



The Thermometer Times

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

VOL. 24 NO. 5 Out of darkness . . . May 2011

Dates to Remember

CARE & SHARE GROUPS

Clients, guests and professionals are invited to come and participate. Riverside County Mental Health Administration Building (see page 9 for address & map)

Saturday 10:00 am - 12 noon
May 7, 14, 21 & 28

Speaker Sat. May 21
Lillian Barnes, Therapist
“Mindfulness and Staying in the Moment”

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.

Web Site for DBSA, Riverside:
<http://DBSAtoday.com>

E-mail for DBSA, Riverside:
DBSAtoday@yahoo.com

E-mail for DBSA, California:
DBSAtoday@yahoo.com

Please include your phone #

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

Hey, don't panic--- meditation can help

MARGARET FINNEGAN

My little bit of a nervous breakdown started 10 years ago, when my daughter —~ then 5—was diagnosed with epilepsy. After six weeks of smiling through neurologist appointments, EEGs, blood tests and boatloads of worry, I started having panic attacks, which are aptly named. They feel like total, uncontrollable panic.

Mine started with a tingling in my head and quickly spread to tunnel vision, sweaty palms, thumping heartbeat and the belief that I was about to die. One panic attack invites many, and in the weeks to come I had them in stores, at home, in the day, in the night. They were my body's way of telling me that something had to change.

So, I started therapy, I started Paxil, I started walking up to six miles a day, and I started very effective breathing exercises in which, at the first sign of a panic attack, I would count backward from 10, taking long, slow breaths with each count.

And slowly, with these strategies, the gift of time and my daughter's improving health, I got better. I stopped the Paxil. I stopped the therapy. I stopped the breathing exercises. But I kept walking, although less and less as the years went by.

But I hadn't really changed, so I guess it was inevitable that one day I would fall apart again. As the old saying goes, "You're only as happy as your most miserable child," and when my daughter reached puberty we all got pretty miserable. Many kids with epilepsy take a turn for the worse when they reach the teen years, and that was true with my daughter, which meant even more neurologist visits,

Continued on page 2 (Meditation)



SEYE MOORHEAD

FINNEGAN: She discovered that doing Vipassana meditation helps her stave off panic attacks.

A Note From the Editor

As always I invite you to submit your stories, poetry and/or drawings for review and possible publication in the newsletter. Your articles allow us to get to know you in greater depth and to learn of your accomplishments and your many talents, interests and assets. They also contribute to our readers' well being and recovery.

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

I look forward to your contribution. Share your wisdom and experience with your DBSA friends through *The Thermometer Times*.

Thank you.
Lynne Stewart, Sr. Ed.

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

Continued from page 1 (MEDITATION)

even more blood tests, even more worry.

One day I thought I was having a heart attack. I wasn't. My old friend Mr. Panic was back.

But this time I could draw upon tools, and that helped. More important, I realized that I needed to change. I couldn't be a constant yo-yo mirroring everyone else's health. I needed to be strong in myself.

So I did the smartest thing I ever did: I started meditating. I've been doing Vipassana meditation for about three years now.

In Vipassana, we focus on the breath. When we realize our minds have wandered, we go back to the breath. In that moment, we "wake up." We practice mindfulness. And, funny enough, after a while, you start "waking up" in daily life too.

Now, when my mind starts to spin out tragedies or dwell on past dramas, I'm less likely to get stuck in them. I wake up. When the stress of parenting a chronically ill child ratchets up, I take solace in the fact that my hardships are like each breath: They evolve. They pass. Nothing lasts forever.

My situation hasn't changed. I'm still the mom with the sick kid, and that's hard. But my response to my circumstances has changed. And that's made the difference, at least for now, and that's OK with me.

Finnegan is a writer and writing instructor at Cal State Los Angeles. Her work has appeared in the Salon and other publications.

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My Turn is a forum for readers to recount an experience related to health or fitness. Submissions should be no more than 500 words, are subject to editing and condensation and become the property of The Times. Please email health@latimes.com. Read more essays at latimes.com/myturn

Source: *Los Angeles Times*
April 18, 2011

Opportunity



If we perceive things not as problems but rather as opportunities for learning, we can experience a sense of joy and well-being when the lessons are learned. We are never presented with lessons until we are ready to learn them.

