

# Meredith Carder: Chaos closets and unlearning perfectionism

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## SPEAKERS

Katy Weber, Meredith Carder

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Meredith Carder 00:00

Honestly, I think one of the best things we can do as adults with ADHD is get comfortable with getting support and whether that means for running your home support, as in like a community of people that understand you and are cheering for you or that accountability of working with a coach or something like that.



Katy Weber 00:23

Hello, and welcome to the women and ADHD podcast. I'm your host, Katy Weber. I was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 45. And it completely turned my world upside down. I've been looking back at so much of my life, school, jobs, my relationships, all of it with this new lens, and it has been nothing short of overwhelming. I quickly discovered I was not the only woman to have this experience. And now I interview other women who liked me discovered in adulthood they have ADHD and are finally feeling like they understand who they are and how to best lean into their strengths, both professionally and personally. Okay, I'd like to start off with this review from a listener named Jack in the Gato on the Apple podcast platform in the UK. It's called a big thank you from Northeast England. A big thank you from across the water. I usually listen to your podcast while driving and chuckling to myself nodding my head or replying out loud to the conversations, I probably look slightly unhinged to all the other drivers on the road. But who cares? I have been recently diagnosed at the age of 45. And I'm finally hearing the experiences of women who for the first time in my life actually sounds like me, keep up the great and important work and inviting excellent guest speakers to your show. Well, thank you, Jack. And truth be told, we are all slightly unhinged. So you've definitely come to the right place. And I really appreciate this review. So thank you for taking the time out of your day to write it. Believe me, I know how many steps it takes to remember to do this and to put your thoughts into words. So thank you, these reviews and knowing you guys are out there listening and nodding along. These are what keeps me going week after a week. And they help other women find this podcast and these conversations and know that they are not alone. So if you're a listener, and you've been benefiting from any of these conversations, a lovely way to let me

know and say thank you is to take a moment to leave a review. And if that feels like too much right now and I get it just go and hit those five stars. In fact, if you'd like and you don't want to forget, just pause right now and do it. I promise we'll wait for you. Okay, here we are at episode 110 in which I interview Meredith Carter. Meredith is an EPCA trained ADHD coach and one of my personal favorite Instagram creators over at hummingbird ADHD as a true multi passionate adult with ADHD. Meredith has gained varied experience over the last 20 years working in employee training and development as well as creating several small businesses in 2019, Meredith decided to pursue ADHD coaching after seeing the positive impact it had on both her life and on her daughter's life. Meredith prides herself in her ability to hold a supportive space for her clients and facilitate lasting connections in her groups. We talk all about impulsivity and the now not now relationship we tend to have with time management. We also talk about curiosity and the love of learning our mutual love of movie trailers, and how to unlearn perfectionism and take ourselves less seriously. I hope you enjoy this conversation as much as I did. All right. Thank you so much for being here. I was so excited. So I have so many questions, because I feel like I on the one hand, I feel like I know you because I've been following you on Instagram and just love your reels and your content. There's so much and you just look like you're having such a good time. And I really, you know, I I get so much valuable information from your from your stuff on your Instagram account. But I also feel like I still have so many questions about like who you are. So I guess first, you know, how old were you when you were diagnosed with ADHD and kind of what was going on in your life that really led you to start looking into it and connecting the dots around this diagnosis.

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Meredith Carder 04:11

Personally, I was diagnosed at 40. But I was fairly certain years before that. The catalyst for me was going through the process with my daughter. And throughout that process, it was very clear to me right away and that, you know, he was not the only one that had neurodivergent in the family. But for me to be honest, I was so burnt out after all of the hoops and executives from sitting demand of getting her diagnosed. That I just kind of like avoided my personal diagnosis for a few years but move forward with the understanding that I most likely had ADHD.



Katy Weber 04:57

Interesting. Yeah. So how old was she when she was nine? mouse

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Meredith Carder 05:01

was in fourth grade. So it would have been what's that? Like? 910 kind of was the age but who was that? I knew something was C was, you know, kind of that title but had a series of misdiagnosis or diagnoses before C had her ADHD diagnosis. So we kind of knew my, as a family much sooner, but officially, it was in fourth grade.



Katy Weber 05:28

Yeah, I know. I feel like, you know, so many of the women I interview came to their own diagnosis after their kids and really kind of being getting into that, like mama bear mode, where you're like I'm going to do all the research and all the hyper focus on how to help a kid

where you're like, I'm going to do all the research and all the hyper focus on how to help a kid and they'd be like, oh, yeah, research at hyper focus is part of ADHD.

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Meredith Carder 05:47

Yeah, we like that is exactly what happens. I have always been like an information, deep divers. So of course, that's where my brain went. And actually, I'm sure other parents with children with ADHD understand that feeling of they received that diagnosis. But there's not a lot that happens after that in terms of education. So I felt that was on me to really explore this and understand what it meant for her and then me as well.



Katy Weber 06:20

Yeah, you know, I feel like there is a lot of that feeling. Something that so many of us have in common is that feeling of like, everybody else got the manual of envy, right? And that idea of like the I got, I gotta keep researching, like, somehow, it doesn't matter how much research you do, it still feels like you're missing something, right? You're missing the information. And I think that's kind of leads us to do a lot of that like deep diving. Like, I have to read all the things in order to feel absolutely prepared. And yet at the same time, always feeling like we've missed out on something, you know, like that. There's something that everybody else knows

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Meredith Carder 06:58

that there's always more Yeah, absolutely.



Katy Weber 07:01

And so when it comes to just like learning about my own ADHD, in the beginning, it was that say, it was the same thing where I'm like, this should be part of the diagnosis, right? Which is, like obsessive looking into it, and then also feeling like, what am I missing? What's the one book I'm supposed to read? Right? Like, like, what are the crib notes to somebody tells me exactly what I'm supposed to know. Like, you've already read 12 books, you probably know what you're going to know. Do you remember when you were kind of looking into it for yourself? What were some of the things that really like, hit home? You know, I feel like sometimes we get that really visceral reaction to identifying with ADHD and just being like, oh, oh, yeah, you know, and it's not fidget. For me. At least it was like not talking about fidget spinners, or, you know, can't sit still it was talking about, like, the shame I had around the state of my house. Right? Or, or feeling like, you know, I'm a bad friend. And you know, it's so much so much of that like emotional stuff.

