

The Myth of ADHD and Other Learning Disabilities; Parenting Without Ritalin

By Dr Jan Strydom

Huntington House Publishers recently published a book, whose title may come as a surprise to many. It is: *The Myth of ADHD and Other Learning Disabilities; Parenting Without Ritalin*. The book was authored by Susan du Plessis and myself.

The idea of Learning Disabilities, and therefore also of ADHD, has become such an established “scientific fact,” that many people may raise a skeptical eyebrow when they see or hear this title. One should never lose sight of the fact, however, that science is practiced by human beings and human beings are prone to err. However, when we consider the destruction and devastation, that notions like “Learning Disabilities” and “Attention Deficit Disorder” have over the past few decades brought to children throughout the whole world, I think it is high time that, for the sake of our children, we start thinking again and stop acting like lemmings. Lemmings are little rodents that live in the arctic regions. They look much like hamsters and they multiply just as fast. Every few years, when the lemmings have multiplied to such an extent that there isn’t enough living room left, a group of them will start running. Many others will follow and once they have started running, they are virtually unstoppable. When they come to a river, they dive in and swim. When eventually they come to the sea, they do the same: they dive in and swim which means that they all drown. What it boils down to is a mass suicide every few years. The few that stayed behind will start multiplying all over and in a few years the same thing will happen again.

The thing that worries me about our present world is that there is not much difference between us human beings – as we are now – and these lemmings. We all follow the crowd. If enough people start spreading the rumor that children suffer from mysterious “brain dysfunctions,” very soon almost everybody will believe this story – and that is all it is, a story. Moreover, it is a story that is very easy to refute. Take the idea of a so-called “Attention Deficit Disorder” as an example. One can scarcely believe that people could have fallen for such an obviously ridiculous notion. Just think logically about it: if it were so that a child, who cannot concentrate – the most important “symptom” of the so-called “disease” – suffered from “Attention Deficit Disorder,” then another child, who cannot ride a bicycle, must surely suffer from Bicycle Riding Deficit Disorder. And I have to admit that I cannot speak Russian, so I suffer from a Russian Speaking Deficit Disorder. I also cannot play golf, so I suffer from Golf Playing Deficit Disorder too. Any person who reads this and who cannot play chess, must then – poor soul – be suffering from Chess Playing Deficit Disorder. It is quite beyond my comprehension that such an obviously ridiculous notion could have been taken seriously by so many people all over the world.

This clearly indicates that the notion of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or any of the other frequently diagnosed learning or behavioral “syndromes,” “dysfunctions” or “disorders,” is no more than mere prattle. The fact that there are so many people, who work very hard to keep the idea alive, despite its absurdity, can only be because it is a very rewarding for-profit hoax. The invention of vaguely defined diseases is satisfying medical-economic needs by generating additional income for growing numbers of psychologists, psychiatrists and related professions. The educational and medical establishments are engaged in a quid pro quo relationship to perpetuate illusions of diseases that reduce parents’ and schools’ obligations to prepare children for adult life. Meanwhile, for-profit medicine, and its business partners, operating as a legalized drug trade, gain thousands of young patients, many of whom eventually become clients of the illegal drug dealers. In the process, gullible parents, in the vain hope that the glib promises of speedy recovery of their “dysfunctional” child will come true, are fraudulently relieved of their hard-earned money.

How vain the hopes of parents are, was already clearly shown as long ago as 1971 by a study entitled: “Hyperactive Children as Teenagers: A Follow-up Study.” Eighty-three children were followed up some years later after being diagnosed as hyperactive or as having attention deficit disorder. Of these children, 92% were given drug treatment. The results were as follows:

60% of the children were still overactive and had poor school work (the original reason for being put on the drug), but in addition they were now viewed as rebellious;

59% had had some contact with police;

23% had been taken to the police station one or more times;

58% had failed one or more grades;

57% were viewed as a discipline problem at school;

83% had trouble with frequent lying;

52% were destructive;

34% had threatened to kill their parents;

15% had talked of or attempted suicide.

The fact that, despite such failure as these statistics indicate, drug treatment for ideas such as Attention Deficit Disorder and other fabrications still continue, clearly show that there is no interest in “curing” the children, but merely in making money.

