



The Thermometer Times

Published by The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Riverside, California

VOL. 20 NO. 9 Out of darkness . . . September 2008

Dates to Remember

CARE & SHARE GROUPS

Clients and their guests are invited to come and participate.

Professional care providers very welcome.

Riverside County Mental Health Administration Building

(see page 13 for address & map)

**Saturday 10:00 am -12 noon
September 6, 13, 20 and 27**

Web Site: DBSA, Riverside:

<http://californiadbsa.org>

E-mail: DBSA, Riverside:

dbsaofriv1@aol.com.

DBSA, California:

dbsaofca1@aol.com



Meetings start promptly at 10 am. Do yourself a good turn: Be on time...visit with friends before the meeting. If you come late, please enter quietly. Announcements will be made at the close of the meeting.

Announcements will be made at the close of the meeting.

Directions to

Jo Ann Martin's Home

Exit 91 Frwy at Van Buren. Go south 4.2 miles on Van Buren to Whispering Spur. Turn left.

2nd driveway on the right



16280 Whispering Spur
Riverside, CA 92504
951 / 780-3366

The good chocolate



WORLD OF SCIENCE - BOB BROCKIE

The chocolate news continues to be good. A string of recent scientific and medical publications confirm that eating dark chocolate helps just about everything.

Experiments on Greek youths showed that chocolate made their arteries more elastic and improved the circulation of their blood. Other tests show that it slightly reduces blood pressure. It also helps prevent persistent coughing by soothing and moistening your throat. The cocoa ingredient theobromine is nearly one third more effective than usually prescribed codeine in reducing coughing.

Another study concluded that melting chocolate in one's mouth increases brain activity and heart rate more intensely than does passionate kissing (the leader of that study insists he did not include his rate in his experimental sample). More medical evidence suggests dark chocolate is anti-diarrheal, stimulates the brain, may slow brain decay with old age and that cocoa flavonoids may have anti-cancer effects, but more research is needed.

A survey in Bath, England, revealed that many more chocolate eaters were happier than chocolate refuseniks. On the downside, eating milk chocolate or white chocolate, or drinking fat-containing milk with dark chocolate, appears largely to negate the health benefits. It's worse for dogs, cats, horses, parrots and rodents. The cough-stifling chocolate chemical theobromine can poison them. A big box of chocolates has been known to kill a small dog.

Mars Incorporated, the giant American company (Mars Bars, M&Ms), spends money each year on cocoa flavonoid research. Mars is talking with pharmaceutical companies to license drugs based on these molecules. According to Mars-funded researchers, cocoa-based prescription drugs could potentially help treat diabetes, dementia and other diseases. The same company is to spend \$10 million in the U.S. during the next five years decoding the dna of the cocoa tree.

Mars wants to identify the best chocolate flavour genes, so it can improve the taste of its products. It also wants to produce higher-yielding crops. Traditional methods of plant improvement take about six years to come up with promising new strains of cocoa trees. Researchers say they can do it in 18 months.

Most of the world's cocoa beans are produced by farmers working small family plots in West Africa. Child and even slave labour blight the industry in some regions, but the trees themselves are blighted by the black pod fungal disease. The fungus has driven many small growers off their land Mars Inc wants to help

Continued on Page 3 (Good Chocolate)

a note from the Editor

We invite you to submit material for review and possible publication in the newsletter. Your articles allow us to get to know one another in greater depth and to learn of the many talents, interests and assets of our members.

Articles, poetry and/or drawings can be on anything pertaining to experiences you have to share regarding depression and/or Bipolar Disorder; what it is to live and cope with the disorder; how you learned of it, what helps, what doesn't. You may write on any other mental health issue or problem that you are passionate about. You can tell us about yourself and how you spend your time and what's important to you. You may want to write a report on a mental health event you attended or a mental health book you have read. We would appreciate that, too.

Drawings should be black and white, line or half-tone.

Your work may be submitted to Jo Ann, Leroy or Lynne at DBSA Riverside meetings.

It may be mailed to: *The Thermometer Times*
% Jo Ann Martin
16280 Whispering Spur
Riverside, CA 92504

E-mail it to: JoAnnMartin1@aol.com

FAX to: 951/780-5758

Materials submitted may or may not be published, at the discretion of the editors, and may be edited for length.

Get your creative juices flowing and share your knowledge and experience with your DBSA friends through *The Thermometer Times*.

Thank you. Lynne Stewart

MOVIE NIGHT AT JO ANN'S*

2nd and 4th Tuesday of September

6:30 PM

Tuesday, September 9

“Music Man”

Con-man, “Professor” Harold Hill (Matthew Broderick) arrives in River City, Iowa, promising to teach children to play in a magnificent marching band.

