



Depression and Bipolar  
Support Alliance  
New Jersey

# DBSA Princeton News

September 16, 2008

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

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

**THERE WILL BE NO MEETING ON ELECTION DAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2008**

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## Upcoming Speakers

### Tuesday, September 23:

*Ask the Doctor* with Dr. Joseph Salvatore. Bring your questions for our supporting psychiatrist.

### Tuesday, December 9:

*Ask the Doctor* with Dr. David Nathan. Bring your questions for our consulting psychiatrist.

### Tuesday, January 13:

*NAMI Hearts and Minds* with Salvina Cappello, NAMI-NJ. Salvina will introduce Hearts and Minds, a new NAMI program, aimed at raising awareness about diet, diabetes, exercise and smoking. Each of these are important in the lives of individuals with mental illness due to medication side effects. See the **Speakers** page on our web site for a link to more information about the program.

## David Foster Wallace, 1962 - 2008

by Susan S.

September 7-13 was National Suicide Awareness Week. It went in with a bang, and out with a whimper—and a bang a day late.

Most of the literary world is still rocking from the suicide of David Foster Wallace, 1962-2008, which made the news this past weekend. Wallace's magnum opus was *Infinite Jest* in the 90's, which set the mood for American Literature in the 90's and 00's. He was awarded a MacArthur Foundation genius grant in 1997, and was endowed in a chair at Pomona College by Roy Disney.

What has come to light in the aftermath—Wallace's father has gone on record to say his son was severely depressed. His med cocktail of 20 years had stopped working; he was having no luck with newer meds. This summer he tried ECT in a last ditch effort to get rid of the black dog.

"It was a brilliant cure but we lost the patient.", said Hemingway right before he used his father's gun on himself. Hemingway had had ECT some six months earlier and could not recover. Apparently the same was true for Wallace.

One of the things about National Suicide Awareness week is to let the media know how many have died by their own hands. Things to know – the rates are going up for males over 45 – and for Veterans coming back from the Middle East.

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**Upcoming Events**

Fran has organized the following events and welcomes all members, including family and friends. You can reach her at 600-716-9829 for information and arrangements.

**Saturday, September 27: Gift Basket/Bake Sale** at the Acme, Route 571, Princeton Junction. Helpers needed. Please call Fran.

**Saturday, October 4: Art Festival** in Somerville, NJ. 10 am – 5 pm. We can car pool.

**Saturday, October 18: Cranberry Festival** in Chatsworth, NJ. 9 am – 4 pm. Free event though the recommended donation for parking is \$5. We can car pool to save expenses.

**David Foster Wallace, 1962 - 2008** (continued from page 1)

While there is no magic wand to wave and depression will go away magically, there are things we, as patients and fellow sufferers, can learn to help in recovery. One of them is to have a peer or family support group to utilize should the depression/suicidal ideation get too bad. They should have the name of a doctor to call or take you to the emergency room. You should have a good working relationship with your psychiatrist and your therapist. Keep a med chart. Kay Jamison, author of *An Unquiet Mind*, said the best tool she had in her recovery was the "badger diet". Badger, badger, badger your pdoc, tdoc with questions about every med, every side effect; don't be afraid to call if you feel ill with side effects. Put these numbers on your speed dial.

Try to stay active. Take a walk. Go to the mall, and have something to eat. Exercise and eating are all important. Don't be afraid to reach out for help. Living is hard; living with depression is harder, but the alternative is far worse.

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**Facilitator Training**

The New Jersey Self-Help Group Clearinghouse (<http://njgroups.org>) offers regular facilitator training sessions. The free training is available to anyone who attends our group, whether you are considering becoming a facilitator, or not. To register for this free training, call the clearinghouse at 1-800-367-6274 (outside NJ, call 1-973-989-1122).

The next sessions are:

Saturday, October 4, 2008. *Advanced Facilitation Skills*, Galloway Township, NJ (Atlantic County Library, 306 E. Jimmie Leeds Rd., 08205)

Saturday, November 11, 2008. *Developing a Group and Facilitation Skills*, West Orange, NJ (West Orange Public Library, 46 Mount Pleasant Ave., 07052)

Saturday, December 13, 2008. *Advanced Facilitation Skills*, location in Somerset County to be arranged.