

# Taking Charge of Adult ADHD

by Russell A. Barkley

A printable to-do list of the most effective habits from this book. Check one off each day you do it.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

<sup>01</sup> **Get a proper ADHD evaluation from a specialist**

Barkley: a GP is not sufficient. Seek a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist specializing in adult ADHD. A full assessment of attention, working memory, impulse control, and emotional regulation is the foundation.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

<sup>02</sup> **Build external working memory everywhere**

Barkley: your internal scratchpad is unreliable - offload it. Sticky notes at the point of action, voice memos, phone alarms, visible checklists. What's not written doesn't exist.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

<sup>03</sup> **Make time physically visible**

Barkley: use analog clocks, visible countdown timers, and time-blocked paper calendars. The ADHD brain cannot sense time passing abstractly - it must be rendered concrete and visible.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

<sup>04</sup> **Place cues at the point of performance**

Barkley: don't rely on remembering. Put tools, reminders, and written prompts physically at the location where behavior must happen - by the door, on the desk, next to the task.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

<sup>05</sup> **Shrink the reward cycle to now**

Barkley: the ADHD brain discounts future rewards steeply. Use immediate, small rewards tied directly to completing steps - not finishing the whole project. Make the payoff present-tense.

MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN

<sup>06</sup> **Apply the 30% rule to your expectations**

Barkley: stop comparing your self-regulation to neurotypical peers your age. Ask instead: what would I expect from someone 30% younger? Then meet yourself there and build from that baseline.