

Example of attention deficit disorder case study

[Psychology](#), [Behaviorism](#)



Attention deficit disorder is a common psychiatric disorder that affects young children and persists into adulthood. It makes it difficult for school going children to concentrate on their studies. Attention deficit disorder affects 6-7 % of children. Additionally, ADD is diagnosed in 2-16 percent of children attending school. This disorder is characterized by troubles in controlling hyperactive and impulsive behaviors and paying attention. This constellation of symptoms not only affects the child at home but also has negative effects on a child's education by creating difficulties in school and peer relations. Most school going children who suffer from ADD have a learning disability (LD) because their concentration rate in class is very low.

The causes of attention deficit disorder are unknown however; it appears that heredity seems to be the main cause (Brown, 2013). Children with ADD are always inattentive, makes careless mistakes, do not listen, have difficulties following instructions and are distracted very easily. In addition, they have a tendency of interrupting in conversations without giving others an opportunity to talk, they have difficulties remaining seated and thus they run around excessively and they cannot engage in quiet activities. Most of them do not even concentrate in class and fail to complete their homework due to distractions.

There are many popular types of treatment for ADD, from behavioral medication therapy, individual psychotherapy, herbal therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, vitamin and mineral supplements to homeopathic and pharmaceutical treatments. However, research shows that medications alone cannot help in addressing ADD issues in children and therefore ADD patients needs certain skills and knowledge on how to change their

behaviors and learn to live with the disorder (Corey, 2005). This is where cognitive behavioral therapy comes in. Cognitive behavioral therapy works well for attention deficit disorder than other forms of therapy. When CBT is combined with medication, it is very effective in controlling ADD symptoms than drug therapy alone. With cognitive behavioral therapy, a child with ADD is able to receive support from the people around them and this helps the child learn to confront the problems with the disorder since he/she is not alone. Secondly, a child is able to learn specific strategies and skills on how to manage and solve all the problems associated with ADD for example inattention. A child is taught on how to live with the disorder by confronting its effects by indulging in activities that keeps them busy and draws their attention for longer times. Cognitive behavioral therapy helps young children with ADD in reducing impulsivity and cultivates good habits in them (Corey, 2005).

Sessions should be conducted on children with attention deficit disorder in order to know what influences them into doing the things they do. After learning what influences them, it is very easy to help them tackle their problems by making sure that they avoid those things. Therefore behavioral modification programs should be set up both at home and schools in order to help both the parents and teachers to be able to reinforce desired behaviors in the children with attention deficit disorder.

Allan was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder at the age of 6. Before his parents could identify that Allan has ADD, they just thought that he is being stubborn due to his age until his father remembered that his younger brother used to behave the same way and was diagnosed with Attention

Deficit Disorder. Allan used to run around all the time, climb on things, and could never pay attention to anything. Furthermore, Allan had lack of concentration, talks nonstop, always running everywhere and could never let people talk since he interrupted all the time. They even took him to school and his teacher complained that he never paid attention to anything he is told and runs around while others are learning in class. Allan could not even do his home work at home since his attention was always distracted. Allan was hypersensitive and very impulsive. Additionally, Allan had even problems with relating with his peers because of his hypersensitivity. He was very stubborn and could distract them in class. In Allan's father's family, there was a history of ADD whereby his dad's younger brother had the condition and so this shows that Allan's condition was hereditary.

Allan was put on medication by his parents immediately after the diagnosis. He was put on a daily dose of Adderall. This medicine caused a lot of reactions on him and made things worse for him. Allan constantly complained of his heart rate speeding up all the time and this made him fear that something serious would happen to him. He also had a chewing problem whereby he could chew gum all the time even the insides of his mouth. It was later discovered that Adderall was a stimulant and this caused his heart rate to speed up and make him more hyperactive. Allan's parents were later advised to put him on a non-stimulant medicine together with cognitive behavioral therapy which could help in decreasing impulsive behavior and make him have positive behaviors. When Allan was introduced to Cognitive behavioral therapy, he started concentrating and changing his behaviors and even started going to school. Cognitive behavioral therapy helped Allan

change his behaviors.

As Allan's psychologist, I will first of all study his moves and understand everything he does the whole day, this is through free association. I will try make him understand what causes distractions in his life and what makes him not to be attentive and concentrate on what he is doing. Next, I will set up specific goals for Allan by making sure he maintains a notebook with all the things that he should accomplish at the end of the day. I will make sure the same applies both in school and at home. For example, the school homework should be done and completed at that time he is able to hold his attention because children with this disorder hold onto their attention at specific times and not for long. It is better to utilize that time in making them complete what they should do. I will make sure that Allan does his homework and other things expected of him at a specific time. A child should be able to recognize for how long can they stay attentive and this will help in reducing distractions while studying or doing their homework. I will advice the Allan to write down all the distractions that emerge while he is trying to concentrate on his school and homework and help him work on reducing them so that he is able to concentrate. After dealing with the things that make him distracted, the child will be able to concentrate and focus on the set goals at the time they are distracted. I will make sure that the Allan avoids behaviors and activities that make him not to concentrate.

Secondly, I will make sure that I reward him if he is able to attain the set goals and the desired behaviors. If the child is able to focus on their homework and complete it on time and avoid behaviors that cause distractions should be awarded since this encourages his/her to work on the

new routine. On the other hand, apart from awarding him, I will also administer punishment if he fails to meet the daily set goals I have for him and fails to avoid the activities and behaviors which cause him distractions. According to Corey (2005), positive and negative reinforcement are very important in behavioral development of a child with attention deficit disorder. A positive reinforcement on a child through rewards and gifts makes them improve and change their behavior and thus they are able to reach the desired behavior because they will not want to miss the rewards. Moreover, when a child is punished for not meeting the set goals or failing to do what was assigned to them, they will always work hard to meet the set goals in order to avoid punishment since no child likes being punished. I will keep using the rewards and punishment approach consistently on Allan and this will shape his behavior in a positive way. Allan will learn to follow the set routine as it will be a daily thing and this will help him confront the problems associated with ADD and improve his self esteem, communication skills and school grades. Furthermore, he will be able to cope with the set schedule and this will highly help him in not experiencing the effects of attention deficit disorder like lack of concentration, running around excessively and many more. Allan will learn how to concentrate on important things especially when he knows that he will be rewarded and this will help him in attaining positive behaviors and learning to finish his work before going out to play.

Cognitive behavioral therapy works very well because it focuses on practical solutions on everyday's issues. For example, if the above approach is used whereby a child has a daily routine to follow and they are awarded if they

follow it and punished if they don't, they will be able to change their behaviors. Following set goals with rewards and punishment shapes a child's behavior because he/she learns to complete the entire task given to them in order to get the rewards and avoid punishment. Allan was able to follow the daily routine and within three weeks, he had changed his behaviors. He was able to learn on concentrating and stopped running all over all the time. Behavioral therapy helps in overcoming debilitating behaviors in attention deficit disorder patients. This approach works because after one learns a child's behavior through free association with him or her, the person will be able to manage what the child does and try helping them out with ADD effects. Through cognitive behavioral therapy, an ADD child can be helped to manage their life by conquering all attention deficit disorder effects.

References

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