



ANT Therapy

Correcting the Automatic Negative Thoughts That Steal Your Happiness and Rob Your Joy

One of the most effective techniques Dr. Amen gives all his patients is called ANT Therapy, or learning how to kill the ANTs (automatic negative thoughts). He coined this term in the early '90s after a hard day at the office, during which he had several very difficult sessions that day with patients in crisis. When he got home that evening, he found an ant infestation in his kitchen. It was gross. As he started to clean them up, the acronym came to him. He thought of his patients from that day—like his infested kitchen, his patients' brains were also infested by the negative thoughts that were robbing them of their joy and stealing their happiness.

The next day, he brought a can of ant spray to work as a visual aid and have been working diligently ever since to help his patients eradicate their ANTs.

Here are the "ANT Killing" principles we use at Amen Clinics to help people feel better fast:

- 1. Every time you have a thought, your brain releases chemicals.** That's how our brains work: you have a thought...your brain releases chemicals...an electrical transmission goes across your brain and you become aware of what you're thinking. Thoughts are real and they have a direct impact on how you feel and how you behave.
- 2. Every time you have a mad thought, an unkind thought, a sad thought, or a cranky thought, your brain releases negative chemicals that make your feel bad.** Think about the last time you were mad. How did you feel physically? When most people are mad, their muscles get tense, their heart beats faster, their hands start to sweat, and they may even begin to feel a little dizzy. Your body reacts to every negative thought you have.
- 3. Every time you have a good thought, a happy thought, a hopeful thought, or a kind thought your brain releases chemicals that make your body feel good.** Think about the last time you had a really happy thought. What did you feel inside your body? When most people are happy their muscles relax and their heartbeat and breathing slow down. Your body also reacts to your good thoughts.

4. Thoughts are very powerful! They can make your mind and body feel good or they can make you feel bad. Every cell in your body is affected by every thought you have. That is why when people get emotionally upset they often develop physical symptoms, such as headaches or stomach aches.

5. Thoughts lie; they lie a lot, but it is your unquestioned or uninvestigated thoughts that make you sad, mad, nervous, or out of control. Unfortunately, if you never challenge your thoughts, you always "believe them." The negative thoughts invade your mind like ants at a picnic. One negative thought, like one ant at a picnic, is not a big deal. Two or three negative thoughts, like two or three ants at a picnic, become more irritating. And ten or twenty negative thoughts can cause real problems.

6. You can train your thoughts to be positive and hopeful or you can just allow them to be negative and upset you. Once you learn about your thoughts, you can choose to think good thoughts and feel good, or you can choose to think bad thoughts and feel lousy. That's right, it's up to you. Research has shown that positive emotions—especially a sense of awe—can reduce inflammation (which hurts your health). You can learn how to change your thoughts and change the way you feel.

Nine Different Types of ANTs (or ways we distort reality to make it worse than it really is)

1. All or nothing thinking: thoughts that things are all good or all bad.
2. "Always" thinking: thinking in words like always, never, no one, everyone, every time, everything.
3. Focusing on the negative: only seeing the bad in a situation.
4. Fortune telling: predicting the worst possible outcome to a situation with little or no evidence for it.
5. Mind reading: believing you know what another person is thinking even though they haven't told you.
6. Thinking with your feelings: believing negative feelings without ever questioning them.
7. Guilt beatings: thinking in words like "should, must, ought, or have to."
8. Labeling: attaching a negative label to yourself or someone else.
9. Blame: blaming someone else for the problems you have. **(RED ANT)**

ANT Killing Exercise:

Whenever you feel sad, mad, nervous, or out of control, write down your automatic negative thoughts, label them, then “kill” them by talking back to them.

Here are some ANT Killing examples:

<u>ANT</u>	<u>Species of ANT</u>	<u>Kill the ANT</u>
My wife never listens to me.	Always Thinking	That's just not true. She often listens to me. Today she is just distracted.
My boss doesn't like me.	Mind Reading	I don't know that for sure. Maybe she's just having a bad day. I need to talk to her.
I'm a failure.	Labeling	Sometimes I fail, but many times I succeed
It's my husband's fault.	Blame	I will look at my part of the problem and look for ways to make it better.

Your thoughts matter. Learn to kill the ANTs and train your thoughts to be positive—it will benefit your mind, mood, and body.

Make copies of the worksheet on the following page and use it to help you get control of your automatic negative thoughts.

Kill the ANTs Worksheet:

When you notice an ANT:

1. Write it down.
2. Identify the type of ANT it is.
3. Kill the ANT by talking back to it – challenge the thought!

What's your ANT?

What type of ANT is it?

Kill the ANT by talking back to it:

What's your ANT?