GERALD G. JAMPOLSKY

Suicide rates linked to economic downturns

THOMAS H. MAUGH II

Everyone is familiar with stories of businessmen jumping to their deaths from window ledges during the Great Depression. New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that those stories, sometimes viewed as apocryphal, have a strong basis in fact: The rate of suicides rises during times of economic hardship and declines in periods of prosperity.

The association, however, holds strongly only for adults of working age, those between 25 and 54 years old, the authors reported Wednesday in the online version of the American Journal of Public Health.

And overall, suicides are only a small proportion of deaths, even at times when rates peak. "The rates were higher during the Great Depression, but not incredibly high," said Dr. Alexander E. Crosby, a medical epidemiologist in the CDC's Division of Violence Prevention and a coauthor of the paper. "But suicide is still a relatively rare event when you talk about all the events that cause deaths."

Earlier studies examining links between economic conditions and suicide have covered only relatively short periods and small groups, and have produced conflicting results, with studies in some countries showing a link and research in other countries showing none. The CDC study is by far the most expansive, covering a period of 80 years and eight distinct age groups.

Overall, the study — which did not distinguish between men and women — found that the suicide rate was 18 per 100,000 adults in 1928, the earliest year for which data were available, and climbed to 22.1 per 100,000 in 1932, the last full year of the Great Depression. That 22.8% jump over a four-year period is the largest in history.

Since then, the suicide rate has been dropping, with much smaller increases at the end of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal (1937-38), the oil crisis (1973-75) and the Double-Dip Recession (1980-82). By 2007, the rate had dropped to 11.2 per 100,000 people and suicide was the fifth leading cause of death in the U. S., accounting for 34,598 deaths.

The authors' interest in the subject was initially triggered by concerns about what effect the most recent recession might have on the suicide rate, but not enough data were available for that period yet, Crosby said.

The greatest decline in suicide rates over the eight decades of the study was observed in older Americans. The 65 and older group had the highest suicide rates during the Great Depression (53 per 100,000 for Americans ages 65 to 74), but rates have been falling steadily since then, have shown little deviation due to economic stress, and are now at the same level as other groups.

That decline is probably because of much better medical care, which has reduced feelings of hopelessness among the elderly.

It is probably not surprising that the group at the prime working age is most susceptible to economic variations, the authors wrote. Those individuals are responsible for mortgage payments, health insurance, children's educations and a variety of other expenses.

A lesson from this study is that communities need to focus prevention efforts on certain groups, particularly working adults ages 25 to 54, the authors said.

For those who don't know where to turn, there is a national crisis hotline, 1-800-273-TALK.

thomas.maugh
@latimes.com

Source: Los Angeles Times
April 15, 2011



CONNECT

Want to feel good inside? Do good for someone else.

The Washington DC-based Corporation for National & Community Service reports that participating in volunteer activities reduces depression, especially among senior citizens.

Benefits can be felt from just two hours of volunteer work a week.

The benefits of doing good can come from simple actions, according to altruism scholar Stephen Post, PhD: Smiling at a stranger, allowing a car to pass or holding a door for someone may be all it takes to help you feel more connected to others and less isolated by despair.

Source: *esperanza Magazine* Fall 2010
As Seen In: *Life in Balance*
April/May 2011



Personal Journeys and Quests

THE PEACE OF THE LORD

By Susie Phillips

My soul embraces green meadow ..
The wind catches my song of laughter
And carries it o'er the fields.
The sun caresses my body
And I feel the peace of the Lord.

My soul embraces blue ocean
Waves roll into my toes.
White gulls, drunk with freedom,
Soar on the wind.
Like precious diamonds, sun glitters
upon the water.
And I feel the peace of the Lord.

My soul embraces dark forest
The silence puts my heart at rest
Great trees tower o'er me like strong,
ancient fathers.
Sun filters through their limbs, bathing
the still sanctuary in its warmth.
And I feel the peace of the Lord.



“Thanks. Friend”

Give me joy for sorrow,
Give me peace for pain,
Take away the sadness,
Help me live again.

Shattered by fears and illusions,
I kept to myself, alone,
Thinking that if you knew me,
To reject me, you'd be prone,

I reached out in shy expectation.
You came to listen and share,
And what would I do,
Without friends just like you,
Who give of themselves and care?

by Henry N. Willey, Jr.
©1985

Wising Up to Dummy Pills



Placebos can bring relief--- even if you know they're drug-free.

