

HEALTH ALERT!

Life In Focus: How An ADHD Diagnosis Changed One Man's World

(NAPSA)—Imagine finding it difficult to focus while studying or reading for an extended period of time. Think of the frustration of consistently missing deadlines or feeling overwhelmed with school or work.

That's how 25-year-old Uri Roer describes life before being diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). He said he was out of focus and his mind was always running off on different tangents.

"I went through high school and college without being able to concentrate in class or study well," Roer said. "It was downright painful when I look back at those years where I could have done better if only I knew what was wrong."

Roer is not alone. ADHD affects an estimated 9 million adults in the United States. Often thought of as a childhood condition, studies suggest that between 30 and 70 percent of children with ADHD continue to have symptoms as adults.

"I've had adults who have not been diagnosed come into my office, receive a diagnosis and breathe a sigh of relief," said Dr. Ari Tuckman, psychologist and author of "Integrative Treatment for Adult ADHD: A Practical, Easy-to-Use Guide for Clinicians." "Living with undiagnosed ADHD can make someone's life much, much harder than it needs to be. As a child, it may mean poor performance in school. But for adults, it can lead to chronic difficulties at work, at home, in relationships and with finances."



Roer was diagnosed a year ago. "It was like a lightbulb came on. Finally, I had an answer. It was a defining moment for me," he said.

According to Dr. Tuckman, diagnosis is the first step. "Once adults are diagnosed, they can work with their health care professionals to devise an individual plan of action. No two cases of ADHD are alike."

Here are a few things Dr. Tuckman recommends for adults to help them manage the condition:

- Seek help from a medical professional—An open line of communication with a trusted health care professional can help you find the treatment plan that's right for you.
- Find a support group—Meeting and getting to know people who have similar experiences can alleviate some of the stress you may feel and let you know you are not alone.
- Educate yourself—Read as much as you can, and ask questions. Learning about ADHD will help you assess what your needs are in terms of treatment, therapy and lifestyle changes.

And now there's a new tool to

help adults with ADHD and those who suspect they may have the condition. It's called ADHD Allies™, and it's an online community housed on the social networking site Facebook®, sponsored by McNeil Pediatrics™, Division of Ortho-McNeil-Janssen Pharmaceuticals, Inc. It's available at www.facebook.com/adhdallies and builds on its July 2008 launch of the ADHD Moms™ community on Facebook®—one of the first-ever resources by, for and about ADHD caregivers in the social media landscape, which has attracted more than 8,300 fans since its launch.

ADHD Allies™ provides adults with timely, practical information about ADHD and personal insight about the challenges and realities of living with the condition. Fans of ADHD Allies™ will hear directly from experts and adults with ADHD on issues such as diagnosis, symptom management, inheritability, social interactions, household management, professional and career issues, parenting and more.

"When I was first diagnosed with ADHD, I was overwhelmed as I attempted to search for information online. I wasn't sure what information I could trust, and longed for a place where I could hear from and interact with people just like me," Roer said. "I think ADHD Allies™ can be a new place where adults with ADHD can join a community and hear from people just like them. I'm glad to be a part of the community, and I hope my story will help others."