I have the absolute conviction that no problem can be solved without identifying the cause. It is certainly a fact that there are at present millions of children who are suffering horribly as a result of problems that are erroneously “diagnosed” as various types of “disabilities,” “dysfunctions,” “syndromes” or “disorders” like “Attention Deficit Disorder.” These “disorders” (etc.) are then “treated” by various forms of drugs and/or therapies, which invariably fail dismally, and then the excuse is offered that they are “incurable” – but only after enough money has been extracted from the parents. If one can’t cure something, the only way to maintain an authoritative pose about it is to say it can’t be cured. This also attempts to excuse absorbing all those funds with nothing to show. But if these “diseases” are known to be incurable, then why spend so much money researching them, and even worse, why waste so much of parents’ money?

These “disorders” (etc.) are a clear indication that in our so-called scientific age, we have not been able to get rid of the myth yet. Since time immemorial, men have resorted to two possible avenues in their efforts to find explanations for phenomena. When the Ancient Greeks did not have the means to find an explanation for the daily movement of the sun through the skies, they invented a story to explain it: they said it was their god Apollo, who traveled through the skies in his fiery chariot. Many centuries later, Copernicus had the means to learn how the solar system works, and then discovered that the explanation for the apparent movement of the sun was to be found in the way the solar system worked.

Scientific history through the ages is the story of a gradual demythologization. Medical science especially had to rid itself of “evil spirits” and various types of “influences.” The full name of ‘flu – “influenza” – the sickness that afflicts so many of us during winter, is still reminiscent of this. “Influenza” is an Italian word meaning “influence,” because it was believed that the influence of the moon was responsible for the coughs and sneezes.

The notion of Attention Deficit Disorder, or any of the other fabrications, is a reversion to the mythological explanation. It is the “evil spirits” all over again. What needs to be done is that one must devote the time and the effort to learn to understand “how the child works” – which is what I have been doing. Then it becomes quite possible to understand the reasons for all the problems that children seem to have nowadays. That all is not well in Western education today is painfully obvious. But this was not always the case – and this very fact may provide us with a clue towards the causes of the problems.

Let us take literacy as an example. In 1910 the literacy rate in America was so high that it was predicted, “the public schools would in a short time practically eliminate illiteracy.” The illiteracy rate of 1910 reflected, for the most part, people who had never had the advantage of schooling. In 1935, a survey of the 375,000 men working in the Civilian Conservation Corps – a government-sponsored work project to provide employment – found an illiteracy rate of 1.9 percent. And this was among men primarily of low socio-economic status (Blumenfeld 1985).

Since the 1930s, something must have happened. In their book, *The Leipzig Connection: The Systematic Destruction of American Education*, Lionni and Klass state: “Somewhere along the line our schools had lost the ability to routinely educate children and produce uniformly good results” (Lionni & Klass, 1980).

The \$14 million National Adult Literacy Survey of 1993 found that even though most adults in the survey had finished high school, 96 percent of them could not read, write, and figure well enough to go to college. Even more to the point, 25 percent “were plainly unable to read,” period (Baughman, 1994).

But literacy is not the only concern. Take a look at the list of the top disciplinary problems in the U.S. schools in 1940 compared to 1990. The source is not a right-wing organization, but the *Congressional Quarterly*, November 1993. The 1940 list consists of minor infractions, whereas the 1990 list is about major criminal activity:

1940

Talking out of turn
Chewing gum
Making a noise
Running in hallways
Queue-jumping
Ignoring dress code
Litter

1990

Drug abuse
Alcohol abuse
Sexual behavior
(Attempted) suicide
Rape, sexual assault
Robbery, theft
Physical assault

So, what had happened? If things were going so well in education previously, why do we now have all these alarming problems? Are the problems really to be attributed to brain dysfunctions? In fact, the idea of “brain dysfunctions” explains nothing at all. If more and more children all over the world were born with mysterious brain dysfunctions, we would have to be very concerned indeed, because **what is then causing all the brain problems ?**

The real explanation is not to be found inside the heads of the children at all.

In the past, the knowledge and experience needed to raise and educate children were passed on among families and communities and down through generations so that a recognizable tradition of child rearing can be seen almost anywhere one cares to look throughout history. These traditions were based on the experience of millions of parents of raising *children*, over many centuries. In Bible-believing countries, like the USA used to be until the notion of evolution came on the scene, these traditions were also strongly based on the Bible. The last few decades, however, have seen an interruption of these traditions.