What type of ANT is it?

Kill the ANT by talking back to it:

Kill the ANTs Worksheet:

When you notice an ANT:

4. Write it down.
5. Identify the type of ANT it is.
6. Kill the ANT by talking back to it – challenge the thought!

What's your ANT?

What type of ANT is it?

Kill the ANT by talking back to it:

What's your ANT?

What type of ANT is it?

Kill the ANT by talking back to it:



One Page Miracle

Tell your brain what you want and your brain will help you match your behavior to get it! Next to each subheading below, briefly write out what's important to you in that area; write **what you want**, not what you don't want. *Be positive* and use the first person. Write what you want with confidence and the expectation that you will make it happen. After you complete this exercise put it up where you can see and read it every day.

RELATIONSHIPS

Spouse/Partner: _____

Children: _____

Family: _____

Friends: _____

WORK/SCHOOL

FINANCES

Short-term Goals: _____

Long-term Goals: _____

SELF

Physical Health: _____

Emotional Health: _____

Spiritual Health: _____



Relaxation Techniques

Stress is both good and bad for you. A little bit of stress is actually good because it can motivate you and lead to an *appropriate* amount of worry to help you meet your goals. However, too much stress can:

- decrease your brain function
- create hormone imbalances
- make you gain weight
- leave you more vulnerable to illness

Too much stress can kill you!

By using the relaxation resources below, you will gain better control over the stress and anxiety that is ruining your health and happiness. Reducing stress is vital to good brain health!

Deep diaphragmatic breathing is a very effective, yet simple method for overcoming stress; one that can be done anywhere, anytime! When you take shallow breaths, it reduces the amount of oxygen that reaches your brain cells and reduces your overall brain function. Taking deep breaths relaxes your muscles, relieves tension, and helps your brain function better.

To practice breathing from your diaphragm, try this:

1. Lie on your back and place a small book on your belly.
2. As you slowly inhale through your nose, make the book go up. Hold your breath at the top of your inhalation for 2 seconds.
3. When you exhale, make the book go down and then hold your breath for 2 seconds before inhaling again.
4. Repeat 10 times and notice how relaxed you feel.

Hand warming is a very helpful technique used to create generalized relaxation throughout your brain and body. Whenever you are stressed or anxious, your hands get cold because your brain diverts the blood from your hands and feet to the large muscles in your body so that you can be ready to fight or run. Learning to warm your hands with your brain helps to counteract this automatic stress response (It comes from the more primitive part of your brain).

Here's how to warm your hands using your brain:

1. Begin by closing your eyes and taking a few deep, calming breaths through your nose.
2. Direct your attention to your hands with warm mental images, such as holding a warm cup of tea, holding someone's hand, or putting your hands in warm sand.
3. Continue deep breathing while imagining your hands being warmed for at least 5 minutes.
4. Open your eyes feeling refreshed and relaxed.



Positive Affirmations

Self-talk is something most of us do all the time but we are not really conscious of it. Often, self-talk is related to negative thoughts that cause you stress. In order to reduce stress, it is important to turn your thinking around by creating alternative positive statements or affirmations.

Reprogramming your thinking

Negative thinking patterns can crush your efforts to change your life. Positive affirmations about you and your life will help you develop better and more productive perceptions of yourself.

How to use positive affirmations:

1. Create a set of positive affirmations that are personal and meaningful to you.
2. Say a positive affirmation to yourself out loud.
3. Then quietly repeat it to yourself.
4. Do this exercise once a day or anytime you need to break negative thought patterns.

How to create your own positive affirmations:

- Always keep your statement in the first person. Use “I” or “my” in the statement.
- Use present tense. Write “**I am**” rather than “I will be.”
- Be specific and create positive statements. For example, say “I feel strong and healthy” instead of “I am not going to be sick.”
- Avoid using the word “try.” If something feels untrue or seems impossible, write things like “I’m *learning to*” and “I’m *getting better at*.”

We rarely focus on the things that we really like about ourselves; instead, we choose to dwell on the things we’d like to change. Therefore, it is important to write positive affirmations about the positive attributes you *already* have along with counteracting the negative, harmful self-talk.

For the best results with positive affirmations, you will need to create a set that are personal to you and repeat them often—the more you affirm something, the more firmly your mind will accept it! Here are some examples to help guide you in creating your own:

- I am a confident and positive person.
- I am strong and powerful.
- I love myself just the way I am.
- I am in charge of my life.
- I choose happiness.
- I choose healthy relationships.
- I am respectful to the ones I love.
- I make healthy choices for myself.
- I have a lot of energy.
- I am calm and relaxed.
- My thoughts are under my control.
- I am loveable.



