



Foot in the Mouth ADHD Impulsivity!

Impulsivity can lead to disaster due to blurting out thoughts never meant to be spoken.

Thoughts race through our minds, here, there and back again. Some thoughts don't mean much, they just race by and have no concrete meaning, but every now and then, in the heat of a moment or in uncontrolled haste, some thoughts never meant to be said slip out and, as much as we would like to and as much as we try to explain and apologize, we can't take them back. And we tend to remember our blunders forever, never quite forgiving ourselves.

We've all done it. However, let me try to explain something to any non-ADDER reading this. It's called impulse control. Part of ADHD is a lack of impulse control and, as you can imagine (or not) we are quite impulsive. If something suddenly shines extra brightly in front of us and it is too expensive, we may not consider the price or the consequences of making the purchase. It's there, we are there and somehow, somehow, we just buy it. That's one instance, but with an easy solution called 'refund it'. It's a rather common one, but then there is one type of impulsiveness that isn't explained away or taken back so easily.

There is a way the mind works that is as confusing as it is common. We all, ADHD or not, have thoughts that either float around in our heads, or race around, as in the case of ADHD they tend to *race*. These thoughts are not always rational, nice or accurate. They are just there. Some call these uncontrolled thoughts the pessimist within, or the Id, or the Ego, or the Super Ego (all have separate definitions [Freud], but we won't go into

that). Not all of these thoughts are self deprecating, some thoughts are about others and when spoken they come out as personal judgment or opinion and are typically rude.

There is a silent, unspoken rule in general society:

You can think it, but you can't say it.

Have you ever said something you didn't mean to say and wish you could take it back, but once it is out there, it's out there and you must either try to fix the situation created from your words, apologize or walk away? Who hasn't? In the case of ADHD, those thoughts which tend to race around the mind, but have no genuine meaning sometimes slip out into the world verbally. They aren't meant to be thought, much less said, and have no true value to the person saying them, but because they are spoken aloud, they are taken literally and have very serious significance to the person or people hearing them, especially if those words have direction and specific meaning. For the ADDer, explaining that the words aren't meant is nearly impossible. Once something is said, it is said and you can't take it back!

Interestingly, there is very little, to no empathy for saying something or doing something impulsively, especially if it hurts someone. However, think about all the things you think about in a single day, think about some of the nightmares you have had in your sleep and they remain with you into the day – now, *what if*, in a moment while doing something, anything, you think of something, then look around you and realize that what you were thinking was actually spoken aloud. You didn't mean to say it, it had no true value to you, it was just one of those random thoughts that everyone has. There's no excuse for it. Your marriage is over. Your child's feelings are hurt. Someone is crying, someone is devastated. You didn't mean to say it... it had no value, until, *until* it was spoken. It was just one of those meaningless thoughts that pop into our heads.

Remember, again, that there is a silent, unspoken rule in general society: *You can think it, but you can't say it. Even if you didn't even mean to think it at all!*

Remember this rule well. Unfortunately, this rule is difficult to abide by, being impulsive is a staple in ADHD symptoms.

ADHD is not an excuse; however, it is a reason for certain behaviors, such as with impulse control. Otherwise, it wouldn't be ADHD. This, of course, is not to say that with awareness we cannot learn to control it better, or observe our behaviors better, because, *we can* and yet, from time to time, ADHD *will* get the better of us no matter how well we learn to cope with it!

Have you ever said something and then wonder:

'Did I really just say that?!'



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