

Mallory Band: Learning when and how to ask for help

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SPEAKERS

Mallory Band, Katy Weber



Mallory Band 00:00

We can't be superwoman all the time. So some days we're going to be motivated. And some days you know, you can't teach motivation. But some days you have the energy to do this stuff. And some days, all you do is get up and send an email. And maybe that's all you can do. Okay, well, you still got up, you survived the day, and that's perfectly fine. It might not feel great, but it just is part of life and accepting that is part of the battle, I think.




Katy Weber 00:28

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 like 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 share with you this review from a listener called Trisha Q. On the apple podcast platform, it's entitled so much nodding in agreement, shaving seconds off the time a task takes, which is something companies pay people big salaries to do creating systems to make doing things more palatable to your own brain. Even when people in your life don't get it and organizing with piles. These are my people. Thank you, Trisha. Que I'm so glad we're all finding each other, and learning to love our brains and lean into our unique strengths. And just a quick reminder that if you're looking for a safe, inclusive, friendly and supportive group of women with ADHD, who will have your back look no further than the women and ADHD online community, I always say that finding our people is an important part of our treatment plan. And I'm so grateful for this online space for us to connect, ask questions, share strategies and advice or just vent. I am continually amazed at the level of empathy and kindness and thoughtfulness that exists within the group. Certainly something I don't see very often in social media spaces. So come join us over at women and adhd.com. And of course, that link is in the show notes. Okay, here we are

at Episode 106, in which I interview Mallory Band, Mallory was diagnosed with ADHD and anxiety at the age of eight. She now works as an executive function specialist who helps children teens and young adults work toward independence, increased organization and improve time management and follow through she recently founded band together education, a community that helps individuals with ADHD and learning differences reach their full potential. Mallory has written for attitude magazine and attention magazine and she is currently working on publishing her first book, and next month she will be speaking about impostor syndrome at the annual International Conference on ADHD in Dallas. We talk all about anxiety, especially anticipatory anxiety, both in childhood and adulthood, and how perfectionism and anxiety interrelate with ADHD. We also talk about chronic overwhelm and the many complicated difficulties we tend to face when it comes to asking for help. All right, here is my interview with Mallory. Hi, Valerie, thank you so much for joining me.

 **Mallory Band** 03:26


Thank you for having me. I'm thrilled to be here. Yay.

 **Katy Weber** 03:29

I'm so excited. And I do I have a pile of questions for you. But let's get started with your diagnosis story. So you were diagnosed in childhood, correct?

 **Mallory Band** 03:40

Yeah, I and I think maybe it's helpful to provide a little bit of background, I guess about my family and how this came to be

 **Katy Weber** 03:49

sure. Yeah, I'll go for it.

 **Mallory Band** 03:51

So just about my parents a little bit, but my dad is still a practicing psychiatrist. And my mom was a special educator for over 30 years. So they were both very well versed, you know, even though this was 2030 years ago, and the ADHD world is it is different now as we know it. So having that knowledge and information and then anyone who knows, my dad, you know, will say oh my gosh, of course he has ADHD, he had a late diagnosis, an adult diagnosis that maybe 40 or something. So he was diagnosed and then I had two older brothers who also were diagnosed. So I think just thinking my parents thinking, genetics are sort of playing in our favor in that the likelihood it's not definite, but the likelihood is that Mallory probably also does have ADHD,

 **Katy Weber** 04:12



Katy Weber 04:42

that still feels like very forward thinking even that alone, right, thinking like my son's habit, so therefore, it's likely My daughter has it I feel like even that is very forward thinking. For sure. And I



Mallory Band 04:53

think to the ways in which I exhibited different characteristics or symptoms of ADHD were certainly different than how my brothers did. But I just still do this. To some extent it looks differently, hopefully as an adult, but had extreme and intense emotions. I mean, that was sort of something that I struggled with when I was younger. And I think that was something that, you know, my parents had this sort of question, and I wonder, is this you know, quote unquote, typical of, you know, an elementary age student? Or is, is there something maybe else going on here that, you know, there's another layer of some things as well. And I guess it's sort of in addition to that, combing through, but I also got an anxiety, anxiety diagnosis simultaneously, which is really hard to sort of distinguish between the comorbidity of that all but hmm, I wonder my child is having, like racing thoughts and rumination, and that, you know, might not feel super typical, or maybe, course all children have anxieties and worries, but this is sort of different than what other eight year olds are exhibiting and dealing with. So sort of brought up some questions and some thinking, for my parents to go through.



Katy Weber 06:10

Yeah, right. And I think so many women who are seeking a diagnosis in adulthood are met with that comment from their physician, which is like, well, there's no evidence of struggle in your childhood. So therefore, you're you got good grades, you know, everything was fine. You were a good kid. And so you can't possibly have ADHD. And you're like, well, there's no evidence of struggle, because I was so anxious. I was overcompensating with perfectionism and hiding it, you know, and it's like, how do you even begin to unravel? Like, where was I struggling in childhood? You had such a great example of your anxiety, childhood anxiety when you did the video? The interview you did with Chad, was it I think it was Chad last summer, where you're talking about the perfectionism with homework even in kindergarten. Can you tell me that story again?