Natural Mood & Energy Boosters

Gratitude

Did you know practicing gratitude causes real changes in your brain that enhance brain function and make you feel better? If you want your brain to work better, practice being grateful for the good things in your life. Writing down your grateful thoughts makes the practice that much more powerful.

- Every day, list 3 things you are grateful for.

Meditation

Meditation is the practice of focusing your attention to help you feel calm and give you a clear awareness about your life. There are many types of meditation as well as relaxation techniques with meditation components. All share the same goal of achieving inner peace. Studies have shown that practicing meditation, even for just a few weeks, can bring a variety of physical, psychological, and social benefits including, but not limited to:

- reducing stress, soothing anxiety, and fostering relaxation
- improving emotional stability and giving you a bigger brain
- reducing depression and decreasing headaches and pain
- increasing your focus and memory

Yoga

Many people think that yoga is just stretching. While stretching is certainly involved, yoga is really about creating balance in the body through developing strength and flexibility. This is done by practicing yoga poses or postures, each of which has specific physical benefits.

Not only does yoga decrease stress and improve flexibility, recent research found that 20 minutes of **yoga stimulates brain function more than walking or jogging** on the treadmill for the same amount of time. Other studies have found that practicing yoga had the same effect on reducing the risk factors of heart disease as did other forms of exercise, like brisk walking or cycling.

Tai Chi

Tai chi (pronounced "tie chee") is a mind-body practice that began in China as a martial art. A person doing tai chi moves his or her body slowly and gently, while breathing deeply and meditating (tai chi is sometimes called "moving meditation"). The benefits of tai chi can include decreased stress and anxiety, increased energy, stamina and flexibility, strengthened muscles and tendons, improved sleep, and an enhanced immune system.

Physical Exercise

Did you know that physical exercise is perhaps **the single most important thing you can do to keep your brain healthy** over time? Physical exercise not only boosts blood flow and other positive nutrients to the brain – it actually stimulates the brain's ability to generate new brain cells.

The health benefits from physical exercise are truly amazing. Research has shown that the benefits of mild to moderate exercise include:

- protecting brain cells against toxins
- repairing damaged cellular DNA to help protect against cell death
- boosting cognitive ability in people of all ages
- reducing the risk of cognitive impairment, heart disease, and stroke
- improving cholesterol and fat metabolism
- reducing the risk of diabetes, osteoporosis, colon and breast cancer
- increasing the likelihood that you will choose healthier foods
- alleviating depression and anxiety
- easing ADD symptoms
- improving sleeping habits
- helping you manage stress more effectively
- improving muscle tone and endurance, which lowers the risk of fall accidents

So what are you waiting for? Just get started!

It is really important to find activities you enjoy - cycling, swimming, walking, hiking, aerobic classes, Cross-Fit, tennis, or dancing. Try something new!

If you have not been exercising regularly, begin slowly. Even if you commit to walking to the end of the block and back every day, it's a start. Then set a goal to increase the amount and intensity of the physical exercise every week until you are exercising four to five times per week for at least 30 minutes.

For those short on time, interval training is recommended by the American College of Cardiology to be *as effective as sustained aerobic exercise*. Twenty minutes of interval training 3 days per week is equivalent to thirty minutes of cardio 5 days per week.

Interval training is basically 90 seconds of warm-up followed by a series of "bursts" of exercise - 30 seconds of going as fast as you can and then 90 seconds of moderate pace. Repeat this 8 times with a 90-120 second cool down at the end. Interval training can be done with any form of exercise such as running, treadmill, elliptical, Stairmaster, swimming, cycling, and walking.

Brain Area Specific Physical Exercises

Prefrontal Cortex: Aerobic exercise helps boost blood flow and dopamine in the brain, which has been shown to help with impulsivity. Yoga can also help sharpen focus and strengthen the PFC.

Deep Limbic: Aerobic activities that are social, such as dancing or joining a local sports team are very effective as they calm hyperactivity in the DL system and enhance your mood, in addition to boosting blood flow and multiple neurotransmitters in the brain.

Basal Ganglia: Yoga and tai chi soothe overactivity in the basal ganglia and calm anxiety.

Temporal Lobes: Issues with the TL can be reduced through aerobic coordination activities that involve music.

Cerebellum: Dancing, table tennis, and coordination exercises are highly recommended.