By Andrea Bartz

When patients complain of certain difficult-to-confirm pains and problems, physicians face a paradox: They know that placebos can help, but passing off dummy drugs as medication is unethical, a breach of the patient's trust. A sugar pill's magic lies in deception—the patient must believe she's getting the real thing. Right?

Wrong, according to a groundbreaking study published in *PLoS One*. Researchers asked patients suffering from irritable bowel syndrome (a common, hard-to-treat disorder with mostly subjective symptoms) to take placebo pills twice a day. They told participants that the pills had no active ingredients, but—this is key—they also explained that placebos can improve IBS symptoms “through mind-body self-healing processes?”

By the end of the three-week trial, 59 percent of pill takers (vs. 35 percent of controls) reported adequate relief. The placebo also doubled the degree of symptom reduction and improvement in quality of life.

“People thought we were nuts for doing this study;” says Ted Kaptchuk, a researcher at Harvard Medical School. “Everyone just assumed effective placebos require deception?” But the findings suggest that knowing you're not getting any real medication won't automatically neutralize the benefits.

The exact mechanism of the placebo effect is unclear. Part of it is expectation: Tell yourself you're going to feel better, and subjective symptoms, at least, improve accordingly. Conditioning also plays a role—if your body has learned that the act of swallowing a capsule precedes relief, taking a few pills might bring on the physiological changes real drugs can yield. “We told participants they didn't have to believe in the placebo effect at all—but they *had* to take two pills a day,” Kaptchuk points out.

Some experts argue that the placebo effect can be chalked up to special attention and care from a physician. “Our study shows that that isn't all there is to it” says Irving Kirsch, a researcher at the University of Hull in the U.K., who coauthored the study. The placebo and control groups had equal face time with health professionals, but the placebo group saw more dramatic improvement. “On the other hand, the control group also improved, and that indeed may have been attributable to the therapeutic relationship,” he adds.

The next steps involve replicating the findings in larger populations and seeing whether the effect holds up for other medical conditions. “Our experiment is just a first step toward a whole new strategy,” Kaptchuk says. “People need to understand they have this huge capacity for self-healing.”

Source: *Psychology Today*
March/April 2011

Marci Reyes

In Loving Memory

Jan 12, 1940 - Mar 30, 2011

Marci Reyes, 71 years old of Loma Linda, Ca passed away on March 30, 2011 after a short, but courageous fight against lung cancer.



Originally from the Philippines, she lived in Loma Linda for 29 years. Shortly after graduating as a nurse from University of Santo Tomas in 1961, she migrated to Chicago, Illinois to work at a Cook County Hospital and Hines VA Medical Center. She moved to Loma Linda, CA and worked at Jerry L. Pettis VA Hospital until her retirement. As a nurse, she was a manager, educator, and most of all, an advocate for every patient she touched.

Her love and passion as a nurse was a natural expression of a fundamental value she dearly held -- “The heart and true art of giving and serving others.” These are treasured legacies she has passed on to her family, friends, and community at large; she will truly be missed.

“Many of you met Marci at our events. She was my best friend & companion. Much love to those left behind.” ~ Jo Ann Martin

~ We Love You Marci ~



A Night of Broadway

Saturday night show,
all star cast on the lawn

May 14, 2011

Location: Franklin Park Gardens ☆

16280 Whispering Spur ☆ ☆ ☆
Riverside, CA

Call: 951-780-3366 ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Or visit DBSAtoday.com for details

If you would like to attend the show and are on very limited funds, see Jo Ann or Leroy about help with buying a ticket. Supply limited & subject to approval.

Tips for Managing Bipolar Disorder at Work

Excerpted from WebMD, <http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/managing-bipolar-disorder-at-work-job-performance-tips>

If you have bipolar disorder, no one needs to tell you how challenging this mental illness can be. You are among millions of American adults who may also find that the extreme mood swings of bipolar disorder can be very disruptive at work. Take heart. There are many steps you can take to find meaningful work and develop successful relationships on — and off — the job.

How Bipolar Disorder Can Affect Job Performance

In a survey conducted by the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA), almost nine out of every 10 people with bipolar disorder said the illness had affected their job performance. More than half surveyed said they thought they had to change jobs or careers more often than others. And many felt they were either given less responsibility or passed up for promotions.