Tuesday, September 23

“Cast Away”

Tom Hanks stars in an unforgettable journey of hope, courage, and survival.

Enjoy pizza and an additional movie of your choice!

* Directions to Jo Ann's home on page 1, bottom of column 1 of this Newsletter.

The Thermometer Times 16280 Whispering Spur Riverside, CA 92504 (951) 780-3366

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Please feel free to reprint any of our articles. However, please acknowledge our publication, date, and author or source. It will please the authors and recognize their efforts.

Riverside Suicide Crisis Help Line

Call (951) 686-HELP [686-4357] if you need to talk to someone. It is available 24 hours - 7 days a week.

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) if you need to talk to someone in any of 109 crisis centers in 42 states. The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline has just been launched by SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) as part of the National Suicide Prevention Initiative (NSPI). In addition, a new Web-site has been established at

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Young Girls Think Self Harming is a Normal Way of Managing Stress

Joanna Sugden

Young girls consider self-harm to be normal teenage behaviour, according to research by mental health and volunteer organisations published today.

A study of the attitudes of 10 to 14-year-old girls found that two fifths know someone who has harmed herself and many believe it to be an accepted way of dealing with teenage angst

Andrew McCulloch, chief executive of the Mental Health Foundation, the group behind the research, said the trend was worrying.

‘Self-harm is so common when dealing with stress that it’s seen as normal,’ he told *The Times*. ‘It’s a sign that we’re failing to give young women the lives that we should be giving them.’

Self-harming can be triggered by emotionally distressing events such as bullying or family breakdown. The most common forms are cutting, burning, scratching, hair pulling and swallowing objects or toxic substances.

A national inquiry on the subject published in 2006 found that one in 15 young people harmed themselves and latest estimates indicate that three teenagers deliberately injure themselves every hour.

The results of the survey suggest that widespread anxiety among a generation of young girls is brought on by exams, celebrity culture and the pressure to grow up too quickly.

One third answering the online questionnaire said that a friend had suffered from an eating disorder and nearly two in five knew someone who had panic attacks. Three quarters admitted feeling anxiety about testing and schoolwork.

When asked during face-to-face interviews about self-harm, many girls felt strongly that it was a typical teenage coping strategy. They said that it was not necessarily a sign of mental health problems as long as the person was not self-harming regularly.

One girl who took part in the research said: ‘I think cutting your arm the first time you do it is OK - it might just be stress.’

Not until someone had cut themselves deliberately three times would it be considered a mental health issue, she added.

Dr Tanya Byron, a child psychologist, said that more and more young people were harming themselves. It was a behaviour of choice for young people. ‘Among young peer groups a number of them will take up self-harm together as part of the emo culture,’ she said.

The teenage sub-culture emo, short for emotional hardcore,

is associated with self-harm and originates from the alternative US music scene.

Another girl in the study spoke of a friend who cut her own wrist. ‘She was doing it to fit in with the emos,’ she said.

Dealing with extreme swings of emotions was difficult for most girls, according to the study, with half saying that they found anger hard to manage and one in six often having angry feelings. Twenty-eight per cent said that they worried regularly and felt that no one understood them.

The survey of more than 350 girls aged 10-14 and in-depth focus groups was carried out for Girl Guiding UK, Britain’s largest voluntary youth organisation, which has about 580,000 members.

Lesley Knighton, the chief commissioner of Girl Guiding UK’s Midlands region, said: what concerns us is that girls are facing tremendous pressure today. Self-harm could be a result of this pressure. The girls feel that they are being required to grow up too quickly.’

Giorgia Smith-Marr, 15, a guide from West London, said that she knew at least three people her age who self-harmed.

She said: ‘Its how people cope, because there are so many problems. Its not surprising that they act in self-destructive ways.’

CASE STUDY

I’ve been self-harming since I was 5. I started by pulling my hair out and ripping the skin off my fingers. Then I used razors to cut my arms, legs and stomach. As I got older, I stopped speaking to people when I was stressed and began taking my anger out on myself. I always have a razor with me so that if I want to do it, I know it’s clean. When I first cut myself I felt better, but afterwards I felt gutted that I had done it. The more upset I got, the more pain I inflicted on myself. Once I cut my face because people were saying I was ugly.

I’ve had more stitches than I can remember. I don’t do it often now and have a great support group where I go and have a cry if I feel upset. A lot of people self-harm for attention but they need to get help, it’s not worth the scars.

