



Newsletter of the Tucson Chapter of the Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance

Improving the lives of people living with mood disorders.

Volume 1, Issue 7
Fall, 2009

One person's vision of Bipolar Disorder part one

By Mary

For those who know me from the meetings, I always start my check-in with, "Hi, I'm Mary. I have Bipolar Disorder with Ultra Rapid Cycling." In other words, I cycle between depression and anxiety several times throughout the day. However, all cycles are not alike. I experience three basic types: One is manageable,

while the others exceed manageability. By manageable, I mean that I appear to be O.K., and I can hide my challenge from others. With some effort, I can perform most tasks adequately.

Triggers, sometimes identifiable, other times not, can move me into a stronger experience of my illness. This can be

characterized as a severe, or unmanageable cycles. In such cases, I cannot hide my condition. I am so deeply affected, that I must refrain from whatever activities I had been engaged in, and this includes sleep. In the worst scenario, I am at my most desperate state. Another realm of chaos and sensations overtake me like a spinning tornado, a

(p.3)

My road to recovery

By Anne

I am Anne and just happen to have chronic depression. Having resided in Florida for 30 years I now live in Tucson with my son, as a true blessing. Ten years ago, I was diagnosed and hospitalized with depression, then brought to Tucson by my son to

heal, recover and begin the road to recovery.

On Thanksgiving, this past 2008, I experienced another bad episode. My son came to Florida immediately, seeing my poor emotional state, once again brought me to Tucson for all the same

above reasons.

From time to time, I have little spells (I call it.) Now being on new medication, seeing psychotherapist regularly, eating well and attending the DBSA meetings, I feel am I much improved.

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**We're on the web
at
dbsatucson.com**

Additional copies of this newsletter can be downloaded from this site.

DBSA meeting times & locations

Central Tucson

Sunday nights

6—7:30 pm.

Located in University Medical Center, on Campbell Avenue near Elm .

The meeting is held on the main floor next to the cafeteria.

Northwest Tucson

Wednesday nights

6:30—8 pm.

Located at the YMCA on Shannon Avenue close to the corner of Magee. It is north of Pima Community Northwest campus on Shannon. The meeting is held in a meeting room on the north side of the YMCA.

Going down the only road I have ever been down

by Lisa

Sometimes I would like to put my mental illness in a box and put it on a shelf. I would love to just forget about it sometimes. The only thing that works for me is being honest with myself now. After attempting to commit suicide three times in the past something had to change.

I had to change my way of thinking and I had to want to live again.

Coping has been very hard for me. I have dealt with a lot of deaths of family and friends. Believe me it has rocked me to the core. I had to find out for myself, that I could no longer go down the only road I had ever been down. I had to accept the fact that I needed help and I needed it desperately.

I then turned my care over to a good doctor and reached out to all

of my friends at the D.B.S.A (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance).

I struggle with my moods on a daily basis but, I let my family's support and love help me through. There are days that I don't think I can make it but, I try hard to fight through it. Believe me there is light at the end of the tunnel and it is not a train. Please trust that you are not alone any more and you don't have to be.

Many thanks for the generosity of

- An anonymous member of the Tucson DBSA Chapter who provided funding for *In the Mood*.
 - The UPS Store, 6336 N. Oracle Rd., for numerous donations and discounts in the printing of the newsletter.
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NAMI News Corner

From Sara

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, shares a common purpose with DBSA: to support individuals and their families living with mental illness. A non-profit, grassroots organization, it also works hard to educate people about the illness, providing programs such as Peer-to-Peer and Family-to-Family, Parents and Teachers as Allies, In our Own Voice and more. Eliminating stigma is a primary goal.

Mental Illness Awareness Week sponsored by NAMI is October 4-11. You'll hear more about it in September meetings. Sometime after October 1 (exact date unknown at this time) national public television will broadcast "Minds on the Edge: Facing Mental Illness". It's a dynamic presentation of a round table discussion of mental illness in our society. On October 2 will be the **Daniel Moreno Award Event**, a NAMI fundraiser and celebration of those living in recovery with mental illness.

Something that NAMI taught me was that mental illnesses are biologically based disorders. The brain works differently from people without



mental illness. Understanding this has freed me from the blame that I should be able to control my depressions even though I live healthily.

Since DBSA and NAMI both exist for helping people with mental illness, consider membership in NAMI. It's not about the money it's about numbers. The more members, the more political clout at the capitol. You can find NAMI of Southern Arizona at www.namisa.org or call for information at 622-5582

My road to recovery (con't pg. 1)

I attend the Wednesday night DBSA meetings faithfully, in which I have received and given great support. It is too bad, in my opinion, this group was not here, ten years ago.

