

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.

Nikki Kinzer: [\(00:50\)](#)

Hello and welcome to TADD talks with ADDA. I'm Nikki Kinzer and I am a certified ADHD coach and co-host of the podcast Taking Control of Your ADHD. I'm thrilled to be here with you to share a story that I hope you will find to be inspiring. Once upon a time, I worked with a client who was struggling with accepting her ADHD. She was diagnosed at a later age, and it confused her that she didn't get diagnosed earlier. How does someone in their sixties get diagnosed with a lifelong condition that she never knew she had; it didn't make sense to her. So, she came to coaching for help and understanding her ADHD, and to figure out a system and better managing her tasks. At this point, she didn't have any kind of system for her to-do list. It was scattered and she never really knew what to do.

Nikki Kinzer: [\(01:44\)](#)

Even though she was always staring at this big, huge list of items to do. She found herself jumping from one task to another, reacting to the next fire to put out, and she always felt like she was just getting by. She was also looking for the next best thing, whether it was the newest app or routine that she read about, she would try it for a little while and then forget about it and go on to the next thing. Every time feeling like she needed to start all over again. Now, when I asked her about the outcomes that she would like to see with our time together, she had three major goals. One is she wanted to figure out the best way to handle her, to do list, to keep her on track. Two, she wanted to not constantly think of her ADHD as a challenge.

Nikki Kinzer: [\(02:38\)](#)

And lastly, she wanted to stop putting a square peg in a round hole. So, over the course of our time together, we had many discussions about her ADHD, like how her mind felt like it was always spinning with thoughts all day, every day. And it was really hard for her to slow down. She had such high expectations on what she thought she could do in a day. And when she didn't meet those expectations, she immediately blamed herself. She didn't do enough. She wasted time. It was always her fault. Now because she was diagnosed later in life, it was really important to her to understand what it meant to have ADHD and have a better understanding of where she saw it play out in her life. Now, many times when we would talk about what is ADHD, this could be a symptom of ADHD, this makes sense because of your ADHD.

Nikki Kinzer: [\(03:36\)](#)

She was actually very comforted to know that what she was experiencing as a normal part of having ADHD, that there was nothing wrong with her. She learned to accept that ADHD isn't

going away, it's not something to be fixed, and she didn't need to be fixed. Now, these conversations were sprinkled into our weekly sessions, as well as talking about different ways to help her manage her tasks. We talked about what she preferred. Did she want a digital, uh, task manager, a paper planner, or maybe a combination of both? We talked about her goals, the purpose of her to-do list. We talked about realistic expectations and how to be kinder to yourself when things didn't go as planned because they rarely do. So, one of the muscles that we were developing is flexibility and being able to adjust. Now, I don't have time today to go through the process on how we got to where she is today, but I can tell you it took practice and patience to find out what would work.

Nikki Kinzer: ([04:44](#))

And she came to every single session, very willing and open to try new ideas. So, the goal here was to come up with a way to organize her tasks and be able to see what needed to be done with each project. She did not want to go digital, and although the traditional planner worked for her and keeping her schedule and calendar organized, they did not help with her organizing her tasks. So, this is what we came up with. There were three major categories in her life that she needed to organize, her house, her gardening, and her own personal business. Now, after some practice, what she realized is that having a clipboard for each category was really helpful and she would start with a brain dump. So, she would put down a list of items and thoughts and ideas of everything that she needed to do around the house.

Nikki Kinzer: ([05:42](#))

Then she would take specific projects and she would put them into a mind map. This was helpful for her to be able to visually see the steps that it took to get a specific project done. So, it was her way of breaking things down. Now she learned during practice during her practice that looking at these clipboards during the week was still very overwhelming because all she's still seeing is this big, huge list of brain dump things. Plus, this mind map that, you know, might be a little bit messy. So, it wasn't really helping her to figure out what to do next. So, she came up with the idea of doing a weekly, weekly review of each of the clipboards at the beginning of the week. And she typically did this on Mondays. And what she would do is she would look at the different clipboards.

Nikki Kinzer: ([06:37](#))

She would look at the mind maps and, and she would prioritize, what are the things that I can do this week?, what are the things that are most important? And as she was doing this, she was also looking at her calendar to see what appointments were going on during the week, what obligations she had. So, she had a better way to really understand what she could get done. Now, once she decided what her priorities were for the week, she would write them down on a three by five note card. And this is what she carried around with her throughout the week. So, looking at this was a lot less overwhelming. It kept her focused. She's already done the prioritizing. So, it helped her stay on task without getting so overwhelmed. Now she uses her planner for her calendar, right? So, when anything came up during the week, like a new task or idea under one of those categories, she would write it down in the notes section of her planner to remember for later.

Nikki Kinzer: (07:41)

Now the only exception here is if something that, uh, if something came up that really needed like immediate attention, it needed to be done that that day or that week, she would then add that task to her current three by five card. At her next weekly review, which is again, usually on Mondays, she will add any new notes, new information that she has gathered to the brain dumping list on the clipboard. Now, at this time, she may look at the brain dump that she's already created, may update it, add stuff, cross stuff off, or she may want to create a new one too. So, it it's whatever she felt like she needed to do at the time. She repeats this process every week. So, as you can see, this is not exactly a conventional way to organize your projects, but with practice and the willingness to be open to new ideas, she found something that works for her.

Nikki Kinzer: (08:39)

So she stopped having to try to put a square into a round hole. Even better, she learned to lower her expectations on what she could get done and no longer feels bad about herself if she doesn't get everything done or needs to readjust. Her self-talk is no longer degrading, but it's kind and compassionate. It has been a great honor to witness her go through this journey of understanding her ADHD, accepting her ADHD, and finding a task system that actually works for her. Thank you so much for joining me today for ADDA 's TADD talk. I'm Nikki Kinzer, and if you want to learn more information about me, my coaching, my podcast, please visit takecontroladhd.com. Thank you so much for your time and attention. Take care.

Outro:: (09:40)

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.