

THE BRAIN CHRONICLE

AUGUST EDITION | 2023

Hello Brains & Hearts!

Welcome back to our monthly Brain Chronicle, where (when we're not drowning in deadlines) we update you on what we've got going on, what's happening with perks, upcoming events and share in one easy-to-find location all the videos your support has allowed us to create this month!

It's been awhile, so I'll catch you up:


WOW writing a book does NOT take a year, as it turns out...it takes a year plus however long past that deadline it takes you to turn it in, plus however long copyedits take, plus however long the SECOND round of copyedits takes, plus a waiting period while it goes to layouts, then a couple more rounds for reviewing layouts...

BUT WE ARE ALMOST AT THE FINISH LINE! In fact, we will be announcing the book officially—and sharing the cover—very very soon! It will be available everywhere books are sold :)

I am...quite tired of writing at this stage of the process, so I'll turn it over to Harley to update you on the rest. But first, I just wanted to say thank you, thank you, a million times thank you. Because of your ongoing support, we were not only able to continue making content for the channel, we were also able to make this book everything we were hoping it would be—and then some. I will be forever grateful to all of you who contributed and helped make this happen.

OK! HARLEY TIME!

PATREON PERKS

 Hello again Brains & Hearts, Harley here! (You can tell because of the bear emoji *nods*) Did Jess mention that books are A LOT? Yes? Okay, good good. Because books are A LOT. *Phew*. But you're here for Perks, aren't ya? ("No, Harley, I'm in the Perks section to learn about horses." Wow! Really? Well did you know that a hand - the measurement used for horse heights - is about equal to 4 inches?) Hehe, okokok, enough joking around. Let me bring you up to speed on your perks!

Behind The Brains

Hello to our long-time Behind the Brains!
And if you're new, hello to you too!

It's been a moment since I last mentioned our Minecraft server, but if that is something you're interested in but unsure where to go, we can help! [Click here to read our FAQ's about how to join Minecraft!](#)

If you're still unsure what to do or feel too overwhelmed with trying to figure things out via the FAQ, no problem. Our DM's are open and we are more than happy to assist in getting you where you need to be for your Minecraft adventures! We'd love to help get you adventuring!

If you're already on our Discord, you can also reach out in the #ask-a-mod channel if you're unsure of where to find our Minecraft server! [Click here to go to #ask-a-mod!](#)

SUPERbrains

Salutations, SUPERbrains!

We are excited to be back to our regularly scheduled programming with the return of the SUPERPOLL. Where you get to vote on which short you would like us to release *first!*

We asked, and you answered - and wow, was it a close race the whole way through! But in the end **An Introduction to the ADHD-friendly Rubric** edged out Three types of people when it comes to boundaries (a balloon metaphor) by just a couple of votes!

[Click here to review the original poll!](#)

(Reeeaaaaally wanted to see the balloon metaphor? Don't you worry, it will still be released, it will just come after the Rubric!)

Wonderbrains

Well met, Wonderbrains!

Missed seeing the fun shenanigans that happen behind the scenes? Miss it no longer! We're back with some new behind the scenes clips just for you 🧡 It's even compiled into a single lovely video for easier viewing!

Don't see it? No worries, we got you! [Click here to see August's behind the scenes video!](#)

Like what you see? Wonder how we do something behind the scenes? Have something else specific you'd love a sneak peek at? Let us know! Send us a DM, or comment in the above behind the scenes video with what you'd love to see!

We'd love to oblige where we can. 🧡

Brain Board

Bonjour, Brain Board!

Remember to set those calendar events and reminders for Brain Board! Or use whatever method helps you remember the best. 😊

New to Brain Board? Or merely need a reminder of when Brain Board is? No problem!

Brain Board will occur this month on...

Saturday, August 26 at **2PM PT | 5PM | ET | 11PM CET**

Unless you are an Australian (or similar) timezone then it will be...

Sunday, August 27 at **7AM AEST**

A link to the Brain Board will be posted to Discord and here on Patreon once it goes live!

Hope to see you there!

Brain Advocate

Hallo, Brain Advocates!

We won't keep you reading here for too long since you've got all the above updates as well, hehe.

At the start of each month the credits update to include any new Brain Advocates who have joined us along the way. But if at any point you don't see your name after the start-of-the-month update, please do not hesitate to reach out and let us know!

UPCOMING EVENTS

VidCon Maryland! | Sep. 28 - Oct 1

<https://www.vidcon.com/baltimore/>

This was a bit of a last minute invite, but we will be there! September 28-Oct. 1st. Panels are still being finalized, but we will share as soon as we know!

Annual International Conference on ADHD 2023 | LIVE: Nov 30 - Dec 2

ONLINE: Dec 5-6

Baltimore, Maryland & Virtual

<https://chadd.org/conference/>

Every year, ACO, ADDA, and CHADD put on a big ADHD Conference. Their theme for this year is Connect, Learn, and Thrive. There is an EARLY BIRD rate that is good until **September 22nd...**

WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED

- We got Patreon perks rolling again! The whole team is working hard to get back to delivering perks—thank you SO much for your patience on this! By the time this comes out, some of them should have been delivered and the rest are on their way!
- Jessica submitted an article for a medical journal outlining the importance of including those with ADHD in their treatment decisions, and providing enough education for them to make these decisions.
- We finalized the ADHD Friendly Rubric! We'll be putting out an episode walking people through it next week (Tuesday, August 22nd) but if you don't

wanna wait—here's the link to the new rubric! <https://rubric.howtoadhd.com/>

- We're just about finished with the first round of layouts for the book—it looks great and very ADHD friendly! Check it out, I screenshotted a couple random pages we've already reviewed here:

emotion dysregulation (n.)*

An impaired ability to control your emotional response, which can lead to extreme and/or disproportional reactions that are not necessarily appropriate to the situation

Unfortunately, like most people with ADHD (and many doctors who *treat* ADHD), I didn't know that emotion dysregulation was part of the deal because the *DSM* doesn't list it as part of the diagnostic criteria for ADHD.

