

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.

Sharon Saline: [\(00:49\)](#)

Hello and welcome to TADD talks with ADDA. I'm Dr. Sharon Saline, clinical psychologist, author, speaker, and consultant, coming to you from North Hampton, Massachusetts. I'm thrilled ADDA has invited me today to be with you sharing a story about time management, and some tips along the way, that I'm sure many of you can relate to, and I hope will help you as well. I have a history of being late. I know I not only irritate others, but I also annoy myself. Why can't I be on time? Better yet, how about a few minutes early? As a psychologist who works with kids, teens, adults, and families living with ADHD, anxiety and more, I know that we all have executive functioning strengths and challenges. I'd like to share with you how I've been dealing lately with one of my executive functioning challenges, time management. It's important for people living with and without ADHD to understand and manage time effectively, at home and at the office. Time management is fundamentally related to organization and planning.

Sharon Saline: [\(01:59\)](#)

Being late has been a big source of shame for me. I'm not here to blame or throw my mother under the bus, but she was, and still is, chronically late. Always. I remember being picked up, uh, last at Hebrew school as a child, well after all the students, and many of the teachers, had already left. She was always cramming things into her life and underestimated how long things took. She was also incredibly successful as a writer and a TV personality. But nonetheless, it was embarrassing to me, uh, her lightness and I vowed to be different. Sadly, I haven't succeeded as much as I had hoped. Sometimes I don't correctly estimate how long something will take such as driving somewhere or writing an article, preparing a presentation, or making a dish for a dinner party. Some of the time I run into trouble because I try to do too much in a given block of time.

Sharon Saline: [\(02:58\)](#)

My appetite is often bigger than my capability. I actually get a lot done, but as a perfectionist and overachiever, there's always more I want to do. In these past five years as I've grown from being primarily a clinician to being an author, speaker and consultant, my approach to time has become more problematic. COVID exacerbated this problem, and it grew unmanageable. By the time June 2021 rolled around, I felt stressed all the time, overworked, and burnt out. As I approached this fall, I knew I wanted to do things differently. Instead of using backwards design occasionally, I promised myself that I would apply it with every speaking commitment, webinar or meeting that I have. This means that I actively consider how long it will take me to get ready

for this event, to arrive at the event if I'm having to drive or, um, use transportation to get there, a lot of time to gather any materials I will need, and give myself time afterwards to transition to the next thing. Recover.

Sharon Saline: [\(04:12\)](#)

This means that I start from my desired arrival time and work backwards, uh, subtracting the estimated amount of time to do things like take a shower, get dressed, pack my bag with my computer, throw in some snacks, take the dog out. You know, all the stuff you need to do to get ready before you go somewhere, or you start something. Maybe that's getting my cup of tea and sitting before I sit down at the computer. Because I often underestimate how long things will take, I add five minutes to each task. I also use alerts and alarms more frequently. I set two notifications on my phone, one that tells me when I have to leave to arrive on time, or, and one to remind me of an event the day before. I know what's coming the next day, and then when I have to depart this kind of sets my brain in motion for the thing that's ahead of me.

Sharon Saline: [\(05:10\)](#)

My timeliness actually has gotten much better. So, all of this help relieve some of my stress and anxiety. But I still struggle with assigning time to do things during my day, such as when I'm seeing clients, doing administrative work, time for writing, keeping track of my speaking commitments. So, I bought a large piece of poster board and two different sizes of post-it notes, and some markers and I drew a huge grid. I divided into the days of the week and the working hours of the day and half hour increments. I call this my master map. Then I wrote down my client names on the smaller post-it notes and put them in their time slots. Then I added daily slots for email, consultation, writing, and webinars or groups that I'm doing. I added lunch and a walk each day too and set a time to stop working.

Sharon Saline: [\(06:05\)](#)

The benefits of this schedule have been enormous for me. First, I like how I can move things around, depending on what changes. One client doesn't want to come at five-thirty, they need an appointment at four-thirty, I can actually see if I have an opening. If I'm not sure if I have an opening, I can, you know, um, see if someone, um, I can move someone, but I can quickly you know, glance at my map for an answer. Secondly, I love the visual component for anxiety reduction. One of my best friends, um, when there's no white space, I know I'm in a danger zone. There's too much going on to process or execute things effectively, too much stress. For example, when I have time for writing set aside, I don't have to worry about when I'll do it. I see that larger post-it on my map with the word writing on it, and I know that's my time.

Sharon Saline: [\(06:54\)](#)

Thirdly, since this map doesn't account for specific webinars, meetings, or conferences, or speaking dates, or the details of those events, I've purchased a regular old paper calendar to keep track of them and set due dates for things. So, I now have this master plan that's what, what each day look like looks like. And then I have a paper calendar where I put in a special event, so I don't have to worry about my day, um, what my days are going to look like, but I need to know when those special events are, and I can glance at those also on the wall. I make

a note of, of general client hours on this calendar, but I don't put any specifics in those go on my master map. Finally, and I know this is a lot of work, but I keep a record of everything on Google Cal. Uh, um, luckily, um, my, uh, online practice, uh, program sinks my sessions, uh, onto my Google calendar, so I just have to add special events and personal appointments.

Sharon Saline: [\(07:53\)](#)

I can see how each week works and where I have to be when. And I, um, I like to have this because I can carry it around all day, I can also keep it on my computer and see what's happening. But I like the cleanliness of the map of just the speaking and special events and what each day looks like in terms of clients. So, I rotate between checking all of these each day. This system may sound like a lot of work to you, and yes, it's definitely labor intensive in the beginning, but I'm seeing positive results. I feel less stressed because I have things to refer to when I have a question about what's happening when, and with whom, rather than, you know, kind of dry thinking about it, is it in my head or looking into my Google Cal, which is often, you know, very kind of overwhelming, um, uh, which I'll do in a quick moment, but I don't operate from that on a day-to-day basis.

Sharon Saline: [\(08:53\)](#)

I've done something like this on a smaller scale with my clients, so I just expanded it to meet my needs. I hope that I've given you some ideas today about how to manage your time a little bit differently, and to craft a map for yourself, um, into a time management system that works for you. Um, I'm so glad you could join me today for ADDA's TADD Talk about Time Management. I'm Dr. Sharon Saline. If you want more information about me or my work with ADHD adults, please find me online at www.drsharonsaline.com. Thank you.

Outro: [\(09:38\)](#)

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.