



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance
New Jersey

DBSA Princeton News

March 24, 2009

April 7, 2009 update

DBSA Princeton meets Tuesdays, 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/>

NAMI Mercer Walk

We will be walking in support of NAMI Mercer on May 30. The walk will be held at the Educational Testing Service Lawrenceville Campus on Rosedale Rd. To join our team, or make a donation, please visit our team page at <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks09/MER/DBSAPrinceton>. See our web site for more information, including links to our team page and a map showing the location of the walk.

DBSA NJ Conference

The third annual DBSA Conference will be on May 16 at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, NJ. The conference, including parking, is free to support group members. Details on speakers will be posted at <http://dbsanewjersey.org> by the end of April. To register, contact Ron Klein at 908-377-5245 or ireklein@aol.com.

Upcoming Speakers

Tuesday, April 28: *Insight Meditation* with Beth Evard. Beth will provide an overview of insight meditation, which uses mindfulness to give a clear, non-judgmental awareness of thoughts, and its proven health benefits, physical and mental. Members who wish to try meditation will have a chance to do so during the second half of our meeting.

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Stages of Depression and when to Seek Help

by Susan S.

What's difficult about dealing with depression is that it can manifest itself in a number of different ways. For some people, depression is merely a short bout of sadness that resolves on its own. But for others, it's a long running presence that makes them feel ineffective, as well as hopeless. Symptoms of depression include feeling sad, feeling hopeless, becoming irritated for no reason, anger and frustration, loss of interest in favorite activities, change in eating habits, change in sleeping habits, and thoughts about suicide.

Diagnosing depression is tricky because it requires that you have these symptoms for extended periods of time—normally at least two weeks continuously. And while some people can easily identify their down times, others might not recognize symptoms like anger as being consistent with depression.

The Stages of Depression

Here are the basic issues that may lead to depression in many people:

Feeling frustrated or overwhelmed - When life begins to become burdensome, you can begin to have trouble dealing with the emotions that come along with this anxiety.

Sense of sadness at the way things are - Feeling like everything is out of control, you begin to feel sad and despondent.

Loss of interest in things you enjoy - You begin to isolate yourself from others and from the things you love to do.

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Speakers (continued from page 1)

May 12, 2009: Nutrition with Ellen Cottone, Registered Dietician. Ellen will give a presentation about nutrition oriented to persons with mood disorders and take your questions. If you have topics or questions you would like covered in the presentation, please send them to us via e-mail to DBSAPrinceton@gmail.com, or bring them to our support group meetings.

Tuesday, June 9: Ask the Doctor with Dr. David Nathan. Bring your questions for our consulting psychiatrist.

July 14, 2009: In Our Own Voice by NAMI Mercer. A carefully designed workshop presented by people who are in recovery from their own mental illness. By describing the inner experience of a person with mental illness and the process of recovery, it educates, empowers and inspires mental health consumers, families and the general public.

Facilitator Training

The New Jersey Self-Help Group Clearinghouse (<http://njgroups.org>) offers regular facilitator training sessions. To register for this free training, call the clearinghouse at 1-800-367-6274 (outside NJ, call 1-973-989-1122).

The next session is:

Friday, April 17, 2009. *Afternoon of Facilitation Skills*, 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm. Gloucester County Library (http://www.gcls.org/Libraries/Mullica_Hill_Branch/), 389 Wolfert Station Rd, Mullica Hill.

Stages of Depression (continued from page 1)

Changes in eating and sleeping - You might begin to change the way you eat and the way you sleep as a way to cope with the burdens of your feelings.

Feelings of hopelessness - As you continue to feel bad, you might begin to see things as hopeless and beyond your control. You begin to not care about anything. You might stop bathing or handling even mundane tasks.

Feelings of death and suicide - Those who feel like they are completely alone and have no one to turn to will often begin to have thoughts of death and finally 'ending it all'.

When You Should Seek Help

Ideally, depression is best treated when you identify the symptoms early and begin treatment. When you first notice that you are having trouble being happy, you might want to start talking to someone about how to handle these emotions.

If you don't get help at that point, you will want to certainly begin to seek help if you have any feelings about suicide. This is the lowest point that you can hit and while you might not feel you are serious about following through on the feeling, it warrants some additional counseling and guidance. When you may become harmful to yourself or even to someone else, you will need to get professional help.

Family and Friends Meeting

We invite all family and friends of persons who have a mood disorder, diagnosed or not, to a special support group meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2009. The meeting will run simultaneously, in an adjoining room, with our regular peer support meeting, from 7:30 PM to 9:15 PM. We will schedule additional meetings for family and friends if there is interest.

This meeting is for family and friends, which includes persons with a disorder who also have a family member or friend with a mood disorder.

Amandalynn Salzman, a Family Specialist with the Intensive Family Support Services program of *Greater Trenton Behavioral Health-Care* (<http://www.gtbbc.org/>) will attend to provide guidance as needed.