Check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

Brain Area Specific Mental Exercises

Prefrontal Cortex: Crossword puzzles, word games, meditation, and hypnosis

Deep Limbic: Killing the ANTS (automatic negative thoughts) and gratitude practice

Basal Ganglia: Deep relaxation, hand-warming techniques, and diaphragmatic breathing

Temporal Lobes: Memory games, naming games, and singing

Parietal Lobes: Juggling and interior design

Cerebellum: Handwriting and calligraphy

Getting Better Sleep

Sleep deprivation is hazardous to your health! Skimping on sleep can affect your health in more ways than you might imagine. When you don't get enough sleep, you have overall decreased blood flow to your brain, which disrupts *thinking, memory, and concentration*.

Sleep deprivation has been associated with many health risks, including: Type 2 diabetes, depression and anxiety, ADD (worsening of symptoms), Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease, stroke, psychosis, weight gain, and poor lifestyle choices.

Strategies for Improving your Sleep:

Remember that we are all unique individuals and what works for one person may not work for another. Keep trying new techniques until you find something that works.

Maintain a regular sleep schedule. Go to bed at the same time each night and wake up (regardless of how much sleep you got the night before) at the same time each day, including weekends.

Pay attention to your environment. Your bedroom should be comfortable. Control the temperature so your room isn't too hot or too cold. Also, keep your room as dark as possible while sleeping. Soothing nature sounds, soft music, wind chimes, white noise makers, or even a fan can induce a very peaceful mood and lull you to sleep.

Create a soothing nighttime routine. A warm bath, meditation, or massage can help you relax.

Technology-free bedroom. Take computers, video games, the TV, and cell phones out of your bedroom and turn them off an hour or two before bedtime to allow time to "unwind." Plus, they emit a type of light that stimulates the brain.

Avoid a full stomach. Don't eat for at least two to three hours before going to bed.

Regular exercise. This is *very* beneficial for insomnia. However, don't do it within four hours of the time you go to sleep as vigorous exercise late in the evening may energize you and keep you awake.

Watch out for stimulants. Don't drink any caffeinated beverages and avoid chocolate, nicotine, and alcohol in the late afternoon or evening. Although alcohol can initially make you feel sleepy, it actually interrupts sleep.

Move the clock so you can't see it. If you wake up in the middle of the night, refrain from looking at the clock. Checking the time can make you feel anxious and make it harder to go back to sleep.

Use the bed only for sleep or sexual activity. Sexual activity releases many natural hormones, releases muscle tension, and boosts a sense of well-being.

Don't toss and turn. If you are unable to fall asleep or return to sleep easily, get up and go to another room to do something relaxing until you feel more tired.

Reducing The Risk Of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

It is estimated that there are about 1.7 million emergency room visits for TBI in the U.S. each year, in addition to hundreds of thousands of unreported incidents of head trauma, including undiagnosed concussions.

Often, brain injuries that don't result in a loss of consciousness go unnoticed and are never treated. Research shows that undiagnosed brain injuries are a major cause of depression, panic attacks, drug and alcohol abuse, homelessness, ADD/ADHD, and suicide.

To Help Keep Your Brain Safe and Reduce the Risk of TBI:

- ✓ **Wear a seat belt** every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle.
- ✓ **Always buckle your child into a child safety seat**, booster seat, or seat belt (according to the child's height, weight, and age) in the car.
- ✓ **Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs**, including prescription medications that can impair the ability to drive.
- ✓ **Avoid high risk sports** and activities where you can hit your head and **don't do "headers" in soccer!**
- ✓ **Always wear a helmet** and make sure your children wear helmets when:
 - Riding a bike, motorcycle, snowmobile, or all-terrain vehicle
 - Playing a contact sport, such as football, ice hockey, or boxing
 - Using in-line skates or riding a skateboard
 - Batting and running bases in baseball or softball
 - Riding a horse
 - Skiing or snowboarding
- ✓ **Do not dive in water that is less than 12 feet deep** or in above-ground pools. Always check the depth and check for debris in the water before diving.
- ✓ **Avoid falls in the home by:**
 - Using a step stool with a grab bar to reach objects on high shelves
 - Installing handrails on stairways and grab bars next to the toilet and in the tub or shower
 - Installing window guards to keep young children from falling out of open windows
 - Using safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs when young children are around
 - Removing or securing tripping hazards such as small area rugs and loose electrical cords
 - Using non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors

What To Do If You Injure Your Brain

Did you know you don't have to hit your head to injure your brain?

Your brain is not a hard, fixed substance; it is soft and jello-like in consistency, composed of millions of fine nerve fibers, and "floats" in fluid within a hard, bony skull containing multiple sharp ridges, making it easily injured.

A brain injury can result from a car crash, a sports injury, from a seemingly innocuous fall, or even from a sudden, jarring movement of the head (like whiplash).

If a Brain Injury Occurs:

If you or someone you are with experiences an impact or violent shake to the head, seek medical advice.