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Meredith Carder 08:06

Yeah, absolutely. I feel like that was the stuff that hit me as well. There were so many light bulb moments, and I can look at every phase of my life. And notice things that just make so much more sense. Now. Definitely, when you said the same around the home, that was a big one. For

me, I was 100%. That really, really messy head that it wasn't that I didn't want to clean space. I just never knew how to get there. My mom would come in like once a month with a trash bag and just like clear stuff out, and I never felt like I had get on top of it. And then as an adult, you know, I had some college roommates that were wonderful people that were really frustrated with my level of disorganization and living with me. And so I definitely, you know, learn to map that symptom quite well, to the outside world. Like I definitely have that house, but it's feared to be picked up. But if you sewed up on it out, I would panic because there was probably stuff in a really random spot. If you went just helped yourself and my girlfriend's the glass and started opening cabinets, I would be horrified because it was just everything stubbed in out of sight out of mind. And it always felt like so intrusive when people saw what was really going on behind the scenes. So that was definitely a big one. Recognizing that same and understanding that it's not because I'm lazy, and I don't care. Like there was a real reason for this was huge for me. Do you right?



Katy Weber 09:46

Yeah, absolutely. And realizing, you know, I've said this before on the podcast to like, What even is executive function? I had never heard that term until after my diagnosis when I was When I was sort of inducted into the world of ADHD terminology, I had no idea, you know that there could be this disconnect between, like you said, that desire to do things and the ability, and like, that was never something that I ever talked about in therapy. Like it was always just about, like, Oh, I'm such a terrible person, because I can't do blah, blah, blah. And you know, that there was something even called executive dysfunction, I think was so novel to me.



Meredith Carder 10:26

Yeah, I had never heard that term, either. And I don't think I heard it, even as my daughter was going through her process until I like, started reading more and hearing it and bugs and things like that. I never heard it from a clinician. So, you know, having some words to put to what was going on was really helpful for me.



Katy Weber 10:44

Yeah, yeah. Was your partner's reaction? Like, yeah, of course you have it? Or are they surprised? Or?



Meredith Carder 10:53

Well, I did verbal processing. So it was, you know, since I did take such a big array between navigating my daughter's diagnosis themselves, I had talked about with him a lot. We have a really close relationship. He's definitely a confidant of mine. But you know, he is very opposite of me. Like he is like, kind of the king of executive function. So I don't think it was a huge surprise. And he has always said he saw a lot of me and my daughter and vice versa. So he was very supportive, and was just like, yeah, obviously, this is, this makes a ton of sense.



Katy Weber 11:29

Yeah, my husband is so sick of me talking about it. Because I was diagnosed first, and then both of my kids got diagnosed over the summer. And it was after we had had this whole conversation with the psychologist where the psychologist was talking a lot about the stuff that I had been talking to him about, you know, casually for the last like two years where he finally had to admit, he's like, wow, you know a lot about this. Like, I know, because he's been hearing me talking about it casually, for so long at this point, now that I'm like, you're probably an expert, too. And so what are some of the things when you look back over, you know, in your childhood, or looking back in your life that you get where you're like, Oh, my goodness, the signs were there all along.



Meredith Carder 12:17

Oh, my God, I can produce stories for probably days that, you know, I meant to do that being really messy kid. But one thing that really stood out to me for my, like, kind of childhood school experiences, I did pretty well in school, because I really was curious and loved to learn a lot. So I did great. When it was a subject that I was interested in, and I liked science, I liked social studies. I like writing, I liked English, I love to read. So all those things were super easy for me, I never had to study, it was fine. But then math was like a different story for me. And I always kind of got by and did like the bare minimum. But I had no idea how to study, I had no idea how to organize myself at all, like my Trapper Keeper, you know, back in the 90s was like such a hot mess, that my dad's path was a disaster. So even though I, you know, felt mostly successful in school, there was definitely a part of me that was like, why can I do all of these things? But why is this one particular thing so massively hard, and that followed me in to college as well. I, one kind of like, very obvious story, is when I was dropping college algebra, I only had to take that one, you know, course, to graduate from college with the degree I was pursuing. And I would get into college algebra, I would sometimes miss class during the first couple weeks. And I would always go right up into that deadline to drop the class without penalty. And then I would wrap it and be like, Okay, I'm gonna try again. It's going to be different than next semester. And I did that through the entire four years just kind of avoiding and making it so much worse for myself. Because the farther you get from school and not doing any math, the harder it is right. And so I finally actually walked to graduation because they let you walk with you just kind of cup of credit that was standing signs up and did it and six weeks at summer school, but I finally realized, like, I have to refer to get it done. Like I had won the cap and gown and I was applying for jobs without understanding that I had a degree so I finally like got through summer school. I went to tutoring every day. And I got to see, I was so proud of myself for getting that done. That that it doesn't end there. Katie so I got it done. I moved to a new state to like, start my new life. I had set that I had a degree on my resume for my first job and then when I can't attend to my job So I lifted my degree, and then went to the interview. And then they call center like, Meredith, we are testing your references and verifying your degree. And your school says that you don't have a degree. And I was like, Oh, my goodness, I never submitted that transcript from that class, to make it official. So here, I was, just literally graduated from college, but I actually haven't. So I had to, like pay all these fees, and to get a rough sense of sense to get the degree process all because I couldn't deal with those executive function pieces around that and with those subjects, and of course, I tell this story, and I laugh now, but there was like, so much fame attached to it at the time. Like, I remember being so embarrassed to tell my parents that I hadn't done that password, it had just kind of completely slipped my mind. But now that I understand kind of what was happening in my brain, it makes total sense that that was the ADHD so unfair,



Katy Weber 16:07

right? I think so much of our negative self concept as we grow into adulthood as undiagnosed ADHD ears is that feeling of like, What is wrong with me? You know, and just constantly over and over of like, I don't understand why this slipped through the cracks, right? Or, like, I am able to do so many things. But I wasn't able to do this one thing. So what is wrong with me? And having that question over and over and over again, throughout your life and never having a real answer to it?