*Source: TIMES ONLINE
frm THE TIMES
July 14, 2008*

GOOD CHOCOLATE (*Cont’d from pg. 1*)

the farmers by developing disease-resistant trees. It might also develop cocoa trees that will grow in colder climates.

When Mars Inc eventually decodes the cocoa dna, alarmists warn that we’re in for big trouble. They claim that growing cocoa in cold climates will drive the traditional tropical growers out of business, that Mexicans will rush to patent chocolate’s dna and demand royalties, and that we’ll all die of frankenchocolate if pesticides don’t get us first. Pass the chocolates.

*Source: The Dominion Post
July 7, 2008*

MANAGING THE FEAR OF LONELINESS

By Stanley Popovich

Sometime or another we will experience a time when we are alone. The first step is to become comfortable with yourself and having the self-confidence that you will be able to manage being alone. There is nothing wrong with being alone. If being alone bothers you then seeing a counselor can help you with these issues.

In the meantime, here is a short list of techniques that a person can use so that the fear of being alone doesn't become a major issue in their lives.

The first step is to find an activity that you enjoy and where you can meet a lot of people. For instance, joining a group activity such as a volleyball group, women's club, or making crafts can be a great way to meet people. Doing something that you like to do will make you happy and will increase your chances of making friends.

Spending time with animals can be a great source of companionship. Having a dog or cat can make us feel loved. If you don't own a dog or cat, then volunteer at the local animal shelter. Spending time with an animal or pet can help us to feel better and can be of good company to all of us whether we are alone or not.

Helping others through community service can be of some help. There are many people out there who could benefit from your time and talents. Helping others can give you a source of pride, help you feel better about yourself, and can provide long lasting friendships. Give it a try and you will be surprised.

Challenge your negative thinking with positive statements and realistic thinking. When encountering thoughts that make

you lonely or depressed, challenge those thoughts by asking yourself questions that will maintain objectivity and common sense. For example, some people may think that if they are alone at the present time then they will always be alone. This is not true. Even if you're alone today doesn't mean that you will be alone all the time. No one can predict the future with one hundred percent accuracy.

It isn't fun being alone, but sometimes there are worse things. For instance, imagine that you are married or stuck in a relationship that you can't get out of and also makes you miserable. Not only do you have to live with this person, there is no way to get out of the relationship because of various financial or personal reasons. As a result, you are stuck living with someone that you can't stand and makes you depressed every single day of your life. With this viewpoint, being alone doesn't sound that bad.

The important thing is to do something constructive. Sitting around and doing nothing will not make things any better whether it is dealing with the fear of being alone or something else. Go out and do something that you like to do. In addition, take it one day at a time and stay committed in trying to solve your problem.

BIOGRAPHY: Stanley Popovich is the author of *"A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods"* - an easy to read book that presents a general overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. For additional information go to: <http://www.managingfear.com>

Source: *Life In Balance*, June 2008

My Struggles Turned To My Wonderful Strengths

By Teresa M. Gonzalez

Well, I really don't know where to start. I am a young mother of three wonderful girls and I am addicted to alcohol and drugs and the men and just things in my life that I thought I could control.

I was diagnosed with a mental disorder in 1994 and I have tried to run away from the fact that society has labeled me.

I kept trying to make the right choices in my life, and bless my family, all of my eight siblings, I have become a wonderful woman and mother/grandmother today. I owe it to the God of my understanding that I am able to be with my family and friends

today. I have learned to apply the tools that I have been given and how I choose to apply them in my life today.

And yes, I understand that I am not alone in this fight with my mental illness. I've just learned to work somewhat hand-in-hand with it. So, it does not beat me down. I could continue on this wonderful journey of life that I have been blessed with today. I truly am thankful for all of the efforts and all the changes that are taking place today. I enjoy me! At the same time, too, we are unique in the eyes of our Creator.



**Stephen
Propst, MBA**

Taking Charge of Your Recovery

If you, like me, live with a mood disorder, who's in charge of your recovery? Your doctor? Your therapist? A family member? (Does a family member act like he or she is in charge?)

The answer is you! No one's more qualified to champion your recovery than you are. That means becoming your own best advocate. Let me spell out the specifics for you using the letters in A-D-V-O-C-A-C-Y:

Attitude: A can-do attitude is essential to moving forward with recovery. How you see things matters.

Destination: What defines wellness for you? Having a home, a job and a relationship? You have to know your desired destination, and the people on your team (your doctor, therapist and family members) should support you in reaching it.

Vehicle: You must have a vehicle, a way, to get where you're going. A roadmap or plan of action to guide you along the path to wellness is fundamental.

