

the Recovery Route

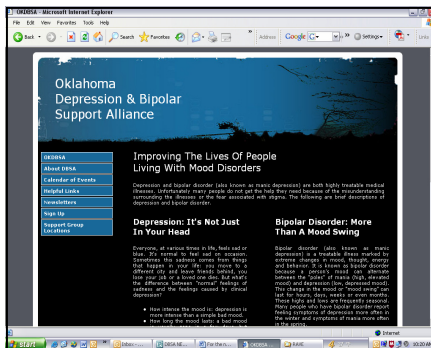
PUBLISHED BY THE DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR
SUPPORT ALLIANCE OF OKLAHOMA

MISSION

TO IMPROVE
THE LIVES
OF PEOPLE
LIVING WITH
MOOD
DISORDERS

NEW WEBSITE UP AND RUNNING

The new website is WWW.OKDBSA.ORG. The website has many new features. Such as downloadable pdf's of the newsletter, *Recovery Route*, answers to common depression & bipolar questions, links to other mental health organizations in Oklahoma, a calendar of mental health events and meetings, and whatever the facilitators, members and support group members ask for. We hope to soon have an interactive web site to enhance communications and services across the state. There is also a SIGN UP page for those wanting to sign up for future facilitator classes when offered.



If you need to contact us, please check out the NEWSLETTER page where the contact form is located. Fill out the automated form and it will be sent via email to the DBSA State Office.

Rave is our new webmaster so if you have ideas or questions, call the office and ask for Rave.

FROM SANDY'S DESK

After a lot of reading about *Winter Blues*, (written for “regular people” that is, those without a mental illness) and Seasonal Affect Disorder (SAD) more often found on websites for people with a mental illness, I am prepared to tell you all about it.

The most common cause is an absence of sunlight. Even though we may try to avoid the sun in other times of the year, it will still sneak into our eyes enough to produce a chemical that in turn produces a chemical in the brain that helps prevents depression. But, in the winter we are more likely to stay inside and the sun doesn't have an opportunity to shine in our eyes.

There are several preventative uniformly mentioned. One is making changes in one's routine so one would have some time each day sitting by a window. Or if you are a smoker or not, going outside several times a day might help. There are several lights that are recommended, including a light box. These are helpful for some people and there are several web sites about these. They are not cheap. What is upsetting to those of us who have had debilitating depression, these new symptoms seem like the same old thing. But they are not and we need to stay aware of this. If you can look back and see that you usually get an increase in depression about the time of Daylight Savings Time, get more sunlight and let your physician know.

There are other considerations. This is the beginning of the holiday season and is considered

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DBSA STATE OFFICE HOURS

OKDBSA OFFICE HOURS: Usually someone is in the office daily from 9am—1 pm. Usually Rave. Sandy is in the office most days and usually works until the middle of the afternoon or later. Sandy carries the office cell phone if there is an emergency that cannot wait until morning. That number is 615-8822. Otherwise, you may leave a message on the office phone, directed at either Sandy or Rave specifically, and we will return it the next day.

NEW STATE LOGO



With the changes taking place at the Oklahoma DBSA state office, we thought it prudent to reflect those changes in our new state logo. We wanted a logo that continued the National DBSA commitment to helping those on their road to recovery, but that showcased our special state and its 100th anniversary.

Let us know what you think!

OUT OF THE DARKNESS SUICIDE AWARENESS WALK

OKDBSA signed up to man a table at the Out of the Darkness Suicide Awareness and Prevention Walk at the Oklahoma City Zoo. It was held Sunday, November 18, 2007 from 9:00 – 12:30. Rave Meyer and her daughter, Madison manned the table, handing out water and support to approximately 125 walkers.

Walkers who signed up had the name of their lost loved one pinned to them as a remembrance. Danita Gaut walked with two of her friends, having experienced the loss of a loved one from suicide.

