



# WHY CAN'T I PAY ATTENTION?

# CAN NEUROFEEDBACK HELP?

By Renee Chillcott, LMHC

## GOOD NEWS!

Research shows that Neurofeedback is a successful alternative for treatment of ADD/ADHD. Attention and Focus problems are brain related. Neurofeedback allows you to work directly on your issues by training the brain to become calmer, more focused, and less impulsive.

### YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW THAT...

- ADD/ADHD is one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders of childhood, and can persist through adolescence and adulthood.
- Those diagnosed can display a number of symptoms including: inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.
- In the brain, ADD/ADHD often displays as too many slow or too many fast neurons firing, particularly in the frontal and/or central lobes.
- Processing issues — auditory, visual, and/or sensory — can cause Attention and Focus problems.
- Other Brain issues such as Anxiety, Depression and head injuries/concussions can also cause Attention and Focus problems.

### WHY TRAIN YOUR BRAIN?

Mental clarity improves when you operate a calmer, more efficient brain. As you learn to slow down “inner chatter” or activate a “sleepy” brain, you become more effective at responding to stress and adapt more readily to different situations, both psychologically and physically. Homework time is smoother and quicker, assignments are more easily remembered, completed and turned in, behavior improves, and mood swings/depression often lift.

Neurofeedback has been shown to be of remarkable value for adults and school-age children who experience focus and learning problems. Through brain training, they can learn to better concentrate on work, increase their frustration tolerance level, and are less prone to be overwhelmed with sensory overload from the environment. With their thoughts more organized, they can focus more clearly on what others say to them and can begin to develop healthier friendships/relationships and learn effectively.

### WHAT IS NEUROFEEDBACK?

Neurofeedback, also known as EEG biofeedback, has been studied and practiced since the late 60's. It is exercise for your brain by allowing you to see the frequencies produced by different parts of your brain in real-time and then through visual and auditory feedback, teaches the brain to better regulate itself. Neurofeedback can be used to help detect, stimulate, and/or inhibit activity in the brain safely and without medication. It can help restore a wider “range of motion” in brain states, much like physical therapy does for the body.

While the client sits comfortably watching a movie or pictures appear on the screen (a calm and focused state), the EEG equipment measures the frequency or speed at which electrical activity moves in the areas where electrodes have been placed. This information is sent to the therapist's computer. The therapist is then able to determine what frequencies are out of balance. For example, when the EEG shows that you are making too many “slow” or “sleepy” waves (delta/theta) or too many “fast” waves (high beta), the therapist adjusts a reward band to encourage more balanced activity. This encouragement or “reward” happens through the auditory reinforcement of “beeps”.

It is important to understand that the neurofeedback approach does not magically “cure” or “fix” anything. We teach and guide your brain to produce frequencies which help it relax and/or focus. We provide the brain with gentle “challenges” and encouragement in a user-friendly, stress-free format so it learns to regulate or shift to healthier states more smoothly on its own at the appropriate time. These learning changes are mostly permanent.

### HOW DOES A “BEEP” OR SOUND TRAIN MY BRAIN TO WORK BETTER?

The auditory or sound reward that corresponds to an increase or decrease in desired brainwave activity is able to affect the brain on a neurological level. Auditory reward stimulates auditory pathways, impacts the vestibular system, and has many connections to the reticular activating system, which modulates wakefulness and attention. These systems operate in our brains without conscious effort. Therefore, neurofeedback teaches your brain through automated learning with little or no behavioral effort. Another way to say this is that neurofeedback involves operant conditioning or learning. This type of learning teaches us through a reinforced reward system. The auditory reward (beep) is delivered on a schedule of reinforcement that promotes optimal learning; not too hard and not too easy. This schedule of reinforcement or reward provides just the right amount of resistance or reward to evoke a positive learning pattern.

### WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF CONDITIONS NEUROFEEDBACK HELPS?

Symptoms of these conditions, among others, can improve through neurofeedback training:

- Anxiety
- Sleep disorders
- Depression
- ADD/ADHD
- Sensory processing disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Seizure disorders
- Auditory/visual processing
- Chronic pain/Fibromyalgia
- Migraines/headaches
- Traumatic brain injuries
- Stroke
- Peak performance
- Oppositional defiant disorder
- Auditory/Visual Processing
- Rages/mood swings
- Attention/focus/concentration
- Reactive attachment disorder
- Autism/Asperger's
- Learning disabilities
- Obsessive compulsive disorder

### HOW MANY SESSIONS ARE NEEDED TO BEGIN SEEING RESULTS?

As the brain learns, you will see the changes. However, everyone learns at different speeds, so it cannot be determined how quickly someone will learn. On average, children take about 10-20 sessions to see changes and we can discuss what to expect during the intake appointment. For adults changes are usually noticed within 10 sessions. Total treatment is an average of 40 sessions, however we individualize treatment – some people need more and some less.

### WHAT IS A QEEG (Quantitative EEG) OR BRAIN MAP AND DO I NEED ONE?

The QEEG is a quantitative EEG. It's also called a brain map and does just that...it gives us a map of what is going on with the entire brain at one time. We attach electrodes to the whole head, 19 spots, and then record the brain waves with eyes open for 5 minutes and with eyes closed for 10 minutes. This recording is then sent to a specialist to be read and analyzed. They are able to give us a summary of significant findings as well as a full report that shows the results of analyzing the data several different ways. The brain activity is not only compared by individual locations over the entire head, but we

can also look at connections, symmetry, and how different parts are communicating. It can help us see what areas need to be addressed more efficiently than just training spot by spot.

We don't always need this data to make improvements in symptoms but we do recommend it in certain situations. A QEEG can also be helpful information when diagnosing and/or trying to decide the best medication/supplement recommendations.

### HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Getting started is easy, just give us a call.

The Brain and Wellness Center staff will answer all of your questions, and help you get scheduled. Some insurance is accepted. If you are wondering what services are best for you, we can help determine that at the time of the intake, in a telephone consultation, or you can schedule a face to face consultation and see our facility. Call, email or message us today! Brain and Wellness Center, 7301 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Suite 102A, Boca Raton, FL 33433. (561) 206-2706, e-mail us at [info@bocabraincenter.com](mailto:info@bocabraincenter.com), or text us at (561) 206-2706 or visit our website at [www.BocaBrainCenter.com](http://www.BocaBrainCenter.com).

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Renee Chillcott is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor that has been practicing Neurofeedback training since 2005. Renee holds a BA degree from The University of Central Florida and a Master's Degree in Psychology from Nova Southeastern University. She is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and is the owner/operator of The Brain and Wellness Center, located in Boca Raton. At The Brain and Wellness Center, adults, teens, children and families enjoy a variety of services from multiple providers. Neurofeedback, Brain Mapping, Acupuncture, Nutritional Counseling, Learning Programs, and counseling are among a few of the services offered.



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