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Ascension Counseling Center

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LOVING AN ADDICT, LOVING YOURSELF

The following information is from the book “Loving an Addict, Loving Yourself: The Top 10 Survival Tips for Loving Someone with an Addiction” by Candace Plattor. It can be purchased from Amazon and also comes with a workbook. Because there are 10 tips, I will only have space in this issue for the first five. The next five will appear in the August edition.

Addictive behaviors include alcohol and other drugs, cigarettes, eating disorders, gambling, internet addiction, compulsive overspending, sex addiction, and codependency in relationships. If you love an addict, chances are that your life is anything but easy, that you are probably caught up in the unpredictable chaos their addictive behaviors have created, that you have likely tried everything you could think of to try to make them stop using their addictive substance or stop their addictive behavior, and that you are at your wits' end and don't know what to do next.

Survival Tips:

1. **Come face-to-face with reality.** Are you trying to distract yourself from the pain with unhealthy behaviors of your own? Are you keeping the secrets and lies so that others don't know the reality of your situation? You may be worried about what other people will think of you or your loved one. People with an addiction spend a lot of time on the addiction, guaranteeing dishonesty and manipulation in relationship with others. Are you living an unfulfilled life? Don't lie to yourself or others. Be courageous and look at your situation realistically. If nothing changes, nothing changes.
2. **Discover how to love an addicted person and stay healthy.** If you love someone with an addiction, you may be finding it a challenge to maintain yourself physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Yet this is exactly what is required in order for you to live your best life, de-

When we treat people merely as they are, they will remain as they are. When we treat them as if they were as they should be, they will become what they should be.

~ Thomas Monson

spite your difficult circumstances. Contrary to what you might think, it actually is possible to stay healthy and preserve your sanity while in a relationship with an addict. This is the groundwork needed to achieve that goal.

3. **You cannot control of “fix” another person, so stop trying!** Most people find it difficult to believe that they can’t control other people’s behavior – they think that if they try hard enough or find the magic formula or words, they will be able to make others do what they want them to do. Do you try to control your loved one with?
 - Being demanding – it’s my way or the highway. You believe you can gain power over others by forcing them to meet your own needs.
 - Emotional manipulation – if you loved me you’d stop
 - People-pleasing – being good-natured to get what you want. See what a wonderful friend I am – How can you not do what I want?
Remember the Serenity Prayer: 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.
4. **Stop blaming other people and become willing to look at yourself.** Are you depending on your addict for your emotional well-being, connectedness to others? We are tempted to blame the addict for the situations in our life, but if we do that nothing really changes. If they are to blame, then they must change before we can be happy. Instead, learn how to support yourself.
5. **Learn the difference between helping and enabling.** Do you feel compelled to help your addicted loved one because you’re afraid of what will happen if you don’t? When we enable we do things that contribute to the addiction continuing, such as giving money to an addict or making excuses for what they or we are doing. Helping behaviors assist addicts with stopping their self-sabotage. These might include setting and maintaining healthier boundaries and learning how to say no when appropriate.

Co-dependency is when we put other people’s needs ahead of our own on a fairly consistent basis. Many people in relationships with addicts do this. You might see yourself as being a “nice” person. Co-dependent people (also known as people-pleasers) often say yes to protect themselves from upsetting others. Begin to set more assertive boundaries and say “no” more often. Allow yourself to feel uncomfortable while you learn this new skill. You can feel free to say no so that you can choose healthier food, get appropriate exercise, make wiser choices in friendships and other relationships, thinking about potential consequences, both positive and negative, of your actions and choices, wanting to take the best possible care of yourself that you can, and honoring yourself for the unique and wonderful person you are.

NEWS, TRAINING & OUTREACH

TRAINING

All Staff attended a workshop on LOCUS assessment to determine level of care, including emergency assessment.

BLOOD DRIVE/HEALTH FAIR

Prevost Hospital Health Fair and Blood Drive, Saturday July 16th, 8 am—noon. 319 Memorial Blvd., Donaldsonville. Free t-shirt to all donors.

ASSESSMENT/TREATMENT: ADD

Attention Deficit Disorder:

You may have ADD if you have 6 or more of the following symptoms of Inattention for 6 months or more. This information cannot take the place of a professional evaluation.

- Often fails to give close attention to details/makes careless mistakes. (overlooks or misses details, work is inaccurate)
- Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities. (difficulty remaining focused during lectures, conversations or lengthy reading)
- Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly. (mind seems elsewhere, even in the absence of any obvious distraction)
- Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace. (starts tasks but quickly loses focus and is easily sidetracked)
- Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities. (difficulty managing sequential tasks, difficulty keeping materials and belongings in order, messy or disorganized work, poor time management, fails to meet deadlines)
- Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort. (schoolwork or homework, preparing reports, completing forms, reviewing lengthy papers)
- Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities. (school materials, pencils, books, tools, wallet, keys, paperwork, eyeglasses, phone)
- Often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli. (may include unrelated thoughts)
- Often forgetful in daily activities (doing chores, running errands, returning calls, paying bills, keeping appointments)

www.AscensionParish.Net/MH

**ASCENSION COUNSELING
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**HELPING INDIVIDUALS AND
FAMILIES CHANGE BEHAVIORS AND
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 and Tuesday: 8 am - 6 pm

SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT GROUPS

Mondays:

- ***Adult Substance Abuse Treatment group***, 10– 12 pm & 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.
- ***Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment group***, 4 - 6 pm, Gonzales.

Tuesdays:

- ***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***: 10 - 12 pm & 6 - 8 pm, Gonzales.

Thursdays:

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



SERVICES WE OFFER

COUNSELING

We offer outpatient mental health counseling for children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families in a comfortable setting with licensed professional counselors. Individuals come to us with a variety of issues of daily living, including academic failure, academic conduct problems, difficulty completing homework, difficulty falling or staying asleep, depression, anxiety, failure to perform up to potential at work, substance use, divorce, relationship conflict, poor communication skills, and more. To see if we can help you or someone you love, contact Dawn at 450-1158.