

BOOK REVIEW

ADHD: Living Without Brakes (2008)

By Martin L. Kutscher MD

(Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London and Philadelphia)

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I purchased this book because the title ***ADHD: Living without Brakes*** and the initial quotes were definitely attention grabbers!

This book is dedicated ...

***“To the children who cope daily with problems they
did not ask to have.”***

“And to the people who believe in those children.”

As I perused this book it quickly became evident that it would be both an informative and a fun (the use of humorous analogies and pictures) read for parents and professionals who are involved with individuals that have ADHD.

Dr. Kutscher does a brilliant job where he describes ADHD as a spectrum with co-occurring symptoms, common difficulties, the use of a variety of strategies/methods, and the role of medications.

His overall theme revolves around four rules.

1. Keep positive
2. Keep calm
3. Keep organized
4. Keep doing rules 1-3

He talks about the classic characteristics of ADHD: impulsiveness, inattentiveness and hyperactivity. He also discusses the need to consider other executive function problems, co-occurring conditions and family stresses. These items were included by Martin Kutscher in Figure 2 on page 17 of his book ... certainly something for parents and professionals working with those with ADHD to ponder.

Executive Functions

Poor:

- Inhibition
- Intuition
- Self-talk
- Working memory
- Foresight and hindsight
- Organization

Trouble:

- Shifting agenda

Co-occurring Conditions

- Learning Disabilities
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder
- Anxiety/OCD
- Depression
- Bipolar Depression
- Tics/Tourette's
- Asperger's Syndrome
- Sensory Integration Disorder
- Central Auditory Processing

Family Issues

- Family members have their own problems
- Stress cycles

There are eight chapters in *ADHD: Living without Brakes*. For me, the best part is that the summary, which is Chapter 8, could stand alone as its own module. If one did not have time to read the whole book, Chapter 8 nicely summarizes the book's content.

At the conclusion of *ADHD: Living without Brakes*, one can find a simple-to-use Behavioral Checklist, an Executive Functions Checklist and an extensive list of book and internet resources. I know that I will be able to make use of the tools provided there.

While reading this book, I felt as if I was sitting next to Dr. Kutscher and having an intense conversation with him about ADHD. The layout of the book, the language used, the pictures, the analogies, and the strategies/methods presented are all fantastic. This book fulfills the 3 Cs: clear, concise and complete. A **“must read”** if you were taken by the initial quote.