

Ministering to the Family of the ADD/ADHD Child

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I. **These are both inner man issues and outer man issues.**

II Cor. 4:16 talks about the outer and inner person. The Bible is balanced; we are not. We often want a black and white answer: "is this a behavioral issue or a medical issue? Is it sin or sickness?". We can hardly wrap our minds around the idea that these two parts interact. Sin can contribute to physical illness, while physical dysfunction can impact a person spiritually. Although biblical counseling methodology teaches that the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart; the outer person nevertheless has an influence on the spirit. II Cor. 7:1 commands believers to purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit. Although the context is sexual, other sins defile or contaminate the body.

II. **Scripture is the primary standard.**

Is. 28:17 shows that justice and righteousness are the measuring line. II Tim. 3:16 teaches that Scripture thoroughly equips for every good work. (But that means the "good" of becoming more like Christ, not how to balance the way the brain works.). Isaiah 55:8,9 teaches that God's ways are higher than our ways. But it is not intended to be a manual for cellular function.

III. **The CURSE of Genesis 3 impacts everything.**

The Fall of Adam brought a deserved curse on all creation and nothing has worked right since. The ground was cursed as well as the roles within relationships. So all our problems are both spiritual and physical. Jesus came to save His people from sin and sickness. But He usually does not rescue us from all of it at one moment. Sanctification is both a completed event and a process. Our bodies are under the curse and will not work right until the new heavens and earth. In this life, God brings healing both instantly and slowly. These "out of control" children we have are not doomed to be like this forever. He will change them as He changes us, the parents.

IV. **Address the spiritual and physical issues consecutively, making the spiritual the centerpiece.**

God's recipe for change is salvation and sanctification: II Cor. 5:17 and Ephesians 4:22-24. Col. 3:20- children obey your parents. Heb. 13:17 Obey them that have rule over you.

Also see medical professionals to check the child's vision, hearing, allergies, possible medication side effects, reading/ processing issues, diet deficiencies and sleep problems. I know this sounds extremely time consuming and expensive but it is necessary to eliminate common contributing factors.

V. **Fourteen Characteristics of ADHD from the DSM 4.**

Often fidgets and squirms in seat.

Has difficulty remaining in seat.

Is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.

Has difficulty waiting his turn.

Often blurts out answers to questions before they have been completed.

Has difficulty following instructions from others.

Has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.

Often shifts from one activity to another.

Has trouble playing quietly.

Often talks excessively.
Often interrupts or intrudes on others.
Often does not seem to listen to what is being said to him.
Often loses necessary things for tasks and activities.
Often engages in physically dangerous activities without considering the consequences.

VI. Investigate Alternative Treatments that have fewer risk factors than psychostimulants, which are the last resort.

A system of rewards and consequences based on the individual child needs. Use Scriptures that build up as well as rebuke. Make the negative consequences be understood well in advance. Do not think up a punishment at the moment of the infraction. Praise and reward godly behavior. Handle disruptive behaviors firmly and consistently. These must be balanced.

Communicate regularly with the child's teacher.

Keep a consistent daily schedule, including regular times for homework, meals and outdoor activities. Make changes to the schedule in advance and not at the last moment. You, as a parent, might be less distracted if you follow these same suggestions. You will have to sacrifice spontaneity for the sake of your child.

Limit distractions in the environment, such as excess clutter.

Play with the child for reasonable periods of time. Bring them back to the activity at hand, no matter how much the child wants to move on.

Make sure the child gets a healthy varied diet, very low in high fructose corn syrup, very high in fiber and all necessary nutrients.

Make sure the child gets adequate sleep. Do not over schedule.

VII. God's grace is more powerful than any problem you face.

Heb. 10:35 Do not throw away your confidence. It will be richly rewarded.