Symptoms of a Brain Injury:

Brain injury symptoms often include:

- Physical complaints - dizziness, fatigue, headaches, visual disturbances, trouble sleeping, nausea, sensitivity to light and sound, and poor balance
- Cognitive changes - poor concentration, memory problems, poor judgment, impulsivity, slowed performance, and difficulty putting thoughts into words
- Psychological concerns - depression, outbursts of anger, irritability, personality changes, and anxiety

Symptoms may develop immediately or after several days or weeks, and they can last for hours, days, weeks, months or longer. Ignoring your symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes symptoms worse.

Ways to Help Yourself Recover From a Brain Injury

There are a number of self-care steps you can take to help your brain heal.

First and foremost, you should **protect yourself from injuring your brain again**. People who have had repeated injuries to their brain may experience serious long-term problems and, in rare cases, it can cause brain swelling and even death.

Other things that you can do to take care of your brain after an injury include:

- Get plenty of sleep at night, and rest during the day

- Write down the things that may be harder than usual for you to remember
- Avoid alcohol, drugs, and caffeine
- Eat brain-healthy foods
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water
- Ask your doctor when it's okay for you to drive a car, ride a bike, or operate machinery
- Avoid activities that are physically demanding (e.g., sports, housework, exercising)
- Avoid activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (e.g., working on the computer, playing video games, balancing a checkbook)
- Increase your activity slowly
- Be patient because healing takes time

RESOURCES

To learn more about healing from brain injuries, you can visit:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury
- Brain Injury Association of America - www.biausa.org

AMEN CLINICS

Information About Sleep Apnea

Sleep apnea is a serious sleep disorder characterized by chronic tiredness during the day, snoring, and periods of apnea (temporary cessation of breathing) which can last from seconds to minutes.

Sleep apnea is very common. According to the National Sleep Foundation, it affects more than 18 million Americans. Risk factors include being male, overweight, having a family history of sleep apnea, and being over the age of 40. However, sleep apnea can strike anyone at any age—even children.

Symptoms of Sleep Apnea

The primary symptom is **excessive daytime sleepiness**. Those with untreated sleep apnea also typically have low energy and problems with concentration. Other indications that someone may have sleep apnea include:

- Snoring
- Frequent awakening or awakening out of breath during the night
- Waking in the morning with a dry mouth or a headache
- Bed partner hears pauses in your breathing during the night
- Obesity is often a risk factor for sleep apnea

However, not everyone with sleep apnea has all of these symptoms. A screening test called Pulse Oximetry, which measures your blood-oxygen level while sleeping, is often done first. If sleep apnea is indicated, then an overnight sleep study will be done to determine the presence and severity of the condition.

The chronic lack of oxygen from the apnea periods is associated with **brain damage** and **early aging**. In fact, sleep apnea doubles a person's risk for Alzheimer's disease! Left untreated, sleep apnea can also have other serious and life-shortening consequences including:

- high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and stroke
- headaches and seizure disorders
- memory and cognitive problems
- depression or worsening of ADD symptoms

Due to the potentially dire health consequences caused by untreated sleep apnea, it is imperative that you be evaluated if there is any chance you may have it. Treating sleep apnea often makes a positive difference in mood, energy, concentration, and overall health.

To learn more about Sleep Apnea and locate a practitioner in your area, you can visit:

- American Sleep Apnea Association – www.sleepapnea.com
- National Sleep Foundation – www.sleepfoundation.org

AMEN CLINICS

Information About Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection caused by the bite of an infected blacklegged tick, also known as a deer tick. This disease is called the “great imitator” and has been vastly under-diagnosed in the U.S. due to inadequate testing methods and a general lack of acknowledgement by the medical community.

A nasty relative of the STD syphilis, Lyme disease and its numerous co-infections can mimic or cause a multitude of medical, neurological, and psychiatric conditions, yet is much harder to cure.

Symptoms of Lyme Disease

Along with physiological symptoms like unexplained fevers, swollen glands, sore throat, headache, and joint pain or swelling, Lyme disease can cause the following common neuropsychological issues:

- Impaired attention, focus, concentration, judgment, and impulse control
- Impaired memory and speech functions
- Disorganization and getting lost
- Poor problem-solving and decision-making abilities
- Slower mental processing speed
- Symptoms similar to dementia and Alzheimer’s disease
- Psychosis and hallucinations

70% of those afflicted with Lyme disease report changes in their thinking, such as memory loss and reduced mental sharpness.

The fortunate ones are able to catch Lyme disease within the first few weeks, when the appropriate antibiotics have a much better chance of working. Unfortunately, Lyme disease is often missed and the infection is allowed to take hold, disrupting the immune system and causing a cascade of inflammatory responses.