Mallory Band 07:02

Yeah, I mean, I, you know, I love to talk about this. And it's funny. It's like, do I remember this? Or is it a story that I've heard a million times and it becomes a memory, but I really do think I do, sort of remember this. But, you know, in kindergarten, we get homework on on Monday, and it's due on Friday, and just sort of a typical little packet of homework. And for me, that was not so I hated that, because it was open ended in the sense of when are you going to do it when you're going to get it all done. And for me, it was it's given to you on Monday, therefore, it has to be completed by Monday before bed, or else I'm going to have a great sense of discomfort. And I will say like, that's something that I'm trying to unlearn now as a 30 year old, where I can't do all of my work in one day, and I can't certainly can't do it well, and it feels extremely uncomfortable to who I'm not going to respond to this email right now, I'm going to let it sit and sort of wait and trying to use this experience to sort of work through that. But

essentially, you know, we had an A to Z book where you know, you have 26 letters, you have four days to sort of do it to turn it in on Friday. And I just remember sitting up on the stairs, like leading up to my bedroom, I don't know why I was working there, but probably sprawled out. And I told my parents, I have to finish this. And they're like, Well, you know, you have tomorrow and the next day and the next day as well. And we can chunk it out. We can do a few letters today, tomorrow. No, like, I hear what you're saying. But that's not a choice and my brain. And this is still something that I do struggle with my I hear what you're saying. But that's not the rational part of my brain is not able to conceptualize that being an option. It's, it is a lot of the all or nothing, I have to get it done, I have to respond immediately. Because it feels worse, to have something lingering. So I am sort of that person who has things on my to do list and if they're not checked off by, you know, the end of the day, that feels so uncomfortable. But recognizing, oh, this is adulthood, there was always going to be a million things that are unchecked. So trying to understand, okay, that's okay, we deal with it, we understand and, you know, you get through it. But within that experience alone, it was a lot of screaming a lot of crying a lot of cursing, I mean, looking back, I feel horrible for the way I treated my parents and just like, you know, using them as punching bags, because I think that is something that I've discovered as an adult is that I would get really angry with my parents but it was me feeling upset with myself for not being able to, to break it down or to not, you know, whether it was something with math and I didn't understand so I would scream at my dad because he wasn't teaching it to me fast enough. Even though he has a full time job and he like has to do stuff when he gets home and helping me with my homework is not yes, it is a priority, but there's a lot of other things going on. as well. And I think that's something that certainly continued on even through high school were feeling like yes, it was a different, maybe example. But it was still the, here's a lot of homework, like getting a syllabus or getting an assignment was so anxiety provoking because there's so many steps to do. And I didn't know how to break that down. It had to be broken down into one piece in one sitting and it had to be today.



Katy Weber 10:27

Oh, my goodness, this is so relatable. I have a having one child who is the like, overwhelmed, but both of my kids were diagnosed with ADHD and generalized anxiety at the same time. So I understand that idea of like, how do you begin to kind of really figure out which is which. But like, I have one kid who is the hopping from foot to foot have to get this done immediately. Everything is urgent, I hate when things are, you know, hovering above me, I gotta get it done. And then the other one who's like, he's driven by anxiety. And then my daughter is like, the procrastinator who leaves everything to the last minute. And but I see that anxiety too, right? The anxiety of not doing and the the anxiety of the paralysis. And we have that struggle a lot right now with her. She's in high school. And it's, you know, this constant, like, why are you reminding me of these things? Why are you telling me that I have to do these things versus stop being so in my business, you know, that like realizing that she's at that stage of her life where she wants to be independent, but at the same time, needs a lot of help and with structure and like, that's what we're so you know, I'm looking into executive function coaching for both of them for different reasons. I want to get into that later. But how was growing up with ADHD, I guess, in school, and what was your history with education as a diagnosed kid?



Mallory Band 11:44

Yeah, I think that that I think this is a great question. And I think like, not that any answer would be typical. We know that everyone is unique, of course. But I think that I wasn't the kid who

was procrastinating I wasn't the kid who was, couldn't sit still and couldn't do this. And I think that it was almost like I'm trying to unlearn some of these things. And I had amazing teachers, but I would be getting, I mean, I always got straight A's. They always did, you know, strove for perfection. But the weird thing, and I'm sorry, my brain is like popping in with all the things but the weird thing is like, like until recently, and I've like grappled with this. It's like, I never really considered myself as being smart, despite like, your teachers telling you. Like, this was so embarrassing. I remember in ninth grade, my teacher said in front of everyone was so embarrassing, but like, I wish every student was like Mallory, and that that was so embarrassing, or like teachers were praising, like, Wow, you got it in so early. And I think that was almost like, a false, like, just a negative, almost connection, where it's, oh, the teachers are telling me because I did it so quickly. I did it. So well, I should keep going along that way. And that was almost fueling the urgency within schooling. So that was something that I'm still trying to, you know, I don't have homework, but I have other things that I need to complete. And you know, that it's the same idea when we think about, you know, executive functioning where we have to break things down. What's the priority with life, not just schooling, of course. But thinking about school is I loved school, I love to learn. But there was a lot of anxiety around like test taking, and things like that. And it was just really weird in that it was just, this was all I knew. So I always got, you know, like, of course, in elementary school, we didn't really have like, extra time and stuff. But like, I didn't care that I sometimes would like go into a different room or would stay longer to do tests and things like I appreciated that because it would give me anxiety to see people get up and turn their tests in so quickly. And I was like, Oh, I'm on page one. Like, what's I'm confused. And I think also like, my middle brother, and I went to the same middle school in high school, and we were three years apart. So like the fact that like, he also would have extra time. It's just like, oh, and he was a kook. So it's like, I didn't really care that much. I was lucky in the fact that like, that was normal for me, because that's all it ever was. And then when I was in college, you know, we're taking tests and like, you know, a little trailer rule and I'm like, okay, great. I can just take my tests in private, I really don't care. I know some kids. And people that I work with, like really don't want to do that, because it does feel alienating, but I appreciated that. And I will say like, group projects were the worst thing of my life that brought forth so much anxiety because I think part of the ADHD and anxiety is if I'm not in control, it feels so awful if I don't know what's coming so like working with others, and I'm moving at 500 miles per hour. Most typical high school kids would Alright, we got something do we'll deal with it. We'll do this and I'm you know, trying to gather the troops and do all this seven, I would rather just do it all myself. So I know I've gotten done and that was really challenging, I think in school of like, learning to work with others because not everything I can just do on my own and tell other people what to do. So that was that was a big challenge in school. But I was lucky in the sense where I did love school, I had accommodations, use them as needed. And now looking back, I can certainly see, Whoa, that was like these were some like ADHD moments or like some sort of like a lot of anxiety coming into this, maybe that wasn't the healthiest way to approach this, or certainly that probably was not, and trying to use those experiences now to help me pave a different path, because I just, you know, maybe we'll talk about this later. But you know, it will lead to burnout, it does lead to, you know, this weird sort of needing praise from other people, instead of realizing I can praise myself, I can be proud of this, but I can't just rely on other people to tell me a good job, perfect. You know, this, and that, because that doesn't always happen in adulthood. That doesn't happen in real life all the time. I mean, we're always sort of seeking that, that dopamine, and that praise that can be really problematic with self esteem. And that's sort of something I'm grappling with currently.



