

# The Recovery Route

## MISSION

*TO IMPROVE  
THE LIVES  
OF PEOPLE  
LIVING WITH  
MOOD  
DISORDERS*

## TWENTY FIVE WAYS TO EASE INTO A REDUCED STRESS LIFEPLAN

By Susan Orr Parker, Nov. 4, 2008

Making significant behavioral changes, even those for the better, can be stressful. With that in mind, try the following relaxing ways to ease into a lower-stress life-style:

#25– Set your alarm clock to wake you 15 minutes earlier every morning, and then use the time to make a to-do list for the day. Read a magazine article or simply start the day off with a healthy breakfast. You will barely notice the 15 minute loss of sleep, but the potentially increased productivity is sure to be a major stress-buster!



#24– Sing. In the car, in the shower...music soothes the savage beast, and that includes the one that is lurking within us all as well.

#23– Tickle a child. The sheer unadulterated joyful peels of glee are contagious and relaxing. If you don't have a child of your own, borrow a niece or nephew, the child of a

neighbor (with permission!) or heck, even your spouse!

#22– Paint. Not the 'hmm, what color will look best in the guest room' type of painting, but the relaxing act of creating a bit of artwork type of painting. Don't worry about talent– we are striving for relaxation here, not a masterpiece. And if it turns out that you unlock a hidden talent, so much the better!

#21– Write down all must-haves and must-do's. Nothing is more stressful than wondering what it is that you have forgotten to pick up (was it your mother-in-law from the airport? Or the dry-cleaning??) or drop off (outgrown clothes to the Goodwill? Cat to the veterinarian?) and keep a short running list not only saves time, it allows for the simplification of errands and prevents duplicate efforts or last minute trips to the store.

#20– Fine tune your sense of humor. Remember, even a bad sense of humor is better than none at all. So go ahead, laugh at that knock knock joke. But laugh!

#19– Do everything, and that includes the items on this list, in moderation. Don't attempt to do all 25 of these right away. Strive for one a day!

#18– Smile at complete strangers, and wish them a hearty "Hi there! Hope you have a great day!" Just imagine how great you will feel when someone else

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## *Reduce Stress, cont'd*

uses this technique on you!

#17– At the grocery store, instead of treating yourself to a candy bar, treat yourself to a flower or even a small bouquet.

#16– Keep a journal. And everyday, write down at least one positive thing that happened to you. If you can also write down one positive thing that someone else did for you or said to you so much the better– give yourself duplicate stress-reduction

points for the day!

#15– Keep things, including possessions and your body, in their best possible working order. When you schedule your automobile inspection or oil change, think about the last time you had your teeth cleaned, and schedule an appointment for that as well (just not on the same day!).

#14– Do everything possible to remove clutter and unnecessary waste from your life. Print out a copy of this and hang it on the fridge, but everything else should go!

#13– Breathe slowly and deeply, from your diaphragm...feeling the air and the tension slowly leave your body.

#12– Learn at least a few phrases in a new language. French, Russian or Pig Latin! Keeping the brain active is a wonderful stress reducer!

#11– Try to avoid negative people. Sure, if it's your boss, there is only so much avoidance that is possible. But try to associate with people who are energetic, filled with a positive outlook and good cheer.

#10– Always, always, always keep an umbrella in your car!

#9– Every day, try to be the best that you can be. Not necessarily the best that there is, but the best that YOU can be, to the best of your ability!

#8– Ride an amusement park ride and scream to your heart's content. The louder the better.

#7—When faced with what seems like an unbearable or insurmountable task, break it into increments. Set a timer for 15 minute intervals and then end when the timer goes off.

#6– Spend an afternoon incorporating all of your old address books, business cards and post-it notes into one new address book, and include directions for those seldom-traveled to, but often hard to find, locations.

#5-Rent your favorite funny movie and invite over a few friends to watch and laugh together.

#4– Avoid coffee, cigarettes and alcohol.

#3– Smile at yourself in the mirror every morning right after you brush your teeth.

#2– Write a letter (a real one, not email) to someone that you haven't seen for quite a long time.

#1– Acknowledge that life includes stress– we can't eliminate it completely, but it doesn't have to be the defining factor in our lives.

Susan Orr Parker is a psychiatric nurse and bipolar. She lives in Virginia with her family and was the stand-out comedian of last years DBSA National convention.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



Please mark the following items on your calendar if you wish to attend....and don't forget to call the DBSA-OK office if you must register in advance!

### APRIL

- 1st Disability Awareness Week, Physical disability day, UCO, Edmond  
 6th DBSA-OK Board Meeting 5pm  
 15th Facilitator/Educational Summit– SSDI/SSI Speaker (pls register)

### MAY

- 4th DBSA-OK Board Meeting 5pm  
 6th—8th 16th Annual Children's Conference, The Art of Creating Resilience  
 Embassy Suites, Norman.  
 Keynote Speaker, Dave Pelzer, Author of *A Child Called It*  
 16th NAMIWalks for the Mind of America  
 20th Facilitator Summit (plz register)

### JUNE

- 1st DBSA-OK Board Meeting, 5pm  
 17th Facilitator Summit (plz register)

Just as a reminder, if you have internet access, you should check out the comedy videos from [www.standupformentalhealth.com](http://www.standupformentalhealth.com)

Their slogan is;

