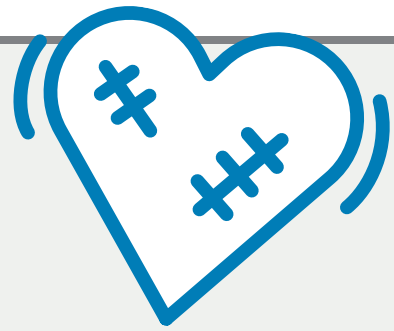


6 Ways ADHD Sabotages Relationships



Research suggests that nearly two-thirds of all marriages touched by ADHD suffer from “mal-adjustment,” which is not synonymous with divorce but also not great. The fact is that ADHD symptoms *do* cause relationship problems. Here, we outline 6 of the most common relationship problems sparked by ADHD symptoms — and offer solutions. By the Editors of *ADDitude*

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION
#1: CHRONIC LATENESS You frequently arrive at 7:15 for a 7 o'clock movie — only to find your hyper-punctual boyfriend fuming in the lobby.	Inform your partner of your time-related challenges, and discuss ways you can manage them — like setting frequent phone reminders <i>before</i> a date, or planning to arrive 20 minutes before the movie starts.
#2: UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP ROLES Your spouse's constant nagging makes her seem more like your parent than your partner, and you're tired of being treated like a child.	Explain how ADHD affects you, and be honest about how the parent/child dynamic makes you feel. At the same time, take seriously your spouse's needs and “honey-do” lists — and remember that structure works wonders for adults with ADHD!
#3: POOR COMMUNICATION You struggle to stay focused during long conversations — and you talk more than you listen, especially when things get heated.	Don't multitask during conversations. Focus on what your partner is saying, and try to listen without passing judgment or reacting. Periodically, summarize your partner's words so he or she knows you're keeping up.
#4: EMOTIONAL VOLATILITY You ride a daily rollercoaster of emotions, and jumping from anger to sadness to excitement is giving your girlfriend whiplash.	Identify your emotional triggers, and step away whenever you feel your temper rising or tears brewing. If your partner feels overshadowed by your intense emotions, make sure you give her space to express her feelings, too.
#5: SEXUAL SNAFUS Your mind wanders during sex, making it difficult to connect with your partner and key into feelings of pleasure.	Don't beat yourself up for getting distracted — this will only compound the problem. Instead, gently bring your attention back to what's happening in the moment. If you take medication, try to initiate sex while your symptom control is strong.
#6: ADULTERY A drive for dopamine combined with impulsivity may mean that adults with ADHD are more likely to engage in extramarital affairs.	Accept responsibility for transgressions, and give your partner space to feel anger or betrayal. Uncover your motivation for the affair — a need for stimulation, perhaps — and work on fulfilling that need in healthier ways.