Katy Weber 16:03

Yeah, I know, right? I feel like that topic comes up a lot. And, you know, we're trying to kind of figure out, like, where is where does the perfectionism come from? Does it come from having like, being very bright, and having a lot of high expectations of ourselves, but at the same time, also, feeling really, like you said, kind of out of control about our intellect, like, I will often like I loved learning, if I was interested in a subject, I was absolutely enthralled. But often, that didn't guarantee that I would do well on a test, you know, based on what the subject was. And so there was always this fear that like, like, I'm secretly really dumb, because I can't like show my intellect and in a way that is acceptable. But then, at the same time, we were often set things, you know, many of us received those comments from our teachers, which is like, you know, Valerie's really rare, Katie's really bright, but, and then a list of some things that she could work on. And then as my personality or maybe it's my neuro divergence, that's like, all I focused on was what I wasn't doing. And so I would become obsessed with that perfectionism. And I was like, where is that coming from? Is that an ADHD thing? Is that an anxiety thing? Is that is everybody experienced that? I don't know.

M

Mallory Band 17:19

Yeah, no. I mean, I can completely relate to that. And I think like, you know, when we were talking earlier, before the show, I think it's like thinking about like, Yes, I was diagnosed as a child, but I'm still continually learning things about how my ADHD has evolved as I've evolved, and how it displays in different ways. And I think like, I didn't have a name for perfection, is it like I couldn't match the behavior with the feeling. And I didn't know that that is what it was. And I didn't even know that rejection sensitive dysphoria. I didn't know that was I didn't even know what that was. And I was read something on attitude. Like this was like, maybe literally two years ago when I was like, Oh, my goodness, that's me. That makes so much sense. Whoa, this is like a thing. And I have that thing I you know, and recognizing, like, other people struggle with that. And I think like, for me, it's been the biggest thing was untangling perfectionism. RSD, and impostor syndrome. And I think, like, it was just so weird, like, my mom was, we're joking. But like, you know, my parents, I'm lucky. My parents are so supportive. And people will say, You're smart. But I just, I think it's the comparison of maybe, but other people like, the way that they speak Wow, they're so articulate, and sometimes I have realized this a lot where I am talking, and then you completely lost my train of thought and have no idea what we were talking about, or have another idea. And let me give you the whole backstory of the story. That's not relevant, but I can't stop myself because I'm already here. Like, that's my downfall. And it is it drives me nuts. It drives my husband nuts. It drives everyone nuts, but I can't stop doing it. And I think like, you know, oh, I studied for six hours and got an A this kid didn't study and still got like an A, and like that, for me was like, what was confusing on what is being smart? And you know, my mom would say, well, but this is this was the IQ when you get tested. I'm like, what that would mean, I'm like, really smart. I don't understand because I don't feel smart, because I feel like I'm doing all these things that other people aren't doing to prepare. But I will say that, yes, having ADHD is really hard. And it is super frustrating sometimes, but I think that there are so many things that I've been able to learn that are beyond helpful for moving through adulthood when random challenges were not expecting pop up. And that's something I just realized that is adulthood, but we don't, you can plan you can plan you can plan but then all of these things pop up and realizing we are smart, we can figure this out. We can problem solve can be really helpful. But I guess that was sort of a tangential thought. And for like thinking about sort of perfectionism, and I I always thought that like, other people have these expectations for me, but like, I was lucky, my parents weren't like, you have to get straight A's. That wasn't a thing. That wasn't ever something that was said. But I didn't realize until recently I did. Somewhere along the line, I just thought that's what it was. That was the

expectation. But that really was my own expectation. And I don't know where that stemmed from, I don't know where that came from. But, you know, maybe insecurities of I need to protect my that was sort of my coping mechanism. And I need to protect these other fragile parts that are that are insecure, that are vulnerable, I didn't have those words to say I feel vulnerable, vulnerable about blah, or whatever, when I was eight, but realizing that that's probably what it was, or I need to be the best at sports, I need to get the best grades because I can cover up the other things that I don't want people to see about me.



Katy Weber 20:54

Yeah, oh, God, it's so complicated and nuanced, because that's the other thing. Like, I feel like my parents did everything right. In terms of, you know, if I wasn't getting straight A's, they were always very supportive, and said, you know, no, we don't expect you to get straight A's, we just want you to be happy. And not everybody has to be, you know, get 100%. But I also kind of look back at that and feel like I could have used a little more push a little more prodding. And, you know, because I was so disappointed at myself when I wasn't getting the A's. And so like you said, a lot of that was from internal and sort of feeling like they kind of gave up on me like, like, you know, and so now as a parent, I look at him, like, what is the best narrative around success, because I want them to be proud of themselves. I want them to push themselves. I know how important that can be to your self esteem in the long run. But I also, you know, I don't want them to burn out or feel like all I care about is the A Yeah, I feel like it's it's a really delicate.



