

ADHD and ASD behaviours

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Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of many neurodevelopmental conditions known to affect both children, young people and adults. Some other examples of neurodevelopmental conditions, include dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, and tics disorders to name but a few.

When someone with ADHD has another diagnosed condition, this is called a co-morbidity. One of the most common co-morbidities seen with ADHD, is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Some research suggests that 50-70% of those with ASD also have ADHD.

Symptoms of ADHD can include:

- Struggles with maintaining focus for long periods of time
- Can make careless mistakes, or rush work
- Poor organisational skills
- Forgetfulness
- Impulsivity
- Hyperactivity (both internal with racing thoughts, and external with fidgeting and constant need to move)

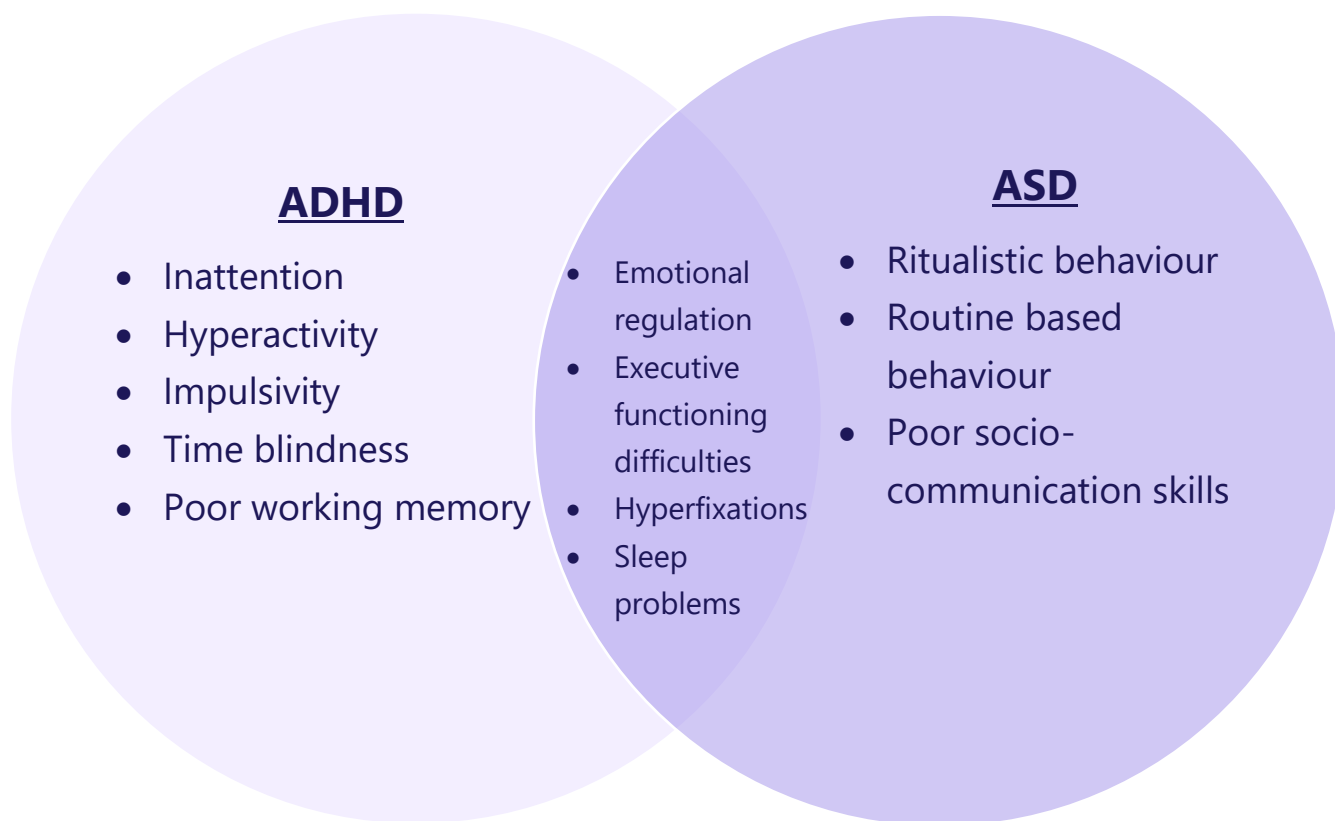
Symptoms of ASD can include:

- Problems with social interactions and/or understand social cues/boundaries
- Struggle with social communication skills
- Display repetitive or ritualistic behaviours
- Have obsessions or fixations on special interests

It may seem difficult to understand how these 2 conditions can be co-morbid when some of the symptom's conflict. For example, someone with ADHD can struggle to organise and plan ahead, whereas someone with ASD can have the need for routine and have their day/possessions in a certain way.



On the other hand, ADHD and ASD can have very similar symptoms and presentations as:



The above diagram is only basic and only shares a few symptoms that both ADHD and ASD can present with. Both ADHD and ASD are complex in their own ways and also present differently for individuals.

It can be difficult to pinpoint whether a behaviour is typical of ADHD or ASD, particularly when looking at ADHD medication management. This is why it is very important to understand what your symptoms are, what your strengths and struggles are in your day-to-day life and how they impact you. Everyone's story and experiences are different.

When ADHD treatment is being considered, it is important to understand that this only treats ADHD symptoms. Once symptoms have been reduced/managed with medication, it may be that ASD traits become more apparent.

This is not necessarily a bad thing and is a part of who you are, what makes you special and unique.