Left untreated, the disease can greatly affect relationships and job performance. However, a combination of medicine and therapy can be effective. Working closely with your health care providers and support network, you can learn how to manage symptoms and find a balance that works for you on the job.

Develop team skills: It helps to accept that both you and others have limitations and that conflict is a natural part of working with others. It's how you manage these conflicts that can make the difference. Deal with problems as they happen, rather than letting them build up. But focus on the problem, rather than pointing fingers at the person. At the same time, stay open to others' ideas and try not to take constructive criticism personally.

Make connections with people and purpose. It may help you to remember that you are not defined by your illness and your work is not your whole life. Spending time with family and friends, planning fun get-togethers, volunteering with a charity — all of these may help you find purpose. Also, have a support system lined up — for good times and bad. The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance can help you find a local support group.

Making job changes with bipolar disorder

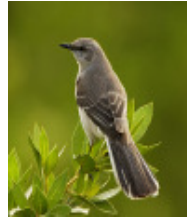
Are you looking for your first job or needing to find a new one? If so, it will help to assess your skills, qualities, and life experiences. Make a list of what you bring to the table. Or, perhaps you need to make changes at your present job or are returning to work after being away. Think about what you really need at work:

- * Can you work better alone than with a large group?
- * Do you need clear direction from others, rather than being

self-directed?

- * Do you need more breaks?
- * What time of day are you most productive?
- * Do you need a different kind of job than you have currently or have had in the past?

Source: *The Initiative*
Spring 2011



Dose of Nature Can Provide Mood Boost

Just a few minutes of physical activity in a natural setting each day can improve mental health and mood, a new study has found.

British researchers said their study, which appeared in the journal *Environmental Science Technology*, found that as little as five minutes of so-called “green activity” such as walking, gardening, cycling or farming can boost mood and self-esteem. People with mental illness were among those with the greatest self-esteem improvements according to the study.

Source: *bp Magazine Summer 2010*
As Seen In: *Life in Balance*
April/May 2011

DBSA-Riverside and friends

At Jo Ann Martin's*

for

Memorial Day Picnic

Monday, May 30

at noon



Swimming, badminton, spa, food and more...

Bring a salad, main dish, or dessert

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

Meat & beverage will be furnished.

~

*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

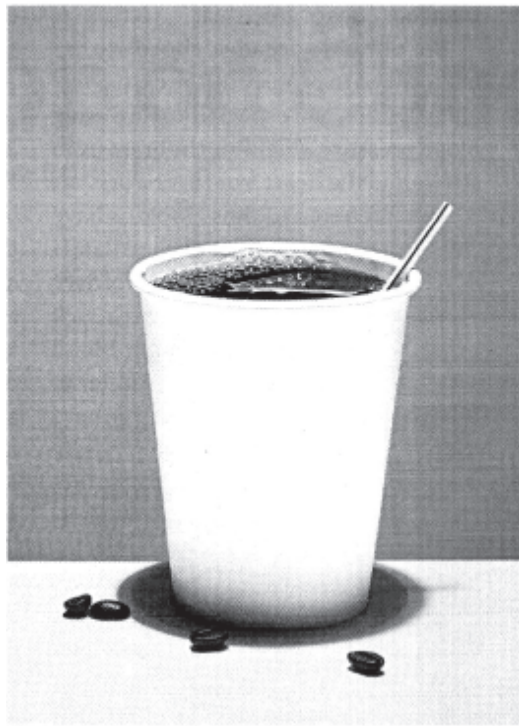
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The Case for Caffeine

The most popular psychoactive substance in the world turns out to protect your brain in a variety of ways.

By Katherine Schreiber

TRYING TO CUT your caffeine consumption? You might not want to strike it from your diet entirely. Research keeps unearthing new benefits this popular stimulant confers on your cognitive and corporeal self. Caffeine, found naturally in tea, coffee, and chocolate—it acts as a natural pesticide in plants—and added to many sodas, belongs to a family of mild central nervous system stimulants called methylxanthines. Caffeine wakes us up by blocking adenosine, thus preventing the brain from sensing exhaustion, and it keeps us alert by eliciting a steady stream of adrenaline. But an array of new studies shows that caffeine also has multiple neuroprotective effects. A cup of drip coffee supplies about 100 to 125 mg of caffeine, a single shot of espresso about 80 to 100 mg, while a cup of black tea weighs in at 50mg and green tea at 30mg. In general, dark roast coffee supplies less caffeine than lighter roasts.



memory in those with Alzheimer's disease, by inhibiting production of beta-amyloid, a protein that accumulates in the aging brain and forms plaques that give rise to the degenerative disease. University of South Florida scientists found that caffeine reduces amyloid deposition in the hippocampi of rats.

