

Experience the Power of an *Aha!*



**DIG COACHING PRACTICE, LLC**

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Own Your ADHD: What a Relief!

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Jeff Copper  
(About All Things Attention)




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CHADD



Attention  
PASSAGES OF DIFFERENCES

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  - Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
  - Edge Foundation
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Presentation Takeaway!

Discovering the Obvious!


The Key!  
That one thing that is required that doesn't get the respect it deserves.

What most ignore!



I don't know who discovered water, but I'm sure it wasn't a fish.

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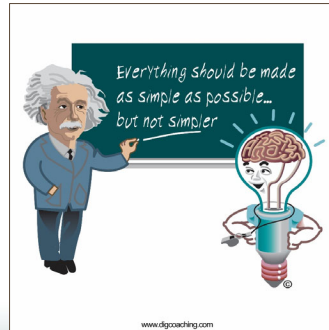


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## Time for a Deep Dive

Self-awareness is as simple as it  
is complex to understand.



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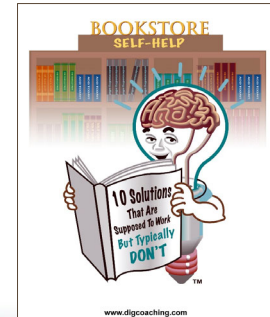
## What is Self-Awareness?

### What is Self-Awareness

- Self-awareness is actually difficult to define.
- Basically, it is being able to see yourself (in the third person), to understand yourself objectively.
- There are many different levels or layers to the idea of self-awareness.
- The goal of self-awareness is self-acceptance over guilt.

### ADHD is an Executive Function Impairment.

- Self-awareness is an executive function.
- Self-awareness is impaired for those with ADHD.



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## The Question of the Day?

Are you self-aware?

It's easier to understand self-awareness  
by looking at examples that we agree do  
not illustrate self-awareness.



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## AttentionScope®

What is it like to be self-aware?

A Simulation

Prepare, consume, and clean up after a  
meal using your less dominant hand.



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## Principles of Self-Awareness

- Being Present
- Being Aware Collectively and Objectively
- Self-Reflection
- The Naked Truth
- Mutually Conflicting Executive Functions

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## Being Present

Being present with yourself in the moment.

- Mindfulness
  - To be in the NOW (without thought of the future or the past)
  - To notice extraneous thoughts or emotions and letting them go
  - To be of self-judgment
  - Override automatic thoughts
- To make factual observations (override your feelings)
  - Regulate your emotions
  - Make-it-is-what-it-is observations
- Example (self-aware at point of performance)
  - Time blindness
  - Documenting a thought (Jeffism... email self)

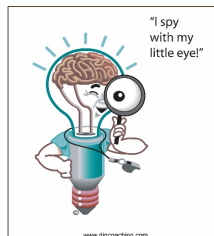
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## Being Aware Collectively and Objectively

- Observe your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors without emotional bias.
- See yourself for who you are, not who you think you are.
- Acknowledge you do everything in your own self-interest.
- Call yourself out on your BS and rationalizations
  - (e.g., *You say you like walking the dog, but you don't do it. Do you really like it as much as you say?*)
  - Acknowledge if you are not doing something that looks simple, it is actually HARD, and you don't want to admit to it!
- Acknowledge the ADHD paradox
  - If you say you should do something and you never do it, that is a paradox.
  - Acknowledging you should do something, but you know you are not going to opens you up to alternatives.



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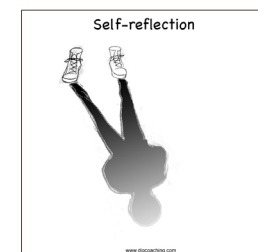


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## Self-Reflection: Cognitively Strenuous

### Self-Awareness Requires Self-Reflection.

- Cognitive load strains working memory.
- Emotional resistance and ego defense mechanisms
- Bias and lack of objectivity
- Ambiguity and lack of clear metrics
- Lack of explicit training in reflection



### Attention Exercise to Illustrate

A bat and ball cost \$1.10

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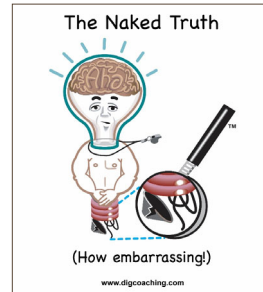


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## The Naked Truth

Simulated Metaphor

Thought Experiment



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## Mutually Conflicting Executive Functions

Emotional Self-Regulation

Mirror, mirror in my mind...



Self-Awareness



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## The Goal of Self-Awareness: Self-Acceptance

The goal of self-awareness is self-acceptance.

When you accept yourself as you are, you can **set realistic expectations and operate efficiently, optimizing your life** without unnecessary effort or frustration.

This practical approach reduces self-judgment and allows you to manage yourself with clarity and effectiveness.

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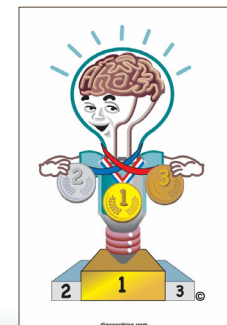
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## Why is Self-Awareness Important

### Self-Awareness:

- Self-awareness is highly **correlated with success in life**.
- At some level nothing works without self-awareness.
- When it comes to emotional regulation, there is no getting around it. It requires self-awareness, 100%.
- **Cost of Denial**
  - Increases stress and anxiety
  - Pretending to be something you're not (imposter syndrome) is exhausting.
  - Brings on shame and guilt



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## Here's the Thing about Self-Awareness

"Many ADDers are poor at self-observation, which they find surprising because they are poor at self-observation."