While the emotional component of ADHD has been observed as long as ADHD has, the simple truth is that emotions are harder to measure in a lab than inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity—so when the diagnostic criteria were formed, they were based on that research. Emotions were left out.

This is the reason people with ADHD are often misdiagnosed with mood disorders, and why we don't get the support we need even once we're diagnosed correctly: we don't know the extent to which our struggle with emotions isn't normal. Emotions hit us harder and faster, and take us under, in ways most medical providers, teachers, and loved ones don't understand.

* "Emotion dysregulation" and "emotional dysregulation" are often used interchangeably. ~~I'll do the same here.~~



(WHY) EMOTION REGULATION IS HARD FOR ADHD BRAINS

Emotion regulation—the ability to exert control over one's emotional state—is what allows us to calm down and make good choices when something gets us worked up. This sounds simple, but emotion regulation relies on skills the ADHD brain tends to have trouble with, such as:

Inhibition, as in not impulsively reacting to an emotion.

According to Dr. Russell Barkley, the more generally impulsive we are (and impulsivity is in the *DSM* criteria for ADHD), the more emotionally impulsive we are, too.

Self-soothing, which is the ability to calm and comfort ourselves after experiencing an emotion. Most of us do have ways to self-soothe, but they're not always healthy (and our healthy ones aren't always "socially acceptable").

Refocusing our attention, which is the exact problem for which our disorder is named. Fantastic. Moving on . . .

Responding to our emotions in a way that aligns with our goals for the situation. This assumes, of course, that we know what our goals even are. To make matters even more complicated, emotion regulation is a cool executive function—and emotions activate our hot executive function system. Once we're emotionally "in the red," we can no longer executive-function our way out; if we don't have automatic go-to's to deescalate a situation, there is a tipping point at which we're *not going to be able to*. This is

THE TOOLBOX

When you have big emotions, it's especially important to learn how to cope with them. Thankfully, there are many ways to do that. I've collected some of my favorites here. If these tools seem a bit daunting, don't worry—according to research, even the act of *noticing* our emotions—without judgement—can make them easier to handle.

1. LABEL YOUR EMOTIONS

Identifying your emotions is key to being able to manage them effectively. (see page 000). This can be easier said than done for those of us who can't always tell what we're feeling. Many of us have a hard time even telling the difference between our feelings and our thoughts.* Here are some ADHD-friendly ways to make it easier:


- **Label the intensity.** We can often tell how *intense* an emotion is before we can tell *what* the emotion is. There are different ways to do this. You can assign a color (such as green, yellow, or red) or use a one-to-ten rating scale,

* Feelings are physical or emotional experiences. Thoughts are mental cognitions—our ideas, opinions, and beliefs. One-word journaling can help you distinguish one from the other. Thoughts take many words to describe ("I feel ~~as if~~ everyone hates me"). Feelings, on the other hand, only require one ("sad").

where one is the least intense and ten is the most. Even if you can't tell what you're feeling yet, identifying its intensity can let you know if it's worth addressing (if it's a ten, probably!)—and if it's a good idea to do that right now (if it's still a ten, probably not).

- **Use external prompts.** Feeling wheels—circular diagrams that help you identify your feelings—can help you put words to your emotional experiences. So can paying attention to what your body is doing. Daniel Jones of The Aspie World YouTube channel, who also has ADHD, points out that emotions are energy in motion. What does the energy in your body make you want to do? Laugh? Cry? Rock? Throw rocks?
- **Create your own labeling system.** For some, describing their emotions isn't as easy as, say, pointing at a color. I have a friend who communicates her feelings in terms of what kind of potato she feels like that day.
- **Look for the emotion behind the emotion.** Emotions that we're less comfortable with having and/or expressing often quickly get masked by other emotions. If you notice you constantly feel angry, there might be a different emotion behind it, such as hurt or even fear. It's important to look for the *first* emotion that you experienced in a situation. If

THE VIDEO GALLERY

 Ohhhh there have been so many videos that have been released since the last Chronicle! This poor newsletter would never end if we linked them all. So instead, here are a few videos that either we really enjoyed, or that seemed to be enjoyed by the overall community! And let us know what videos YOU really enjoyed these last few months!

[Why Dental Care Can Be So Hard--AND How to Make it Easier](#)

[The Struggle to Relax: Why ADHD Makes it Tough](#)

[Hyperfocus - which I never talk about on this ADHD channel 🦊](#)

[Why People With ADHD Struggle to remember Things](#)

[Why I Was Afraid to Disclose My ADHD \(ft. Dr. Patrick LaCount\)](#)

[The Unexpected Side Effects of Pushing Yourself to the Limit](#)