

M for the woman in every mom

**TRANSFORMING
YOUR HEALTH
MIND, BODY & SOUL**

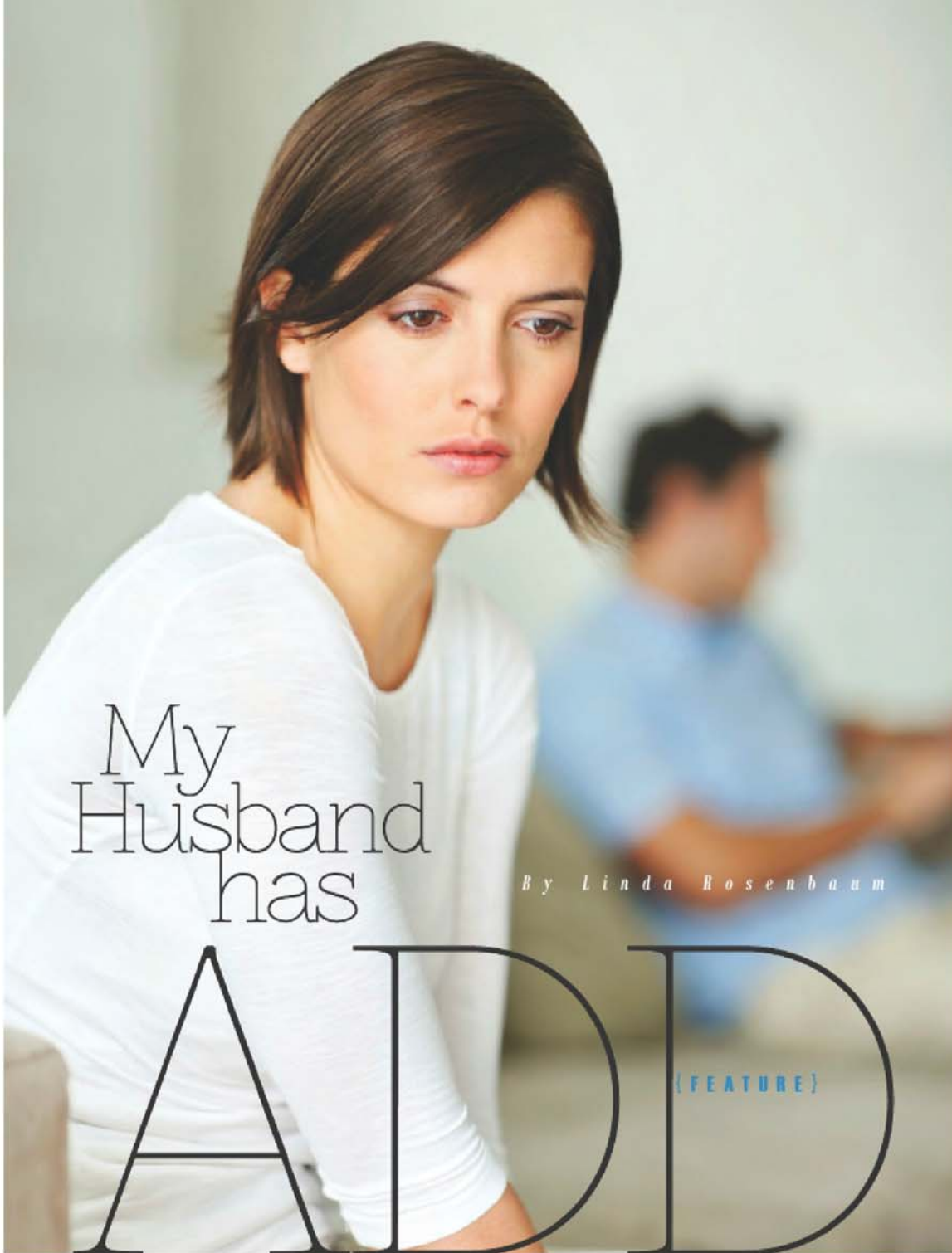
**COPING WITH
ADULT ADD**

Teaching kids
**HOW TO
COPE**
WITH TRAGEDY

the
**health &
beauty**
ISSUE

plus

MAKING HOMEWORK FUN AND CONNECTING WITH YOUR KIDS



My Husband has

By Linda Rosenbaum

ADD

{FEATURE}

LIVING AND COPING WITH ADULT ADD

EVERYTHING SEEMED PERFECT — way back in the last century when I married my soul mate, Bob

Life was good. Until it wasn't...

I had no way of knowing then what Adult ADD/ADHD was, or that my life would be nearly destroyed by this condition. Bob, unknowingly, had ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder). This mental health condition in adults was not readily recognized

or accepted as existing until the late 90s. And yet today it is still grossly misunderstood, underrated and quite baffling! Few realize the depth of misery and mayhem it can cause.

