April, 2011

Ascension Counseling Center

Editor: Suzanne Hamilton, LPC

April is Stress Reduction Month

You experience stress from four basic sources:

- Your environment bombards you with demands to adjust. You must endure weather, noise, traffic, and pollution.
- You also must cope with social stressors such as deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, demands for your time and attention, and loss of loved ones.
- A third source of stress is physiological. The rapid growth of adolescence, menopause in women, illness, aging, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances all tax the body. Your physiological reaction to environmental and social threats and changes can also result in stressful symptoms such as muscle tension, headaches, stomach upset, and anxiety.
- The fourth source of stress is your thoughts. Your brain interprets and translates complex changes in your environment and body and determines when to turn on the "emergency response".

Chronic or persistent stress can occur when the stressors of life are unrelenting, as they are during a major reorganization or downsizing at work or while undergoing a messy divorce or coping with a chronic or life-threatening illness. Chronic stress also occurs when little stressors accumulate and you are unable to recuperate from any one of them. As long as the mind perceives a threat, the body remains aroused. If the stress response remains turned on, you can be increasing your chances of a stress-related disease.

To reduce stress, acknowledge the impact of large and small changes in your life.

Job Stress Management

According to *The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook, by Davis, Eshelman & McKay,* the classic symptoms of job burnout include pessimism, increased dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and inefficiency at work. While you may not be on the verge of job burnout, you are probably one of the growing majority of Americans who report that their job causes them stress. Job stress accounts for a tremendous amount of personal misery and billions of dollars lost annually in productivity, wages, and medical bills. Americans are waking up to the fact that job stress management makes personal and financial sense.

There are so many moments when we crave connection yet we can't think of anything to do.

You will learn to respond better when you are able to take more control. You will probably want to make changes in one or more of these general areas.

1. Change the external stressors (quit the job, assertively tell the boss not to overload you, take regular breaks, reorganize your time).
2. Change your thoughts (turn off the job when you go home, alter your perfectionist attitude, stop assuming that you are responsible for others' problems).
3. Change physically (relax, exercise, eat properly, get sufficient sleep).

When setting goals for yourself remember to make them specific, observable, achievable within a certain time frame, and broken down into intermediate steps. Keep yourself motivated to change your stressful patterns by rewarding yourself for change.

Choose leisure activities that balance the unique stresses of your job.

- If your job requires much sitting or mental concentration, consider aerobic exercise.
- If your job requires mindless repetition, consider intellectually challenging hobbies and interests.
- If your job requires a controlled environment, consider hiking in nature or adventure vacations.
- If your job requires boring tasks or no recognition, consider competitive or achievement-oriented activities.
- If your job requires responding to people demands, consider solitary activities.
- If your job requires working alone, consider social activities.
- If your job requires dealing with conflicts, consider peaceful activities.

Carefully explore all your options, which can either make you realize how good you have it or motivate you to plan for change.

Milestones

New Substance Abuse Treatment Counselor Hired

Ascension Counseling Center is pleased to announce that Stephanie Turner has joined us full time as a Substance Abuse Counselor. Stephanie is a Licensed Professional Counselor Intern who graduated from Nicholls State University in 2008 with a Master of Arts in Psychological Counseling. She previously worked for us as a contract counselor leading our evening adult substance abuse treatment groups. Before joining us she worked as a Therapist at Ascension Wellness in Gonzales and as an Intake Counselor at E. Baton Rouge Detox Center in Baton Rouge. Welcome aboard, Stephanie!

Two Staff Members Trained in Emergency Assessment

Daryl Hebert, Licensed Professional Counselor and a Licensed Addictions Counselor, and Karen Hyorth, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, have completed training in Emergency Mental Health Assessment and Treatment. The goal of emergency assessment is to attempt to stabilize someone in an emergency and determine the most appropriate level of care to safely manage their symptoms. The most common emergency needs are suicidal plans or intent and psychosis, losing touch with reality.

Our goal is stabilization and providing the appropriate level of care.

Our Clinical Staff

- **Tatiyana Curry**, Intake Worker, 621-1113, TCurry@apgov.us
- **Suzanne Hamilton**, Director, 621-8598, SHamilton@apgov.us.
- **Daryl Hebert**, Jail Program Mgr, 473-8674, x 226, DHebert@apgov.us
- **Stacey House**, MH Counselor, 621-1116, SHouse@apgov.us
- **Karen Hyorth**, MH Counselor, 621-1112, KHyorth@apgov.us
- **Treniece Landry**, Adol. SA Counselor, 621-8599, TLandry@apgov.us
- **Jill Lemann**, Office Manager, 621-1111, JLemann@apgov.us
- **Lisa Lopez**, Nurse, 621-5760, LLopez@apgov.us
- **Hugh Nobile**, MH counselor, 621-5733, HNobile@agov.us
- **Ted Pinkard**, Adult SA Counselor, 621-8559, TPinkard@apgov.us
- **Jackie Powell**, Clinical Manager, 621-5742, JPowell@apgov.us
- **Jamie Schuler**, MH Counselor, 621-1115, JSchuler@apgov.us
- **Stephanie Turner**, SA Counselor, 621-1121, STurner@apgov.us
- **Lisa Webre-Curry**, MH/SA Counselor, 621-1114, LWebre-Curry@apgov.us

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Ascension Counseling Center

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Helping individuals and families change behaviors, change lives.

Ascension Counseling Center provides comprehensive therapeutic services to individuals and families in an effort to foster healthy coping skills that will improve their quality of life.

Hours

Gonzales:

Business Hours
Mon - Thur: 8 am - 5:30 pm; Fri: 8 am - noon

Counseling Hours
Mon - Thur: 7 am - 8 pm; Fri: 8 am - noon

Psychiatrist Hours
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday: 8 am - 6 pm

Donaldsonville:

Business Hours
Wednesday: 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

Counseling Hours
Wednesday: 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

Psychiatrist Hours
4th Thursday of the Month: 8 am - 11:30 am

Upcoming April Events

Mondays:

- ***Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment group***: 5 - 7 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group***, 4 - 6 pm & 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Women in Recovery***, 4 - 6 pm, Gonzales.

Tuesdays:

- ***Anger Management:*** ongoing, join any time, 4 - 5 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Nurturing Parenting, adult & children groups***: 5 - 7:30 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Smoking Cessation***, 4 - 5 pm, Gonzales.

Wednesdays:

- ***Early Intervention: Toward No Drug (Adolescents),*** 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Early Intervention: Guiding Good Choices (Parents),*** 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment group:*** 2:30 - 4:30 pm, Donaldsonville.
- ***Smoking Cessation***, 10 am, Donaldsonville.
- ***Living Strong Cancer Survivors group***, 3 - 4 pm, Donaldsonville. 2nd Wed of each month.
- ***Free HIV/AIDS testing*** (no blood/no needles), 10 am - 2 pm, Gonzales. 2nd Wed of each month.
- ***Free HIV/AIDS testing*** (no blood/no needles), 10 am - 2 pm, Donaldsonville, 4th Wed of each month.
- ***Grandparents Raising Grandchildren***, 10:30 am - noon, lunch provided, Donaldsonville, 4th Wed of each month.

Thursdays:

- ***Adolescent Right Choices group***, 4 - 6 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Anxiety Reduction group***: 4 - 5 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Psychiatrist in Donaldsonville***, 4th Thurs of each month.