



CK ADHD Coaching & Consulting

Empowering you to see things through

How Christine Helped a Client Launch New Strategies for Task Management — and Launch Aircraft of His Own

CASE STUDY
(8 MIN. READ)



“The core organizational system I built with Christine has allowed me to really stay on top of everything and stay organized. It’s also let my Mom be my Mom, and less of a drill sergeant — and that’s dropped stress levels for both of us.”

Rob T., Lewis University



THE TAKE-AWAY

Christine provided, mostly in online meetings,

- a sturdy foundation for Rob's confidence, &
- a repertoire of skills and strategies that enabled Rob to manage his priorities, fulfill his obligations and enjoy the journey

Rob's results

- admission into Lewis University with a 4-year scholarship
- @ Lewis: Dean's list, National Honor Society
- internship at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab
- more reciprocal trust and love with his parents

The Client

Rob T., currently a rising senior at Lewis University (IL)

Rob's interests



drones
(major: unmanned aircraft systems)



engineering:
hardware and software



music
performance (percussion)

The Challenge

In high school, Rob joined the golf team, played percussion in the local youth symphony, studied for his pilot's license, and worked on unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). Rob also joined local paramedics and firefighters on ride alongs, as part of his emergency-responder training.

Rob's schedule as a sophomore became unmanageable. The first sign of trouble? Rob didn't receive credit for multiple assignments — and not because he hadn't done the work, but because he hadn't submitted them.

Both his parents got involved, and things got tense. "My mother was trying to manage the situation," Rob says. "I didn't feel that what she was suggesting would work." In his junior year, Rob and his family sought professional assistance from an ADHD coach — who, unfortunately, did not provide the level of attention that Rob needed.

"With my first coach, the skills were just more generic. I feel like she would shoot out a skill and then that skill would only sort of work ... but the whole thing just didn't seem to be working very well."

Rob T.



The Game Plan: Christine's Discovery Process

Christine works closely with her clients from the discovery phase through a game plan with three stages:

STABILITY ACCOUNTABILITY AUTONOMY

1

2

3

By way of the intake form, and often a conversation with a client's parent or spouse, Christine knows the basic problem ahead of her first meeting with a client:

It can be "I'm struggling with work," or "I'm struggling with family responsibilities," or "I'm going to lose my scholarship and my parents aren't going to let me go back to school if I don't get my grades up."



Rob started working with Christine during his senior year of high school. In his intake session with Christine, Rob and his mother both fielded the key question: "What are your strengths?" If a client hesitates to answer, Christine may lend a hand.

I might say, "You're a good friend, right? That's a strength. You don't talk behind people's backs. You help people when they have troubles. You do those kinds of things."

ADHD Coaching is often a game of confidence. Rob's time mis-management skills had shaken his mother's confidence in his ability to get things done — which is not unusual for parents and kids. In turn, Christine focused his mother's attention on Rob's strengths.

"Sometimes parents have never said those things out loud to their kids," Christine says. **"It can be a big deal. It's good."**

That parental affirmation helps establish a sense of **stability** for an adolescent client. It affirms the client's sense of belonging, and it helps establish the foundation for Christine and the client to develop skills and strategies for seeing things through.

The Game Plan, pt. 1: Stability

As the client's confidence grows, and Christine really gets to know the client, they work together on different strategies to help stabilize the client's situation.



STRATEGY — a tool for completing specific tasks (e.g., effective use of Google calendar)



SKILL — the ability to combine different strategies to manage a larger project (e.g., complete a course in mathematics)

Christine also ensures that the client understands the game plan.



I'll ask, "What is it that three or six months from now you want to be different?" I also explain how I'm not going to say, "Woo! There you go. You're fixed!" Some clients have had these habits for 30 years. So we talk about coaching as a process to change your thinking about things — and doing about things.

Christine secured Rob's confidence quickly, in part because he understood that Christine has been through the process herself.



The fact that Christine has ADHD — she can relate really well to how I'm feeling. Someone who doesn't have ADHD may understand what the textbook says ... but Christine actually knows. She understands.

