



ADHD, Gifted or Both?

ADHD and giftedness may look the same on the surface— difficulty focusing, distractibility, difficulty following through, high need for physical activity and the like. However, they are usually different internal phenomena. It can be possible, but actually not common, for them both to exist within the same person. They are not driven by the same internal processes. It's crucial to dig deeper to discover exactly what is actually going on. Here are some similarities and salient differences between them*.

AD/HD

- ❑ Poorly sustained attention in almost all situations
- ❑ Diminished persistence on tasks not having immediate gratification
- ❑ Impulsivity, poor ability to delay gratification
- ❑ Impaired adherence to commands to regulate or inhibit behavior in social contexts
- ❑ More active & restless than normal children
- ❑ Difficulty adhering to rules and regulations

GIFTED

- ❑ Poor attention, boredom, daydreaming in specific situations
- ❑ Low tolerance for persistence on tasks that seem irrelevant
- ❑ Judgment lags behind intellect
- ❑ Intensity may lead to power struggles with authorities
- ❑ High activity level; may need less sleep, psychomotor OE
- ❑ Questions rules, customs, and traditions

You can see how at first glance, AD/HD and Giftedness appear to be the same thing. If we identify only that there is difficulty with sustaining attention, low persistence, problems with follow-through, decision-making, restlessness and following rules, you would say both groups have AD/HD. When you look more closely into what is driving the behavior, it's often not hard to tell the difference.

To discuss your questions or concerns about your specific situation, please call me at 303-987-0346 or email me at Sharon@TherapistForSensitiveAndGifted.com. I'm happy to help you sort this out, for yourself or on behalf of your child or teen.

*Source: **Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children and Adults** by James T Webb, PhD et al.