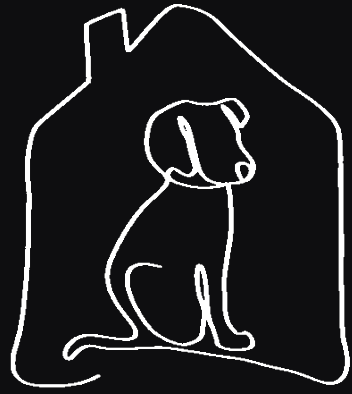




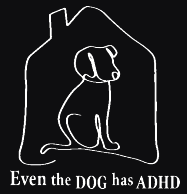
Even the DOG has ADHD

04 / GUIDE FOUR

Explaining ADHD.

Words that help partners, parents, teachers and employers actually get it.

Telling someone you have ADHD is one thing. Helping them understand it is another. This guide offers plain language and short explanations you can use with the people in your life. No jargon, no apology, no over-explaining. The goal is understanding, not agreement.



START HERE

A sentence you can lead with.

You do not need a speech. A single, clear sentence often works better than a lecture, because it invites a real conversation rather than a performance.

Try something like: 'I found out I have ADHD. It does not change who I am, but it does explain a lot about how my brain works, and there are a few small things that genuinely help me.' Then pause. Let them respond.

THE ESSENTIALS

What ADHD actually is.

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental difference, not a behaviour choice or a lack of willpower. It affects how the brain regulates attention, motivation, energy and impulse, across a person's whole life, not just in childhood.

A useful frame: it is less about 'cannot pay attention' and more about difficulty regulating attention: sometimes too little where it is expected, sometimes an intense focus where something has genuinely captured the brain.

THREE THINGS WORTH SAYING PLAINLY

- 01 It is not laziness, carelessness or a character flaw. It is how my brain is wired.
- 02 It shows up differently in different people, and often differently in the same person across a day.
- 03 It is lifelong, but it is manageable, and the right adjustments make a real difference.



FOR PARTNERS & FAMILY

What it means in real life.

The people closest to you have probably been living with your ADHD for years without naming it. They may have carried extra mental load, felt confused by inconsistency, or worried that effort was the issue. Honesty helps them reframe.

Name both the strengths and the costs. Many people with ADHD are creative, energetic, deeply empathetic and capable of remarkable focus. They may also forget things, lose track of time, or need help with the everyday admin of life. Both can be true.

THINGS THAT GENUINELY HELP ME

Written reminders rather than spoken ones I will forget.

A little patience when I switch tasks or lose my place.

Noticing the effort behind what looks easy.

Gentle, specific requests rather than vague expectations.

FOR TEACHERS & EMPLOYERS

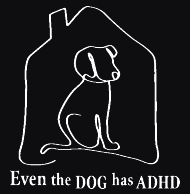
Adjustments that work.

At work or in education, small, practical adjustments usually help far more than dramatic ones. Many cost nothing. Under the Equality Act 2010, neurodivergent people may be entitled to reasonable adjustments, and a formal diagnosis is not always required to ask for support.

Lead with what would help, framed as practical rather than personal. Employers respond well to solutions.

EXAMPLES OF REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

- 01 Written instructions alongside verbal ones.
- 02 A quieter workspace or flexibility over where I work.
- 03 Flexible start times that work with how my attention functions.
- 04 Clear priorities and one thing at a time, where possible.
- 05 Access to Work support for equipment, coaching or software.



IF THEY DON'T GET IT

When understanding is slow.

Not everyone will respond well, and that is not your fault to fix. Some people hold outdated ideas about ADHD. You can offer good information once; you do not have to convince anyone.

What matters is that you understand yourself. Protect your energy for the people who are willing to learn, and remember that you do not need everyone's approval to live well with your own brain.

A last word

You are not starting from scratch.

Parents do not need more blame. They need better maps. The same is true of partners, teachers and employers. A few clear words can hand them one.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Share understanding with Even The Dog Has ADHD.

Sources & further reading

NHS: living with ADHD

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/living-with/>

Acas: reasonable adjustments <https://www.acas.org.uk/reasonable-adjustments>

GOV.UK: Access to Work <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

ADHD Foundation: support & training <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>