

# DIG COACHING PRACTICE



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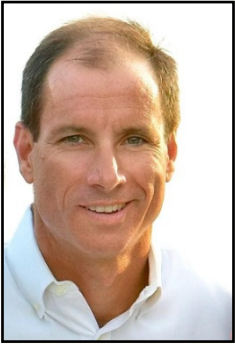
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## **ADD Traits, Part 3: Hyperactive vs. Energetic**

DIG Coaching is the leading coaching practice for adults and children looking to manage attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms and attention deficit disorder (ADD) symptoms. We focus on managing symptoms of attention deficit disorder, adults with ADD, or adults who have children with ADHD. DIG Coaching, led by attention coach Jeff Copper, helps adults and children (particularly those diagnosed with or impacted by attention deficit disorder or its symptoms) in life or business who are stuck, overwhelmed, or frustrated. DIG Coaching helps adults and children get unstuck and moving forward by helping to open their minds and pay attention to what works.

# ADD Traits, Part 3: Hyperactive vs. Energetic

By Jeff Copper, Manager & Head Coach, DIG Coaching Practice LLC



This is Part 3 of ADD Traits. In Parts 1 and 2, we learned that those close to attention deficit disorder (ADD)—psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists, therapists, counselors, etc.—frequently reference four distinguishing characteristics or traits that are used to differentiate between those who have ADD and those who do not. The four traits are “distractable,” “impulsive,” “hyper-

active, and “lazy.”

In this third part, we will compare the definitions of “hyperactive” and “energetic” to show that the obvious interpretations are a function of what people are paying attention to.

Dictionaries define “hyperactive” as:

- Highly or excessively active. More active than is usual or desirable
- Having behavior characterized by constant over activity; unusually or abnormally active
- Afflicted with attention deficit disorder. Displaying exaggerated physical activity sometimes associated with neurological or psychological causes.

Now let’s look at how dictionaries define “energetic”:

- Possessing or exhibiting energy, especially in abundance; vigorous: *an energetic leader*
- Powerful in action or effect; effective: *to take energetic measures against crime*
- Having or showing much energy or force; vigorous

After reading these definitions and thinking about them, does anything jump out at you? Is anything obvious? Well, what’s obvious to me is that most adults would die for the energy level of those with ADHD. From my perspective, ADDers, especially those with hyperactivity, have an abundance of energy. When managed, the energy represents what we call “life endurance.” Unmanaged energy comes across as reckless “hyperactivity.” When you think about it, in this day and age, life endurance is an asset in our multitasking, always-on world.

As was the case in ADD Traits Parts 1 and 2, I pointed out that our choice of labels depends on what we pay attention to. If we pay attention to “reckless hyperactivity,” it is negative. Focus on “life endurance” and it becomes an asset. The travesty is that, when society puts a negative label on a personal trait, the negativity overshadows the positive aspects. Emphasizing the negative blinds us to the positive.

What is obvious to me is that ADDers need to be reminded of the positive aspects of “curiosity,” “creativity,” and “energy.” Why? Because where they will find success is not by paying attention to what doesn’t work, but by paying attention to what does work, what is positive, and what they can use to make a difference in their lives.

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