



“Staying Connected, The ADHD Way”

Jamie Blume ([00:01](#)):

Hi, this is Jamie Bloom with Along Their Way. I'm excited to be part of this year's TADD Talks talking ADD brought to you by ADDA. Today, we're talking about connection. We'll address why connection matters for adults with ADHD. We'll uncover hurdles adults with ADHD may face, and we'll offer strategies to improve and maintain connection. Let's face it, not everyone with ADHD is a social butterfly. Some of us thrive around people while some of us feel awkward, anxious, or exhausted after small talk. Some of us love humans in theory, but prefer dogs, cats, books or memes in practice, connection does matter. Safe connection of any size can steady breathing, soften muscle tension and give those brains I'm okay signals. That can be from a best friend, a partner, a support group, or a neighbor you wave at. Any connection is nourishment. And for adults with ADHD, it's not just nice to have, it's healthcare.

Jamie Blume ([01:06](#)):

Adults with ADHD on average report more strain in relationships. Shorter partnerships, more conflict and more loneliness than adults without ADHD. Social connection buffers stress, improves mental health and predicts longer life. That's big picture public health level big. The Harvard Study of adult development calls relationships one of the strongest predictors of health and longevity. And here's an encouraging twist. Not every connection has to be deep. Research on weak ties, those brief low stake chats with the gym person, shows that small interactions boost belonging and mood. And on days when chatty moments increase, wellbeing often rises too. So a 62nd, Hey, how's your day? Absolutely counts. Yet adults with ADHD may have hurdles with connection. And please know you are not the hurdle. Your neurodivergent. The ADHD brain runs a different operating system for attention, emotion, and time. For ADHD, the road to connection can get bumpy because of lots of things going on in your brain.

Jamie Blume ([02:20](#)):

None of them are flaws. They're just obstacles. And obstacles can be designed around. So what are we talking about here? Well, working memory is the brain's mental post-it stack. In ADHD, it feels fast and slips faster. That's why out of sight out of mind can feel literally like the object is invisible. Relationships here may drift off the mental whiteboard, time can be wobbly. If your brain tags later as not real, no wonder you miss the group chat, forget to RSVP or are 15 minutes late. It's actually a brain clock issue. And many don't realize that emotional regulation is effortful. Many adults with ADHD report more intense, faster rising feelings and tougher cool downs in relationships that can look like quick hurt,



defense texting or ruminating after a minor misread. And remember, when tasks feel low interest or far away, it's harder to engage. And that push pull shows up socially too.

Jamie Blume ([03:25](#)):

Sensory overload is real. Sound, light, crowded spaces can flood the system and drain the social battery fast. That can make you leave early ghost plans or need more decompression than others. Any of you zone out. Yeah, it's a default mode network that doesn't shut off. That system, that toggles between your inside my thoughts and engaged in the world. When that toggle is sticky, it's easier to miss a conversational beat or drift mid story. None of this means that you're bad at people. It means you need ADHD friendly ways to connect. So let's jump into strategies. How do we maintain connection? ADHD style? So we're gonna start with connection styles. See if one of these feels like home to you. Are you socially anxious or introverted? Think low stakes. High predictability. Choose situations where your body feels safe and your brain can plan a quiet coffee at 10:00 AM beats a 7:00 PM crowded patio.

Jamie Blume ([04:28](#)):

Or try a micro touch of connection. Comment on a photo or send a quick thinking of you check-in. Weak ties and tiny touches add up. Are you novelty seeking and extroverted? Perhaps a spontaneous text. I'm out for a walk. If you're free, great. If not, no pressure. And when you meet someone new, set one small anchor before the dopamine fades. Are you task focused and practical Leverage CO-DOing. How about co-working on zoom camera on mics off or reoccurring Sunday soup swap. Give yourself permission to be brief. Keeping it short, keeps it possible. Are you slow to warm, observant, or people selective? Quality over quantity may be your game. You may prefer one deep root over 20 plants. Give yourself plenty of time to recharge and remind yourself and others it's not rejection. Perhaps bring a question card. Low pressure, higher richness. Are you digital first? Online connection counts and often fits ADHD brains. Are memes your love language spam. People with dogs and neuroscience. Respond to people during a daily connection block. So responses don't sprawl into sleep hours.

Jamie Blume ([05:54](#)):

And here are some more general tips and tricks for all of us adults with ADHD. Make connections. Visible, externalize. Put people where your eyes go. A paper list, a rotating phone, widget reminders and like ping a friend every second Tuesday. Visibility beats memory. Shrink the perfectionism energy. Use default templates for texts such as solve this and thought of you. Tiny scripts keep the door open without demanding a novel. Use body first regulation before calling downshift your nervous system. Take a one minute exhale, soften your shoulders. Your voice changes, your friend's nervous system mirrors connection gets easier. Practice the power of the pause. When your brain predicts rejection such as they haven't texted me back, they must hate me. Renarrate it. My brain is predicting danger. They may be in a meeting. Pausing lets you pick a kinder reason and a kinder reply. Predecide your exits.



If overstimulation hits, you can leave without ghosting. Hey, I'm hitting my sensory limit heading out now. Love seeing you. Repair fast, not perfect. If a plan slips and it will reply with a one line repair, I dropped the ball. You matter. Rain check Tuesday. And when hard days come and they will. You can still cancel. Forget or go quiet, but talk to yourself like you would your favorite friend. Give yourself grace.

Jamie Blume ([07:34](#)):

We know that when we feel more secure in our nervous system, we tend to increase our social engagement. And so give yourself things like soft lighting, fewer competing sounds, one-on-one versus big groups or a familiar place that's not being picky, that's regulating your autonomic state so that social steals become easier. Remember, connection is cumulative. The three second smile, the thinking of you gif, the 10 minute call while you fold laundry, all laid down, relational myelin in the neurotransmitters in your brain. So, the final word, you do not need to become a different person to maintain a connection. You need a different design. Fewer shoulds, fewer fix, me's more fit Me's. Your brain can connect beautifully, especially when your environment, your language, and your expectations are tuned to how your system actually works. You've got this. Notice the pride and fulfillment that creeps in when you realize you can maintain connections. It may take some time, it may take some grace, but you can do it. I'm so glad you could join me for today's talk about why connection matters, the hurdles adults may face, and how to maintain them in a way that fits your personality, your nervous system.

Jamie Blume ([08:54](#)):

System, and your energy. Find me at Along Their Way. I'm guiding a yoga class as well as hosting a peer support group for ADHD coaches at this year's international conference on ADHD. I hope to see you in Kansas City next month. And if not, we'll see you another time. Enjoy your day.