As part of his scheduling strategy, Rob added an assignment to his calendar as soon as he received it and set multiple reminders. He also put Post-It notes on his backpack, and each time Rob saw these notes, he exercised his executive functioning neurons. Likewise, during their first few months together, Christine and Rob built a comprehensive list of his responsibilities and deadlines week by week. In this stage of the game plan, Christine and her clients make regular adjustments to the process until the client develops — and sustains — confidence in the process and confidence in their own powers of accountability.

The Game Plan, pt. 2: Accountability

In this phase, Christine works closely with a client to expand their facility with different strategies and skills. These strategies include the ability to make their own plans and — when things don't go exactly according to plan — their facility with self-compassion.

Once Rob enrolled at Lewis University, he faced new demands on his strategies and skills. With Christine's help, Rob experimented with different techniques of time management. He eventually settled upon prioritizing three big things for each day, and setting aside big chunks of time to get them done.



We can't work on everything at once, of course. We may spend six weeks getting something to feel good, and then it's time for something a little different.

In the previous phase:

when a client strays from the plan, they may start to doubt their ability to follow the plan — or any plan, for that matter.

In the accountability phase:

a client presents the list of to-do items, and Christine helps the client assemble a game plan. In Rob's case, that plan regularly included research papers and, at this stage, if he didn't meet the first day's benchmark, he had the skills necessary to make adjustments over the next few days to complete the task. In the subsequent week, Christine and Rob reviewed what went according to plan, and how successful he was in terms of maintaining flexibility to complete his assignments.



My clients gain the knowledge and the comfort to keep going if they miss a goal. They don't have to stop. They don't have to freak out. They have the skills to simply adjust.

The Game Plan, pt. 3: Autonomy

During the summer, Rob is on his own, as are most of Christine's college-aged clients. College students with ADHD can typically handle the responsibility of summer school or a summer job on their own, and their short-lived separation from Christine is not ironclad: if they run into trouble, they can either get on her calendar on short notice or text Christine for a quick affirmation, which is often all they need.

During the school year, Rob maintained contact with Christine on a weekly call. In this phase of their work, Rob presented the range of tasks he needed to attend to, as well as his "plan of attack." Christine often responded with a question such as:



"Do you foresee anything that might prevent you from completing these assignments?"

Rob was then able to reconsider how he ordered the tasks, the time allotted to each of them, and the impact of one-off events on his schedule — like jury duty, for example. "She brings such a good perspective, and it's nice to talk to another person and get her input on my schedule," Rob notes. **"Even her suggestions about spacing things out have made things much easier."**

As Rob moved closer to full autonomy, Christine helped him to build flexibility and sustained satisfaction into his daily routine.



Rob's Results

COLLEGE PERFORMANCE

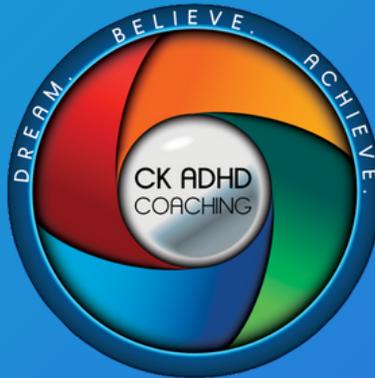
- Dean's List, Lewis University, spring 2018 & fall 2018
- Lewis University Fitzpatrick Academic Scholarship recipient (all semesters)
- National Honor Society

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Systems Engineering Intern, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory
- Engineering Technician, SelectTech GeoSpatial Advanced Manufacturing Facility
- FAA: Remote Pilot Certificate & Airframe and Powerplant Licenses

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

- Less drama.
- More happiness.



What's Stopping You from Seeing Things Through?

Does your ADHD stifle your ability to dream, believe and achieve?

Contact Christine today

Note: Christine regards the matter of confidentiality seriously. "Rob" is an alias for one of her clients.

This case study was prepared by:



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