

Painfully Out Of Focus
Attention Deficit Disorder
By Irene Maltzan

With the start of the new school year, once again, so many of our children are facing the struggle of trying to fit into the routine of the classroom and to achieve some measure of success while their physical mechanisms are totally unconditioned to functioning within such an environment.

Attention Deficit Disorder is a term coined only in 1980, but since that time, it has become North America's number one childhood "psychological disorder. The "experts" in the medical field believe that three to five percent of all North American children suffer from ADD in one form or another. One hundred years ago before food additives, chemical pollution, prescription drugs, refined sugar products, processed foods, and television and computer games were in integral part of our lifestyle, ADD did not exist.

There are several different classifications of the disorder, generally broken down under the categories of, with or without hyperactive behavior. A contributing cause of these disorders points to toxicity and/or deficiency of essential nutrients within the body.

In the cases of hyperactivity, emotional stress, the consumption of food additives, excess sugar and food allergies seem to contribute to the imbalance. With interrupted focus or short term attention/retention span, stress, nutritional deficiencies and repeated antibiotic use is more common.

How does ADD affect our children? Once again, depending upon the cause it may manifest as:

- Lack of concentration
- A tendency to disturb other children and the classroom in general
- Mood swings and tantrums
- Extreme distractibility
- Forgetfulness and absentmindedness (daydreaming)
- Inability to finish tasks
- Difficulty in managing time
- Clumsiness
- Sleep disturbances (including insomnia and bed-wetting)
- Failure in school despite average or above average intelligence

Ask yourself what long-term effect any of these symptoms may have on the development of self esteem and worthiness of a child. Often children experiencing ADD are so ashamed of their perceived inadequacies that they withdraw into themselves to avoid being "found out". They end up with the label of "being slow" or worse which stays with them right through school. The other reaction may be the "class clown" syndrome of a child acting out the belief that nothing bothers them. How sad that they begin their lives under the shadows of such false faces.

What is the standard "treatment" for ADD? Currently more than 7 million North American children take drugs which contain substances to alter the brain's neurotransmitter system in preliminary research conducted at Toronto's Clark Institute. The lifelong impact of such alteration is yet unknown.

Yet what is a desperate parent to do? They can't just stand by and let their children be labeled and miserable under such a diagnosis. There are other options which are completely natural available to help ADD children. The natural approach, which supports overall wellness in the lifestyles of ADD children and their families, offers an array of alternatives but please contact a

qualified practitioner before giving any supplements or homeopathic remedies to your child. Following are the different alternative therapies which may include:

- A complete analysis of dietary and nutritional needs of the individual
- Including regular Chiropractic check-ups, combined with patience and perseverance, just may bring the results we seek. Health begins at the cellular level. Each portion of our body--our skin, blood, bones, and organs--is made up of cells (about 75 trillion of them!) Each of those individual cells has five fundamental needs. None of these cellular functions, however, can be accomplished without communication from the brain to every tissue and organ in the body. The brain must send messages to the body's cells (efferent transmission) and the cell must communicate its needs back to the brain (afferent transmission) through the nervous system. That is why all approaches to health care should begin with assurance of a healthy flow of nerve impulses to allow the body to function at its optimal level. If this flow of communication is impaired, all of our valiant attempts to eat right, take vitamins or herbs, exercise, etc., will be compromised.
- Flower Essences as a safe, natural way to support a child in releasing old patterns of behavior associated with ADD. Blends are available to encourage focus, self esteem and a calming of behavior, providing a fresh new start to learning. Flower Essences are free of negative side effects and may be used in conjunction with all other forms of treatment.
- Homeopathic remedies are very helpful with ADD/ADHD because they can address the emotional components of the disorder without concern for side effects. A good book to read on homeopathy is *Ritalin-Free Kids* by Judyth Reichenberg-Ullman and Robert Ullman. Homeopathic remedies are suited to the symptoms of the individual rather than the disease name. This makes things very individualized. Here are examples of typical homeopathic remedies used for ADD/ADHD:

Phosphorus is a good remedy for ADD. These types of children are usually tall and slender. They have many fears, an active imagination and are easily distracted by external stimuli. They love company and find it hard to work in a group because they want to socialize. They have many friends and are very likable children. Physically they can become easily tired and tend towards respiratory infections.

Sulfur is a remedy that suits intelligent types. However, if a Sulfur has ADD/ADHD, they seem too lazy to rouse themselves to study. They are messy and do not care for details. These types often have skin problems, such as eczema, psoriasis and acne. They are deeply interested in things that they like. For example, they may have a collection of sticks or rocks they have found. These finds seem like a treasure to them and garbage to us. These types can be loners who get caught up in their own world. They can become immersed in the Internet, reading, computer games or building things. These kids can be an all or nothing type. For example, if I cannot pass math, I will not do it. If you think my room is a mess now, wait until next week! They are very challenging in this regard.

Baryta Carb is a remedy that is often used for children who are not quick to learn new things. This child can be considered mentally handicapped or simply a slow learner. They are typically shy and fear new situations. They avoid strangers and new situations. They have self-esteem problems such as feeling ridiculed and dislike any attention drawn to them. Physically these types can have swollen glands, tonsils or adenoid problems. This may also signify an underlying allergy or infection.

Lycopodium is a magnificent remedy for attention problems. These types of children have low self-esteem like Bartya Carb. They fear public speaking, presentations and tests. They have poor concentration and are forgetful. Especially in the morning, they can be moody, irritable and confrontational, even to adults. This overconfident behaviour can be a front for their insecurity. They can be quite difficult and have tantrums if contradicted. They worry due to an essential lack of confidence. They hate taking on new tasks because they fear failure.

- Yoga and Martial Arts classes have shown tremendous benefits for all children. They can
 - ❖ Improve ability to focus and concentrate
 - ❖ Heighten memory and mental concentration
 - ❖ Build self esteem and increase self confidence
 - ❖ Improve listening skills and increase coordination/flexibility
 - ❖ Quiet the Mind
 - ❖ Alleviate Stress and Fatigue
 - ❖ Boost the Immune System

Each of these modalities of holistic wellness offers a unique and vital link in the support system of the child. Together they form a positive, alternative option to the use of chemical therapies. The choices are available; the results are proving themselves successful beyond all expectations, as more and more ADD children who have lived with the pain and frustration of their seemingly hopeless situation are experiencing the freedom of coming into focus through programs of total body wellness..