Meredith Carder 16:41

Absolutely. Yeah. That was really a big like, question answered, for sure. When I got that diagnosis.



Katy Weber 16:49

That's crazy. I had no idea businesses actually checked on your degrees, that



Meredith Carder 16:58

very large, well known nonprofit, so I think they cross all their t's and dot their eyes and, you know, get AIDS, maybe they are, they don't care as much. But I think at that time, since they had been a degree is required for the job that they wanted to do. And, sir, that,



Katy Weber 17:14

that's good to know. Because I always like, you know, whenever I moved, I always had my Bachelor's diploma. And I would always like, it was one of those things that I had felt like I had to hold on to, but it was just like, in an envelope in my attic. And I'm like, why don't have to always have you. And I was like, you know, it's not like I'm ever gonna frame my bachelor's in political science and put it on my wall somewhere. Like, I was just like, I just so desperately wanted to throw it away. And I'm like, you can't really throw away your college diploma. But I'm like, who cares? Like who would ever know or even look it up? So it's good to know, businesses, there are businesses who look it up?



Meredith Carder 17:48

Yeah. I got my degree, I didn't do grad school. So I'm sure at some point, I would have realized I didn't actually like do that last step. But had that not happened? It might have been a bigger problem later on.



Katy Weber 17:59



Yeah, I did the cardinal sit well, I did such a stupid thing, which is now looking back at it is so clearly ADHD, which is I was doing my final semester of university and I already had enough credits to graduate I, you know, this was just like, mostly just credits to like, finish out the year. And I got my dream job at a newspaper. And I just decided to stop going to all these classes, because I was like, you know, I've got enough to graduate. It was after the period where you could drop them. And I was like, I'm never going to grad school, it doesn't matter who cares. And so I just, like, flunked all the last the classes in the last semester, which destroyed my GPA. But I was like, who cares? I have enough credit, I, you know, I did, I was able to get my diploma. And, and it didn't really seem like a big deal until now. You know, 25 years later, almost, I wanted to go to grad school, and I begged, you know, pleading with my University, my alma mater, to take them off my transcript, and they won't, because they they said, I was like, Can I get a withdrawal? And they were like, No, it's been too long. And there's no evidence that you didn't attend the classes, and flunked, right. And I was like, Ah, okay, that's a weird reason. But I guess so now, I've got these like, F's on my script. And I'm just like, What was I thinking it was so it's so frustrating, and so short sighted, and I'm like, There's ADHD written all over that



Meredith Carder 19:22

100%. It's that now we're not now Right? Like, we're thinking about what's affecting us in that moment. And then that moment, our brain wants to do something else. So it makes total sense to me, that would happen. It's so frustrating. Yeah.



Katy Weber 19:37

So yeah, so you have your MBA. I'm curious, what were you, you know, before you pivoted to ADHD coaching, what what's your background? Because you have a psych background too,



Meredith Carder 19:47

right? Yeah, I got my MBA when I was pregnant with my first child and really getting interested in both, you know, because it's never one thing was he right where Interested in so many I was really interested in someday becoming an entrepreneur and I asked him I really was drawn to organizational psychology. So I kind of wanted to understand how businesses were ran for my own personal reasons and wanting to apply psychology and that way. As far as my professional background, I am definitely that Jane of all trades, personality, I have tried a lot of things. Definitely, like common threads were employee training and development and things like that, you know, I joke with each of my kids, I had to start a new business. So I would like you know, quit whatever job I was at, when I went on maternity leave, started business, do that for a couple years have some success. But that typical ADC thing of like, getting stuck, and not being able to like navigate the path through and get the right support, kind of always sabotage me a little bit. And I would also, you know, I wasn't aware of how, you know, important it is to avoid burnout as a business owner with AC. So, you know, I really enjoyed it, but I always kind of got stuck with go back to corporate. And, you know, I kind of got into ADHD coaching after starting to work with coaches myself, like during that process, when, even before I was diagnosed, I was working with coaches to understand my ADHD better be able to help myself be able to help my daughter because that was the piece where I was like, there's gotta be more than just a prescription. Like, I know, I need more. And I saw the power of posting in my own life, and in



my daughter's life. And I was doing a lot of like, hosting adjacent type of roles. At that time, I was working for a large company, as an employee coach. So it made a lot of sense for me to think, Okay, well, I'm posting are ready. And the corporate sector, why not post on something that I'm totally interested in fascinated, fascinated on, have direct experience. And I saw like how powerful it was, and what a big need there is for ADC coating. So that's kind of when I started to make that transition.



Katy Weber 22:18

Yeah, that's a really great point. I was just like, I was like, Yeah, that's probably why I ended up transitioning into coaching. From I traded, I became a coach, after my second was born, where I was, you know, had knew that I never wanted to go back to Deadline journalism, but knew that I couldn't, like, I couldn't I couldn't work in a newsroom anymore, because I had two kids. And I just was like, you know, I can't do it anymore. But I also knew that I was like, could never be a freelancer, because I was, so I needed deadlines, right, I needed the accountability of deadlines. And, and I had had such success with, you know, in my own life with coaching that I really appealed to me when I first started it. And, but I find that like, time and time again, even though we know it's so effective in terms of the accountability, right, and that idea of, of, you know, like, I liken it to like, being a personal trainer, right? Like, sometimes people can just go to the gym, and they can just get a gym membership. And they can do it themselves. And they go and they use the equipment, and they're totally fine with it. And I'm like, but like a lot of us can't, a lot of us need the accountability of like, some people can even just like sign up for a class and go to a class. And that's great. And sometimes you know, that, like, you need a personal trainer, you need somebody who's gonna keep you accountable. But at the same time, I also feel like, accountability is one of the things that so many of us struggle with, like, we should be able to do things on our own, right? Like, it's like this, this mental hurdle of like, ah, there's something wrong with me that I even need somebody to hold me accountable. Like, it feels like childish. And, and I think it's like, there's still a lot of shame around that right around the idea of like, I need somebody to do this for me, like I don't, I think it's pretty brilliant.



