

Types of ADHD & Related Strengths

There are three types of ADHD: Inattentive Type (ADHD-I), Hyperactive/Impulsive Type (ADHD-HI), and Combined Type (ADHD-C).

ADHD-I Symptoms

- Makes careless mistakes/lacks attention to detail
- Difficulty sustaining attention
- Does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
- Fails to follow through on tasks and instructions
- Exhibits poor organization
- Avoids/dislikes tasks requiring sustained mental effort
- Loses things necessary for tasks/activities
- Easily distracted (including unrelated thoughts)
- Is forgetful in daily activities

ADHD-HI Symptoms

- Fidgets with or taps hands or feet, squirms in seat
- Leaves seat in situations when remaining seated is expected
- Experiences feelings of restlessness
- Has difficulty engaging in quiet, leisurely activities
- Is “on-the-go” or acts as if “driven by a motor”
- Talks excessively
- Blurts out answers
- Has difficulty waiting their turn

If you are a child, you need to show at least six of the symptoms of a given type for at least six months, in multiple settings; if you are an adult, you need five. They also need to be evident prior to age 12. For ADHD-C, you need to meet the criteria for both ADHD-I and ADHD-HI.

Described as executive dysfunction, the symptoms are as follows:

ADHD-I is characterized by difficulties with:

- Attentional Control;
- Cognitive Flexibility;
- Cognitive Inhibition;
- Goal-Directed Behaviour;
- Organizational Skills;
- Planning;
- Self-Monitoring; and
- Working Memory.

Meanwhile, ADHD-HI is characterized by difficulties with:

- Cognitive Flexibility;
- Goal-Directed Behaviour;
- Inhibitory Control; and
- Self-Monitoring.

ADHD-C, then, is characterized by difficulties with everything.

Everyone has strengths, whether they are executive functions that we are good at or coping mechanisms that effectively help us manage our symptoms. Use the following pages to list your strengths.

Executive Functions & Related Strengths

Write your strengths in the last column. Remember, a strength isn't just something that's innate; it can also be something you have devised to help you manage your symptoms.

<i>Executive Function</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>My Related Strengths</i>
Attentional Control	The ability to control what you pay attention to. It's basically being able to concentrate.	
Cognitive Flexibility	The ability to change your behaviour and thought processes based on changes in your situation or gaining information.	
Cognitive Inhibition	The ability to tune out unrelated stimuli and stay on task or follow a train of thought.	
Goal-Directed Behaviour	The ability to control your behaviour so that you're working towards achieving goals.	
Inhibitory Control	The ability to stop before you act so you can choose the most appropriate way to behave in a given situation. It's got a lot to do with self-control.	
Organizational Skills	All that sorting, putting things away, etc.	
Planning	The ability to think ahead and to break goals down into smaller steps.	
Self-Monitoring	The ability to keep track of what you're doing and how you're coming across, as well as notice things like hunger, thirst, fatigue, pain, the need to use the bathroom, etc.	
Working Memory	The ability to hold information in your mind so you can use it to make decisions and complete tasks.	