For the record, ADD and ADHD (current popular name) are really one and the same. Both involve hyperactivity of some sort, such as tantrums, fidgeting, and agitation. Also note, everyone does "ADD things" occasionally, but people who have ADD do them relentlessly!

A devastating brain dysfunction, ADD is capable of ruining lives, families, and relationships. Its negative effects are experienced daily in all facets of life including parenting, employment, financial and social. While the afflicted may be unaware they have any problem at all, those close to them wonder why they act so abnormal—sometimes destructively so, often putting themselves and their families at great risk.

In spite of mixed public opinion, ADD is a broad and profound neurobiological disorder. It appears to observers that those afflicted have little self-discipline. Unfortunately, that is true. They really cannot control their actions. However, this information does not make family members feel any better—in fact quite the opposite. Not only do they feel constantly annoyed and angry, but ironically, they are also expected to continuously forgive the ADD people in their life. This was the situation in my home and what motivated me to persistently research and desperately seek help.

With 13 million American adults currently struggling with this inherited disorder, it's a growing epidemic. It has been estimated that seven percent of children have ADD. The FDA only recently approved brain scans for children, leading to a more accurate diagnosis. Unfortunately, our experience in getting a diagnosis for Bob was appalling. It took me years to find enlightened professional help.

Following decades of horrendous difficulties, tedious inquiries, and some bad doctoring (including a dangerous misdiagnosis), I emerged as an expert on how this brain disorder affects real people in real life, beyond any textbook description. ADD is so misunderstood and taken so lightly, that it prevents millions of folks from getting the appropriate help they desperately need. Ramifications from symptoms can range from constantly losing your keys to losing your home!

It was in our second year of marriage that the troubles began. I later learned that this is a common scenario and a typical time frame for ADD symptoms to surface—when normal adult responsibilities become routine. This is due to the sudden drop in the brain of the (feel good) hormone dopamine. In those with ADD, it drops below normal after the euphoric high of a new love settles down, and results in unexpected and abrupt personality changes. Bob's altered persona left me confused, stressed and angry. What I had gotten myself into?

Living with a husband - and son - with ADD, I experienced firsthand how insidious and devastating this disorder can be. Frequently, those with this condition ignore or deny they have it. But surprisingly, their destructive behavior is not well comprehended by many mental health providers either. They and the general population tend to think of this disorder as mostly a focusing and behavioral issue. For a more realistic evaluation, ask the folks who struggle with afflicted spouses and children how they feel. Then it becomes perfectly clear; it is those who live with ADD people that suffer the most!

During our first decade, Bob transformed from Dr. Jekyll to

Mr. Hyde. I wondered; "Where did the nice man go, the one who never said an unkind word to me?" I frequently grumbled to him in exasperation, "What is wrong with you?" He was agitated with every little thing, couldn't seem to focus and was totally unaware of the effect his offensive behavior had on others.

Bob was also oblivious concerning his poor employment and financial decisions and could not comprehend how upsetting it was to his family. He continued to make the same mistakes repeatedly. He declared himself always right and had no feelings for others or their opinions. If I complained about his actions, his response was: "You're always picking on me!" This selfish attitude became habitual. I felt betrayed. Little did we know the ADD monster was the culprit!

Since an "ADD event" can occur at any time, living with someone with ADD means always waiting for the other shoe to drop. You know it will, you just don't know when! Those who feel this disorder does not really exist, well, either you are not living in an ADD home or you are one of the thousands undiagnosed or in denial.

Those who insist their ADD is "a gift" are merely justifying their strange behavior. It is not for them to decide, anyhow—that is best judged by those that live with them. Calling it "a gift" while hurting or destroying your loved ones is self-serving!

Although I loved my husband, I most certainly did not always like him. With so much misery and mayhem going on in our home, I was in a constant state of anxiety. But I instinctively knew, early on, that in order to keep some semblance of normalcy in our home, I had to become Bob's mentor and enabler. There was no help for a condition that had no name yet.

Puzzled and humiliated by Bob's strange antics, I kept our bizarre home life secret, while discreetly repairing all the fiascos he was causing in order to present us to the world as I wished us to be--a normal happy family. Early on I didn't understand why I had to do this but quickly realized that it was absolutely necessary for the survival of our family. We were unknowingly living a multifaceted ADD life.

Funny thing about folks with ADD – they look perfectly normal so it is sometimes referred to as "the hidden handicap." Their strange behavior is often perplexing to those they come in contact with at work or at play. If you have ever been cornered at a gathering by someone who talks incessantly, non-stop on a subject of no interest to you, and you can't get a word in edgewise, you know what I mean. They mistake courtesy for interest. Unawareness!