In 1898 a man by the name of Edward Lee Thorndike was appointed at the Department of Psychology at Columbia University's Teachers College in New York. Thorndike studied the behavior of chickens, cats, rats, dogs, fish and monkeys. Cats would be placed in puzzle boxes, where they would try to escape from confinement. Clawing all over the box in their struggle to escape, they would accidentally claw a string or loop or button that would open the door of the box. Eventually, after many such accidental successes, the cat would learn to do whatever was necessary to escape from the box.

Of course there is nothing wrong with animal experiments, *if* the objective is to learn more about *animals*. However, this was not the case. The objective of Thorndike's experiments was to throw light on the learning processes of *children* and of *human beings* in general. Being an evolutionist, Thorndike saw only a quantitative, but no qualitative differences between chickens, cats, rats, dogs, fish and monkeys on the one hand and children on the other. Therefore, to his mind, animal studies were a valid method of learning more about children.

When we compare man and animal from a biological perspective only, there are no fundamental differences. Man does not possess a single organ, no bone, no muscle, which is not also to be found in the vertebrate animals. The only difference, seemingly, is the size of the brain. But because there are similarities, it does not imply that there are not also dissimilarities. Every morning millions of people throughout the world get up, dress themselves, eat breakfast and then go to work or to school. In the afternoons they all come back home, do homework, eat their supper, sit in front of the television, go to visit friends, or read a book. Has any person ever seen any animal doing any of these?

Under the banner of *educational psychology*, "animal psychology" soon became the order of the day. Rats had to run through mazes in order to satisfy the curiosity of psychologists as to how learning occurs, and projections to human learning have been made on that basis. Köhler, for some strange reason referred to as a *child* psychologist, studied the intelligence of *chimpanzees*, and for many years after that time (1917) Köhler's experiments were included in many discussions on learning and problem-solving processes in children. Harlow carried out work with monkeys on mother-child relationships, social development, conditions in which curiosity manifests itself, "learning to learn," and the acquisition of "concepts." A considerable amount of work by a number of investigators has also been devoted to the study of the effects of sensory deprivation in young animals in order to better understand the effects of deprivation on cognitive development in children. More recent experiments include a thirty-year study of "the vocal learning" of birds, which researchers had hoped would offer insight into the learning and speech processes of infants and children. I recently saw a TV program on a psychologist who studies parrots in the vain hope that from them she will learn how to deal with "learning-disabled" children.

Slowly, inexorably, the "knowledge" that accumulated through these animal experiments replaced the time-honored traditions that educators-parents and teachers-had been following, giving rise to new methods of child rearing, teaching strategies and classroom practices. Because parents were believed to be "too ignorant" of child personality development to be trusted to raise children adequately – despite the wonderful successes of the past – a parents education campaign was launched in the USA in the 1920s. Unfortunately, this had the drawback of voluntary participation. Parents could not be forced to accept, listen to, or practice the advice of psychology and psychiatry. Therefore, there remained only one alternative: the schools. As Ralph Truitt stated in 1927, "the school should be the focus of our attack." Through large-scale marketing, the new ideas of psychology and psychiatry gradually filtered through to American decision-makers. Hand in hand, psychology

and psychiatry worked together to bring about the collapse of education in schools. Through continued marketing and propaganda, parents were also eventually lured into the snare. In the process, power and authority over children, which used to be vested in parents, were usurped by psychology and psychiatry.

Present-day parents have been stripped of all knowledge and all power. They understand nothing at all about children, because they have been brainwashed by power-hungry and money-lusting evolutionistic humanists, who do not care a hoot about the future and well being of any child. The wonderful child-rearing traditions that parents had previously employed with so much love and with such great success, and all the wonderful wisdom on children and child-rearing that is contained in the Bible, have all been replaced by new, so-called “scientific” methods, strategies and practices. For the simple – and obvious – reason, however, that a child is neither a cat or a rat or a dog, nor any other form of animal, these new ideas have all failed miserably.

