

# Let's Talk Learning Disabilities

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## EPISODE 03

In Episode 03 Laurie and Abbey share about their own experiences with ADHD. They touch on their personal challenges with having ADHD, as well as experiences with clients, friends and family members who have ADHD as well. They also share about how ADHD testing, treatment and stigmas have changed over the years.

### **Going Through High School Undiagnosed with ADHD** 3 min

Even though Abbey was diagnosed as an adult, she can look back to her highschool years and recognize her struggles with ADHD even then. Her main goal was to get to college, and even then she struggled with doing the bare minimum needed just to get by. She struggled with paying attention, planning and procrastinated in everything.

### **Medication & Misdiagnosis** 5 min

After starting medication, Abbey noticed a real difference in her ability to focus and accomplish tasks. Before being diagnosed with ADHD, Abbey was under the impression that the root of her struggles was her anxiety. And furthermore, once she started the medication for ADHD, her anxiety subsided and her depression as well. Not only is she more organized personally and professionally, but she feels like she can plan things and carryout those plans well.

### **ADHD 10 Years Ago (2010)** 13 min

One of the biggest stigmas with ADHD is that it's widely overdiagnosed, and while Laurie and Abbey agree that maybe that was the case at one point, it was largely due to the fact that the testing for ADHD left a lot of room for misinterpretation. Ten years ago, the typical way of diagnosis was a questionnaire that the parent and teacher would fill out, and the pediatrician would diagnosis based off of the answers and spending 10-15 minutes with the

child. Many of the questions had to do with the students ability or history of focusing, in reality there are many other reasons besides ADHD that a student might have an inability to stay focused in class ranging from behavioral issues to other learning disabilities. Laurie and Abbey share how this process has changed quite a bit over the years, and the diagnosis takes much more than 10-15 minutes of surface conversations with the student.

### **ADHD in Boys vs Girls 20 min**

ADHD can show up in both boys and girls, despite the largely misconstrued thought that ADHD is more common in boys. Sometimes ADHD in girls can go undiagnosed longer because it may show up differently than what you might typically think ADHD looks like. In boys you tend to see the typical acting out, being disruptive in class, and not staying focused. And in girls it may look like anxiety and not understanding the content because they aren't able to retain information even though it may seem like they are paying attention.

### **Unmedicated ADHD 25 min**

Abbey shares about her friend with ADHD who chooses not to be medicated. It can be hard to rely on a friend who has ADHD because of the challenges that present themselves with keeping organized and scheduling plans. She speaks to her experience with this particular friend and how hard it can be to count on her for the simplest of things. Constantly losing things, overcommitting her time, or even the inability to decide or finalize plans, can make coordinating with her very difficult. Abbey also recognizes the unhealthy negative self-talk that shows up sometimes as a result from her friend being disappointed in her own struggles.

### **ADHD Coaching & Parent Education 30 min**

ADHD Coaching is briefly mentioned, and will be further discussed in future episodes. Laurie and Abbey talk about the benefits of coaching and the level of accountability it can offer as well as the need to educate parents and loved ones on the need of a structured environment for those who have ADHD.