**Amen Brain System Checklist**

Please rate yourself on each of the symptoms listed below using the following scale. If possible, to give us the most complete picture, have another person who knows you well (such as a spouse, partner or parent) rate you as well. List other symptoms if necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Very Frequently</th>
<th>Not Applicable/Not Known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other  Self

1. Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes
2. Trouble sustaining attention in routine situations (i.e., homework, chores, paperwork)
3. Trouble listening
4. Fails to finish things
5. Poor organization for time or space (such as backpack, room, desk, paperwork)
6. Avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort
7. Loses things
8. Easily distracted
9. Forgetful
10. Poor planning skills
11. Lack clear goals or forward thinking
12. Difficulty expressing feelings
13. Difficulty expressing empathy for others
14. Excessive daydreaming
15. Feeling bored
16. Feeling apathetic or unmotivated
17. Feeling tired, sluggish or slow moving
18. Feeling spacey or “in a fog”
19. Fidgety, restless or trouble sitting still
20. Difficulty waiting turn
21.Interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games)
22. Impulsive (saying or doing things without thinking first)
23. "On the go" or acts as if "driven by a motor"
24. Talks excessively
25. Blurs out answers before questions have been completed
26. Difficulty waiting turn
27. Interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations or games)
28. Impulsive (saying or doing things without thinking first)
29. Excessive or senseless worrying
30. Upset when things do not go your way
31. Upset when things are out of place
32. Tendency to be oppositional or argumentative
33. Tendency to have repetitive negative thoughts
34. Tendency toward compulsive behaviors
35. Intense dislike for change
36. Tendency to hold grudges
37. Trouble shifting attention from subject to subject
38. Trouble shifting behavior from task to task
39. Difficulties seeing options in situations
40. Tendency to hold on to own opinion and not listen to others
41. Tendency to get locked into a course of action, whether or not it is good
42. Needing to have things done a certain way or you become very upset
43. Others complain that you worry too much
44. Tend to say no without first thinking about question
45. Tendency to predict fear
46. Frequent feelings of sadness
47. Moodiness
48. Negativity
49. Low energy
50. Irritability
51. Decreased interest in others
52. Decreased interest in things that are usually fun or pleasurable
53. Feelings of hopelessness about the future
54. Feelings of helplessness or powerlessness
55. Feeling dissatisfied or bored
56. Excessive guilt
57. Suicidal feelings
58. Crying spells
59. Lowered interest in things usually considered fun
60. Sleep changes (too much or too little)
61. Appetite changes (too much or too little)
62. Chronic low self-esteem
63. Negative sensitivity to smells/odors
64. Frequent feelings of nervousness or anxiety
65. Panic attacks
66. Symptoms of heightened muscle tension (headaches, sore muscles, hand tremor)
67. Periods of heart pounding, rapid heart rate or chest pain
68. Periods of trouble breathing or feeling smothered
69. Periods of feeling dizzy, faint or unsteady on your feet
70. Periods of nausea or abdominal upset
71. Periods of sweating, hot or cold flashes
72. Tendency to predict the worst
73. Fear of dying or doing something crazy
74. Avoid places for fear of having an anxiety attack
75. Conflict avoidance
76. Excessive fear of being judged or scrutinized by others
77. Persistent phobias
78. Low motivation
79. Excessive motivation
80. Tics (motor or vocal)
81. Poor handwriting
82. Quick startle
83. Tendency to freeze in anxiety provoking situations
84. Lacks confidence in their abilities
85. Seems shy or timid
86. Easily embarrassed
87. Sensitive to criticism
88. Bites fingernails or picks skin
89. Short fuse or periods of extreme irritability
90. Periods of rage with little provocation
91. Often misinterprets comments as negative when they are not
92. Irritability tends to build, then explodes, then recedes, often tired after a rage
93. Periods of spaciness or confusion
94. Periods of panic and/or fear for no specific reason
95. Visual or auditory changes, such as seeing shadows or hearing muffled sounds
96. Frequent periods of deja vu (feelings of being somewhere you have never been)
97. Sensitivity or mild paranoia
98. Headaches or abdominal pain of uncertain origin
99. History of a head injury
100. Dark thoughts, may involve suicidal or homicidal thoughts
101. Periods of forgetfulness or memory problems
Amen Brain System Checklist Answer Key