Instead of doing the honorable thing by acknowledging their mistake and retreating from the scene, so that normality could gradually return after the devastation they have created, psychologists and their disciples have resorted to inventing more and more ridiculous “explanations” – like “Attention Deficit Disorder” – in an attempt to explain away their failures. Under the umbrella term of “learning disabilities,” *dyslexia* is used to explain the failure to teach reading. The failure to teach writing became *dysgraphia*, and the failure to teach numeracy *dyscalculia*. Further inventions to “explain” concentration and behavior problems followed fast and furious, so that we now have a veritable alphabet soup-ADD, ADHD, ODD, CD, OCD, CAPD and many more.

More and more parents and their children are drowning in this soup. Worried parents, who see their children suffer and crumble under the weight of all the learning and behavioral “illnesses” their children are “suffering from,” catch at any straw in a vain effort to save their unhappy offspring-without realizing that all these “diseases” have less substance than a mirage.

Children are certainly suffering today, probably more than they have ever before in the whole history of the world. However, they are not “suffering from” any “diseases,” like “Attention Deficit Disorder.” Notions like these are mere figments of the imaginations of people who have very creative – but very unscrupulous – moneymaking ideas. The reason for the suffering of the children is explained very clearly in the Bible in Deuteronomy 5:9: “... *for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers...*” Educational psychology is not a science at all, but an ideology based on the false religion of evolution. Parents, who follow the ideas of educational psychology in the raising of their children, are in the process also bending their knees to the gods of evolution.

The wise and logical thing for any parent, who wishes his or her child to have a good life and a happy future, is to return to sense and sensibility. The first thing such a parent must do, is to realize that such sense and sensibility is not to be found in “educational psychology,” or in the consulting rooms of any “professionals” or therapists, nor in any form of drug, but solely between the covers of the Bible – the Manufacturer’s Manual.

The difficulty is that parents have over the past nearly a century been lead astray so far away from this great book, that modern-day parents have no idea what the Bible says about children and how to go about raising them. Even parents, who attempt to read the Bible, do not understand what it says anymore, because they have become used to looking at it through the tinted lenses of educational psychology. That is why my co-author and I wrote “*The Myth of ADHD.*” Our intention was to interpret for parents the biblical instructions to parents.

The most enjoyable, the most wonderful, the most meaningful task that any person can accomplish in this world is certainly that of raising his or her children. However, if one discards the Manufacturer’s Manual, it becomes an impossible task and a frustrating burden.

Parents who want to learn more about the information in this article and related subjects, are invited to visit the website www.audiblox2000.com.

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If readers here are STILL skeptical, one of the most renowned doctors on the planet WC Douglass, M.D. has chimed-in with his analysis in his renowned FREE newsletter "The Daily Dose". TheDouglassReport@newmarkethealth.com

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The real cure for ADHD is time -- not drugs

Show me a little kid who DOESN'T have the supposed symptoms of ADHD, and I'll show you a kid who's in a coma, or at least asleep.

Kids who have "too much" energy aren't hyper and they don't have attention deficits. They're just kids -- kids who need more time to grow up and more discipline... not drugs.

And now, a new study makes my point perfectly.

Canadian researchers looked at data on close to a million kids between the ages of 6 and 12 years old and found that the youngest girls in any given class were 70 percent more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than the oldest.

And naturally, these kids were also 70 percent more likely to be drugged for it.

For boys, those numbers were 30 percent and 41 percent respectively -- smaller, to be sure, but there's really nothing small about them.

But why is this a stunner? Other studies have found the same thing -- including one two years back that found younger kids are 60 percent more likely to be diagnosed and treated for ADHD than their oldest classmates.

In other words, these kids don't act up because they have some phony disease that needs treatment. They act up because they're younger and less mature and need to be TAUGHT how to behave.

Call me old-fashioned, but isn't that what parents and teachers used to do?

Forget ADHD, ADD and any other set of letters they throw at you and your kids or grandkids. The only letters you need to remember are the two D's: Discipline and Diet.

These days kids are so hopped up on sugar, caffeine, videogames and processed foods it's honestly a wonder that they can even think at all. Get rid of it all and get back to basics, and your kid or grandkid will start to act like a human being again.

Then, don't be afraid to be a disciplinarian instead of a BFF (that's kid-speak for "best friends forever"). Kids who understand that bad behavior will be met with real punishment will learn to behave fast, guaranteed.

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