Meredith Carder 24:05

Honestly, I think one of the best things we can do as adults with ADHD is get comfortable with getting support and whether that means support running your home support, as in like a community of people that understand you and are cheering for you, or that accountability of working with a toast or something like that. But we can do so much more with the right resources than we can when we're constantly like, trying to just like, live in the woods, right? Like I said, be able to do this and just, you know, posting through those things that are really hard for us. Like it takes away the energy that we could be spending on the things that we're really good at. And people with ADHD oftentimes are really good at some things. But when we're so caught up in the things that are hard for us and not accepting support, it's hard to have the time and energy to lean into those strings.



Katy Weber 24:58

Yeah, I know That was so mind blowing for me. That idea of the default mode network and you know, the fact that it's more interesting for our brains to think about everything that's going



wrong, because there's hope there's dopamine in that there's no dopamine in all the effortless things that are going right in our life. So. And that was such that was so transformative for me to think about, like, Hmm, I wonder what like, you know, I'm like, why am I so depressed all the time? Maybe it's because all I do is think about what's not working in my life. And if somebody's you know, complements me, I think you were talking about that recently, too, right? Like, how we were so dismissive of anytime people compliment us, or it's, like, really uncomfortable to feel, to sit in your accomplishments. And I always thought that was like, Well, women are socialized to, like, you know, not brag, but I think there's so much more under the surface when it comes to how our brains operate. And like, where it's just not interesting.

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Meredith Carder 26:02

That's really why we like to, we don't like to, but we tend to have the right over our accomplishments. And I also think, with the way our memory works with AD V, sometimes we have to be really intentional to like, remind ourselves how far we, you know, like, we're only seeing the problems that are in front of us now. And sometimes we have to, like have a practice of going back, and evaluating where we used to be and everything we have done. And if we're not intentional about it, our brain is just gonna hold on to those problems that, like you said, are more interesting at the moment than going back and like, you know, acknowledging our success and our growth.



Katy Weber 26:42

Well, I think also you can, you can learn from what is working in your life in terms of like extrapolating, like, what is it about that, that seems to work for me, as opposed to, you know, something that I might struggle with in terms of, you know, how boring it is? Or how mundane or routine it is, you know, what is it about the things that I feel effortless that I can apply to the things that I have more difficulty into? And I think we we don't pay to, like, I think we just we exist in this world where, you know, it's like, nothing works for me, I'm a hot mess. Like, well, it's usually not the case.

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Meredith Carder 27:15

Yeah, it's easy for us to be in that like black and white, right? Like it's either all good or all bad. So it is important to, like you said, gather that evidence, like look at what's actually working and apply that to other areas and move forward and that way, but it's not always something that comes to us naturally. So we have to sometimes have, like you said, the accountability of working with someone or having a group or something like that, that kind of helps us see ourselves outside of ourselves, like look at us through a different lens and remind us and you know, over time, we can learn to kind of like self post through those things. But it isn't something that most of us are born to do, our brain does want to find the negative most of the time,



Katy Weber 27:56

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Listener of this podcast, you know, I am a big proponent of therapy. Therapy provides me the best opportunity for verbal processing something that is so important for my kind of brain and my sense of self. What I love about BetterHelp is that it's not a crisis line. It's not self help. It is professional therapy that's done securely online from the comfort of your home. They assess your needs and match you with your own licensed professional therapist, and it's available for clients worldwide. So you get access to a broad range of expertise that might not be available to you locally. It also tends to be more affordable than traditional offline therapy and financial aid is available. If you visit their website and read their testimonials. There are actually quite a few reviews that specifically reference help with ADHD as a special offer for listeners of the women and ADHD podcast, you'll get 10% off your first month, simply sign up at [betterhelp.com/women ADHD](https://www.betterhelp.com/women-ADHD). That's [BetterHelp help.com/women ADHD](https://www.betterhelp.com/women-ADHD), and there's a link in the show notes. This podcast is sponsored by BetterHelp. What do you think has changed the most in your mindset? Since your diagnosis? I don't know if that's even an answerable question. There's so much.

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Meredith Carder 29:11

My oh my goodness, you know, a huge thing for me was, for the longest time I thought the way to perceive success or whatever that means was to really have increasingly high standards for my I was definitely a perfectionist for most of my life. And I think a lot of it now makes sense with you know, being undiagnosed for so long. And it was just like a huge lightbulb moment when I realized how much that perfectionism was causing me to self sabotage. When I first thought about getting on Instagram to you know, find science and promote my coaching business. I just didn't think I could do it. Because I didn't think I could pop on a camera. I didn't know how to do it honestly, like, I didn't know how to make a real or I was also really worried about saying the wrong thing or being the expert. And it just delayed me from putting myself out there for a long time. And even at the very beginning, if you go back and look at my early Instagram, like, I was not that person that jumped on Instagram and grew right away. Like I didn't live long time, I think it was like I worked with a post to help me and she was amazing. But I could tell she was like, why isn't it worth making, like 10 pots growing like what is going on. And I think it's because I was being a perfectionist, and I wanted things until they were perfect. So that meant I wasn't being very consistent. And I wasn't being very authentic either at first. So really learning that, you know, I'm enough, where I'm at that at part of me that it's not all of me. And accepting kind of those things, like the cupboards that are a hot mess, always in my car that's like, never cleaned out. And not only my focus there all the time anymore, not trying to like constantly work from a place of bringing up any disrespect that I've had. But also just, you know, kind of like managing the symptoms that needed to be managed. But then putting more of my intention into what I was good at was like, a huge shift for me, and it just feels so much better. Not trying to live up to the impossible standards I



