

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.

Bruce Eastman: [\(00:49\)](#)

Hi, my name's Bruce Eastman. I'm a retired nurse practitioner, actually and I live in Roseburg, Oregon, Southern Oregon, part of many, many things near the ocean coast, the Oregon coast, near Crater Lake National Park, and really the center of paradise. My credentials include a Master of Science in education with many years teaching nurses. Also, the last 10 years I've been a family practice provider, have a post master's degree as a family nurse practitioner, and have a Bachelor of Science degree and worked many years before. Thirty years in and out of hospitals, intensive cares, and emergency departments and as I said, also teaching. The topic today is Getting Off the Racetrack. And like so many people, I chose to go into a situation into a career that wasn't very, friendly as it were to my ADD. My hero's journey starts at about 12 years old and like so many people's attention deficit in the last century, 40, 50, 60 years ago, attention deficit was pretty new.

Bruce Eastman: [\(02:14\)](#)

My parents had been told by counselors and others that perhaps I should try medications. And that was not very well accepted at that time. And out of fear for problems and side effects of medications and the fact that if I just tried harder, I'd probably do better which wasn't true. And I lived with that really for a long time. But at that time, everyone was doing the best they could I suppose. My Uncle George Dyckman came to visit me, and he saw I was struggling. I had problems with not living up to my potential, not finishing deadlines, unable, I mean, even though I could read Tolstoy and Sherlock Holmes at 10, 11, 12 years old, I didn't know my alphabet. I didn't know my times tables till I was sixteen, et cetera. And uncle George gave me postcards throughout the next three decades until he was unable to send postcards as he had illness and passed away.

Bruce Eastman: [\(03:24\)](#)

I was never able to thank him for that, but the encouragement in those small little things he did for me were so important. Fast forward a little bit. I did manage to graduate from high school albeit not with honors and a limited amount of A's and lots of B's and lots of C's, a few D's, and F's. In my final years, as I began to develop my unhealthy, uh, addictions of alcohol and marijuana and opioids, gambling and other challenging things, behaviors that we all sometimes have in our twenties. I joined the military, got out after four years, married someone didn't work out too well and was able to eventually get my Bachelor of Science and nursing. I became a registered nurse and, continued to struggle with all of the things that we still commonly struggle with attention deficit deadlines and completing work and relationships and impulsivity

and et cetera, how I tended to separate and get angry with things and go on and on and on about it for days, hours, and weeks.

Bruce Eastman: [\(04:42\)](#)

And sometimes finally just end up quitting or whatever. Ending a relationship or, or, or trying to think well, maybe if I went over here, so things would be better. Eventually I was able to extract myself from the self-medicating, alcohol and other addictive things and move forward in life. I got divorced, a very painful time. But before I got, had an epiphany of like well gosh, I was in such a low place and decided one night in Memphis, Tennessee area, this was in my late twenties, thirties, and decided if I'm going to be in this much pain, I may as well just get out of here. So accelerated my car to a hundred miles an hour, aimed it at the underpass and took off. I don't know how, but I missed the underpass. Maybe it was the alcohol and other drugs in my system. By some miracle, I actually ended up negotiating through the exit, missed the underpass, missed everything, spun out five or six times. Didn't really wreck my car got out, kicked the tires, drove home drunk. Yay, survived. And that was such an epiphany, it was like, well, what the heck am I thinking here?

Bruce Eastman: [\(06:13\)](#)

I finally was able to get divorced, a very painful time, able to move forward and get a master's degree in education. I taught nurses for many years, and it was a pretty happy time, but finally I think my overreaction of emotions et cetera, I got out of that. And again, you know, thinking that if I could get enough education, enough new things and be smart enough, cool enough, try harder. I finally had a psychologist just sit me down and go, dude, you have attention deficit, be quiet, take this medication because it will help your diverse attention deficit mind work better. Yay. Despite my fears, he finally talked me into that after a few months. It really did help. I mean, it still helped a tremendous amount, but wasn't completely helpful. I did manage to get another degree and become a family practice provider and even with the additional help of medication and also meditation as it were, and some coaching and CBT, cognitive behavioral therapy, I still found myself much like that time when I had a suicide attempt

Bruce Eastman: [\(07:33\)](#)

Why was I so shocked that having, as Dr. Hallowell says, a Ferrari mind and bicycle brakes? I continued to get on these racetracks of long hours and unbelievable amounts of decisions per day. Why was I so shocked to find that I was having trouble with work relationships and deadlines et cetera? So finally, I decided to get out of being in medicine, and excuse my French, but in medicine, there's no such thing as part-time, it's either balls the wall or nothing. And I'm sure there are some part-time positions out there, but I decided that, for my own peace of mind, let me get out of this profession, get off the racetrack and retire. I'm now sixty-five and very happy with my wife, Cindy. We work together. She has a business and I help her with that.

Bruce Eastman: [\(08:38\)](#)

I also started helping people with their ADD and helping them using my experience to help them negotiate. What is your right racetrack? What might be helpful in helping you improve your life and be better? You can reach me at my cell phone, 208-559-4433. You can reach me at

my email at [bluepacificaddcoaching@gmail.com](mailto:bluepacificaddcoaching@gmail.com). Let me leave you with a small gift and it's absolutely free, of course. Pretend you just got a postcard with my name on it. And it says, "a small gift of appreciation, love, and gratitude". You never know what huge effect the smallest gift might have on another person's life in honor of Uncle George. Thank you.

Outro: (10:04)

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, so 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.