

Symptoms

Inro

Hi doctor, This will contain a general outline of what issues I'm having and what symptoms I experience in my day to day life. I have split the symptoms up into distinct categories and will explain how they show up in the different domains in my life.

Some of the information might be a little disparate or vague but to be honest I'm trying to include everything I can think of in the chance that it might help knowing these things. I have tried roughly 10 medications and therapy over the years and nothing has really helped me much (besides the stimulants).

Along with ADHD I have been diagnosed vaguely with depression, but i don't really resonate with the symptoms of it except for symptoms like apathy and anhedonia. Traditional antidepressants have basically close to zero effect on me.

I am trying to get help for these issues once again and its very important to me that we are very thorough and take an individual approach with me please. If you have any questions for any of the points below I will try my best to answer them.

1. Apathy & Anhedonia

These are generally some of my biggest issues. I don't really feel a drive to do much and i have to really force my self to do most things, even if these are things that I know I would like to do. I have great friends and family but I need to force myself to see/talk to them a lot since my natural push is to go home and kind of do nothing except scroll the internet. This kind of thing applies to hobbies/interests too.

I generally know that if I didn't have these issues, I would be studying the same things that I'm studying right now. Being friends with the same people I am

currently friends with and pursuing the same sorts of hobbies that I am now - all with much more vigor. I think my issues are internal. My first homework from my therapist was to outline in writing the "person I'd like to be" or in other words my most important values. This is what my life feels like, its always a cognitive effort to try and be that person, but failure to do so doesn't invoke any kind of negative feelings in me to steer my self back on course, its always a cognitive effort.

Please note that i don't really find this to be depression. I don't feel a lot of doom/sadness nor do i over/under eat and my sleeping is generally fine. Any negative feelings I get seem to be indirectly caused by theses symptoms. Its more so that i have this overabundance of indifference rather than any sort of sadness.

I'm pretty sure these symptoms are something distinct from depression, something I've been treated for with many different drugs to no avail. I just don't feel an internal drive to work on my issues and improve myself, its always been a more rational desire that makes it hard to sustain and easy to think of excuses when things get momentarily difficult.

What Domains this Impacts me in:

Generally

- **extremely low motivation**
- hard to get out of bed
- lack of serious interest in many things **(no emotional/motivational connection to what I'm doing)**
- **feel indifferent towards most things**
- **definitely feel a reduced ability to derive pleasure from things**
- lack of connection with others and the things I know that i like doing
- **markedly reduced ability to sustain effort and derive pleasure long term from things**

School

- low motivation to attend classes but can more or less make it in generally (barring a few weeks where this was harder)
- Am doing generally well (only started to the past 3 semesters) but usually submit work at the deadline or late
- would like to try harder/study harder but rarely seem to be able to push through the extra work required, even though id like to
- low motivation to pursue and apply to internships even though i know its important to me
- **Any kind of sustained cognitive effort results in brain fog and desire to stop what I'm doing**
- **low emotional capacity, just feel generally "meh" about everything. Makes it hard to support friends when they have stuff going wrong**

Work

- hard for me to learn and automatize skills i need at work (likely due to the adhd)
- lost internal drive to improve at these things
- show up late a lot
- always want to leave and not be there while I'm working

Social & Family

- have decent amount of friends but lack a lot of the desire to go out and do things with them (I will do it sometimes but its not something i get excited over even though i want to be able to get excited over these things) - I almost always have a better time than i expect though
- **Don't really miss people or have the desire to reach out to family and friends... always feels more like obligation**
- **Don't really feel connected to others even though id really like to**
- **Don't really desire a relationship even though this is something I cognitively know i would like**
- feel indifferent towards others and feel like I would be ok if I didn't talk to anyone else for a while

- **when i am with friends, i find that i do enjoy their company in the moment but it only lasts in the moment and no kind of super deep connection is really made**

Hobbies

- **really difficult to do things i know id enjoy, especially if they require some cognitive effort**
- I know i want to learn a new song on the piano but I immediately lose interest as i begin playing, overcoming this takes a lot of effort
- forcing myself to go to the gym has not really become a habit, its more of a continuous effort that i need to apply to get myself to go even though its been about a year of more or less continuous attendance (stopped going for the past few weeks though)
- Really hard to enjoy and sit through tv shows/ watch new movies as i really have to force myself to start watching - the movie could be good and i might end up enjoying it
- I can think of some projects id like to start but cannot summon nor sustain the effort required to seem them through

2. ADHD & SCT

I am officially diagnosed with ADHD and resonate heavily with symptoms defined under SCT (sometimes referred to CDS or Cognitive Disengagement Syndrome)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_disengagement_syndrome). Although its not an official condition and I generally dislike labeling myself like this but I find that this in combination with the ADHD issues is an apt description of my problems.

General

- **Lethargic, sleepy, brain fogged generally (very rare for me to not feel this way)**
- have low energy

- withdrawn (lost in thought sometimes or just unable to directly focus)
- **Difficult to continuously apply effort towards a task**
- Don't automatically connect the dots, have to be consciously thinking about things for them to come together
- Zone-out fairly frequently
- **takes me a bit of time to process what I am hearing/learning, especially instructions**
- blank on recalling details, procedures, and knowledge correctly and accurately
- **frequently make mistakes, miss details and do inaccurate work (even though i can understand the core idea)**

School

- **always feel mentally foggy**
- need more time to apply skills and work through a problem (classwork, homework, etc.)
- Need to constantly re-read things sometimes to understand them
- get stuck trying and sometimes persevere in solving a problem the same way even though a new approach is needed
- **find that i commonly misread/misinterpret instructions and this causes me to waste time doing something wrong/unnecessary**
- **Require great mental effort to generalize concepts that i learned to other things**
- commonly transpose numbers/show work incorrectly (stupid mistakes)

Work

I work at Starbucks in a fast-paced, attention driven environment and although I can definitely see that a job like this might not be a great fit for me, I would not like to quit simply because these things are more difficult for me. The issue i have now is my apathy and lack of motivation to improve makes it almost impossible to practice more/do the things i need to do to get better.

- **inaccurately performing job duties**
- almost always missing tasks/forgetting sub tasks that need completion
- **issues with sequencing tasks in the moment (can do this somewhat well if given more time)**
- **slow at completing tasks and multitasking on things that i have had adequate training in**
- poor on-the-spot problem solving

3. Other Problems & Notes

these other problems seem very indicative to me and are equally important as all the other issues

Porn use

i have used porn in the past as a way to withdraw from my issues and it has generally had a numbing effect on me, way more so than what i consider normal. I find that it is difficult for me to get addicted to anything else (smoking nicotine was incredibly easy to stop and generally had very little effect on me) but the porn use was and continues to be a large issue for me (talked about it with therapist and we will be working on it).

Interestingly, abstaining from it for as long as possible has had a pretty large effect on all of my symptoms. Although it doesn't help fully, my ability to self motivate, persevere through hard tasks and work more accurately noticeably improved when i abstained from porn and other overly stimulating activities. This has been hard to convey and talk about but i think it has a lot of value here. This extreme and abnormal sensitivity to porn use and how I notice these effects on my behaviors might be important so i thought id mention it

Nicotine

I also thought to mention that i tried to use a vape as a way to replace the porn habit. It was largely ineffective because

1. I felt barely any stimulatory effect from the vape

2. it was very easy to put the vape down and not use/forget about it
this makes me wonder why I'm so sensitive to porn use but so completely desensitized to other commonly addictive things, and why i can't derive any pleasure from them. I have not used Nicotine for a while and do not plan on using it in the future as there doesn't seem to be anything good that can come from it.