Mallory Band 21:50

Yeah, for sure. You know, I'm not a parent yet, but I just working with, you know, parents and families and seeing now, I am so grateful for what my parents did. And just, it must be so hard to be a parent, especially with kids who have you know, ADHD, we have anxiety, we have learning differences. And I think a big part of it is when it's appropriate, like involving the kid in the conversation, and what are their own goals for them. So for their selves, what do they want to do, and it's so important as a parent, or as the adults to be honest, and talk about when you've completely failed and fallen flat on your face. And then what you did about it, I think, being careful with what we say, Because kids will pick up on that when we're talking about ourselves as the adults, and just being conscious of that, because they're they're sponges, and they're gonna pick up on how sort of our body language what we say what we don't say. And also just like, helping them understand that. We can't do it all in one day. But we can be strategic with focusing on what are the priorities, what are we trying to achieve? And how are we going to get there. And I'm such a big advocate for helping kids understand, like asking for help is so necessary, because when you're an adult, some adults still don't realize that and I find that to be a really unattractive trait when you think you can do it all on your own. Because that just, you know, whether it's narcissistic or pride or ego, I don't know what it is. But like, I've always been someone who's been comfortable. And I'm lucky in the sense where I will ask for help. Because I think I'd rather not deal with the internal anxiety of oh my gosh, I'm gonna go home and not know what to do. I'd rather ask for help. Even though I did feel really stupid, a lot of the times where sometimes I would force my best friend to ask the questions for me, because she would do it when I was just too scared to ask the teacher but just like, needing to ask for help. And I think for kids that's so valuable, because we don't know what we don't know. But there's always someone out there who can help you. And if you don't say you need help,

they might not know that. And I think just bringing that to light can be super helpful. But needless to say, parenting must be extremely challenging. But it's really helpful to have a lot of free resources out there of people talking more openly about their experiences, because I think, probably 20 years ago, even just there wasn't a lot of this dialogue about this, there was much more of a stigma around all of these things, you know, whether it's ADHD, or anxiety or whatever, and it's no one's fault. It's not nothing's to be at fault. It's just this is how your brain is, this is how your nervous system is. How are we going to then help you be as successful as you can you want to be and you know, and it's hard. It's a challenge, but it's doable.



Katy Weber 24:41

Or at least like overcome that feeling like everybody else has it figured out but me which I think is so common to so many of us with ADHD that that feeling like Yeah, and that's I've said this so many times on the podcast where I'd never even had heard the term executive functioning until I was diagnosed with ADHD. It was kind of inducted into this world. Have no divergence. And I feel as though there's so many things around executive functioning that are just life skills that I feel like I needed to be explicitly taught in high school or even just in university about adulting. Right? Like, why are we not taught this in school in a very explicit way? Or is it just, as somebody with a neuro divergent brain, I feel like I need that explicitly. And everybody else seems to just be absorbing how to like, come up with a budget and stuff like that, or, like figure out, you know, even just like essay writing, I'd like to take a moment to thank better help for sponsoring this podcast. If you're a regular 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://betterhelp.com/women-ADHD), that's BetterHelp help.com/women, ADHD, and there's a link in the show notes. This podcast is sponsored by BetterHelp. I also want to just sort of backtrack and talk a little bit about like, what even is executive functioning in terms of coaching versus like, say tutoring?



Mallory Band 26:51

Yeah. So, you know, I think my understanding is that tutoring is really helping, like, here are the things you're learning in class, let's review them, let's practice them through homework. And then you know, helping you sort of with that completion of maybe there's a specific area where it's maybe a writing deficiency, or something that is of a challenge. And I think when we talk about executive function skills, we're talking about a lot of things. We're talking about planning, we're talking about organizing, we're talking about self monitoring, you know, emotional regulation, when we talk about executive function skills, it's, here are the skills that we can apply. And they're transferable to anything we're going to do and helping the person understand that here are the tools. And then also, it's so important to expose the explain how do you use the tools? Where do you use the tools? When do you use the tools? Because I think

that's challenging. Like, when, back to the comment you said in schools, like, here's the essay, go write it. And it like, thinking about just a middle school example, last year with it with a student I was working with, it drove me nuts, where here's, you know, oh, there's no due date. We don't know when the due date is we don't have a rubric. Here's like a prompt. And it's like, sort of a loosey goosey thing. And I'm like, whoa, whoa, whoa, this is giving me anxiety. So we need to like backtrack. What, when is the due date? So we can work backwards? Of how do we break this up? What are the different pieces we need to do? It's not just write a draft and then hear the comments. It's, let's do a brain dump. Let's do some prewriting. Let's do a graphic organizer. Let's break it into. Here's the intro paragraph. How do we how do we write an intro paragraph? I think a lot of the times these schools, we assume that kids can have these certain, understand how to do these certain skills. So with a lot of the executive function, coaching, I find it and some of the kids are like, Oh, this is I know this, and that's great if they do but a lot of the times, we assume that they know how to write an essay. That's not always a skill that's explicitly taught. And why would the kid know how to do that? If they haven't been taught that? When else are they writing five paragraph essays, you know, and I think a big part of executive function coaching is also helping them gain independence, like we want to be fired, like, you don't want to be with me forever. But like the goal is for you to do this on your own. And it's hard because we don't know when that path may end or when you may be ready to veer off on your own. But it's just it's a lot of scaffolding. And I love to do it where it's like we do it together, we do it together, we do it together. And then you do it on your own. Because I think so much of it, you know time is here's the explanation go do it. And when our brain is not as mature as delayed in certain aspects and some of these executive function skills so like when we have ADHD, we're going to have a hard time with some or all of the executive function skills. That's just how it is. We assume maybe as the adult assume that the kid knows how to then transfer that but we really can't make these assumptions because then we're sort of almost telling them don't ask for help. Just you're supposed to know it and that feels really terrible as the young person of I don't, why does everyone else know how to do it? I don't understand this. You know, and I would remember like working Same with, you know, tutors. And, you know, I think a lot of the tutors I did was maybe it wasn't called executive function coaching, but a lot of it was like, around writing and a lot of it was sort of like thinking about how we're thinking and breaking things down, and how are we going to plan. So a lot of it was sort of intertwined in that sense back in the day, like in middle school, but I think it's, it's appropriate to be explicit. And it's also okay to go, you have to go at the pace that the child or the young person needs, because there is no one size or fits approach. So I think it's, you know, interesting, when certain people come at executive function, like, here's, here are the forms I want to use, here's this, it's all the same. It's like, we have to get to know the person we're working with what works for me doesn't necessarily work for you. So like, why would I try to force my method on you? It's really seeing, where are they? And then how do we actually meet them where they are? That's so important, because it's not about where should they be, you know, with their chronological age, but it's where are they with their developmental age, we have to meet them there, because that's where they are. And that's, you know, they would if they could, sometimes they can't access what they're trying to produce or do just because of what's going on with their brain. And that's just how it is. And there's nothing wrong with that.