Katy Weber 31:39

had. Right? I know, I feel like so much of the time before my diagnosis, I was always like, trying to rein it in, right where I was like, Oh, I'm accidentally blurting out things and I Oh, God, I got it, I got to rein that in or like, I got to tidy that up, like pull back. It was always about like, How can I kind of gather up all of this chaotic things that had fallen out of my overflowing bag of me? And like, how can I get it all back in? And now I'm like, Oh my God, there's so much power and healing and just dumping it

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Meredith Carder 32:14

isn't real you right? Can you friends with that person that's like, so, so perfect, that they're putting their perfectionistic expectations on them. Do you know what I mean? Like ADHD people are finding most of the time that we are asking for great to be in conversations with they may not be very like linear, we're gonna go in circles, but we're gonna have a good time. We know so many interesting things. Like, why not lean into those pieces of ourselves and let go of the things that we used to think were like, such a big deal and that we were so bad at and just trying to fix all the time. You know, like, it feels so much better to just be authentic and see what the real reaction to that is. Because a lot of times it's so much more positive than we think it's gonna be.



Katy Weber 32:59

Yeah, totally. I know. It does feel like you're standing on the edge of a cliff sometimes when with especially when it comes to putting yourself out there on social media. I still like I'm constantly I get wrapped up in that, like, oh, it has to be perfect. It has to be well researched. And then I suddenly I'm like, oh, no, it's been like, three months since I've posted.

M

Meredith Carder 33:21

So I do think like, as a creator, and I funny that I'm even using that word to describe my this is I never anticipated this kind of having this impact, especially after six months, as you know, one like every time I posted, but there's a lot that I think we have to like work through when we're putting ourselves out there and that way because a lot of us, you know, we struggle with RST sometimes. So those negatives, roll comments, but other people can just like delete and block and have it not affect them like it's a p&l and I'm like to clean up typos. So it's almost a guarantee that there's gonna be a typo on almost everything I post so I try to proofread my brain does not see it. And you know, I don't want to delete everything I post after people comment. So there's always going to be people you know, and I, most of that time, people are not rude about that. But there's so much opportunity for us to ruminate and overthink about what we're posting and what we're putting out there. So, you know, that has been a challenge, but it's also been like, I think that's great exercise and continuing to like unlearn that perfectionism and that piece. While it's been really hard, I think it's been really valuable and has translated into other areas of my life as well.



Katy Weber 34:43

Yeah, I love that. How do you like manage boundaries around people asking you to help them personally for free all the time in your DMS because I know you must. I get it and you have so many more followers that I do. So I know you must get it all the time.

M

Meredith Carder 35:03

You know, I give you I feel like, try to give a lot of support away for free. It's just me and I thought about this a lot of like. do I need to have a specific boundary? There are questions I will

answer for people there there used to wear, you know, I have to see for them to like, either join my membership, or I played them in a direct kind of, you know, a resource. But I am very service minded and I get a lot of joy and satisfaction out of interacting with my audience. So, I don't have like a specific boundary around that I'm sure that's not fair people are thinking they're going to hear, I will say that I always ask for grace from when we do get so many DMS and the way Instagram is filtering things, you know, sometimes I just don't see things, you know, and I will like not answer. So I hope people aren't listening to this and being like, well, I sent you a DM two months ago, and you didn't get back to me. And you're saying you get back to people. So if you always ask for the other study that you're talking to somebody with ADHD do that, you know, I do try to have 1000s with myself more, I really focused on understanding my capacity. And I usually will not even open my DMs, if I'm not at a point where I can actually give them some time. If I'm like, you know, with my kids or at the weekend or things like that, I only will do that if I am telling myself this is like something I want to do versus something I feel like I have to do. So it's kind of more personal boundaries for me versus like tied to his boundaries with my audience. Yeah. Oh,



Katy Weber 36:43

good. I like that. Yeah, it's been, it's been such a learning process for me to lead mystery of just like how, you know, what am I okay, with? And what, you know, where we're in terms of, you know, do I feel like I'm being put upon, do I, you know, am I feeling like, I'm doing all this stuff for free, all the time. And yet, there's always more, you know, and, and, you know, and I'm like, I don't I don't ever want to get to a party, where I resent, you know, posting or just resent being on social media. But I also have to be like, so strict. And I'm, like always pulling back in terms of, like, how much I'm constantly attending to and giving in, in the platform?



Meredith Carder 37:25

Yeah, absolutely. I think that's something that capacity in general, is something that's super important for us to really understand and manage with ADHD, because like you said, there's always more we can give, right? And we tend to be very giving people. So really checking in with yourself and understanding like, am I getting resentful of having to do this. And that's when you I think, you know, it's a good time to reevaluate, you're having those feelings



Katy Weber 37:51

are also like just that idea that you like, there's so much I want to do, like, I want to do all of the things. But again, right, and I think it's like, how can we hold on to that enthusiasm, which I think is wonderful. I love that about myself, and how I approach things that like I'm always want, I'm always the one with the hand up to volunteer or to help, but like, you know, how can I hold on to that enthusiasm, but at the same time, like realize that that is actually quite unhealthy for mental health a lot of the time, and like, you know, realizing that the answer is almost always to do less and pull back.



Meredith Carder 38:29

Yeah, it is definitely I think that with ADHD, see, we don't always recognize that, sometimes impulsively, can until somebody can show up for us as being the one to raise our hands, guess I'll do this being the one to like be asked to, you know, do a volunteer opportunity, like, we almost always will react without that pause. So understanding that we have that tendency and having something to like, kind of pull out of our back pocket. Like, I kind of have a rule with myself, especially when it comes to volunteerism, to say, I'm really interested in evaluating if this opportunity is right for me, I will get back to you tomorrow. And if I don't, you can ping me or you can email me because again, like I did without a problem or that responsibility to act on the person asking because I'll forget that even if I'm feeling like yes, I want to say yes. And the moment I haven't taken the time yet to evaluate, like, what am I going to have to give up to do this? Do I actually have the kind of capacity to say yes to this. So kind of training myself to pause has been really really cool with not pitching and grabbing on more all the time, because there are so many exciting opportunities and we do want to say yes to a lot of things.



