

## ADHD &amp; EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

# ADHD & Emotions: Understanding the Rollercoaster.

*Up to 70% of people with ADHD struggle with emotional dysregulation. It's not sensitivity — it's a structural brain difference.*

ADHD affects the prefrontal cortex — the brain's braking system — making emotions arrive fast, loud, and hard to pause. This is not a personality flaw. It's a 2 – 3 year maturation gap in emotional regulation development.

## 2 – 3

Years behind neurotypical peers in emotional regulation development. ADHD affects the prefrontal cortex — the brain's braking system — making emotions arrive fast, loud, and hard to pause.

### WHY ADHD EMOTIONS FEEL SO INTENSE — IT'S STRUCTURAL, NOT PERSONAL

The ADHD brain has a **weaker emotional brake**. Emotions arrive at full intensity and the prefrontal cortex — responsible for pausing, reflecting and choosing a response — is slower to engage.

**Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria** means that perceived criticism or rejection can trigger emotional pain that feels physically unbearable. This is not dramatic — it's neurological.

Emotional dysregulation in ADHD often looks like: intense anger that passes quickly, crying at things that "shouldn't" matter, overwhelming excitement, and rapid mood shifts that confuse others.

### PRACTICAL TOOLS — WHAT ACTUALLY HELPS

## 1

#### Pause Protocol

When flooded, say "I need 5 minutes."  
Leave the situation before responding.  
The emotion will pass.

## 2

#### Name It to Tame It

Labelling the emotion ("I'm feeling rejected") activates the prefrontal cortex and reduces intensity.

## 3

#### Body First

Regulate the body before the mind:  
cold water on wrists, slow breathing,  
physical movement.

## 4

#### Repair Quickly

ADHD emotions pass fast. Repair relationships quickly after outbursts — don't let shame compound.

## 5

#### Track Patterns

Notice your triggers. Hunger, sleep deprivation and overwhelm amplify emotional dysregulation.

## 6

#### Self-Compassion

You're not "too much." Your brain works differently. Shame makes dysregulation worse.

*"ADHD coaching that works with your brain, not against it."*

BOOK A FREE DISCOVERY CALL  
[DANIELLEHARRISCOACHING.COM](https://danielleharriscoaching.com)