Katy Weber 31:21

Yeah, you know, that was a real lightbulb moment for me around working memory to which is even if you've done this before, even if you've already written the five paragraph essay, it's still an assumption to think that you still know how to do it the next time around, right? That, that you sometimes do need to have that scaffolding, like you said, that helps you to then reference

constantly, like I remember a month ago, at the beginning of the summer, I was I had talked in an episode about the barbecue, and how every year I at the beginning of this summer, I need to be retaught how to use the barbecue, even though I used it last summer. And even though it's very simple machinery, like I just forget, and I for a long time was like what's wrong with me? This is where I was too embarrassed. And I was like, I would avoid it. And it was just that light bulb moment where I'm like, No, it's okay, that I am allowed to, like forget to do something and have to be retaught it you know, and I think that that's a lot. You know, for as a kid, that must be such a confusing concept, right, which is like I was taught this and I and you know, my son has that a lot of the time where he's afraid to ask teachers for he's afraid to like advocate and as teachers for clarification, because he's worried that the teacher may have already given that clarification in class before and he wasn't listening. And so he's so anxious about having to ask and then be reprimanded for asking again, that he doesn't. And I'm like, Oh, poor guy.

M

Mallory Band 32:44

Yeah, and I think that's super common. And I, you know, I'm thinking about a particular person, or young person who's, you know, the first time and she's has a real job. And she's working. And we have this similar conversation to what you just mentioned about your son this week. And she's dealing with all of these sciency things in a lab, and they tell her what it is once but they're, you know, 30 different systems that she has to be able to do, and not every day, you know what you're doing. So it's like, we can just say to our supervisor, like, Hey, I know, You've showed me this before, but like, the way my brain works is I need to have you walk it, walk through it with me, so I can physically do it, I can see it, I can touch it. And I think like her bosses don't understand ADHD, they're not going to assume like other people need these things. And I know it feels really uncomfortable to sort of put yourself out there and be like, Listen, this is what I need. But like, I want to be successful in my job, I want to get the raise, I want to do the right thing. But it also feels really scary to come up to them, because I'm not seeing my co workers have the same issues. So like, what, like we can come up with our own workarounds. But we should also feel comfortable. We should but we don't always feel comfortable just with a culture of going up to the supervisor or the adults and asking for clarification asking a question. I just, it's so important for the adults or the leader in that situation to practice empathy, or even sympathy if you don't know what it's like you don't know. And that's okay. But to understand if someone's brave enough to come to you are vulnerable enough to, to explain, I don't know what this is. Or even just saying, Oh, you might have explained this, I forgot it, can you work through this with me, I really want to be able to, to understand it better. So I can apply it, you know, on the on the project or whatever it is. But that's so scary as a young person, but I think a lot of it is we build confidence by doing it, and we can talk about it so much. But we have to do it to really gain that confidence. And that's where it gets challenging of if we get an adverse reaction or a negative response from the person who's supposed to be supportive, like the adult, the teacher, or the boss or whatever, that shuts us down that shrinks us and that makes things much more convoluted and confusing when we're trying to advocate for our own selves and to help our brain sort of give our brain what it needs to be successful.



Katy Weber 35:01

Yeah. And I think also like anxiety, too, is so wrapped up in that experiential learning, right? Like, I know, for myself, I have such elevated anxiety when I when it's not something I've experienced before. And once I've actually gone through the experience, and you know, and

had that kind of firsthand relationship with whatever it is, I'm feeling anxious about, it usually goes away. But like, how do you talk about that in abstract terms with a kid? Who is, you know, holding back tears all day long or something, you

M

Mallory Band 35:31

know? Yeah, for sure. I mean, I think like, the power that we possess as the adults being able to interact with younger people is like, especially if you have the lived experiences, it is helpful to share that, like, for me, it's like, I think it's, it's so much anticipatory anxiety about everything that I do. So even like, if I'm driving to a place I've never been before, oh, my gosh, is there going to be parking? Is there going to be traffic? Am I going to be late? I should be 45 minutes early. Oh, my gosh, what's going to happen? What if my car gets towed? And I can't focus during the meeting? It's like, all of these things, the likelihood is like, 1%, that that's going to happen, you might be late, but like, oh, well, that happens. You know, and then after the fact, when I'm in it, it's it's okay. But even I need a lot of repetition. Because even though it's like thinking about a pocket, okay, I've done a few podcasts, but I do I still get really anxious and nervous before. Sure. I feel very uncomfortable before, but it's like, oh, you're just talking about yourself, you know yourself better than anybody else. No one's going to tell you, you're wrong about yourself, you know? And I think when we're talking about like, how do we build up the confidence in younger people, part of the reason I do, what I do and why I'm trying to create all these things that I feel are empowering is to be the person that I needed, or that I wanted when I was younger, and I absolutely love I work with children, teens and young adults, but I absolutely love working with young adults, because it's nice to connect, and I can sort of we can have these conversations and understand like, I might have your same experimental have your same experience, but I get it, I get where you're coming from, like, you know, it drives me crazy. When people say just think happy thoughts just be happy. It's like, we would if we could, you don't understand this brain. But helping people just like build up there. It's so much more than executive function skills, or tutoring or coaching or whatever the the entity is, but it's, I like helping the person to I see you, I hear you, I understand you, I know where you're coming from. And we're gonna get through this together, it doesn't have to be an on your own thing. Because I'm gonna be here, I can be so many different roles, I can be a coach, I can be a mentor, I can be a cheerleader, I can just be here where you are spitballing ideas or whatever it is. But helping, like, especially for young women, I think with ADHD, too, it's like, we're scared to talk about things that are challenging or flaws because we're trying to cover it up to overcompensate for other things. And we're allowed to make mistakes, we're allowed to own them, we should learn from them, but we shouldn't be held to a different standard, then, you know, then then boys and men are just because we are exhibiting different, you know, characteristics or symptoms of ADHD or whatever it might be. But I think that we have so much power to help really empower other people. And especially like, I love that your podcast is, you know, geared towards women with ADHD, because I think so much in the world. It's like women stepping on other women's backs to get ahead. And it's really like, Let's build each other up, because there's enough work, there's enough air for everybody. We don't need to compete against each other, there's enough for everybody. So how can we help each other do that? And I think just like I really appreciate, you know, having the opportunity to share, you know, where I'm coming from, and, you know, share my thoughts. And I know, that was a whole lot. But I there was one other thing sort of related to that is that sometimes I get really overwhelmed, like listening to other podcasts or watching people's webinars because they have like, PhD, this and that. And it's like, have all these amazing credentials. And it's, I feel other than sometimes to these people, even though Yeah, I do have, you know, certain credentials or certain experiences, but part of my approach to coaching and to just interacting and helping people is