If you would be interested in working at a DBSA table in the future— for any upcoming event— handing out brochures and information to inquisitive passers-by, please call the office to volunteer. Usually two people work a table. Everything is organized to make setting up the table really easy.

FACILITATOR NEWS

Facilitator Training was Sat. November 10, from 10:00-2:00. We trained at the OKDBSA state office, 4501 N. Classen, St. 108. Due to a mix up about the location, the training was sparsely attended. We will have another training in December, again on a Saturday. If you want to sign up for the training, call the office 286-9370. If you have had the training in the past but didn't facilitate a group and/or want to brush up on your skills, please come. We have a **serious** shortage of facilitators and requests for more groups in OKC. If several group members want the training then all the better! The training will be here at the office until we outgrow it.

WANT TO KNOW?

How do I Get My Boss To Understand My Bipolar Disorder?

Sandy talked with a woman from the Oklahoma Disability Law Center at the Consumer Conference and was told that there are several keys to this. One is that your boss, not your co-workers, needs to know about your mental illness. (We have a great booklet at the office for family and friends that might help your boss understand what your symptoms might look like). You can expect your boss to make “Reasonable Accommodations” for you, according to the Americans Disability Act. To understand what that means isn’t always easy.

ODDS—N—ENDS

The Annual DBSA-OK Fall picnic was held the September 29th at Will Rogers Park. The Picnic is a long tradition in DBSA and we have the pictures in our office to prove it.



Here are several chicken-eating members who can be added to our collage. Is that our esteemed Board President?

In October, we had our first Facilitators Meeting. Facilitators met in the DBSA office to discuss questions they had and challenges that had come up in their groups. One of those challenges seems to be happening at the “meeting after the meeting” when people go out for coffee, etc. Of course, facilitators don’t have any control over people who get together and talk. But, everyone who comes to a DBSA group has had plenty of experience of being talked about in an unkind way, by family, friends, co-workers and medical people, teachers, etc. . It is important that we not turn this unkindness onto our fellow group members. Two things are important to remember: ‘If people could do better, they would’; and - ‘Is it kind?’

FORMER OFFICE MANAGER PASSES

Dear Friends,

It is with a heavy heart that I inform you that our dear friend and fellow RSS, Jeff Swanson, has lost his battle with cancer. He worked at DBSA. As soon as I have the details of his services I will forward them on to you.

Please, keep his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers. Those of us who have had the privilege of knowing Jeff know what a loss we are experiencing. He is extremely loved. He shared his passion about recovery and advocacy with others whenever possible. Jeff served as a great example to all who knew his story. He was a great person, a wonderful friend, I miss him already...



Take Good Care,
Amber

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

From page 1

a family time. Many in DBSA have unhappy relationships with some or all of our family members. So we have the challenge of spending time with people who are supposed to love us and don't or vice-versa.

This is also a time when many people are used to hibernating, so to speak. In the olden days, people laid up food for winter and took a time to plan new crops, or a garden, to contemplate and to be still. Regardless of the role we play today, there is still a need for all these things and we often don't stop long enough to do any of these things. Winter is not the same as other seasons. It puts new demands on us and we have to respond respectfully.

Winter is a time to prepare for. Have dried soup in your cabinets, bread in the breadbox and extra coffee or tea. It takes some vigilance to qualify for "averaging" on your utility bills but cold weather makes it all worthwhile.

Be aware of any losses experienced in the holiday season. Maybe there is the anniversary of a loved one's death, or past hospitalizations, or past illnesses, or bad childhood memories. Schedule some extra time with your counselor or case worker to share these. Or go to every support group you qualify for—and in larger towns there are often multiple meetings each week.

MILEAGE

Your mileage to and from all called meetings at the office or any conferences, etc. that you are asked to volunteer to attend, will be paid after the event. You will need to present your mileage to and from the event to Sandy and she will have a check sent to you. This does not include support group meetings. If you have any questions about this, please contact Sandy for more information or clarification.