

Rainy Days and Weekends Don't Have To Get You Down

By Judi Jerome, LICSW, LADC



OK, it's not exactly The Carpenters, but that song keeps going through my mind so I decided I'd better write about it. You have a three day weekend and it starts pouring outside. You then find out that it's going to rain non-stop. So, what do you do? Well, if you have AD/HD you decide to clean the house, NOT. So then you decide to finish up all the projects that are neatly placed in boxes in various rooms.

What is it about having AD/HD that allows one to get bored so darn fast? Well, that's OK, because there is another project in another room to perk up one's interest. But wait, here is a great idea for a new project; do you jump right in, or take a deep breath and use self-control?

I'll leave it up to your imagination.

Well, well, the 3 day weekend is over already. I did my billing. The fruit is in the dehydrator. The summer/winter clothes have been switched and all put away, and there are another three bags filled with clothes for the hurricane relief effort. The latest set of digital pictures has even been emailed to all the cousins. I played Mah Jongg at a ridiculously early hour Saturday morning. I met with one coachee in a local cafe, talked with another over the phone, and answered phone and email check-in's from the rest. The Sunday papers have been read, and all personal and business emails answered. Three loads of laundry have been done and put away, and the living room and kitchen tidied up. The compost was taken out and I even hot synced the PDA.

So why on earth do I feel like I didn't get anything done the past three days? Well, maybe it is because the original overwhelming amount of "have to do" weekend work that was neatly sorted and prepared on my desk before the rain started is still there, $\frac{2}{3}$ of it untouched. And maybe it is because the high priority "must do" pile of books and boxes brought home from the office is still not sorted through. Perhaps it is because the photo project that was $\frac{1}{2}$ completed last winter is still sitting neatly organized in its box, staring at me, or perhaps even glaring. I could go on and on but I won't bore you with any more particulars.

The bottom line is that "AD/HD and unlimited ideas" is synonymous with "energy and only so many hours in a day". Have you ever checked that handy little "call timer" on your cell phone? How could I have *possibly* used that many hours the past 3 days? Well, there you go, that certainly is a reasonable explanation for not getting necessary work completed; I *had* to talk to every single one of my relatives and friends! IT WAS CRUCIAL!

TIP # 1:

The greatest tool that an ADDer can own is an egg timer. It helps one to 'stick with it' for a set amount of time, and to avoid hyper-focus during the times that one is engaged in trivial pursuits, no pun intended. It is an absolute must if you live alone and it rates right up there with my most treasured possession, the microwave. Time is a friend or an enemy. Personally, I'd rather keep it as a friend.

Confession # 1

Coaching 101: When you write up a To-Do list and put 20 items on it, (even if you meticulously plugged them into time slots on your schedule), you must immediately cut the list down to 10 items. Of course, you then have to break down each project into small tasks. I also believe that it would be helpful if, instead of putting all of the "must do's" first, you schedule them, every other one, with an enjoyable activity in between. If you don't, you rebel and set yourself up for feeling like you failed to accomplish enough and time just slipped by way to fast. After all, rocky road ice cream tastes unbelievable with hot fudge, even if it is overkill; but the truth is that everyone knows it really is heaven all by itself. #'s 11-20 will be the whip cream, cherry, nuts and sprinkles; add them one at a time and eventually you discover the reality that its overwhelming to try and devour them all at once. Always remember to meditate because mindfulness does matter.



Judi has been in private practice since 1990 working with a variety of issues, and specializing in teens and adults with AD/HD and co-morbid disorders, life cycle transitions, and substance abuse. Judi enjoys coaching teens and adults with AD/HD in all genres of life. She believes that each individual has potential within to achieve success beyond the current limits that problems such as time management, disorganization, morning madness and late night hyper-focusing may be imposing on their lives. Judi coaches people toward accomplishing their dreams as well as their goals. Her motto - Empowerment, growth and maintenance for positive life changes.

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