group coaching, teleclasses, and a free e–newsletter. For more information, please visit <http://www.ADDmanagement.com>

## Essential Skills for Manaing ADD – Part 2

**By Jennifer Koretsky**

## **Essential Skills for Managing ADD – Part 2 by Jennifer Koretsky**

As an adult with ADD and an ADD Coach, I have observed some skills that I believe are essential for successful ADD management. Last month, we looked at the essential skill of Practicing Excellent Self–care. This month, let's look at another essential skill: Planning the Time to Plan.

ADDers often find themselves overwhelmed by everyday life. Sometimes, the number of tasks to do at work builds up to the point where you find yourself working long hours to just to stay on top of everything. And sometimes the chores at home, like dishes, laundry, and bill–paying, become so overwhelming that you end up with piles of stuff in every room. These things are common, and there is a simple way to get it all under control: plan.

When you plan to tackle a task, you break it down into simple steps that make it less overwhelming. Here's an example I like to use: closet cleaning. Let's say that you have a closet you want to clean out because it is cluttered and disorganized, and you can't find what you need. There are a number of ways you can approach it. One way is to just dive in. However, chances are that when you open the closet door and see what a mess it is, you may become completely overwhelmed, not know where to start, close the closet door in disgust, and then go watch TV! You'll probably also feel guilty because you think you should be cleaning the closet!

There's a much better way to approach this situation: plan for it in advance. Before you ever open the closet door, set aside 15 minutes that you can use to write down some steps. An example of this might be:

1. Donate or throw out all clothes that I haven't worn in the past year
2. Designate the right side of the closet for work clothes, and the left side for casual clothes
3. Hang belts, scarves, and other accessory items in the middle of the closet
4. Arrange shoes neatly on the closet floor
5. Remove all non–clothing items from the closet

Taking the time to break down the task into 3 or more steps makes the act of cleaning out a closet nothing more than a simple system to follow. It relieves pressure, and often prevents that feeling of being overwhelmed by the mess.

And don't forget to take your planning a step further and actually plan the time to plan! If you know that you have a two hour window on Saturday to clean your closet, turn that time span into 15 minutes of planning, and 1 hour and 45 minutes of cleaning. Chances are you won't even miss that 15 minutes you took to plan because you'll be so organized in your cleaning approach that you won't waste any time when you're in the process!

Jennifer Koretsky is an ADD Management Coach who helps adults learn how to manage their ADD

and move forward in life. She offers individual and group coaching, workshops, and skill–building

programs. Subscribe to Jennifer's free email newsletter, The ADD Management Guide, by visiting <http://www.ADDmanagement.com/e-newsletter.htm>.



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