like, I'm just a regular person. I have similar lived experiences. Yeah, I do have education in special education and executive function, and then things like that, but I'm just a regular person. And I think a lot of the times it's like, oh, malar you've got it all figured out. You're helping other people. It's like, oh my gosh, I'm gonna laugh out loud. I don't have it all figured out. You should see me at home you should see like, how supportive my husband is and like how hard it is like as two people who have anxiety and I also have ADHD, like, that's a lot at home, but like understanding having someone who can understand you and build you up, but I don't have it figured out and I'm the first to sort of, you know, spill the beans of it. I'm trying to figure this out. And I think a big part of it is like I part of the reason why I love coaching is because I can help others learn. But I can also learn about myself from the work we do. And that's been really eye opening, like, for understanding my ADHD and how it's evolved as I was diagnosed that eighth, and I'm 30, and I don't have it figured out still. But I think that the more I understand and can make sense of these little milestones or these experiences, helps me realize, I am smart, I'm doing all of these amazing things. And yeah, I've done a lot of things that were failures, or were missing those mistakes, and that's okay, but that's I'm gonna learn from them. But it's been a really empowering journey. And it's also been like, whoa, I'm gonna wait, if you know, when I first started, I was like, Whoa, that was really bad. That was a terrible session, you know, and it's now it's like, a lot less of that, because we learn we have these experiences, but I'm just a regular person who, you know, has these insights to share. And I think it's sometimes can be overwhelming when you assume everyone is this perfect person with all these degrees and knows how to do everything and has been doing this for a million years. But we're all just trying to figure it out. And I think being open about that can be really helpful and insightful for for those around us who, no matter where they are in their journey.



Katy Weber 41:20

Yeah, oh, I loved all of that. One of the things I love about having these conversations is that I get to talk to women who are from all different walks of life, and from all over the place. And we all just talked about what hot messes we are like, and sometimes I will get that criticism, which is like you have too many experts who are like winning at ADHD, where are the real women who are really struggling? And I'm like, we're all struggling. That's the point, right? Like we all you can be both things at once you can be extraordinary and also need help. And that's what I love about Sara, Sara sold and talks about that. And Michelle Frank talks about that in their workbook, right, like you have permission to be extraordinary, but also need require help, they are not mutually exclusive. And chances are the person who's saying all of these women that you have on the podcast are so extraordinary. And like chances are that woman is too She's just only focusing on what a hot mess she is. And I'm like, let's like really embrace the fact that you can be both at the same time. But I think we are programmed as women to feel like asking for help is failure, and that we wait until we are completely at wit's end until we welcome help. And I don't know if that's because of chronic overwhelm, and the inability to articulate or what but I do think that's something we really, really struggle with, which is, what does it say about me when I need help, as opposed to like, do you think Oprah gives a crap? You know, you think Oprah spending any time feeling bad about the fact that she's not folding her own laundry? No, she outsourced that long ago.



Mallory Band 42:51

Exactly. It sounds just like kids, but like, with, with adults, too, but just having these like, just yeah, like, I need help. I am like, these are the areas in which I need help. And I'm really good

at this. I'm not great at this yet. I'm trying to get better at it. But we can't do anything alone. And I think that's where the some of the culture is, it's you have to grind, you have to grind, you have to grind. And it's you wake up at four o'clock, you do all these things by yourself, and you're this entrepreneur, and it's like, maybe that works for some people. But like, that's not working for me, you know, and I think understanding of like, it's the same thing as a care team. Have you have these different people on your care team who can help you do have a therapist who have a psychiatrist who have these people like who can help you become the better version that you want to be that you know, you can become. And I think that's so important to normalize that. And I'm glad that there's just a lot more conversation about mental health now, because it's so confusing and clearly not talked about even 10 years ago as a way different you no place to be. So just trying to like, grapple with that and navigate through that it is complicated. But when you can be open and honest, I think you can help somebody else just here, make make a relation, even if you're never going to meet this person that really is helpful. And hopefully somebody can resonate with them to realize I'm not this crazy person, this is actually normal to have these struggles. Like let's normalize that because that is what life is. And if you're saying you don't have these struggles, then well, you're lying. Like I'll be straight up. Like that's not true. Like everybody has struggles. If everything's easy for you like, then you are the only billionaire in the world and there's nothing else no, like, you know, billionaires. They're entrepreneurs working like this crazy lifestyle of you have to ask for help. You can't do it all by yourself. And I think that's just important to understand. We're not that different from each other in the sense that we all do need help.



