

How the 'Wall of Awful' Makes ADHD Routines Harder & What to Do About It

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"If you're going to overhelp or not help at all, the least skilled options are those extremes. It takes more skill to find the middle."

'The Wall of Awful'

The 'Wall of Awful' is my way of explaining the emotional baggage we collect from repeated failures, especially with ADHD. Every time we fail, it's like adding a brick to this wall—failure bricks, disappointment bricks, and even rejection bricks if we feel let down by others. It's not just for ADHD; everyone has a Wall of Awful.

As these bricks pile up, they create an emotional barrier that makes facing certain tasks really tough. For example, if a kid struggles with homework, that wall can get pretty high, especially if they've failed a lot before. Sometimes, just the thought of a challenging task can bring that wall crashing down. To help them climb over, give them enough support to get started, but don't do things for them.

Meet them where they are

That frustration? It's on the parents, not the kids. So, instead of letting it build, we've got to manage our emotions and adjust our expectations. If your kid is mentally drained, let them be. Don't push them when they're spent—just rearrange the day or so the important stuff gets done earlier.

Remember, ADHD brains develop at a different pace, so a high school freshman might be operating like a seventh-grader in some ways. It's all about meeting your kid where they are, not where you think they should be. And here's a big one: your kid's struggles don't reflect on you as a parent. Their story is theirs; we're just supporting characters, not the main act.

Essentially, your kid's struggles aren't about you. Their story is theirs, and we're just here to support, not star in it. When they fall short, it's not because they're lazy—it's because they need help building those skills. So, skip the comparisons and focus on what they need to grow.