Optimism: I define optimism as being realistically hopeful. That means facing reality today while hoping for a better tomorrow.

Control: Taking charge of your recovery is really about who is in control. Ultimately, you should be. After all, you're the one person best equipped to take care of you!

Action: Thinking or theorizing is one thing, but taking action moves you forward. Visit a support group. Find a doctor to team up with. Read a book. Attend a conference.

Challenge: There might be times when you just don't think you can make it. (I know I've been there many times.) But keep the faith—challenge those challenges. There are always new ways to equip, empower and energize your recovery.

You hold the key to taking charge of your well-being and your life! Capitalize on your strengths, be mindful of your vulnerabilities and acknowledge your needs.

To take charge of my own recovery, I've found it helpful to:

- Live day by day. Take things one step at a time.
- Learn something new every day. Knowledge is empowering.
- Laugh several times a day. There's no better medicine.
- Lean on others if it's a tough day. None of us can go it alone.

It's amazing how peers can help one another take charge of recovery.

*Source: DBSA Outreach
Spring 2008*

Antidepressant Prescriptions Up 16 Million Over Three-Year Period

According to a report released last week by the U S Government, psychiatrists wrote 29% of new antidepressant orders, followed by GPs and primary care doctors. Between 2002 and 2005, prescriptions filled for antidepressant drugs increased from 154 million to 170 million. The analysis, conducted by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, indicated that antidepressant prescriptions--and this does not include refills--written after doctors spoke with patients either in person or over the phone increased by 16 million over the past 3 years. The data used came from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey of health services by Americans.

- 29 percent of prescriptions were written by psychiatrists
- 23 percent of prescriptions were written by GPs.
- 21 percent were written by family practitioners.
- 10 percent were written by internal medicine specialists.

GPs provide primary care, but are specially-trained; family practitioners or primary care physicians who complete a residency in family medicine' and internal medicine specialists complete a residency in internal medicine and focus on the di-

agnosis and non-surgical treatment of adults with illnesses that are difficult to diagnose or manage.

Meanwhile, Dr Martin Keller, head of psychiatry at Brown University, is likely to be the next target in ongoing congressional investigations into the often too-friendly relationship between some doctors and pharmaceutical companies. Senator Charles E. Grassley--Republican-Iosw--the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee is looking at consulting fees Keller received from drug companies for his research on the antidepressant Paxil. Meanwhile, Alison Bass, a former Globe reporter who wrote a book on Keller's research and the legal trial and fallout, said the move was a long time coming. Keller has never been publicly disciplined or sanctioned for his role in a study that hid the negative consequences of Paxil while promoting only positive outcomes. Despite this, "he is still chief of psychiatry [at Brown] and pulling in millions of dollars in research funding from the drug companies and federal research agencies." Bass said.

Source: Excerpted from NEWSINFERNO.com July 2008

Movie Night At Jo Ann's*

2nd and 4th Tuesday
of September
6:30 PM

Tuesday, September 9

“”

Tuesday, September 23

“”

Pizza is ordered and a second movie of your choice is shown during the evening.

Directions to

Jo Ann Martin's Home

Exit 91 Frwy at Van Buren.

Go south 4.2 miles on Van Buren to

Whispering Spur. Turn left.

2nd driveway on the right (cat mailbox)

16280 Whispering Spur Drive

Entryway construction is underway ...you can still drive down the new driveway.

REUTERS

“We don’t know yet whether depression contributes to the development of Alzheimer’s disease or whether another unknown factor causes both depression and dementia,” said Monique Breteler of Erasmus University in Rotterdam.

(Editing by Maggie Fox and Philip Barbara)

Magnetic resonance images were taken of the subjects’ brains at the beginning of the study, and depression was not associated with brain shrinkage.

But among the 134 of 503 people in the study who reported seeking help for depression, the risk of Alzheimer’s was 2.5 times higher than among those who were not depressed.

“We think that some people are more vulnerable or it takes less of a dose because of other changes that are taking place in the brain,” such as damage inflicted by depression, he said.

A related theory that depression shrinks the hippocampus and amygdala and paves the way for Alzheimer’s was not supported by a Dutch study published on Monday in *Neurology*, a journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

few plaques and tangles and they do have dementia. This has long been known that plaques and tangles aren’t the whole story. They’re other things going on that are causing loss of cognition and memory we think depression is involved in one of those pathways,” he said.

Everyone reaching their 70s and 80s likely has some physical manifestations of Alzheimer’s in their aging brains, Wilson said, but not all develop the mind-robbing symptoms.

Wilson cited one theory that chronic stress from depression releases excessive amounts of the brain hormone cortisol that ultimately damages the filigreed connections between brain cells called dendrites.