*Most people think you have to be nuts to do stand-up comedy!*

*We offer it as a form of therapy!*

## DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR SUPPORT ALLIANCE- OKLAHOMA

4501 N. Classen Blvd. Suite 108, Oklahoma City, OK 73118 405-286-9370

Mar 2009

### ADA

Contact: Linda Kauffman  
Phone: 405-401-9279  
Thursday's 6:00 PM  
Rolling Hills Hospital  
1000 Rolling Hills Lane

### ARDMORE

Friends of Hope Chapter  
Contact: David Engle  
Phone: 580-272-3781  
Thursday's 7pm  
Ardmore Public Library

### BETHANY

Contact: Becky Rowell  
Phone: 405-943-0879  
Thursday's 7pm  
Bathany Church Of Christ  
3301 N. Rockwell

### GUTHRIE

Contact: Iva Cook  
Phone: 405-373-0059  
Thursday's 7 PM  
West Guthrie Methodist Church  
Fellowship Hall  
1201 W. Noble

### Lawton Public Library

Contact: John Windham  
Phone: 580-483-4942  
Contact:2 Jack & Priscilla Yoast  
Phone: 580-248-2390  
Monday's 7:00 PM  
Lawton Public Library  
[www.dbsa-swok.org](http://www.dbsa-swok.org)

### OKLAHOMA CITY

Northside 1- All Souls  
George Crooks  
405-413-7778  
Monday's 7pm  
All Souls Episcopal Church  
6400 N. Penn(63rd &N. Penn  
Park and go in back door

Capitol Hill - SouthSide  
Contact: Nancy Vlet  
Phone: 405-570-3672  
Thursday's 6:30 PM  
Capitol Hill Library  
334 SW 26th

Northside 2- Crossings  
Shannon Streeter  
405-942-0172  
Monday's 6PM  
Crossings Community Church  
14600 N. Portland

Daytime Group  
Contact: Gina Marston  
Phone: 405-635-1735  
Tuesday's 10am  
DBSA State Office  
4501 N. Classen Suite 108

Closed Groups\*  
Red Rock- Yukon  
North Care- N. Hudson OKC  
Crisis Center- NE 13th OKC  
\* Must be a client

### MIDWEST CITY

Contact Jackie Skaggs  
Phone 405-737-1923  
Tuesdays 6:30pm  
Eastside Church of Christ  
916 S. Douglas

### NORMAN

Contact: Iva Cook  
Phone 405-373-0059  
Thursdays 7:00 PM  
Edsel Ford House  
Griffin Memorial Hosp.

### PONCA CITY

Contact: Katherine Ewing  
Phone: 580-336-0136  
Mondays 7:30-9pm  
at Ponca Hosp, conf. Room B

### STILLWATER

Contact 1: Don Brown  
Phone: 580-336-0136  
Tuesdays 7:30 -9pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church

### WEATHERFORD

Contact: Anita Crawford  
Phone: 580-819-3545  
Tuesdays 6pm  
Pizza Hut Meeting Room  
309 N. Washington St

### YUKON

Contact: Marcia Newhardt  
Phone: 405-514-1597  
Tuesdays 7:00 PM  
First Christian Church  
601 Maple

**ALL DBSA SUPPORT GROUPS ARE FREE OF CHARGE**

Please Check our website for the most up-to-date information on groups, training sessions, conferences & get-togethers!



[www.Okdbsa.org](http://www.Okdbsa.org)



We've Been There. We Can Help

## *From Sandy's Chair*

Did you know that when the National Alliance on Mental Health reported on Oklahoma's Public Mental Health System 3 years ago, we got a "D" but when the new report came out on March 12, we got a "B"? The report said that "if the state Legislature made mental health a funding priority, Oklahoma could become a model for comprehensive, recovery-oriented mental health care". That is wonderful news and Oklahoma is only one of 6 states to get this rating and the others are all on the East Coast. The average for all the states was "D" and no one got an "A". Now, guess where I read this? The Daily Oklahoman. On the inside page of the second section "State and Local News". Page 10A. We seem to enjoy being the ignorant bad child of the media and so positive news is held to a minimum in our newspaper. I won't go on and on, just want you to know that we earned that accolade and that OK doesn't have to be a victim in the news all the time.

Speaking of winning, the NAMI WALK will be May 16, at Stars and Stripes Park. DBSA-OK will have a big team so call me to register now, no charge and free food, Check in at 8 am, start walking at 9 am. The office phone is 286-9370. I am forwarding the calls from the office to the cell phone so just call any time and leave a message. If it is business hours, I will try to answer. We will be starting our PR campaign soon so watch for it!

## *DBSA Joining NAMIWalk with a Team*



DBSA will once again have a Walk Team for the 6th annual NAMI-Walks for the Mind of America. This years event will take place on May 16, 2009 at Stars and Stripes Park in Oklahoma City.

DBSA needs YOU to join our walk team! The more people we have, the more we can raise!

So please consider joining us for a day of fun (and by default, exercise!) at the park! Lunch is included and the good times are free!

In years past, DBSA has made a BIG showing not only with the number of people we bring, but with the enthusiasm only DBSA has!

If you are interested in leading the DBSA walk team, contact Sandy at the state office.

OKLAHOMA  
DEPRESSION &  
BIPOLAR SUPPORT  
ALLIANCE

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Suite 108  
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[WWW.OKDBSA.ORG](http://WWW.OKDBSA.ORG)

***WE'VE BEEN THERE,  
WE CAN HELP.***

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***IDEAS***

DBSA-OK wants to know from you what you would like to see in our newsletter. Is the current format easy to read? Would you like more personal stories from consumers? What is it that YOU want to know?

Please drop us a line any way you can— phone, email, regular mail or through our website. We are here to help you— tell us what you need.