Katy Weber 44:50

Yeah. And it's something I struggle with a lot when it is asking for help because I have a really hard time articulating what Would I need, what kind of help I need? And then also, I think I'm just, you know, I have that perfectionism side where I'm like, You know what, rather than trying to explain to somebody else, what help I need, I will just do it myself, especially as in my business, right? Where I'm like, Oh, it's just easier to do it myself. It's just easier to do myself. And then I'm like, wait a bit, and I'm, I'm burned out. Why is that? And so I think it's like, even asking for help feels like a life skill that needs to be explicitly taught, right? Like, I don't know how to ask for help a lot of the time, it's not even just that I feel like I should do it myself, I just, I have such a hard time letting go of things that I feel perfectionist about.



Mallory Band 45:38

Yeah, and I wonder too, about that, you know, if that's like, almost like a, you know, something chained to your ankle where it feels really heavy to have to meet these certain expectations. But they probably like taking it almost sort of symbolizes like taking a deep breath. And then, you know, just jumping off the diving board. It's really scary beforehand, but then you do it, and it was okay. And sort of going through that process of yeah, maybe I'm asking for help. And it makes no sense. But then the person can ask follow up questions, or you can, you know, have some type of visual or even, like, something I like to do is even create, like a cheat sheet or something where ways in which I can ask for help, and then have some pre sort of arranged language for some of the people I work with. So that when this situation happens, oh, I remember, like looking there on the chart, we have this. So making the connections between that, oh, it's mostly on asking for clarification, it's going to save me time. If I ask for help. Now, rather than doing it wrong the first time, then having to scrap it, do the whole thing again, and

then feeling more shameful about myself at the end when it didn't work, then feeling maybe uncomfortable, but asking for help up front. And I think that is like something that I really wish that I maybe had when I was younger, but like, here are different ways in which we can ask for help in different situations. And I just think that's so it's such a powerful tool to add to the toolkit for especially for young, young people and young women to wear. We're not really taught how to do that. So why would we know how to ask for help? It's a weird sort of assumption that we're supposed to know how to do these things. But if we're not taught, how do we know?



Katy Weber 47:21

Yeah, rehearsing is super helpful. It's a really helpful skill, especially with like job interviews. Or I remember even my daughter when she was younger, we were like, the first time she wanted to call a boy in her classroom, I think this was like second or third grade. And it didn't, I didn't even realize that phone calls were like a learned skill. Like you don't just pick up the phone and you know how to talk on the phone. And we had to like rehearse conversations, so that she could kind of learn that skill of speaking on the phone. And it was so adorable, because she was like little bit. I was, you know, I do a lot of that rehearsing. I think it is a neuro divergent thing. Or if it's not an ADHD thing, maybe it's an autism thing is I was listening to the book, unmasking autism by Devin price recently. And they were talking about, if you're going to a restaurant that like often neuro divergence will like look up the menu ahead of time, and so that they know exactly what to expect. And you look up the restaurant on a map. And so you know exactly where it is. And like you said, like, you got to prepare where the parking is and the time and how long it's going to take you. And then they were also talking about if there's if there's words that are not in your language, like you know, a French word or something, or a cheese that you don't know what it is like, there's something on the menu, and you don't know what the word is, we tend to like research it ahead of time, so that we're not put on the spot. And I was like, I have big so called out. But realizing like how much we do that kind of rehearsing on our own before a lot of you know, stressful, anxious situations, like it's really helpful. Yeah,



Mallory Band 48:51

that's definitely a thing. And I was like, just on the menu thing. It's like, I will look at the menu, but I there's too many people talking, there's too much going on. So I'm looking at the menu. And then I'm like, unless I've been there a million times I you know, I will look up the food ahead of time because it's like, I'm looking at the menu, but it's like the same thing. When I'm reading. I'm thinking about 800 Other things and I don't know what I'm going to get Are you ready? And like oh, yes, I'm ready. But then I just will make you know a poor to pick something I don't actually want and then I'm disappointed because it's like, there's too much going on with that. So I think that is definitely a thing. And I can definitely relate to that as well.



Katy Weber 49:25

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](https://www.adhd.com/coaching), to book a 30 minute initial consult with me, so we can figure out if my brand of one on one coaching is right for you. Again, that's [women and adhd.com/coaching](https://www.adhd.com/coaching). And you can find that link in the episode show notes. You know, one of the things I feel like has been really interesting is medication for kids for you know, as parents who are ambivalent about medication for their kids. One of the things that has been really, it was really interesting to me, when I was watching the documentary disruptors, I really liked how they kind of talked about the ambivalence around medication and the fear or the parents have around, you know, giving medication to children who still have developing brains, versus how important the skills that medication provides in terms of self esteem and confidence. skills, those skills are crucial during brain development. Right. And so that kind of I was like, oh, yeah, that's such a good point. So I know, you've said, you've said in the past that you did take medication through childhood? Do you talk to parents about that? Or if parents are concerned about it? What is some of your what would you recommend?

M

Mallory Band 51:26

Yeah, I mean, I think that's a great question. That's certainly a hot topic. And I think that this is actually something that was sort of talking about, like, having a conversation, not specifically about medication. But there are certainly different stigmas around, you know, different things that help us so like glasses. Okay, that's not a big deal. But like, for instance, like, oh, hearing aids, maybe that's a bigger deal. Like some people have a different stigmas around that. And I think medication is certainly different. But I think that like thinking about if there's something that can help you, you know, sometimes people think, oh, it's going to make my trail the zombie, or it's gonna change who they are. But maybe if we sort of frame it in the fact that when we find the right medication that's going to help them activate the person that they know they can be. And that's really helpful. So yeah, if they're becoming a zombie, or if they're becoming, you know, having a lot of adverse reactions, maybe that's not the right medication. And I think there was a child who at first couldn't find the right medication on that movie, on the documentary disruptors, and then eventually did and was night and day with the way he was progressing in school. And I am, you know, maybe it's because I do come from a background where my dad is a psychiatrist, and that just was something that was normal. For me growing up, but I'm a big, I'm a big believer in, if there's something that can help you that safe. And that's studied, obviously, then, let's work together with people who have the intense hours of studying and knowledge in the medical field, as part of our care team. And I think that's really important of, you know, there's going to be risks and benefits to anything you do. It's, you know, especially medical, you know, of course, but thinking about the pros and cons, what outweighs what and where is your child, and like, if there's something that could help you, I think, as a parent, you would want to do anything in the world, you could to make sure that you're helping them feel even an ounce better than they currently feel. And I think that's so important to take into consideration when you're thinking about that conversation topic.