Prefrontal Cortex Symptoms (PFC)
  Inattention Symptoms, 1-18
  Hyperactivity-Impulsivity Symptoms, 19-28
Anterior Cingulate System (ACS) Symptoms, 29-45
Deep Limbic System (DLS) Symptoms, 46-63
Basal Ganglia (BGS) Symptoms, 64-88
Temporal Lobe (TLS) Symptoms, 89-101

Add up all of the questions answered as 3 or 4 in each section.

PFC

ADD, combined type if both 1-18, and 19-28 score (in each area)
  Highly probable     8 questions with 3 or 4
  Probable            6 questions with 3 or 4
  May be possible     4 questions with 3 or 4

ADD, inattentive subtype if 1-18 has X questions with 3 or 4 but 19-28 has less than 3 questions with 3 or 4
  Highly probable     8 questions with 3 or 4
  Probable            6 questions with 3 or 4
  May be possible     4 questions with 3 or 4

Anterior Cingulate System Hyperactivity, questions 29-45
  Highly probable     10 questions with 3 or 4
  Probable            7 questions with 3 or 4
  May be possible     4 questions with 3 or 4

Deep Limbic System Hyperactivity, questions 46-63
  Highly probable     10 questions with 3 or 4
  Probable            7 questions with 3 or 4
  May be possible     4 questions with 3 or 4

Basal Ganglia Hyperactivity, questions 64-88
  Highly probable     10 questions with 3 or 4
  Probable            7 questions with 3 or 4
  May be possible     4 questions with 3 or 4

Temporal Lobe System, questions 89-101
  Highly probable     8 questions with 3 or 4
  Probable            6 questions with 3 or 4
  May be possible     4 questions with 3 or 4
How To Use The Amen Brain Systems Checklist in Daily Clinical Practice

Daniel Amen, M.D. developed the ABSC (Amen Brain System Checklist) to provide a way of assessing the need for SPECT brain imaging and to utilize as an assessment tool to measure the effectiveness of medication. The ABSC can be used as a one time assessment to measure whether or not referral for a SPECT Scan is needed, and to be used periodically to provide objective feedback to the prescribing physician to help titrate medications/supplements or to know when medication/supplements may need to be changed.

Ways to Administer:
The checklist can be self administered, or given verbally to the patient by the therapist. When the checklist is administered verbally it gives you the opportunity to question the patient about their responses to gain further information about the severity of their symptoms. As an example with question #99, “History of a head injury or family history of violence or explosiveness”. It is helpful to ask if they have experienced a blow to the head by asking the following questions. Note their responses, with approximate dates, and age at the time of the traumatic incident.

- Have you ever experienced a blow to the head where you saw “stars”, felt confused or shaken up?
- Have you been in a car accident? Can you describe what happened?
- Ever played football? Soccer? Have you ever been surfing?
- Any times when you had periods of high fever?
- Ever been in a fist fight?
- Drug or alcohol experiences where you passed out, or got into a fight?
- Did your father, or mother rage? Did they or any family members when they were angry throw things? Kick? Did they become so angry they punched holes in the walls?
- Did your parents or family members have mood swings? Periods of sleeplessness? Times of mania?

The Importance of “Other”.

The ABSC has a column that can be used for self report, and a column to have their spouse, parent, or close friend rate them. Generally speaking unless the patient is in a time of high stress or desperately needing help “self report” can yield highly inaccurate results. At the beginning of therapy it is not unusual for patients to see themselves as functioning quite normally. In situations where it is clear that verbal abuse and rage are frequent and common occurrences it is not unusual for the volatile spouse to rate themselves quite “normal”. I usually find that the “other” rating will be closer to SPECT Scan results than self – report. I usually have both people fill out the ABSC for themselves, and on their spouse. The results will yield interesting data on how each person is coming across to the other person.