Striatum Saver

Several metabolites of caffeine (paraxanthine, theobromine, and theophylline) appear to help sufferers of Parkinson's disease, the progressive movement disorder. In animal studies, the chemicals, which protect against loss of the neurotransmitter dopamine in a region of the brain called the striatum, reverse the behavioral symptoms of Parkinson's, notably impaired motor control, and keep dopamine-producing neurons from deteriorating.

Pain Preventer

Be sure to stop off at the nearest Starbucks before you head to the gym for an intense physical workout. Caffeine can boost physical endurance by inhibiting perception of pain in muscles and by diminishing a sense of muscle fatigue. It works by blocking the adenosine receptors located on sensory nerve endings.

Mood Modulator

In blocking the adenosine receptors that pick up chemical cues of exhaustion, caffeine can not only enhance physical endurance and reverse drowsiness, it can also boost mood. Craig Olson and colleagues at the University of California, Davis, compared caffeine with another adenosine antagonist, the flavonoid quercetin. Only caffeine significantly increased self-reported vigor, reduced fatigue, and moderated mood disturbance.

Source: *Psychology Today*
March/April 2011

Cancer Killer

Harvard researchers following nearly 300,000 men and women over 30 years found that those drinking five or more cups of coffee and tea a day—especially men— had a significantly lower risk of developing glioma, a tumor arising in the brain's supportive tissue. Further studies suggest a mere half cup of coffee or tea a day cuts the risk by 34 percent. Caffeine may inhibit the cellular signaling tumors rely on to multiply. Or the abundant polyphenols may repair damaged DNA.

Beta Buffer

Regular daily consumption of caffeine in three or more cups of coffee is known to reduce cognitive decline among the aging. It now seems to preserve—even restore— working

**When one's expectations are reduced to zero,
one really appreciates everything one does have.**
STEPHEN HAWKING

*The important thing is not that we can live on hope
alone, but that life is not worth living without it.*
HARVEY MILK



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
951 358-4987/1-800-330-4522

Phone Phriends

If you need someone to talk with:

Leroy 951 / 686-5047

6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Andie (Amanda) 909 / 824 - 5385

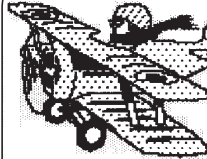
9:30 am to 7:30 p.m. (youth)

Yen Cress 951 / 315 - 7315

9 pm - 6 a.m. & Weekends

Cathy Waechter 951 / 529 - 8586

5 pm to 9 pm



ANNOUNCEMENTS

TEMECULA DMDA

Mark Monroe
951 / 926 - 8393

Rancho Cucamonga DMDA

Meets 1st and 3rd
Wednesdays evenings
Contact: David or
Samantha Johns
909 / 944 - 1964 OR
e-mail: dmjbf@aol.com

DBSA - Loma Linda

909 / 327 - 6178

HEMET SUPPORT GROUP

Hemet Support group meets at
Trinity Lutheran Church
Mondays, 7 to 9 pm. Fridays,
1:30 to 3:30 pm
951 / 658 - 0181 (Lyla)

THE UPLIFTERS

(Christian emphasis) meets at
The Grove Community Church
19900 Grove Community Drive
(off Trautwein) Riv. 92508
meets Mondays 7 pm
Contact Ken Sharum
951 / 368 - 7713

DBSA (Christian Emphasis)

Lake Hills Christian Center
12500 Indiana Ave
Tuesdays 6:30 - 8:30 PM
(951) 368-7713 (Ken)

For Support People:

NAMI - Riverside Mental Health Administration Building
4095 County Circle Dr. (off Hole Ave. near Magnolia)
7:00 pm, 1st Monday each month 951 / 369 - 1913 - Rosanna

Calling all interested consumers!