Many famous people have ADD; actors, politicians and business moguls. We tend to think we know a lot about them, but wonder what's wrong when they suddenly display irrational or inappropriate behavior. We really don't know how they relate to family and friends behind closed doors either. Fortunately, the stigma of ADD has faded in the past few years, and people are now more open and willing to talk about their condition.

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As our first decade ended, Bob, an intelligent man, with a degree in electrical engineering, already exhibited an erratic yet typical ADD employment history. He had seven different jobs, moved us seven times, into four different states. During this time I gave birth twice. All this left me little “think-time.” Nevertheless, I began my quest to get to the bottom of his irrational actions.

I knew our survival—emotionally, socially and especially financially was at stake. I was not focusing on ending our marriage, but rather on what was causing his issues. I thought all I had to do was find the answer, fix the offending problem, and move on again with my “original” Bob. Failure was not an option. I never really gave up on that thinking; although there would be years of unpredictable behavior, destructive decisions, and many “ADD-caused” hardships before we had a worthwhile resolution.

Sadly, children with ADD seldom outgrow it, as was once thought. They just grow up and become ADD adults. They often struggle with school performance, homework, tireless hyper energy, and suffer socially on the playground.

But whoa; ADD adults can cause serious and permanent damage as they continuously create chaos resulting in major life-altering changes. Such fiascos are the result of symptoms like procrastination, stubbornness, impulsiveness, and agitation, which are intensified and often uncontrollable in adults. You can put your child in a time out corner but certainly not your spouse!

I discuss 40 symptoms in my memoir, *MY HUSBAND HAS ADD and the Miraculous Discovery that Changed Our Life*. But few folks have them all, the same degree of severity, or even the same issues as other family members. This seems to further contribute to the confusion of what ADD really is, and can actually delay a diagnosis. That happened to our family. My husband and son had different symptoms.

By the time our son, with a history of school issues and organizational problems (common symptoms) was finally diagnosed as a young adult, I felt certain that Bob had ADD also. But he staunchly insisted that since he had been an excellent student and was always well organized, this could not possibly be his problem. So put aside any notion that everyone has the same difficulties and address indicators specific to your situation.

A few of the classic symptoms such as procrastination, impatience, selfishness, impulsiveness, risky behavior, and an inability to focus, may seem familiar to observers. But personally, I felt unawareness to be the most pervasive and damaging overshadowing all others, because Bob was totally unaware he had any symptoms at all. Denial!

Another poorly understood symptom is hyper-focusing which can be paralyzing (as in intensely playing computer games). It prevents both adults and children from functioning and going forward with their responsibilities. Their focus is so intent, usually on something they really enjoy, that nothing else matters.

My perseverance paid off in later years when we finally found mental health professionals who were knowledgeable, specifically about Adult ADD. When seeking answers, or a diagnosis for an adult, be very selective. We walked out on more than one professional over the years. There are many other ADD traits that I am all too familiar with, like poor handwriting and noise sensitivity, yet they often surprise even good doctors

In 2011, following almost ten years of Bob’s success with ADD medication, our life was again in terrible upheaval. The medications had stopped working. So it seemed like a miracle when I stumbled upon a discovery so profound that it completely changed our life.



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This discovery, a little known ancient mental exercise (in a realm similar to meditation) is a method of dowsing that amazingly suppresses Bob’s ADD symptoms. It has no side effects, takes less than a minute, cost nothing and works extremely well. It was something I learned to do for him. But after experiencing the excellent results, Bob, who has a very analytical mind, stopped demanding answers as to how it worked, and learned to do this for himself. As Thomas Edison said, when asked how electricity worked: “Well, I don’t know, but it’s there, so let’s use it!”

I am now a woman on a mission to enlighten all about what ADD is, how to recognize it, how to cope with it and how to defeat it. To that end I have authored a non-clinical memoir of tragedy and triumph, so definitive it awakens many to suddenly grasp that ADD is their personal issue after all. Likewise others, after reading this book, comprehend why their life is in constant commotion, suddenly realizing they live (or work) with someone who is afflicted. If anyone in the family has ADD, then all blood relatives either have it or may well be carriers of this destructive gene.

ADD had prevented Bob from living life with ease and genuine independence. However with an open mind, all things are possible. Bob and I are now finally living and loving our life together without the struggles and stresses of ADD. Monster defeated! ☑

Linda Rosenbaum is the author of MY HUSBAND HAS ADD and the Miraculous Discovery that Changed Our Life. Her careers include newspaper advertising executive, owner of a nanny placement agency, and a marketing and publishing firm. While working as a national consultant for new and existing nanny placement agencies, she wrote articles for major newspapers and industry newsletters. Linda hopes to make a difference for the ADD afflicted — and more importantly, for those whose lives are severely impacted by living or interacting with them. www.MyHusbandHasADD.com.