



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013

Ascension Counseling Center

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Get Yourself Unstuck

Dr. Daniel Amen is the host of a popular PBS series called "Change your brain, change your life". In it, he shows that a healthy brain allows you to shift your attention from one thing to another, to move from idea to idea, to see the options in life, to feel safe and secure, and to plan and set goals for the future. He calls this cognitive flexibility. He offers this short quiz to rate yourself on whether you get mentally stuck. For each behavior, use the following scale:

0 = never / 1 = rarely / 2 = occasionally / 3 = frequently / 4 = very frequently

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive or senseless worrying | <input type="checkbox"/> Being upset when things don't go your way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Upset when things are out of place | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to be oppositional or argumentative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have repetitive negative thoughts | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency toward compulsive behaviors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency toward compulsive behaviors | <input type="checkbox"/> Intense dislike of change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to hold grudges | <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble shifting attention from subject to subject |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble shifting behavior from task to task | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty seeing options in situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hold own opinion & don't listen to others | <input type="checkbox"/> Very upset unless things are done a certain way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Others believe that you worry too much | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to predict negative outcomes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to say no without first thinking about the question | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Get locked into a course of action, whether or not it is good | |

If you scored a 3 or a 4 on five or more items it is highly likely you need to become unstuck. To do that we need to train our brain to see options and new ideas. The following actions should help.

- **Notice when you're stuck, distract yourself, and come back to the problem later.** Whenever you find your thoughts going over and over, distract yourself from them. Try singing a song, listening to music that makes you feel positive, taking a walk, or doing a chore.
- **Think through answers before automatically saying no.** Take a breath and think first whether it's best to say no. Use the time during the deep breath to ask yourself whether you really want to deny the request. Will saying 'no' make things better or harm your relationship.
- **Write out options and solutions when you feel stuck.** Seeing a thought on paper makes it easier to deal with in a rational way. After you write down a thought that has "gotten stuck," create a list of things you can do about it and things you can't do about it.
- **Seek the counsel of others when you feel stuck.** Find someone to discuss your worries, fears, or repetitive behaviors with. Often just talking about feeling stuck will open new options. When you're stuck, allow others to help you with the problem. Call Ascension Counseling Center at 225/450-1158 to speak with a neutral third party who can guide you to your own answers.
- **Memorize and recite the Serenity Prayer when bothered by repetitive thoughts.** "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference..."
- **Don't try to convince someone else who is stuck.** Take a break and come back later. When another person is stuck on a thought or behavior, logical reasoning won't work. Briefly make your point, then leave or distract them with another topic. Come back to the discussion later after giving both of you time to think it through.
- **Exercise** can calm worries and increase cognitive flexibility by releasing amino acids into the brain.

Clinic News

A survey team from CARF International* will be visiting on February 26, 2013 - February 28, 2013. We invited the surveyors to evaluate how well we meet international standards for quality. The survey will tell us what we are doing well and ways we might improve. As a result of this survey, we may earn or continue accreditation. As part of the survey, the surveyors will interview people who receive services, their families, our staff, and others. Some questions the survey team members might ask people are:

- Do we provide a clean and safe setting?
- Do you receive the services you need and want?
- Are you treated with respect?
- Do you take part in planning your services?
- Are you told what you need to know about your services?
- Are your questions answered in a way you understand?

Do you know where to go with questions or concerns?

If you would like to talk with one of the survey team members or want to learn more about CARF International, please let one of our staff members know. You may also contact CARF International directly.

- Internet: www.carf.org/contact-us
- E-mail: feedback@carf.org
- Mail: CARF International, 6951 East Southpoint Road, Tucson, AZ 85756
- Toll-free telephone: (866) 510-2273

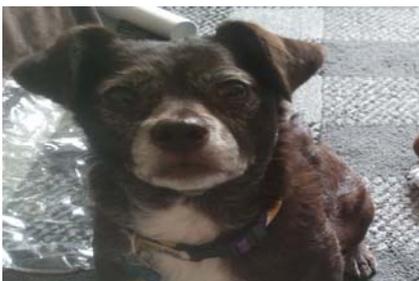
Fax: (520) 318-1129

carf INTERNATIONAL

*CARF International is an independent, not-for-profit family of organizations (including CARF, CARF Canada, and CARF-CCAC) that provides accreditation in the field of human services