A tick bite is the best way to know whether you are at risk – however, one study showed that only 17% of those surveyed even recalled being bitten!

To learn more about Lyme disease and locate a practitioner in your area, you can visit:

- International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society – www.ilads.org
- American Lyme Disease Foundation – www.aldf.com
- Lyme Disease Association, Inc. – www.lymediseaseassociation.org

AMEN CLINICS

Information About Irlen Syndrome

Irlen Syndrome (sometimes called scotopic sensitivity syndrome) is a visual *processing* problem, not a vision problem, which appears to be caused by a defect in one of the visual pathways that carries messages from the eye to the brain.

The eyes transmit 70% of the information a person receives and this must be interpreted correctly by the brain. Any problem in the way the brain processes visual information can cause difficulties in a general ability to function.

Some research estimates that Irlen Syndrome affects approximately 18% of the general public and as much as 65% of those diagnosed with dyslexia!

Possible Symptoms

- **Light Sensitivity** - Bothered by glare, fluorescent lights, bright lights, sunlight, or driving at night
- **Reading Problems** - Print that shifts, shakes, blurs, moves, doubles, disappears, or becomes difficult to perceive
- **Attention Challenges** - Problems concentrating, difficulty staying on task, takes breaks, looks away, becomes restless, fidgety, or tired
- **Strain or Fatigue** - Feeling strain, tension, fatigue or sleepy, or get headaches while reading and engaged in other perceptual activities
- **Poor Depth Perception** - Inability to accurately judge distance or spatial relationships, difficulty with such things as escalators, stairs, ball sports, or driving
- **Physical** - headaches (including migraine), nausea, motion sickness, confusion, or lack of clarity in thinking

Irlen Syndrome can affect listening, energy level, motivation, and work production. People with Irlen Syndrome are often viewed as underachievers or as having behavioral, attitudinal, or motivational problems.

Irlen Syndrome is not detected by standard educational, visual, or medical tests. A certified Irlen diagnostician can test for Irlen Syndrome, as well as assess for the appropriate treatments.

Treatment involves the use of tinted lenses in glasses or contacts and colored overlay sheets in order to reduce or eliminate the perceptual processing errors.

Although the treatment is simple, the results are often very dramatic.

To learn more about Irlen Syndrome and locate a practitioner in your area, you can visit:
www.irlen.com

504 Accommodations Recommendations

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

1. Diagnosis: _____

2. Describe the basis for the determination of disability: _____

3. Describe how the disability affects a major life activity: _____

4. Name of Physician: _____ Phone: _____

5. The physician has examined and reviewed the files of the above student and concludes that he/she meets the classification as a qualified disabled individual under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In accordance with those guidelines, the physician recommends the school make reasonable accommodations and addresses the individual student's needs by:

PHYSICAL ROOM ARRANGEMENTS:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seating student near teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing the distance between the desks | <input type="checkbox"/> Avoiding distracting stimuli (air conditioner, high traffic area) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seating student near a positive role model | <input type="checkbox"/> Standing near the student when giving directions or presenting lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional accommodations: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seating student away from others but can see the board | | _____ |

LESSON PRESENTATION:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pairing students to check work | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing key points on the board | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing written outlines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Including a variety of activities during each lesson | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing peer tutoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Making sure directions are understood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having student orally review key points | <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking longer presentations into shorter segments | <input type="checkbox"/> Allowing students to record lessons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching through multi-sensory | <input type="checkbox"/> Using computer assisted instruction | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional accommodations: _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing visual aids | _____ |

modes

___ Providing note taker

ASSIGNMENTS/WORKSHEETS:

- Giving extra time to complete tasks
- Allowing students to audio record assignments/homework
- Shortening assignments or breaking work into smaller segments
- Handing out worksheets one at a time
- Providing a structured routine in written form

- Simplifying complex directions
- Allowing computer printed assignments
- Redoing the reading level of the assignments/instructions
- Providing study skills training/remediation strategies

- Requiring fewer correct responses to achieve grade
- Giving frequent short quizzes and avoiding long tests
- Additional accommodations:

- _____

TEST TAKING:

- Allowing open book exams
- Allowing extra time for exams, reading test item to student
- Allowing student to audio record test answers

- Giving exam orally/giving take home tests
- Giving frequent short quizzes, not long exams

- Using more objective items (fewer essay responses)
- Additional accommodations:

- _____

BEHAVIORS:

- Praising specific behaviors using monitoring strategies
- Cueing students to stay on task (nonverbal signals)
- Ignoring inappropriate behaviors not drastically outside classroom limits
- Marking student's correct answers more than their mistakes
- Allowing legitimate movement

