

Intro: ([00:00](#))

Having an ADHD brain is a mixed bag. Sometimes it's good news. And sometimes, well, it's not. Even ADHD professionals have trouble with their ADHD. They try harder and harder and harder to overcome the chaos that's ADHD. And finally, they overcome the barriers of ADHD and they become what we call at ADDA, ADHD heroes. And that's what TADD Talks are all about this year. Your favorite ADHD professionals sharing their ADHD stories. So, join us here at ADDA, the Attention Deficit Disorder Association every single day of October, because it's ADHD Awareness Month. Here's the next inspiring story.

Annette Tabor: ([00:49](#))

Welcome to TADD talks given to you today from ADDA. My name is Annette Tabor, and I am coming to you from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Today, I'm excited to share with you my ADHD story that I'm sure a lot of you can relate to. My ADHD story is called The Hero Is Me. I want you to close your eyes and picture a small building in the year, 1959 in a small town in Western Pennsylvania. In one of these classrooms, in this elementary school, there is a nine-year-old girl sitting at a desk that she has chosen for herself. It is in the last row of the room in the back of the classroom. There's a lot of things going on in the classroom. And if you open your eyes, you will see the teacher is presenting a lesson and the students are listening, sharing their ideas, and answering questions.

Annette Tabor: ([01:54](#))

But, this little girl is not really listening. She's not sharing her ideas or answering questions, for she is a very quiet child. Instead, she is looking out the window at what is going on outside of the classroom. There are mothers wheeling their babies, people are talking to each other, and the teacher's father comes every day at two-thirty and waits for school to be over so they can drive home together. The most exciting thing she sees is the first snowfall of the year or a heavy rainstorm. If the teacher does call on her, she sits quietly and doesn't answer, because sometimes she knows the answer, but sometimes she didn't even hear the question because she wasn't listening. But she knew everything that was going on outside of the classroom window. As you probably have guessed that nine-year-old girl was me. I remember bringing home books from school every night and the other kids would say, why are you bringing those books home? We don't even have homework in those books tonight. But I didn't care about that, I wanted to read the books and look at the pictures and try to make some sense of what was going on. I was struggling, but I didn't know why everything was always so hard for me.

Annette Tabor: ([03:03](#))

But in junior high school, I was doing a little bit better. And ninth grade something wonderful happened. My ninth-grade English teacher liked my work and she asked me and recommended me to take honors English in high school. I was so happy that I could hardly wait for high school to start. When I got to high school, I met some friends that had more in common with me and I started being friendly with them, and I was happier too. These friends are still my friends. They were lifelong friends.

Annette Tabor: ([03:53](#))

One day in 11th grade honors English, something happened that I still remember as if it happened today, even though it was many years ago. My friend said, "Annette, if you don't know the answer, tell the teacher, 'I don't know the answer.' But if you do, say something, and tell her the answer, because it really doesn't look good if you just sit there and don't say anything." I thanked my friend, and I was really taking that advice to heart. And I started to communicate a little bit more and I started to talk to the teachers in the classroom too. I was able to apply and get accepted for a very good college in Pittsburgh, where I lived, and I was able to start the college on a good note. The first two years I

did well, the college was small. I had very caring and very smart professional professors and friends, and I did like it a lot. But I "hit the wall" as people say, my junior year of college.

Annette Tabor: [\(04:50\)](#)

Not only did I hit the wall, but I got so depressed that I couldn't study. I couldn't function. I couldn't even talk to my friends or communicate or socialize. It was so bad that at the recommendation of my counselors and my professors, I decided to take a semester off. I was told that I would be able to catch up and graduate with my class if I came back in the fall, so I did. At their recommendation, I was asked to see some counselors, a psychiatrist, some psychologists, but nobody really thought in 1972, what was wrong. There was no diagnosis. There were no continued goals. There was no medication. But I did improve and rest and work part-time that summer. And I was able to go back to school and I did graduate with my class in 1973.

Annette Tabor: [\(05:57\)](#)

However, because I had taken the semester off and things were hard for me, even when I was back to study and focus and really concentrate and learn. I was not able to take the courses I wanted and needed to get certain, my certifications in teaching elementary school. But I have to say that I did teach for 40 years private colleges, and I was very happy and successful during those teaching years. When I got married and had children, I was happy for a while, but late in life and 48 when I was 48, I became depressed again. But this depression was different. I couldn't even be happy with my family or my children or my husband. I had no goals. I worked, but I always wanted to be home and really not do anything. It was time for me to seek help again. I was leery about it, but at the encouragement of my wonderful husband, I did go. And this time I did get a diagnosis.

Annette Tabor: [\(06:54\)](#)

I was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. I was so happy with that diagnosis for many reasons. The first reason I was happy is because finally I knew what was wrong with me. There was something wrong. I wasn't crazy. I wasn't imagining it. And there were things people could do to help me and medication that I could take and therapy I could get to help me become the person I always wanted to be. Able to learn more focus, concentrate, and talk to other people and in front of other people. So I began that journey, a journey that lasted many years. I had excellent therapy from two therapists, one at the beginning who helped diagnose me and get me started and learn a little bit about myself and the other one who's helped me future years, more future years to get along better with my family and relationships, my husband, and to get more confidence in myself. For that is what I needed, I needed the confidence to say that the hero in my story was me, the little girl who was afraid to talk to the teacher or participate in class, grew up to be the teacher.

Annette Tabor: [\(08:13\)](#)

And I've not only taught in person classes, I've also learned something new, and learned how to teach in zoom on zoom classes when people were going to school virtually these past years. So, I have gotten more self-confidence and more courage to do other things. But the thing that I did that really helped me the most is when I was first diagnosed, I joined CHADD, Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder. I was a local coordinator in my hometown in Florida for 10 years. And I did help many parents with the diagnosis and the continuing education and care of their children with ADHD. When I joined ADDA, after I retired from teaching, I was older. I was happy to find that this organization was helping adults with ADHD. I liked the people, but I always had a dream that wasn't done yet that I didn't get yet.

Annette Tabor: [\(09:15\)](#)

That dream was to be on a committee or a group of people or something that could make a difference in the lives of people like me with ADHD, somewhere where I could learn to be more for myself and also for other people. And after joining ADDA and participating and facilitating in their groups for a few years, I was asked and voted in and accepted to be on the ADDA board of directors and the chairman of the education committee. This was my dream. I finally was working with a group of people that also shared my hope and my dreams of making a difference in the lives and educating people with attention deficit disorder. So, I've told you my story, thank you very much for the opportunity. And I hope to see you in many of ADDA or other activities for adults with ADHD. Thank you very much.

Thanks so much for joining us for TADD talks this year. I'm sure you enjoyed these inspiring stories and there's so much more. In fact, why don't you join us for the 2021 virtual ADHD International Conference November 4th through the 6th. And you might want to consider joining ADDA as well. It's a great investment for a small amount of money as little as \$5 a month. And remember, when you feel like hope is gone, look inside you and be strong and you'll finally see the truth, that a hero lies in you.