Katy Weber 53:25

Well, especially, because so many neurodivergent children tend to be rejected by their peers, or they tend to be social outliers, because they are too much or too weird, or, you know, like, I think that that can be really a huge factor in terms of you know, what to deciding, weighing, you know, not it's not just about doing your homework and organization, but a lot of it does have to do with their confidence and their sense of self in such a crucial developmental time. Right?

M

Mallory Band 53:57

Absolutely. Because it's not like, if they're like this as a child, and we don't get sort of this help and make some changes to help them learn, you know, maybe how to interact how to how to do these things that they want to do, they're going to be like that, you know, it doesn't just go away. So if we don't have you know, things that are helping them, they're gonna then be the person in the workplace, who doesn't know how to ask for help, who doesn't know where how to set boundaries, and all of these things that are really hard adulty things that we're supposed to know how to do. You know, not that medication. Helps specifically with that, setting boundaries or anything but but feeling we emotion and cognition are so intertwined. So if we don't feel good about ourselves, we can't do good. We can't do anything that we're proud of. Like if we feel crappy. It's so hard then to have to, to be able to produce or to do do well in school. But when we feel better about ourselves, everything doesn't mean anything's easy, but it's easier to navigate around in the world around Guess when we feel better.



Katy Weber 55:02

Or even just that if you have a fundamental belief that you are extraordinary, you know that you are intelligent, as opposed to many of us who had a fundamental belief that we were stupid and fake it. If you are able to kind of reframe your intellect that alone that can give you confidence in certain situations in terms of adequate advocacy or you know, approaching things, new things with a sense of confidence, it is kind of a domino effect in either direction. Yeah. Wow. No, are you good? This was great. This is so fascinating. I really love talking with you. I really feel like I could go on for hours. But I do want to ask if you could rename ADHD to something else, would you? Or what do you what are your thoughts on that acronym?

M

Mallory Band 55:47

Yes. Let me say I wrote something that I didn't want to forget what it what the idea I had. Is I that happens. So yeah, I think that's a great question. I think I said, attention driven by passion, because it's not that we are not able to pay attention. But if we're not interested, we're not going to be paying attention to it. And I think a big proponent in what I believe is its strength based. So we have to pull from our strength we have to pull from, let's use hyperfocus to our advantage, let's use our creativity, our passions, and to make everything interest driven. And it's sort of like finding the ways and structures that support your interests and passions. So it's like the how to support the what I think is really helpful. So I think it's, it's not a deficit, it's just if we're interested, you know, like, we're gonna be focused on things we're interested in, I think that, you know, is probably true for anybody, but especially, especially people with ADHD. So I think that a lot of people with ADHD are super passionate about certain things. So let's use that

to our advantage to find workarounds to Yeah, we have to do things we don't like, I hate being inconvenienced. But we have to, we have to be inconvenience at time. So how can we sort of transfer some of that attention to complete the less fun tasks?



Katy Weber 57:04

Yeah, well, and I think also, this is something I work on a lot with my clients, which is that like, passion, and energy and focus, those, they're all cyclical, it's, there's no, you know, a lot of the time clients will come to me and be like, How can I harness my use hyperfocus all the time. And I'm like, that would kill you. So why don't you allow hyperfocus to happen when it does, but then at the same time, also realize that you need rest and recharging that there are going to be days where you can't get off the couch, because your energy is cyclical. But you know, this idea that like, how we often use hyper focus as evidence that we should be like that all the time. Like, no, that's actually not the best way to approach life.



Mallory Band 57:45

Definitely. And I think just being careful in the fact that what we think is productive, and that's perfectly fine. And we have to think about it, like, on Monday, it might look like this on Tuesday, it's gonna look drastically different. And that's okay, because we can't be superwoman all the time. So some days, we're going to be motivated. And some days, you know, you can't teach motivation. But some days you have the energy to do this stuff. And some days, all you do is get up and send an email. And maybe that's all you can do. Okay, well, you still got up, you survived the day, and that's perfectly fine. may not feel great, but it just is part of life and accepting that is part of the battle, I think. Yeah,



Katy Weber 58:21

right. I'm kind of strict. And I think that's also comes down to that whole perfectionist attitude, which is like, I need straight A's and everything. I want to let people know where they can find you and work with you with executive function. So you I know you work primarily with kids and teenagers. Do you work with adults too? Yeah, so



Mallory Band 58:41

I work with young adults and, and regular adults to not young adults, but older adults as well. And I really love that. So I've been in the executive function, kind of world for three years. And I'm really excited to announce that this year, I'm launching band together education. And it's sort of just a community that helps individuals with ADHD and learning differences reach their full potential by tapping into the unique strengths. So the website is not yet up and running. But it will be this winter, but you can email me at info at band together. education.com. You can also find me on LinkedIn just under Mallory band, and also on Instagram at Mallory B underscore ADHD. I just post random things that I write and talk about and things I find interesting. So we'd love to connect with you. And I just like you, I'd love to, if you're looking for services, awesome. But if you're looking for someone to talk to or connect with, I think that's a

really big part of it all to building a community where we can all have a place where we feel comfortable and confident to share our experiences. And I just want to thank you for allowing me to do so today.



Katy Weber 59:56

Wonderful. It's been such a pleasure talking to you. Thank you so much. All right. have all those links in the show notes too? Don't worry. And yeah, right. I think it's just so important to find other people that you can be extraordinary with and also be a hot mess



Mallory Band 1:00:09

with. Absolutely hot mess Express. Yeah.



Katy Weber 1:00:15

All right. Well, thank you so much, Valerie.



Mallory Band 1:00:17

Thank you.



Katy Weber 1:00:23

And there you have it. Thank you for listening. And I really hope you enjoy 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 [women and adhd.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