



“I Can’t Stand  
BOREDOM!”



A Teenager’s Guide  
to ADHD

Booklet 8  
In a Series

Chesterfield County Public Schools



## “My biggest problem with school is boredom!”



Boredom is the Number 1 problem for people with ADHD.

Boredom is the feeling ADHD people can't stand.

If you read Booklet 1 in this series, you'll recall the title, "I'm NOT Interested in Anything I'm NOT Interested In!" The booklet talked about the difficulty people with ADHD have dealing with boring things.

And unfortunately much of school is boring to many people. People without ADHD have a greater tendency to think about the future—grades, passing, graduation, or privileges like driving—and then continue working to finish the homework or other school task.

People with ADHD feel bored and their minds go to something more interesting and tend to stay there.

## “What can I do in class about this boredom problem?”

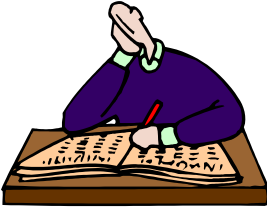
Several things come immediately to mind.

Be prepared for class. When you come without your homework, you have this feeling of wanting to hide. That takes you away from what's happening in the class.

Second, ask questions and answer questions. The more you participate, the more interesting the material will be.

Third, if your doctor has prescribed medication, and your parents support medication, take it!

- You will feel more alert.
- You will follow the lesson better than without medication.
- Many people report, when taking medication, the material seems more interesting.



## “What about homework? That’s really boring!”

The boredom feeling of doing homework is a feeling many students avoid. They just keep putting it off until it’s just too late to do it.

These students know they hate the boredom feeling so much, they just don’t even start their homework.

Then they come to school and try to fade into the walls so the teacher won’t call on them. Then they feel disconnected from the lesson, don’t pay attention, and again feel really bored. Then their minds take off.

- What will I do this afternoon?
- I can’t wait until lunch when...
- Man, I’m going to ride my dirt bike when I get home from school.

People with ADHD need to learn to deal with the boredom feeling.



## “What can I do? I hate feeling bored!”

The problem is not so much the feeling of boredom, but the URGE you feel to go on to something more fun than the task at hand.

That's what happens. You feel bored. Then you feel the urge to go to something more fun than the task you are doing or should be doing.

You need to learn to conquer the URGE to move on to something more fun!

There are 5 steps to conquering the URGE.

Now this next information can get a little too much at times, but hang in there with it. It is crucial to your taking better control of your life.



## Step 1—Recognize the URGE.

This sounds easy—but it's a little tricky.

Listen to yourself talk.

"This stuff is too boring!"

"Man I hate this class!"

"I can do this later."

"I'm just lazy."

"I can't stand to read!"

"I can't learn this."

Or you might find yourself saying, "I need to..."

call a friend

play my guitar

clean my room

check the weather

\_\_\_\_\_ (you fill in the blank.)

These thoughts or statements indicate you feel or believe you will shortly feel BORED.

Recognize you are feeling the urge to end or avoid boredom.

# Recognize the Feeling

## Step 2—Relabel the statement into an urge statement.

Call the URGE what it is—an URGE.

Do not call it a  
a need  
a want  
a desire.

It's not that you need to ride your bike. You are feeling the URGE to move on to something more

exciting  
interesting  
entertaining  
more fun

than the task you are doing or should be doing.

Label the URGE.

"I'm feeling the urge to do something other than study."

"I'm feeling that urge to do something more fun than homework."

# Call it an urge

## Step 3—Blame the URGE on your ADHD”

Identify the URGE as caused by your ADHD.

That’s right. Blame your ADHD, not the homework assignment.

“This urge to stop my homework is caused by my ADHD.”

And even blame it on the chemistry or biology behind your ADHD.

“This urge to do something fun is caused by a chemical imbalance.”

Or say, “This urge is caused by my brain drain.”

By blaming your ADHD for your problem, you are actually accepting your ADHD, and accepting you have a biological or chemical condition.

# Blame Your ADHD

## Step 4—Refocus. Handle the urge.

# Handle the Urge

Next, learn to handle the URGE.

The idea is not to make the URGE feeling go away.

The struggle is to resist giving in to the feeling.  
The struggle is to not give in to the urge.

You need to come up with a variety of things to do to handle the urge. Here are some ideas.

1. Return to work. Sometimes if you just continue working you will show the urge who is boss.
2. Change your homework task to something less boring for a few minutes.
3. Put on some background music. Sometimes music allows you to handle the urge by not giving in.
4. Work for a set period of time (say 15 minutes) and reward yourself with a 3 minute break.
5. Visualize a relaxing scene—you know, picture yourself at the beach to calm yourself down to fight the urge.
6. Talk to yourself. Say something like, “If I keep working, the urge will lose its strength.”
7. Visualize a confidence scene. Picture yourself doing something you do really well.

If you give in to the urge and quit homework, don't put yourself down. Do not say, “I'm just a loser.”

Rather, tell yourself,  
“The urge to do something else was just too big today. Tomorrow I'll feel stronger and work through it.”

Or say, “The urge was just too mean today. I'll win

## Step 5—Feel Good About Yourself.

Start seeing yourself as someone who is not a victim of their urges but as somebody who can take their life where they want to go.

Begin to see yourself as someone who  
can complete assignments  
has increased self-control  
feels more self-confident.

See yourself as having learned a skill useful  
in school  
at home  
in relationships  
in life!





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Thanks to the Author  
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2003