I am saddened to see some of the younger attendees, suffering and hurting. In my opinion, based upon my experience in DBSA, which is incredible, taking my medication, seeing my doctor, eating correctly and attending the DBSA meetings, all have been a treat influence on

my recovery, making me hopeful, that there is a road to recovery.

Kudos to all who do such great work for the chapter.

God Bless

Anne (90 years young,
90th birthday 3/2/09)

DBSA Tucson now a Facebook group

Thanks to Awndrea, one of our consumers, designed and posted a DBSA Tucson Group site on facebook. There are currently around two dozen members and you're invited to join. Log on to facebook, look next to "log out" where it says "search" and type in "DBSA Tucson" and hit enter and it will take you right to the group. You can read all about DBSA Tucson and decide if you want to join. We hope you'll decide to join.

One person's vision of Bipolar Disorder (con't pg. 1)

maelstrom in which I feel slammed against the wall.

The upswing in my severe cycles is a panic mode that is extremely agitating. Concurrently I have uncontrollable itching on my legs and arms which I cannot resist scratching to the point of bleeding.

As it progresses, I simultaneously feel anxious, claustrophobic, hopeless, despairing, and I am easily angered. I once threw my cat that I love dearly across the room. This was very painful for me. She still loves me.

To be continued....



bp Magazine

by Bobby

There are those magazines that exist to fill your coffee table, or to tempt us on the way through the grocery line, and on and on. And yet there are those who impart real information in a delightfully easy to read fashion. That's how I would define bp Magazine. Its articles are relevant by including politics, medication news, and suggestions for living that affect us as the bipolar community. A subject that we all share is coverage of medications. bp Magazine often explains how they are used and new ones that are quickly coming onto the scene after being approved by the FDA. My favorite sections are those with stories of others who struggle in the same way I do. I like the ones about others who succeed in finding self approval and building confidence into their lives.

As I was perusing the summer 2009 issue, I found our chapter president, Ron Melzer, in the magazine telling his story about "Accepting the Diagnosis." It was exciting to see someone from our own DBSA community being tapped for content in the magazine. I'm heartened to see the various conferences placed within its pages. They help me witness the international efforts put forward toward more research. There was even an interview with Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison, the expert that many of us feel is the most forward thinking person of the bipolar community. I recommend that you find a copy and review it for yourself.

Presidential Ponderings

From Ron

Just today my 94 year old grandmother in Chicago said to me, “No News is Good News” with regard to a family situation. She’s right in that instance. But DBSA Tucson can’t live that way. We’ve got great news to share with people with a mood disorder and their families that needs to get out to the public!

Earlier this spring a board of director’s member suggested we update the chapter brochure. This is in addition to all the brochures I bring to meetings from the national DBSA office in Chicago. Our chapter was assisted in this by the computer friend of a board member and late this summer we printed up 300 color copies. We are encouraging persons to take one to share with their clinician and more if they think they’ll use them with their family doctor or clinical settings. We want to get the word out about the good news of the DBSA Tucson support groups.

At this same spring meeting it was suggested to look into whether or not Sun Trans buses in the Tucson Metro area would carry our public service announcement. The good news is that the application process has been completed, the ad posters printed and delivered to Sun Trans and they will begin appearing in 235 buses in September. They will appear with our logo, the words “We’ve been there. We can help” along with the chapter’s phone number and website.

In fact, national DBSA has asked our chapter to write a small piece for a national publication explaining how we accomplished it. Great news is worth sharing!!



New webmaster masterfully at work!

Richard, one of our chapter’s support persons and our new webmaster, worked late summer to completely change the look and contents of our website to make it more informative and user friendly. You can send him feedback or suggestions at: webmaster@dbsatucson.com



It’s everybody’s newsletter

Our *In the Mood* newsletter is dedicated to representing the stories of all of us, the participants of DBSA Tucson. We invite you to join in this effort by writing about yourself and your experiences. Find an article or a topic you’d like to share with others. If you have some ideas and want some support, consider finding a buddy or ask someone on the newsletter committee to help you write them up. Contact us at newsletter@dbsatucson.com

November 15: next issue of newsletter will be distributed.

December 6: deadline for articles for Winter issue.



Hotlines

SAMHC	622-6000
NAMISA	622-5582
Help on Call	323-9373
Peer Mentor Warm Line	770-9909
Information & Referral	881-1794



If you are in crisis and need to call the police at 911, request that a CIT (Crisis Intervention Trained) officer be provided.

