



ADHD Storm Resilience

James Ochoa ([00:01](#)):

This is a TADD Talk sponsored by ADDA association for ADHD awareness Month, October, 2025. Black mold was hanging from the AIR event like Spanish moss and a horror movie. It's 11:30 PM my immunocompromised best friend is with me. And after months of caregiving, weeks of planning and hours of packing, my ADHD brain is about to show me that 36 years of being an expert in emotional dysregulation doesn't exempt me from the storm. Hi, I'm James Ochoa. I'm a licensed professional counselor and what I call the ADHD Pathfinder here in Austin, Texas. And yes, for years I've guided thousands through what I call the emotional distress syndrome of ADHD, which is all the emotional, mental and behavioral disruption that spin off the diagnosis of ADHD. I write about it extensively in my book, Focus Forward, Navigating the Storms of Adult ADHD. But that night and that Airbnb was about to live my own case study. So we packed the car like Tetris Masters. Months of caregiving had led to this. A six week medical treatment lies ahead. Every item calculated, every detail researched. My ADHD brain had hyper-focused on creating the perfect sanctuary, yet we couldn't see what was coming. And then the first Gale Force winds hit, it was Beyonce. She was going to be a half a mile away. Tens of thousands of fans would be near where we had planned for silence, calm and peace.

James Ochoa ([01:53](#)):

Or my friend's first thought when we drove up to the Airbnb, this just doesn't feel right, am I trying to convince them? But I'd researched this place. I'd controlled this variable. It was fine, simple, clean, typical Airbnb quality. I'm sure this will work fine. Yet when we got into the Airbnb and settled in the shower doesn't drain. There's draino under the sink, never a good sign. The handyman will come tomorrow the owner says. We can manage this I say we buy groceries like we're stocking a bunker. We're prepared. We're in control. We've exhausted, but we are here. And here comes our breaking point. We look up and there it is black mold hanging from the vent and our safety net just disintegrates before our eyes. My friends compromised immune system already at risk. Six weeks of treatment ahead and my brain, my ADHD expert brain completely

James Ochoa ([02:59](#)):

Shorts out. So it's 11:30 PM I'm throwing necessities into a bag like a refugee. I'm calling my niece who has a place for us to run to for safety. I'm getting in the car and here's where my 36 years of expertise meets reality. I transposed the address twice my brain that can recite emotional regulation strategies in my sleep. Yet I can't process five numbers in the right order. My niece eventually has to stand in the street to flag me down as I'm circling two blocks away, lost in a neighborhood I know. Hyperventilating, not sure which way is up, but feeling like I'm sure I'm safe to drive. I'm likely not. This is what I call an



ADHD storm. Not the distraction, not the hyperactivity. The complete emotional and executive function collapse when your carefully constructed plans meet realities Black mold. After decades of helping others navigate these storms there, I was unable to type five numbers correctly because my emotional dysregulation had hijacked my entire brain.

James Ochoa ([04:20](#)):

So here's what didn't happen that night. I didn't stay frozen. I took action where I could. I didn't pretend the mold wasn't there. I hit the panic button and immediately got help. I didn't push through and risk my friend's health. The storm hit yes. Oh, did the storm hit. But I called for help. I accepted the flag down. The difference after 36 years isn't that I don't have storms. It's that I know they will pass the transposed address. That's no failure. It's just ADHD hacking my brain. And I recognized it in real time asking for help, seeing that niece in the street. That's resilience. You can build that the rest of your life.

James Ochoa ([05:13](#)):

Every one of us with ADHD will face our black mold moment. The storms will come. The question is, who is your person standing in the street and are you willing to see them and take action? I believe you can. And I've been helping thousands of people do this in the last three and a half decades. I hope this story helps you to understand that storms with ADHD will continue throughout your life. They don't have to continue to disrupt you at a level that you lose your potential or your sense of self and your life is just not any fun anymore. Life can be happy. Life can be full of resilience. Life can be

James Ochoa ([05:56](#)):

Full of adventure, and you can learn to reset and recenter yourself on an ongoing basis. That's the of ADHD, managing storms one at a time in a way you can never predict, but know that you can respond to when things show up. Thank you for listening. This has been James Ochoa. Again, I'm a licensed professional counselor and your ADHD Pathfinder in Austin, Texas. You can find all my services at www.jamesochoa.com. And thanks again to the ADDA Association for bringing support to those with ADHD for so many years. Have a great day.