

# Second Chance — of — Northwest Florida, Inc.

*“A Non-profit Organization Serving the Needs of Adults with Brain Injuries and their Families.”*



## Brain Waves Newsletter

### A Reflection on Gratitude

The more you operate from a positive perspective, the stronger you will become in terms of resilience when facing trauma or loss.

“Every day of life is a gift! Be sure to ... unwrap it. Play with it, and most importantly – Give thanks for it!” So says Valerie Rickel, creator of award winning online magazine, SoulfulLiving.com. Her thoughts are amplified by Simple Abundance author, Sarah Ban Breathnach, who feels that being grateful for the good in your life each day unleashes power that can change your brain.

The benefits are real. By celebrating the present, through appreciating the values you hold, noticing the positives in your daily life and by participating as much as possible in activities you enjoy, you are taking steps that block toxic emotions such as envy, resentment, depression and regret.

The more you operate from a positive perspective, the stronger you will become in terms of resilience when facing trauma or loss. An upbeat outlook helps strengthen social ties and goes a long way toward improving self-worth.

“It will change your brain,” says Dr. Daniel Amen, pioneer of brain imaging in clinical practice and author of Magnificent Mind at Any Age.

We hear a lot these days about neuroplasticity of the brain. Back in the day, it was commonly thought that a brain developed to a certain point, then hardened. Today, science indicates it just isn't so. You can teach an old brain to develop new pathways.

Rick Hanson, in Taking in the Good, says we can use our minds to change our brains over time for the better and he offers advice for getting there. Using examples such as a job well done, a visit with a special friend, a good book or a great movie, Hanson suggests we reflect on the positives in these experiences. Take time to savor each event and really feel it, enjoy it, and let it sink in to your body and emotions. He believes benefits can accrue in as little as a week or two if you are faithful to the practice.

G.K. Chesterton, (1874-1936) English writer, lay theologian, poet, and philosopher said, “When it comes to life, the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.”

Looking at life through lenses of gratitude is a choice we can make, a skill we can develop. We can facilitate this by keeping a gratitude journal, or writing gratitude letters or emails for things we truly appreciate in our lives. Always savor the good. An orientation toward gratitude can have a beneficial effect on our total wellbeing.

A friend who raised her two children as a single parent for a number of years shared with me her thoughts on gratitude. Every evening, she and her children would think about their day at school or work respectively and would write three things for which each was grateful. These were shared around the table and then taped on the refrigerator. Instead of concentrating on what

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Jon Cupp

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might have been missing from their lives, this sharing exercise helped the family focus on what they had. Her adult children have recalled with pleasure how that activity shaped their lives.

William Arthur Ward (1921-1994), one of America's most quoted authors of inspirational maxims, had this to say, "Each day we receive the gift of 86,400 seconds of life." He asks, "Have you used one (second) to say Thank You?"

By Heather Sinclair

## Our Thanksgiving

Besides life skills classes covering the benefits of gratitude, we have started a *Second Chance Gratitude Journal* to not only help us to remember what all we have to be thankful for but to help develop new pathways in our brains. Dr. Daniel Amen, MD, named in the above article is one of the world's foremost experts on brain imaging and is now the consultant for the NFL. He was hired to help retired NFL players who have traumatic brain injuries. He has in fact devoted decades of his life studying the brain and has now completed over 87,000 brain scans. In addition to the benefits mentioned in the above article, he has shown that writing down just 3 things every day for which you are grateful, can actually develop new pathways between neurons in the brain.

### So what are the staff, members, and volunteers most thankful for here at Second Chance???

**Dan** (member) "Wife", **Shamika** (member) "To be alive", **Randy** (member) "For being alive, having friends, & Second Chance", **Colleen** (member) "For surviving", **Teresa** (member) "Trees", **Tyler** (member) "Family", **Jason** (member) "Roll Tide", **Diane** (member) "Family & friends", **James** (member) "Mom", **Maria** (member) "Things that go on here at Second Chance", **Eugene** (member) "My life, health, strength, and wisdom", **Herman** (member) "Life, health, and ability to still walk", **Paul** (member) "Mom and dad", **Dawn** (member) "Happy that I can still move and think", **Stacy** (member) "Love", **Bobby** (member) "My family", **Bubba** (member) "My kids", **Mike** (member) "Kids", **Alison** (member) "Family", **Gary** (member) "Being alive", **Idris** (member) "To be alive", **Stan** (volunteer) "For being here at Second Chance", **Donna** (classroom assistant) "The Holy Spirit", **Sherry** (volunteer) "Good health & living in Panama City", **Norma** (volunteer) "I'm thankful to have the opportunity to work here & to witness how far our members have come." **Ellen** (volunteer) "Being given the time to take care of my family this past year", **Jessica** (volunteer) "Inner strength & motivation", **Marcia** (volunteer) "Amazing Grace", **Jon** (Executive Director) "Life in Christ", **Colleen** (Music Therapist) "Being here to share my gifts with others & learn as others share their gifts", **Sheila** (Life Skills instructor) "For 18 years with my daughter, my most wonderful husband, & the members here at Second Chance", **Sherl** (President) "Family, church, friends...".

We have so much to be thankful for-including our new garden! Thanks to Jon Cupp for making it possible!



By Sheila Phillips

## 50 Shades of Happy: The New Joy of Coloring – Parade

### The Coloring Craze Takes Off

That’s right, I’m a middle-aged woman who’s spending her evenings these days coloring. And I’m hardly alone. Others have caught on to the magical, mood-lifting power of their erstwhile childhood pastime, and together we’re giving rise to a craze unsurpassed since the days we had Donny Osmond fever. There’s a new world of intricate, beautiful coloring books aimed at adults—and we’re snapping them up like hotcakes.

