



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance
New Jersey

DBSA Princeton News

December 1, 2009

DBSA Princeton meets Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 7:30 PM to 9:15 PM
in Lambert House (Classroom 1) at the University Medical Center at Princeton.

For directions and updates, visit <http://dbsaNewJersey.org/princeton/>

Upcoming Speakers

Tuesday, December 8: *Ask the Doctor* with Dr. Anne Rochford, psychiatrist. Bring your questions on mood disorders and their treatment for Dr. Rochford.

Tuesday, January 12: *NAMI Hearts and Minds* with Salvina Cappello, NAMI-NJ. Salvina will speak about NAMI's consumer education program on wellness.

Tuesday, February 9: *Cognitive and Behavior Therapies: Past, Present and Future* with Clifford Lazarus, psychologist, and Donna Astor-Lazarus, social worker, The Lazarus Institute. Dr. Lazarus and Ms. Astor-Lazarus will speak and take questions.

Tuesday, March 9: *Ask the Doctor* with Dr. David Nathan, psychiatrist, Princeton Psychiatry. Bring your questions for our group's advisor.

Donate via Google Checkout

DBSA Princeton is now accepting donations online! Go to our web site <http://dbsaNewJersey.org/princeton> and click the Donate button to use Google Checkout to donate to our group. Tell your friends and family to support our group! Donations are used to help fund our outreach, educational, support and advocacy efforts for people living with mood disorders in the Princeton, New Jersey area.

Speakers on Sleep and Metabolic Syndrome

Our group was honored to host speakers over the last two months on topics of particular importance to the health and well being of persons with mood disorders.

On November 10, Dr. Rochelle Zozula, psychologist, spoke on *Sleep Disorders*. Dr. Zozula specializes in behavioral sleep, one of only three such specialists in New Jersey.

There is a high correlation between psychiatric disorders and sleep disorders—little wonder as sleep is essential to the proper functioning of the brain. For example, falling into a pattern of early awakenings may indicate an oncoming depressive cycle for those diagnosed with major depression. And a return to normal sleep patterns indicates remission.

Dr. Zozula says a brief mid-day nap, when the body hits that after lunch lull, is fine provided it lasts no more than 20 to 30 minutes. More than that and it becomes disruptive to your sleep cycle.

On October 13, Dr. Lisa Motavalli, cardiologist, spoke on *Mood Disorders, the Metabolic Syndrome and Cardiovascular Diseases*. It is well known that metabolic syndrome, a collection of risk factors including obesity, high triglycerides (a type of fat) and insulin resistance, is common among persons with mood disorders. Less well known is the association of mood disorders with cardiovascular disease, a disease that can lead to heart attacks. Thus it is especially important for persons with mood disorders to control their weight, eat healthfully and exercise regularly.

2009 Annual Meeting

Our group's annual meeting will be on **Tuesday, December 15, 2009** at our normal meeting time and location. A regular peer support meeting will immediately follow. The main purpose of the meeting is to elect the Board of Directors for 2010. There are up to eight positions available, as all terms expire annually.

All members, including current board members, are eligible for election to the board. You are a member if you attend our support group meetings. If you wish to serve on the Board for 2010, please let David or another facilitator know by December 9. You may let us know at a group meeting, or by phone or email using the contact information on our web site. You do not have to be present at the annual meeting to be elected to the Board.

Facilitator Training

We encourage group members who may be interested in becoming group facilitators to attend a training session to find out what its all about. After the training, you decide whether you want to help facilitate the group.

The New Jersey Self-Help Group Clearinghouse (<http://njgroups.org>) offers a free facilitator training session each month of the year. To register for this training, call the clearinghouse at 1-800-367-6274 (outside NJ, call 1-973-989-1122). The next training session will be on Saturday, December 12, 2009 in Somerset County.

Dealing with Holiday Stress

By Susan S.

Why are some holidays considered stressful, and others aren't? In America, few can say they are stressed out by the 4th of July, yet Thanksgiving, Christmas and Hanukkah score high on the stress meter. Why is that?

Without getting too much into Psychology here, perhaps it is from Western expectations. We want a Norman Rockwell type Christmas. We want our family to behave like the perfect TV family—say *The Waltons*, not like *The Simpsons*. The media; every time you turn on the TV, you see a Hallmark version of the perfect holiday, along with the most perfect tree, house, and dinner. The last thing you see is a Griswold tree, house, and dinner like in the movie.

Having a mental illness, one thing I know is to avoid stress. But how do you do it when you are busy with family, friends and work this time of year? Easy. Here are some tips I have learned.

KISS. Keep it simple, stupid. Martha Stewart is not coming over for dinner. If your house doesn't look like it can be featured in *House Beautiful*, it's OK. If cooking is your problem, you can get a cooked meal at your local supermarket that all you have to do is reheat and plate.

Along with gift giving, don't expect people to read your mind. Tell your family EXACTLY what you want—so you don't get something that makes you unhappy. And as for purchasing presents this year, why don't you and your family decide for the adults not to exchange presents, but to give the money instead to a charity in their name?

And speaking of good, get yourself something nice as well. A CD, perhaps, or if money is not an issue, a massage, or an item of clothing you wanted. Spoil yourself a bit. You are no good to anyone else if you are a ball of nerves.

Don't be afraid to ask for help. Remember, we are all here for each other.

Susan S. is a writer who blogs at

<http://ifyouregoingthroughhellkeepgoing.blogspot.com/>