Katy Weber 39:41

I know right? That's what am i i get caught up in that it's my pet peeve that when businesses like will email and be like, you know, we really want to talk to you about this Can we jump on a call tomorrow? And I'm like, I understand why you're doing that. You know, you want to be you want to be specific and not open ended and like you know, but I'm so resistant to that I'm like, I see what you're doing and no, you're not going to like take advantage of by impulsive nature.



Meredith Carder 40:09


Yeah. And using that strength we have to kind of remind ourselves that we can.




Katy Weber 40:16

When I was diagnosed with ADHD, it completely turned my world upside down. I looked back at so much of my life, my grades in school, my multiple careers and hobbies, my friendships, my marriage, motherhood, my relationship with food and my body like all of this with a new lens. And it was overwhelming to say the least. If you've been diagnosed with ADHD and you're feeling blown away by this new insight into your brain and how it operates, I totally understand I can help you begin to sort through this chaos, explore who you are and how your brain operates. So you can finally start to lean into your strengths and begin to use them to your advantage moving forward together we can work to identify what obstacles you've been facing and create strategies to help you start living a more fulfilling gratifying life head over to women in adhd.com/coaching to book a 30 minute initial consult with me so we can figure out of my brand of one on one coaching is right for you. Again, that's women and adhd.com/coaching and you can find that link in the episode show notes. Okay, so I what do you what would you say you love most about your ADHD? We've kind of talked around that with you know, how your reels and I mean, you just I I know I said this already, but like you have so much helpful information on your Instagram account if there's if you're not following Meredith her her Instagram account will definitely be in the my show notes hummingbird eight is it hummingbird adhd with an underscore? I don't I don't have it in front of me.



 Meredith Carder 41:50

I mean, but under fulfill hummingbird underscore ADHD Yeah, you know. So your question around what do I love about my ad. I love that I am just like, a fun for learning new things. I am serious person I have been my whole life. And there's always something new to learn. And I think it makes me like, pretty fun at a party. Like I always have something to talk about, I can relate to a lot of people because I'm so serious. And a lot of my curiosity presents in wanting to really, like, truly understand and see people. Like when people are telling me their story. I'm always so curious to know more and understand. And I think it helps me in so many ways, but it helps me be really empathetic as well, because I've heard so many stories, and I've asked so many questions, that it's easy for me to have empathy for people, even people that have different views than me and live different lives by me and things like that. And I just love that my curious nature and my interests driven brain has kind of led me to explore so many different topics and learn so much about different people and things like that.

 Katy Weber 43:09

Yeah, that I love that. And I also am similar, like, it was so freeing for me to think about how much I love learning when it came to, you know, just like I love reading about topics and I love when there's no pressure to retain the information. Right? Once I realized that, like I was somebody who loved like, input, but was really, really bad at output right into in terms of like I really struggled in school with like, I would be have perfect attendance in school I would have, especially in university, I would have perfect attendance, I'd go to office hours, I would do all the things, I take all the notes. And then when it came to taking the test, I just was like I would kind of like do okay, you know, like, I just never felt like my output, Matt matched the enthusiasm of my input. And so I always like had that negative association with school, and like, but I always loved you know, throughout life when the pressures off to just like, learn about things. I'm like, I love it. Like, that's my favorite hobby.

 Meredith Carder 44:13

Why not? That's the beauty of being an adult, right is like, we have more capacity for that. And when we're kids when they're like, constantly, you know, forcing us to learn things we might not be interested in. But I do think that's really incredible. And I will say that I when I talk to a lot of people with ADHD, and they're also fascinating in their own way. And I think a lot of it is because we are so curious, driven.

 Katy Weber 44:34

And I think also there I find a lot of us are able to really kind of connect dots between, you know, when it comes to certain information that you can be like, oh, yeah, that also reminds me of this and I think it makes me fascinating, meandering realizations, right so that you can have like a deeper insight into it, you know, ideas and conversation for sure.

 Meredith Carder 44:59

You know, When you talk about that, like dots connecting like that intuition that we develop a sense of God. I think it's so much more powerful than anyone talks about. And it's hard to

sense of God, I think it's so much more powerful than anyone talks about. And it's hard to always like, kind of pinpoint when it's happening. But we are kind of those people like in the corporate world where people are probably like wanting us to brainstorm with them. Like, we're the people that people want us to put that different lens on things. And I think it's really cool to think about and there's actual, like, explanations for why our brain is like this. You know,



Katy Weber 45:29

I, you cracked me up the other day when you posted about watching trailers and reading book reviews, because I made me laugh so hard, because I was like, it's true. Like, I will, I will. I love watching trailers. And I really don't like watching the movie, because I'm like, we already did this in the trailer.



Meredith Carder 45:48

Right. But I



Katy Weber 45:50

just love them. I feel like it's such an art form to come up with, you know, a three minute synopsis of a movie, and I always appreciate the editing and everything, but I'm like, there's also just that part of me. That's like, I wish all movies were only three minutes.



Meredith Carder 46:03

Yeah, honestly, I felt me committing to like, pay attention to something for an hour and a half. Like, I want to know that this movie is gonna grab me like you need to, like, prove to me that this is 50 worth it. Because it's hard for us to like have that sustained attention on something if it's not really interesting to us, you know, and I think that's where I'm like, okay, Taylor, Taylor, Taylor. And then I'm distracted. And I'm like walking over here to do something. And I forgot I was even looking for a movie. So like, there's a lot going on with that behavior. But most of us have ADHD.



Katy Weber 46:34

I know right? And say with reading reviews, right? Where it's like, okay, I want as much I want to know as much as possible about what it is that I might like, potentially be getting or buying or reading and, but I also just find them so entertaining. It's like a hobby.



Meredith Carder 46:52

Yeah, reading reviews, that they're at home.