What exactly does a grown-up color, you may ask? Think paisleys, botanicals, animals, mandelas (symbols used in Hinduism or Buddhism that represent wholeness), enchanted forests, cats, decorative fans and Benedict Cumberbatch. Yes, there’s a Colour Me Good Benedict Cumberbatch coloring book (part of cheeky line of books by British illustrator Mel Elliott that also features Ryan Gosling and Taylor Swift). It’s even rumored that a Game of Thrones coloring book is in the works.

Benedict Cumberbatch aside, the majority of adults who color want to create something beautiful. Take Andie Ray, 48, a real estate agent in Knoxville, Tenn. When she first laid eyes on an adult coloring book “my heart just jumped,” Ray recalls. “Right away, I bought two: Magic Garden (Barron’s) and Mandala Magic (Barron’s).”

Like me, she finds coloring an easy way to downshift in the midst of a busy life. “Everything else in my life is hurry up, hurry up, hurry up. I’m constantly bombarded, and I always have trouble calming down,” she says. “But now I turn off the computer and TV, and I have this beautiful hobby to go to. I decide what I want to do, how much I want to work on tonight, and immediately I’m more relaxed and happier.”



**Colored by our members!**

*50 Shades...continued from page 3*

**Color for Your Health**

While other hobbies might relax you, coloring offers complete absorption. “It engages both sides of your brain in that it’s both creative and tactical,” says psychologist Alice Domar, Ph.D., executive director of the Domar Center for Mind/Body Health in Boston. The creativity comes with envisioning the color selection and how it will play throughout the piece, while the tactical involves applying your decisions to the artist’s design. Both keep your right brain from taking over and wandering where it wants, as it does when you just doodle.

“It’s impossible to worry about dinner or the laundry or anything else when your mind is completely engaged,” Domar explains. “With knitting or other crafts, you can watch TV or multitask, but coloring really requires you to be in the moment. And that makes it meditative.” She suggests coloring to patients who need stress relief, particularly those who loved the activity as a child. “Coloring brings you back to a simpler time, it’s pleasurable, it’s a chance to sit and be mindful...and at the end you get this beautiful result. You have a real sense of accomplishment.”

“I saw coloring books on Amazon, and was immediately intrigued,” says Kevin Tober, 50, of Pompano Beach, Fla. “I ordered a few and some markers and really found the process of coloring the more involved mandala-type designs to be extremely relaxing. I am disabled with chronic pain, so anything that enables me to escape to a meditative mindset is a huge benefit to me.”

Taken from “50 Shades of Happy: The New Joy of Coloring.” 10 July, 2015. By Hillari Dowdle.  
For the complete article, please visit: <http://parade.com>

**October Happenings**

- \*Rock It Lanes - Outing, Oct. 2nd**
- \*Covered Dish Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> - Guest Speaker Ann Robbins from the Bay County Library**
- \*Birthdays Celebrated - Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>**
- \*Picnic at Oaks by the Bay - Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>**



- \*Finns - Outing, Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>**
- \*Yard Sale - Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>**
- \*Pizza Hut - Outing, Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Donations**

We are so grateful for all of the generous donations from the community. Canned foods, clothes, hygiene products, money, and volunteer time are all things that keep us going! Thanks to all who give their time, money, etc. You are truly appreciated!

## November Happenings

- \*Pizza Party - Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>
- \*Covered Dish - Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Theme: Bountiful Harvest
- Guest Speaker: Pat Nease, a local storyteller
- \*Library & Lunch - Outing, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>
- \*Iron Man - Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>
- \*Center Closed Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> for Veteran's Day
- \*Rock It Lanes & Pizza - Outing, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>
- \*Birthday Celebrations - Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>
- \*Grills Gone Wild - Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>
- \*Thanksgiving - Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>
- \*Center Closed Nov. 26<sup>th</sup> & Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> for the Thanksgiving Holiday

## New at Second Chance

\*Our Music Therapist, Colleen Cox, will now be here twice a week (Mondays and Thursdays)!!!



\*We now have dance classes every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month!

\*We have started our Peace Garden, and tables will arrive Monday, Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>!

\*Matthew W. Shack Sr. (Author, Playwright, & Historian) will be teaching a class!



# Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!!!

## **How Music Helps to Heal the Injured Brain: Therapeutic Use Crescendos Thanks to Advances in Brain Science**

By: Michael Thaut Ph.D. and Gerald McIntosh, M.D.

“What no longer requires confirmation is the premise that music in therapy works, in principle and in practice. It is a fact: Music shows promise for helping to heal the brain. Research has identified specific areas in which music is an effective therapeutic approach. Neurologic music therapy now meets the standards of evidence-based medicine, is recognized by the World Federation of Neurorehabilitation, and should be a tool for standard rehabilitation care...”

For complete article, please visit:

[http://dana.org/Cerebrum/2010/How\\_Music\\_Helps\\_to\\_Heal\\_the\\_Injured\\_Brain\\_\\_Therapeutic\\_Use\\_Crescendos\\_Thanks\\_to\\_Advances\\_in\\_Brain\\_Science/#sthash.1di7dAOB.dpuf](http://dana.org/Cerebrum/2010/How_Music_Helps_to_Heal_the_Injured_Brain__Therapeutic_Use_Crescendos_Thanks_to_Advances_in_Brain_Science/#sthash.1di7dAOB.dpuf)