Depression has not been shown to have a direct relationship to the brain plaques and tangles often found during autopsies on Alzheimer’s victims, Wilson said.

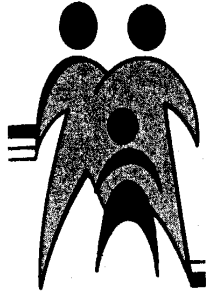
“Some people die with lots of plaques and tangles but they don’t have dementia. Some people die with episodes.

“In terms of depressive symptoms, those are fairly consistent from year to year as people have a chronic tendency to be depressed or not be depressed – it’s not just something that randomly varied from year to year,” Wilson said.

Damaged Connections

**(THIS PAGE FOR
MEETING AD)**

**Lynne:Please cut back two
page_s**



Family/Friends Support Groups

Riverside County Dept. of Mental Health
Offers Support groups for families and friends
of people with severe
and persistent mental illness.
These Support Groups are offered
throughout the County of Riverside.

The County also offers the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program

This program is a 12-week series of
educational meetings for
family members.

There is NO COST TO YOU.

For information on dates, times and location,
Please contact:

Riverside Co. Dept. of Mental Health
The Family Advocate Program
951 / 358-4987 or 800 / 330-4522

The Starting Point SUPPORT GROUP FOR DEPRESSIVES AND BIPOLARS

Mesa Clinic, 850 Foothill Blvd., Rialto
Mondays from 10:30 to 12:10
For more info: *82 (909) 864-4404

ORIGINAL MATERIAL WANTED

Do you have a story to tell, or a poem or art work?

We welcome submissions
to our newsletter.



If you have something you think
we could use, please send it to:



EDITOR

DBSA P.O. Box 51597 Riverside, CA 92517-2597
FAX 951/780-5758

Join friends of DBSA-Riverside

*At Jo Ann Martin's**

for the

Holidays

Picnics or dinners
at noon

~

Swimming, badminton, spa, food and more...
during summer months.

Friendly sharing during the winter.

~

Bring a salad, main dish,
or dessert.

If you can't bring a dish, come anyway.

Meat & beverage will be furnished.

~

Holidays include: Memorial Day,
4th of July, Labor Day,
Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

~

*Directions to

Jo Ann Martin's Home

Exit 91 Frwy at Van Buren. Go south 4.2 miles on Van
Buren to

Whispering Spur. Turn left.

2nd

driveway
on the right



16280 Whispering Spur
Riverside, CA 92504

951 / 780-3366



Do you have a Medic Alert Bracelet?

Do you wear it? All the time?

In an emergency, would others know what
medication you are taking and why?

Always wear your
Medic Alert bracelet.

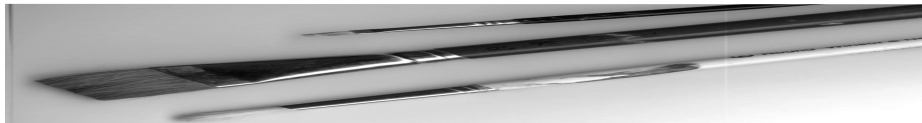
It could save your life.

If you don't have one,

ORDER ONE TODAY!

(Available through most pharmacies)





The Art Connection

Rhue Pritchard is in charge.

**September 13 - writing
September 27 - mixed media collage
at**

Jo Ann's after lunch

Many of us who are dealing with depressive or bipolar disorders are creatively gifted. Here is a chance to try your "wings", learn from others, and share.

**For more details:
call us at: 951 / 780 - 3366**

DBSA - Riverside

Don't miss our 18th Annual DBSA Conference

**"Up, Up and Away
Lower Your Stress and Improve
The Quality of Your Life"**

Friday, October 3rd and Saturday, October 4th, 2008

**The Park Plaza Hotel
Oakland, California**

Keynote Topics include:

"New Treatments for Bipolar Disorder"
Terence Ketter, M.D., Stanford University

"Diagnostic Challenges in Bipolar Disorder"
Po W. Wang, Stanford University

"That Voice in The Wilderness is Laughing"
Brian Wetzel, Professional Comedian

**Hotel Rooms - \$99.00
(Can share upto 4 persons per room)
Cots - \$10.00**

**Conference Registration - \$129.00
Early bird (by Sept. 10th) - \$99.00
One Day Only - \$70.00**

**Talent Show, Art Exhibit,
Support groups, Massages, & Yoga
Limited Scholarships available, call number below**

For more information and to register go to the DBSA, California web site at:

<http://californiadbsa.org>

or call: 951 / 780 - 3366