NAMI—In Our Own Voice:

We are looking for consumers who are interested in sharing their personal recovery stories. In Our Own Voice: Living With Mental Illness (IOOV) is a recovery-education program conducted by trained presenters for other consumers, family members, friends, and professional and lay audiences. Individuals need not be active in mental health advocacy at this time, but

- ▶ They have "been there."
- ▶ They are able to present professionally.
- ▶ They are in recovery.
- ▶ They have the time to be trained.
- ▶ They believe in treatment, with medication as a component for recovery.
- ▶ They periodically present at 1½-2 hour workshops, during working hrs.



Stipends will be paid for presentations.



For more information, or to be put on a waiting list, please call:

Angela Sandoval, IOOV Coordinator
(951)686-5484, ext. 120

A collaborative effort brought to you by:
—The Riverside County Mental Health Department—
— NAMI, Western Riverside County —
—Jefferson Transitional Programs—

DBSA- Riverside

Map Legend

- ★ Meeting Location
- TTTT = Parking

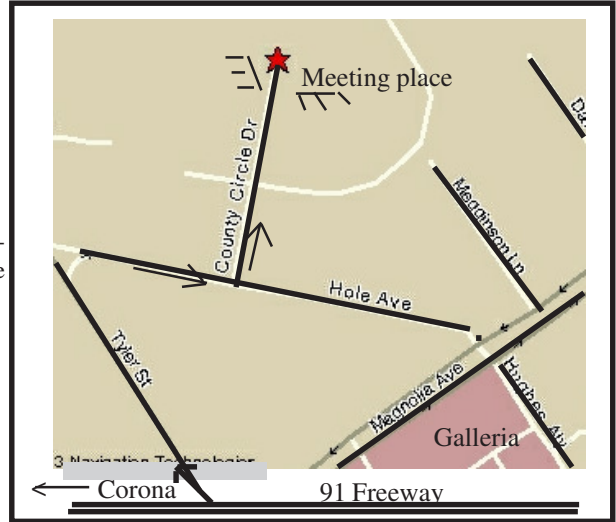
Due to route changes, no RTA regular bus crosses County Circle Drive anymore. However, several routes stop at the Galleria (Tyler Mall), which is only a three-block walk from where we meet. Those routes include Canyon Crest, Corona, Country Village, Hemet, La Sierra, Perris, Norco, and Sun City.* For meeting-day

route times, please call RTA at 800/266-6883 toll free. If you qualify for Dial-a-Ride, a door-to-door service for the handicapped, info is available at the same phone number. * as well as other parts of Riverside.


About DBSA-Riverside

DBSA of Riverside is a support group for people who have depression or bipolar (manic-depressive) disorder and who have sought or are seeking treatment for their illness. DBSA is totally patient run, which means we need volunteers like you to help with mail-outs, telephoning and planning. A work time

is held at the home of JoAnn Martin on the Saturday afternoon following the last sharing meeting of each month to assemble the newsletter for mailing. Directions are printed on the lower left corner of the front page of this newsletter. You may reach JoAnn or Leroy at 951/ 780-3366. **Our sharing meetings are held every Saturday of each week from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Riverside Mental Health Administration Building, 4095 County Circle Drive (off Hole Avenue near Magnolia), Room A.** We welcome professional care providers and adult family members and friends. Please note our new area code - 951, effective on July 17, 2004.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Individual membership for the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Riverside is \$20.00 per year. This helps defray the cost of the monthly newsletter and helps pay for the cost of our meetings. Subscription to the newsletter is \$10.00 per year. If you are unable to help financially, the newsletter may be sent upon request. Volunteers are always needed. If you would like to volunteer, please indicate below. 

Mail to DBSA of Riverside, 16280 Whispering Spur, Riverside, CA 92504

DATE _____ **Please Print** New Renewal

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please check one of the following:

- I have: Bipolar Disorder (Manic-Depression) Depression
- I am a Family Member Professional
- None of the above

Birth Date (Optional) : Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Enclosed is my payment for DBSA Membership _____ \$20.00 (includes newsletter).

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ to help others receive the newsletter.

I would like a subscription to the newsletter only. _____ \$10.00 (12 issues per year).

I would like to volunteer my time and talent to help.

DBSA OF RIVERSIDE
16280 Whispering Spur
Riverside, CA 92504

HELP US KEEP COSTS DOWN

We're using a computer mailing list

Please help us keep costs down by

making sure your name and address
are correct. If there is an error or if

you are receiving more than one
newsletter, please let us know.

Print legibly so that mistakes can be
avoided.

Your help and patience are greatly
appreciated.