~ Rick Green

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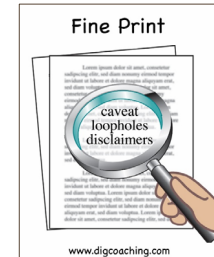


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## How Do You Become Self-Aware?

### Book Answer

- **The Book Answer**
  - **Self-awareness** is about recognizing and understanding oneself.
  - **Conscientiousness** is about applying that understanding.
  - Thus, one must **become conscientious to be self-aware**.
- **To be conscientious, one must:**
  - Be disciplined, responsible, and goal-oriented.
  - Make better decisions.
  - Build habits and follow through.
  - Plan and prioritize, not overreacting.
- **The Dilemma (requires executive functions)**
  - You have to use executive functions to be more conscientious.
  - If you have ADHD, your executive functions are impaired.
  - You have to use a weakness to overcome a weakness.



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## How Do You Become Self-Aware?

### The Real World

- **Reality (The real-world answer)**
  - **Surrender yourself to reality.**
  - **Acknowledge you lack self-awareness.**
    - Admit your perception is flawed.
    - Stop trusting your feelings as truth.
  - **Get a Cognitive Mind's Mirror (\*) (external help)**
    - ADHD coach
    - Therapist
    - Mentor/ trusted friend
  - **Understand it is a lifelong process; it is:**
    - Effortful
    - Uncomfortable
    - Requires ongoing willingness to confront uncomfortable truths about yourself.



(\*) Those with ADHD lack hindsight, which impairs foresight and self-awareness. Coaches, therapists, mentors can help by mirroring or reflecting back on past experiences and guiding future actions

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## What is Sobering about Surrendering?

It is akin to recognizing that you need help.  
Much like addiction recovery.



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## The Essence of Renewal Recovery Process

The essence of any renewal recovery process (addiction included) centers around the act of thinking.

- Reflecting, engaging, and processing things directly (**thinking**).
- The idea is to think frequently to **hold things top of mind**, and;
- in the instance of addiction, **to be on guard** (not to relapse).

Executive functions are mind tools used to think and solve problems.

Renewal Recovery (*i.e.*, addiction recovery) is **done on location with in-person guidance**. Why? It is **cognitively easier** to externalize thinking, collaborate, and verbalize thought. One engages with therapists and counselors daily to think out loud multiple times a day to keep things top of mind, to be self-aware, and to be on guard.

ADHD is an executive function impairment and, thus, **needs the accommodations** to make thinking and its frequency easier. The **presence of others to talk to in the real world is the accommodation**.



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## The Role of External Support in ADHD Thinking: The Cognitive Mind's Mirror

**Key Idea:** ADHD impairs hindsight and foresight, making self-awareness difficult.

- Therapists in rehab help to process thoughts and build self-awareness.
- In daily life, **coaches, friends, and mentors** play this role by helping individuals **externalize thoughts** (think out loud).
- Dr. Barkley explains that **ADHD weakens hindsight**, affecting decision-making and self-monitoring.

**Solution:** Trusted individuals act as **cognitive mirrors**, reflecting past experiences and guiding future actions.



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## The Reality of Self-Awareness: Summary

- Acknowledge you lack self-awareness.
- Get a Cognitive Mirror to help you Think & Reflect
  - Talk out loud (engage your executive functions).
  - Engage regularly and externally.
  - Keep awareness top of mind.
  - The goal is to be on guard.



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## The Challenge!

Many people don't seek this level of support until the pain of their situation outweighs the discomfort of getting help.



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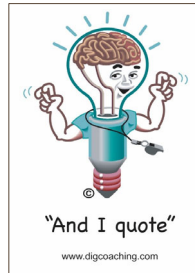
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## Dr. Barkley Quotes

- “A good chunk of what you and I do is helping to convince people to buy in, to own this.”
- “If you're telling me you don't want treatment for ADHD, you'd better know what you're asking for.”



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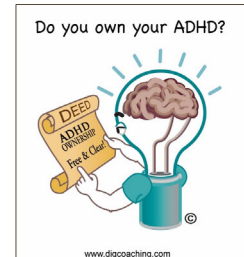
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## Own Your ADHD

- There are a lot of people who know a lot about ADHD.
- Those who are self-aware, and own it, are more successful.

ADHD Deed  
Own Your ADHD Free and Clear!



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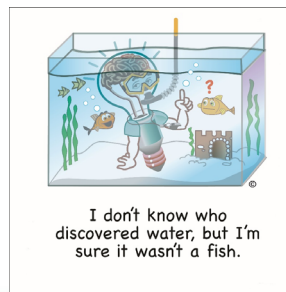
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## Presentation Takeaway!

Isn't it Obvious that Self-Awareness  
is at some level the key to  
managing your ADHD?

Isn't it time to give it the respect it  
deserves?

Get Relief! Own your ADHD!



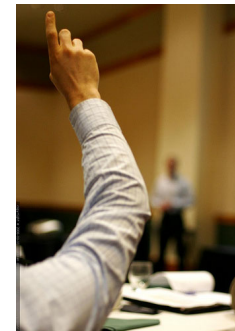
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## Questions?

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