Canine Counselor Joins ACC Staff

The Ascension Counseling Center has a new member on its therapy team! Java is a five-year-old, medium-sized mixed breed dog who joins her counselor, Kristi Boggs, in sessions for pet-assisted therapy. Java volunteers her time with Tiger H.A.T.S. (Human Animal Therapy Services) for monthly visits to a local senior living community center. She also partners with Trafficking Hope, a non-profit organization that provides safe housing for victims of human trafficking. Java and Kristi will be making frequent visits to the Hope House once it opens in South Louisiana. Java enjoys belly rubs and visits to the dog park, and is excited to be working with her clients at the counseling center. If you would like an appointment for counseling with Kristi and Java, please contact Ascension Counseling Center intake coordinator Sarah Cuti at 225-621-1113.



Milestones

Clinical Staff attend Training

- Stacy House attended the 9th Annual Conference on Sexual and Domestic Violence hosted by the Louisiana Foundation Against Sexual Assault and the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
- Suzanne Hamilton attended the “From Organizational Stress to Organizational Success” training provided by the ARC of Louisiana and the Louisiana Conference of Executives of the ARC.

Ascension Counseling Center Welcomes New Counselor

- Kristie Boggs joined ACC as a permanent, full-time Counselor on December 10th. Kristie joined our staff at the beginning of 2012 as a student counseling intern from LSU. Upon her graduation she continued with us as a contract counselor, replacing staff who were out on extended leave. Kristie has served both mental health and substance use individuals and groups, as well as conducting a substance use group at the Ascension Parish Jail. One of her interests is human trafficking and she volunteers her time to Project Hope. She also brings Java, her therapy dog, with her. Welcome Kristie and Java.

Happy Anniversary to the following employees

- Stacy House—January 5, 2010 3 years of service
- Stephanie Turner - February 7, 2011 2 years of service
- Sarah Cuti—February 20, 2012 one year of service
- Tatiyana Curry—February 22, 2010 3 years of service
- Dr. Robert Barnes—February 27, 1997 15 years of service

NEW PHONE NUMBERS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY **Our old phone numbers will roll over for a few months**

450-1016	Main Line	450-1164	Jill Lemann
450-1158	Intake Worker (Sarah Cuti)	450-1165	Lisa Lopez
450-1150	Fax Line	450-1166	Angela Longley
450-1157	Tatiyana Curry	450-1167	Hugh Nobile
450-1158	Sarah Cuti	450-1168	Ryan Schuette
450-1159	Andrea Gaines	450-1169	Jamie Schuler
450-1160	Suzanne Hamilton	450-1170	Denise Thibodeaux
450-1161	Stacy House	450-1171	Stephanie Turner
450-1162	Karen Hyorth	450-1172	Lisa Weber-Curry
450-1163	Courtney Leblanc	450-1173	Dawn Bennett

www.AscensionParish.Net/MH

**Ascension Counseling
Center**

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Complex, Gonzales, LA 70737
419 Memorial Blvd,
Donaldsonville, LA 70346
Phone: (225) 621-5775
Fax: (225) 644-3208
E-mail: SHamilton@apgov.us

**HELPING INDIVIDUALS AND
FAMILIES CHANGE BEHAVIORS,
CHANGE LIVES.**

MONTHLY EVENTS

Mondays:

- *Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group*, 4 - 6 pm & 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- *Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment group*, 4 - 6 pm, Gonzales.

Tuesdays:

- *Women's Empowerment Group*, 10 - 11:30 am, Gonzales.
- *Nurturing Parenting, adult & children groups*: 5 - 7:30 pm, Gonzales.
- *Anger Management Class*, 4 - 5 pm, Gonzales.
- *Stop Smoking group*, 4 - 6 pm, Gonzales
- *Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group*, 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.

Wednesdays:

- *Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group*: 1 pm, Donaldsonville.
- *Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment group*, 3 - 4 pm, Donaldsonville.
- *Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group*: 4 - 6 pm & 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- *Living Strong Cancer Survivors group*, 3 - 4 pm, Donaldsonville. 2nd Wed of each month.
- *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, 10:30 am - noon, lunch provided, Donaldsonville, 3rd Wed of each month

Thursdays:

- *Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group*: 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- *Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment group*, 4 - 6 pm, Gonzales.
- *Anxiety Reduction group*: 4 - 5 pm, Gonzales.

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 and Tuesday: 8 am - 6 pm

Donaldsonville:

Business Hours

Wednesday: 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

Counseling Hours

Wednesday: 7:30 am - 5:30 pm