- Giving extra privileges and rewards
- Keeping classroom rules simple and clear
- Contracting with student
- Making "prudent use" of negative consequences
- Implementing a classroom behavior management system
- Increasing the immediacy of rewards

- Implementing time-out procedures
- Allowing for "short" breaks between assignments
- Allowing student time out of seat to run errands
- Additional accommodations:

- _____

ORGANIZATION:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Providing peer assistance with organizational skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Assigning volunteer homework buddy | <input type="checkbox"/> Allowing student to have extra set of books at home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sending daily/weekly progress reports home | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing a reward system for in-school work and homework completion | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional accommodations:

_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Providing student with homework assignment notebook/calendar | | |

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suggesting parenting program(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing group/individual counseling, one-on-one tutorial, reducing class size, providing classroom aide(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Providing social skills group experiences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodations for bus riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Modify/monitor non-academic times (lunchroom, movement between classes) | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing intervention strategies for transitional periods (i.e. cafeteria, physical education) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Providing note takers | <input type="checkbox"/> Tailoring homework assignments | <input type="checkbox"/> Modify the curriculum:

_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring student closely on field trips | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suggesting agency involvement | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide laptop computer | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inservicing teacher(s) on student's disability | | |

DISCIPLINE:

- This student's section 504 disability would NOT cause him/her to violate school rules.
- This student's section 504 disability COULD cause him/her to violate school rules.

Recommended by:

SIGNATURE OF RECOMMENDING PROFESSIONAL

DATE

Daily Progress Note

Copyright © 2016 Daniel G. Amen, M.D.

Supervision is key to helping students with ADD or other students who are having difficulty transitioning to the rigors of school. They often have not developed the internal discipline for day-to-day success at school and with their homework. I use this system for both children and teenagers. Even though teenagers may balk at this system, many teens in my practice have used it very successfully. I'm convinced that many students have graduated from high school because we kept them on track with this system! ADD students tend to do much better if they know someone is watching.

Directions for Effectively Using the DPN:

Every school day the child or teen is to bring the Daily Progress Note (DPN) to school for the teacher(s) to fill out (at the end of the day if there is only one teacher, at the end of each class for those who have multiple teachers).

The teacher (or teachers) rates the student on a scale of 1 - 5 (1 = best, 5 = worst) in four different areas: homework, class participation, class work, and peer interactions. After rating the child in each area, the teacher is then to put his or her initials at the bottom of the form. It is important to emphasize to the teacher to give an accurate assessment. Some teachers give out "good" marks just to be nice and then put the real grades down on the report card, shocking the student and parents.

At the end of the day, the child or teen brings the DPN home. This note provides the student, parents, and teacher immediate feedback on performance and helps everyone track progress throughout the year. Good performance is noticed and reinforced. Mediocre or poor performance is observed and necessary corrective measures can be put into place. When the child or teen brings the DPN home, it is helpful if parents first look for something they like (too many parents only notice the negative). If the child or teen's marks are particularly poor, the parent needs to question the reasons behind the difficulties of the day.

After the discussion, the parent then assigns points for the day. Here is a sample point system:

- 1 = 5 points
- 2 = 2 points
- 3 = 1 point
- 4/5 = 0 points

In the system listed above (for students with one teacher a day), there is a total of 20 possible points that the child can earn (a score of 1 [5 points] multiplied by 4 areas = 20 points).

The points are then spent in two different ways: One for daily wants and needs and the other for future privileges. Earning points for daily wants and needs is significant, as these reinforce and discipline behavior on a more immediate basis. To do this, the parent and child make up a list of the things he or she likes to do on a daily basis, such as watching television, playing outside, having a friend over, playing a video game, talking on the phone, etc. Half of the possible points (10 in the example above) should be spent on daily privileges. This lets the child know that he or she can't just blow a day at school and expect everything to be okay at home.

For example:

Points Needed for Daily Wants

- 2 = 1/2 hour of television
- 2 = 1 hour of playing outside
- 3 = having a friend over for an hour
- 2 = playing a video game
- 3 = 1/2 hour of phone privilege

The other half of their points can be saved for special treats and privileges as they earn enough points (such as a special toy, a trip to their favorite restaurant, having a friend spend the night, or being able to stay up past their bedtime). It is important to make up a "wish" list of the things the child or teen is willing to work for. The child or teen needs to develop this list in order to more fully buy into this program.

In some cases, children will intentionally lose their DPN or forget to have their teacher sign it if their performance that day was poor. In the case where the child claims to have lost the DPN or they say that the teacher didn't fill it out, they lose all of their points for the day (or portion of points if multiple teachers are involved). The child or teen must take responsibility! On a day where the child earns little or no points for various privileges, the child is to be encouraged to do better the next day and he or she is simply allowed to read books or play in his or her room.