Katy Weber 46:57

Uh, yeah, whenever I get a negative review for this podcast, I've always like, I have so much RSD around it. And so I'm like, it's very meta for me when I think when I talk about like, yeah, the very few times somebody's given me a one star review from my podcasts. But I've also usually tried to be like to have empathy for that person who's reviewing it, where I'm like, you know, they're probably, like, really want to get as much information as possible about ADHD as quickly as possible. And they're listening to this podcast. They're angry because they're like, What are you guys rambling on about? And I'm like, I have so many times impulsively, just like anger had anger outbursts as a result of my ADHD that I'm like, It's okay. You can have your anger outburst? It's fine. I don't mind. I get it.



Meredith Carder 47:44

You know, I love it personally. When we're doing anything that is for like public sentiment, right, with the RFP fees, I honestly see it impacting my business too. Like when you talk about reviews, I have a really hard time asking my clients for feedback. Like they're asking us happy, they're telling me they're happy. But it's like, so hard for me to send that like, kind of septons survey or something like that. And I'll get the notification, I won't want to open it. Because what if they said something bad. And I think that's a real issue for a lot of us with ADHD and some glue that holds us back from even starting the thing we're dreaming about doing? You know what I mean? I wonder how many contractors are out there that haven't started their podcast yet, because they know those reviews are going to be so hard for them. So I just want to say I think it takes this kind of courage, you know, with as a person with ADHD to put a podcast together and know you're gonna get feedback that may not always be kind or positive.



Katy Weber 48:43

Oh, yeah. Well, if my first reviews had been that terrible, you know, I would have quit 100% You know, I those were, the positive reviews are absolutely what keeps me going and give me the dopamine. And I feel like if I had had negative reviews, right at the beginning, I would have quit immediately. And so now now the when I do get them, I'm sort of like it's a point of pride where I'm like, Oh, I'm popular enough to get negative reviews.



Meredith Carder 49:11

I get comments when my content is doing really well on Instagram. So I do the same thing of like, see, like reaching more people. Now. I will say, we talk about the negativity a lot. But there's some people in the ADHD community I think are overwhelmingly supportive. And since so many of us spent so much of our lives, not understanding how our brain works. I have seen so much like kindness and support of other people in that position from, you know, the interactions that happen on my page from the interactions that happen in the groups that I run that that same, you know, like you described going back and reminding yourself with a positive like, there's so much positive to draw on when that negative comes in that when we can use that tool. It can really help us not get too caught up in that.



Katy Weber 49:56



Katy Weber 49:56

Yeah, good point. I love that. I will try to take that Hart, I'll just, I'll just remember I have to listen to this episode, whatever. I'm having trouble with that. Yeah. So now I'd love to ask if you could rename ADHD to something a little less confusing. Would you call it something else?



Meredith Carder 50:13

Oh, my God, I knew this question was coming because I listened to your podcast. Yeah, I'm naming things has always been my like Achilles heel, like, anytime I started, there's this like, never name it. Naming Oh, my God, it's so hard for me. And I actually could ask those questions. My audience, I had a post on this several months ago. And that's so many responses that were so creative and fun. And I think what's hard about this question is that, like, ADHD is so much, right. And trying to find a phrase or some like a term that really can encompass everything about ADHD. It's so multifaceted. It feels impossible to do. But I will say I would love to see us getting away from the word disorder. And I know for a lot of people like I don't want to, you know, diminish how much trouble can come with ADHD. But I think when that that may word we're hearing I'm not saying it's not a disorder, but when that's like, actually in the name like that, that's kind of where our brain goes, right. I think Attention Deficit is super misleading, because we have tons of attention. We just don't know where to put it. We don't we have trouble regulating it. So I think something around regulating attention would be interesting. And, um, you know, again, I just don't have the right words, what are some of your favorites that people have come up with? Well, it's,



Katy Weber 51:41

you know, it's funny, because the name hummingbird is so perfect. I thought for sure you were just gonna be like, I already came up with the best name hubbing. Because it's such a wonderful name.



Meredith Carder 51:53

In Belgrade. That's it. That's why we're calling it now that not so long story on how I came up with that name, as well. And it's like, I love the story of how, how I made my business this time around. But it is so hard, right? Like, I think we can all agree that a b is so much more than hyperactivity and inattention. And like, there's so many other pieces to it. It's it's hard for me to sum that up in a perfect row world. Sometimes I wish it was just like, named after somebody's like last name. And then, you know, we weren't trying to like tie so much is winning, right? We could just learn about it,



Katy Weber 52:32

right? Yeah. No, no, I agree. But I love it. And I love the name, hummingbird. It's such a lovely image. And I like how you can always you know, there's so much of your language around like taking flight, like there's so much you could do with it.

M

Meredith Carder 52:47

So now the metaphor.



Katy Weber 52:49

So now you have so many incredible offerings. Tell me about yourself led course. Because I think that's such a great thing to have available for somebody is it's for people who are just starting out, or who is that courseware? It's called ADHD one on one, right?

M

Meredith Carder 53:06

Yes, it is the one on one I go into. And as I say, biology of AC and one of the modules, and then we talk about the symptoms, we talk about the strength. And then the final module is just an introduction to some of the tools that you can use to manage your ADC. And then the reason I put this course together is because I had been on that path of really trying to get a lot of information about AD D. And I kept like trying to find that perfect book. And I was trying to find, you know, all of these pieces, and there's so many great books out there. But so many of them are really long, you know, and I wanted something a little bit more interactive that I can offer to people that had been in that position that I was that were like, I need more info than that pamphlet that was given to me at the doctor's office, I need to dive in. And I'm reading these articles, and I'm consuming this information on the internet, but I need it kind of like tied together in one package so that I can reference. So I really just wanted to create something that was like accessible to a broad population. So I think it's a great option for people that are recently diagnosed. I also think, you know, a story I hear a lot with people I work with, it's like, yeah, I was diagnosed 10 years ago, but nobody really taught me about ADHD, like I just knew I couldn't sit still in school. So for those people that are like, I'm just now learning, there's so much more to add. See, I think that's a great resource. And I've even had parents of children with ADHD that want to understand what's happening for their children better. It's not parenting focus. But I think that one of the best ways we can help our loved ones is by understanding them better. So I think that there is a broad appeal there.



