

Why people with ADHD may be more creative

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is typically described by the problems it presents. It is known as a neurological disorder, marked by distractibility, impulsivity, and hyperactivity, which begins in childhood and persists in adults. And, indeed, ADHD may have [negative consequences](#) for academic achievement, employment performance, and social relationships.

But ADHD may also bring with it an advantage: the ability to think more creatively. Three aspects of creative cognition are [divergent thinking](#), [conceptual expansion](#) and [overcoming knowledge constraints](#). Divergent thinking, or the ability to think of many ideas from a single starting point, is a critical part of creative thinking. Previous [research](#) has established that individuals with ADHD are exceptionally good at divergent thinking tasks, such as inventing creative new uses for everyday objects, and [brainstorming](#) new features for an innovative cell phone device. In a new [study](#), college students with ADHD scored higher than non-ADHD peers on two tasks that tapped conceptual expansion and the ability to overcome knowledge constraints.

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At first glance, non-conformity and conceptual expansion may not sound very impressive. But, in the context of creative innovation, a small change may unlock a breakthrough.

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