Almost all children find this system to be very rewarding after they have used it for several days. Some children refuse to participate initially, but if the parent persists, the child will almost always give in. One of the advantages of this system is that some children become "miserly" with their points and will often give up watching television and playing video games to save points for other things they are interested in. In addition, many begin to develop a more positive attitude toward school because of their ability to earn extra privileges for performing well in school.

Some parents have asked me if the DPN does not single out the child for teasing from peers. I have rarely found this to be the case. In fact, this helps the child to modify their behavior in school, which in turns helps their interactions with peers.

The DPN is on the following page for you to make copies. To ensure success, make plenty of copies in advance so you won't run out and break the continuity this supervision method.

DAILY PROGRESS NOTE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please rate this child/teen in each of the areas listed below as to how he/she performed in school today, using a scale of 1 – 5:

Excellent Good Fair Poor Terrible/Did not do work
1 2 3 4 5

Class Periods/Subjects

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Homework	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Class Participation	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Class Work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Peer Interactions	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Teacher's Initials	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

DAILY PROGRESS NOTE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please rate this child/teen in each of the areas listed below as to how he/she performed in school today, using a scale of 1 – 5:

Excellent Good Fair Poor Terrible/Did not do work
1 2 3 4 5

Class Periods/Subjects

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Homework	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Class Participation	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Class Work	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Peer Interactions	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
Teacher's Initials	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Job Accommodations for ADD

Copyright © 2016 Daniel G. Amen, M.D.

Reasonable accommodations are required for workers who qualify under the ADA statutes. Accommodations are of three general types:

1. Those required to ensure equal opportunity in the job application process;
2. Those which enable the individual with a disability to perform the essential features of a job;
3. Those which enable individuals with disabilities to enjoy the same benefits and privileges as those available to individuals without disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations for individuals with ADD and learning disorders (LD) often include the following:

- providing or modifying equipment or devices
- job restructuring
- part-time or modified work schedules
- reassignment to a vacant position
- adjusting/modifying examinations, training materials, or policies
- providing readers or interpreters
- making the workplace accessible to and usable by people with disabilities

Despite the fears of employers, the accommodations actually required for individuals with ADD or LD are generally not expensive or extensive. The President's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities has concluded that:

- 31% of accommodations cost nothing
- 50% cost less than \$50
- 69% cost less than \$500
- 88% cost less than \$1,000

Certainly, in many cases, job retraining costs much more than the accommodations necessary to keep a valued employee.

SPECIFIC SAMPLE WORK ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH ADD OR LD

- Employees with ADD need structure. ADD adults are often successful in the military because there is a high level of structure provided.

- Pressure often disorganizes the ADD employee. Give them enough time to do their job, without undue pressure.
- Use praise more than threats. Threats and anger trigger negative memories from the past for most ADD people. An employer is likely to get much more productivity from the ADD employee by using praise and encouragement.
- Help with organization. ADD employees often have serious problems with organization. Teaching them effective ways to organize their work area and time may help them significantly
- Give simple instructions and have the employee repeat them back. People with ADD may only process 30% of what is said. It is critical to check with them to ensure they understand what is expected of them.
- Modify hiring tests and on-the-job performance tests. People with ADD often need more time to complete tests to show what they really know. Employers could lose a valuable asset by excluding someone based on timed tests. In a similar way, on-the-job performance tests need to be modified so that the ADD person is not at a disadvantage
- Supplement verbal instructions with visual instructions.
- Adjust work schedules when possible. Many people with ADD have trouble getting up early in the morning and do better with work schedules which begin later in the day. Also, provide a grace period for tardiness and have the employee, when late, be able to make up time at the end of the day (as long as this won't interfere with the behavior or morale of other employees).

Other suggestions from the Job Accommodations Network include:

Computer related:

- Word processing programs with spell and grammar check
- Software organizers, such as those by Borland, Micro Logic and Micro Systems
- Software flow charts
- Computer screen reading systems/reading machines

Clerical:

- Color coding
- Color templates
- Automate paperwork by creating electronic files
- Use voice recorders in phones

- Audio prompts/cue cards

Memory aids:

- Personal assistant devices
- Timers, counters

Time management skills:

- Goal setting
- Staying on one task until it is finished

Managing the physical environment:

- Have employee's setting away from visual distractions
- Use space enclosures/cubicles
- White noise machines

For more information, visit the Job Accommodation Network www.askjan.org or call (800) 526-7234 or (800) ADA-WORK. Persons calling from Canada may call (800) 526-2262.