



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance
New Jersey

DBSA Princeton News

November 18, 2008

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/>

NOTICE OF ANY MEETING CANCELLATIONS FOR SEVERE WEATHER WILL BE POSTED BY 5 PM ON THE MEETING DATE. YOU CAN ALSO CALL SUSAN AT (732) 951-0281.

Upcoming Speakers

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

Tuesday, December 16, 2008: *Wellness & Recovery Action Plan* by Erika Reading, NAMI Mercer. Erika will introduce this free NAMI program which will meet monthly for about eight sessions in 2009. You can register by calling NAMI at 609-799-8994.

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.

February, date to be determined: *Recent developments in medication research* with Dr. Ricardo Fernandez, Princeton Family Care Associates. Dr. Fernandez, a certified psychopharmacologist, will explain what that specialty is and give his insight as to what the future holds for medication treatments.

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Holiday Blues

The holiday season, between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, can be a difficult time for people with a mood disorder. Holiday stress can make us feel worse, and family members and friends could become triggers. All the food offered and the changing weather can put a damper on exercise. The days are shorter and the nights longer. So what is a person supposed to do?

Philip Dawdy, journalist, writer, and author of the must read *Furious Seasons* website (<http://www.furiouseasons.com/>), published these tips on September 23 in his article *That Tricky Time of Year, Or Depression Hacks*.

"The first thing is to eat. I've watched too many people I know with depression have things spiral out of control because they weren't eating. Or drinking any fluids. Yes, I know food tastes like gruel when times are tough, but you've got to find that one dish you can always eat no matter what. I'm pretty certain that if you are starving yourself, then your brain and body cannot function well, putting you at a distinct disadvantage, regardless of whether or not you take meds.

"The second thing is you've got to sleep. That's the other big spiral out-of-control thing that you've got to be on top of.

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Speakers (continued from page 1)

Tuesday, March 10: *Ask the Doctor* with Dr. Joseph Salvatore. Bring your questions for our supporting psychiatrist.

Tuesday, April 14: *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.

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

Check Our Links!

The links page on our website provides access to helpful resources and support, both for persons with a mood disorder, and family and friends. Simply point your web browser to <http://dbsanewjersey.org/princeton/> and click the **Links** button on the left side of the page.

You will find links to the DBSA national website, which has an abundance of information and tips; NAMI Mercer, including information on their many programs; and the New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services, which has published an advance directive for mental health care.

For support and inspiration, we've linked to the *Top 10 Mental Health Blogs* as rated by blogs.com. The top 10 include *Furious Seasons* by Philip Dawdy, from whom we've quoted tips for getting through the winter season in the lead article of this newsletter, and *If You're Going Through Hell Keep Going* by our own Susan S.

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"The third thing is you--well, at least, I--have got to get outside. I know that just sitting in my apartment and working and staring at the Mac simply doesn't lead to anything good psychologically, so I try to get my butt outside and take a brief walk four to six times day. Especially when it's sunny out, even if the sun is only out for a few hours like it was in Seattle yesterday.

"The fourth thing is socializing. Self-explanatory.

"And, the fifth, as I mentioned above, is to stop worry and let it all go. I don't know how to tell anyone else to go about that process, but it's damn helpful if you get there. My experience is if I am not falling into despair over the possible onset of depression then I don't get depressed. Which I suppose proves something about all this mindfulness talk you read in depression recovery circles."

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 session is:

Saturday, December 4, 2008. *Afternoon of Facilitation Skills*, 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm.
East Brunswick Public Library
(<http://www.ebpl.org/>), in the Jean Walling Civic Center near Ryders Lane.