Katy Weber 54:51

Yeah. Okay. And then you also have, you've got your hummingbird hive right and the monthly membership to All right.

M

Meredith Carder 55:01

So the Happy Birthday, there's a monthly member set them up the hummingbird pies is kind of a space where we have like a, we have an outside platform out of Facebook and Instagram where we can have like a message board type conversations for support. And then we have weekly meetings for anything from like accountability and planning your week, like we meet every Monday to like, just have dedicated time to look at our week and say, Okay, this is what I want to focus on the most. We also have at least one meeting a week where I do office hours, and people can drop in anytime within the hour and ask me questions, or a lot of times, what

usually happens is we all just start chatting, and we just get to hang out with other people with neurodivergent brains. I think that, you know, that's such a gift, to be able to share space with other people whose brains work like ours view, and to kind of create community around that. So that's a great option for people that really are looking to connect with others with ADHD and be part of a community.



Katy Weber 56:03

Yeah, I know, I feel like a broken record when I'm like, find your people because it's so true how, you know, the power of community, especially for neurodivergent women. It's that, that the validation that is that comes from having a conversation about things like shame, and you know, and how we are all kind of fascinating, credible, you know, women who also feel like hot mess, like, I always say, like, I've always like a conversation with another ADHD woman is like, undoing the button on a two type pair of pants, like, it just feels so good. And I learned so much more about me through a one hour conversation than I ever would through a book or an article or, you know, a medical text or anything like that. And so it's like, it's so I just feel like it's so beneficial to like to have just those random conversations about like what we do. And also crowdsourcing I think is something that we don't realize that we've always sort of been intuitively that person who's gathering knowledge, right? And it's like, oh, like many of us, when we were diagnosed with ADHD, immediately went to Facebook and like, joined all the Facebook groups. And I'm like, there's a reason why we do that, because we are gathering of, you know, gathering as much information as possible. But also, I think it's like very healing to realize, Oh, my goodness, this is not just me. Right, other people are experiencing this. And it's like



Meredith Carder 57:30

that. Yeah, I think that that's something that's so common for people with ADHD as they go a lot of their life feeling like, they're different. And they can't really put their finger on why, and then they get that diagnosis, or they, you know, are self diagnosed and feel like, wow, I finally have an answer here. And they may not know anybody else with ADHD, or they probably do, but they don't know, they know somebody else with ADHD because, you know, they haven't disclosed or people aren't talking about it. And then being able to be in this community, where you can all like have a contest to see how who has the most unread emails, and like, everyone's laughing and nobody's horrifying. Like, that's what happened in our group yesterday, as somebody was talking about managing communications. And I'm like, I've got 10,000, unread and drugs. And I thought I was in and we all just felt seen and comfortable, like sharing that fact about ourselves. And, you know, we weren't worried about that person, like site is that we're not organized. And, you know, we all have our own systems, like they have their reasons, we have all those unread emails like I was to search through and find that information I might have been. But you know, my point is that like just sharing space with other people that are seeing and like you said, you can crowdsource we can learn about each other. And it's just a fresh breath of fresh air, when you've spent your whole life feeling like okay, I'm different, but I don't really understand why or how



Katy Weber 58:56

that's so interesting. You know, would you say it's true, like so many of us have found, felt like, I'm different. And I can't put my finger on it. I don't know why. And yet, when we find out what's

different about us, we realize that like, those are things we thought everybody else did. We didn't realize that not everybody is like that.

M

Meredith Carder 59:17

Yeah. And then they said definitely me early after. You know, I learned that after living like I feel like I was surrounded by like, people that were super organized and that, you know, my husband is super organized. My best friend is really organized. I don't know if I was drawn to them because I like praying to that like consistency because I was so inconsistent. And again, I'm like, totally losing my train of thought here about what I was even talking about. Oh, so I did. I definitely was like very clear in my brain operating and what I consider the normal way that there have been those moments throughout the journey of like, oh, okay, yeah, I thought, you know, until I lived with somebody that didn't do things the way I did, it was like, oh, it's not normal to like, constantly be like, putting your coffee pot in their freezer or like, driving away with, you know, cup of coffee on your car or panicking at work and ruminating all day that you might have left a curling iron on. Like, I did kind of think that how everybody's brain works. And so I like started talking about it. And then people are like, No, I never do that. Oh,



Katy Weber 1:00:28

I know. Exactly. Right. Yeah, that's funny. Oh, well, Meredith, thank you so much. It's been really wonderful getting to know you a little bit more and hearing more about your own personal story. And I just, I can't say enough how much I love your Instagram account and your content. And just I think you're doing such amazing things for this community. So thank you for sitting down with me.

M

Meredith Carder 1:00:51

Thank you for having me today. It was such an honor to get put tags, you know, Berkeley face, face, I love your content as well. So this was really, really funny.



Katy Weber 1:01:06

And there you have it. Thank you for listening. And I really hope you enjoyed this episode of the women and ADHD podcast. Also, you know, we ADHD ears crave feedback. And I would really appreciate hearing from you the listener. If you're a fan of the podcast, please take a moment to leave me a review on Apple podcasts or audible. And if that feels like too much, and I get it, then just take a few seconds right now to give me a five star rating. Or share this episode on your own social media to help reach more women who maybe have yet to discover and lean into this gift of neurodivergent. See, and they may still be struggling and don't even know why. And if you'd like to find out more about me and my one on one coaching for women with ADHD, head over to [womenandadhd.com/coaching](https://www.womenandadhd.com/coaching) and you can always find that link in the show notes. I'll see you next week when I interview another amazing woman who discovered that she is not lazy or crazy or broken. But she has ADHD and she is now on the path to understanding her neurodiversity and finally using this gift to her advantage. Take care till then

