

# Hill and Valley Newsletter: October, 2010

## **Mark Your Calendar for an Interesting Education Meeting**

On October 17, 2010, at 3:15pm in the Red Oak room, we will be hosting hypnotherapist Daryl Stones, who will speak to us about her experiences in using hypnosis to help people who suffer from mood disorders. Ms. Stones is certified by the National Guild of Hypnotists and is a member of the International Society of Counselors and Therapists. She has a degree in Biology. The presentation will last about one hour and will include time for questions and discussion. We hope to see you then.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT FOR OCTOBER**

#### **Bank Account Balances**

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Checking Account Balance | \$1,403 |
| Emergency Medical Fund:  | \$5,114 |

#### **Dues Paying Members**

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Individual Members | 14 |
| Family Members     | 10 |
| Total Members      | 24 |

#### **Newsletter Distribution**

|                             |         |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Email Recipients            | 163     |
| Hardcopy Recipients         | 59      |
| Total Recipients            | 222     |
| Last Email Date             | 10/3/10 |
| Last USPS Mailing Date      | 10/4/10 |
|                             |         |
| Last Board of Directors Mtg | 9/6/10  |

In the past month, we added 10 addresses to our mailing list. Our distribution list has reached **222**. We also received dues from 3 new members. **We now have 24 dues-paying members, compared to 2 prior to the recent Board of Directors leadership change.**

## **This Issue's Article: Preparing For Your First Psych Appointment (by the Mayo Clinic Staff)**

You're likely to start by first seeing your family doctor or a general practitioner. However, in some cases when you call to set up an appointment, you may be referred immediately to a psychiatrist — a medical doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating mental health conditions.

Because appointments can be brief, and because there's often a lot of ground to cover, it's a good idea to be well prepared for your appointment. Here's some information to help you get ready for your appointment, and what to expect from your doctor.

### What you can do

- Write down any symptoms you've had, including any that may seem unrelated to the reason for which you scheduled the appointment.
- Write down key personal information, including any major stresses or recent life changes.
- Make a list of all medications, as well as any vitamins or supplements that you're taking.
- Take a family member or friend along, if possible. Sometimes it can be difficult to soak up all the information provided to you during an appointment. Someone who accompanies you may remember something that you missed or forgot.
- Write down questions to ask your doctor.

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We've been there. We can help.

Your time with your doctor is limited, so preparing a list of questions ahead of time will help you make the most of your time together. List your questions from most important to least important in case time runs out. For problems related to bipolar disorder, some basic questions to ask your doctor include:

- Is bipolar disorder likely causing my symptoms or condition?
- Other than the most likely cause, what are other possible causes for my symptoms or condition?
- What kinds of tests will I need?
- What treatment is likely to work best for me?
- What are the alternatives to the primary approach that you're suggesting?
- I have these other health conditions. How can I best manage them together?
- Are there any restrictions that I need to follow?
- Should I see a psychiatrist or other mental health provider? What will that cost, and will my insurance cover seeing a specialist?
- Is there a generic alternative to the medicine you're prescribing me?
- Are there any brochures or other printed material that I can take home with me? What Web sites do you recommend visiting?
- In addition to the questions that you've prepared to ask your doctor, don't hesitate to ask questions during your appointment at any time you don't understand something.

### What to expect from your doctor

Your doctor is likely to ask you a number of questions. Being ready to answer them may reserve time to go over any points you want to spend more time on. Your doctor may ask:

- When did you or your loved ones first notice your symptoms of depression, mania or hypomania?
- How frequently do your moods change?
- Do you ever have suicidal thoughts when you're feeling down?
- How severe are your symptoms? Do they interfere with your daily life or relationships?
- Do you have any blood relatives with bipolar disorder or another mood disorder?
- What other mental or physical health conditions do you have?
- Do you drink alcohol or use street drugs?
- How much do you sleep at night? Does it change over time?
- Do you go through periods when you take risks you wouldn't normally take, such as unsafe sex or unwise, spontaneous financial decisions?
- What, if anything, seems to improve your symptoms?..worsen your symptoms?

### **Introducing our DBSA Board of Directors**

For the next five months, each newsletter will highlight one of the members of our DBSA West Board of Directors, so you can get to know those people who have dedicated their time to helping run our chapter of DBSA. This month, we feature Bob Steinmetz:

Bob Steinmetz is the Communications Director for DBSA West. He writes and distributes our monthly newsletter and maintains our website. Bob also facilitates the Thursday evening caregiver support group. Bob's lovely wife, Rachel, is bipolar, as are his four wonderful children, ages 29, 27, 24 and 20. Bob is the owner of ANDY ONCALL, a handyman services and home improvement business in Warrenville. Bob and Rachel live in Winfield.

INTERESTING THINGS ABOUT BOB:

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We've been there. We can help.

- Bob and his family lived in Waterloo, Belgium for 3-1/2 years in the late 80s and early 90s.
- At 16, Bob sold souvenirs in Three Rivers Stadium, during Pittsburgh Pirates baseball games.

## **Please help DBSA West by becoming a dues-paying member.**

DBSA is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to improving the lives of people living with mood disorders and their loved ones. Our primary focus is on providing support groups for persons dealing with depression and bipolar disorder and their friends and families.

We are constantly looking for ways to make people aware of our group, which means we spend money on postage, printing and distribution of our information. When you become a member of DBSA, your \$20 individual and \$30 family annual dues payments help us pay for the production and mailing costs of our newsletters and brochures. Please see the sign up form at the end of this newsletter.

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### Our Officers:

President: Bernadette Knudsen, [beesnees1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:beesnees1@sbcglobal.net)

Vice President: Norma Wimunc, [nwimunc25@earthlink.net](mailto:nwimunc25@earthlink.net)

Treasurer: Mary Paganoni, [marypaganoni@aol.com](mailto:marypaganoni@aol.com)

Secretary:

Communications Director: Bob Steinmetz, [bob@steinmetzmail.com](mailto:bob@steinmetzmail.com)

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### Our Support Group Facilitators:

Sunday: Bernadette Knudsen, [beesnees1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:beesnees1@sbcglobal.net)

Sunday: Linda Dougherty

Wednesday: Norma Wimunc, [nwimunc25@earthlink.net](mailto:nwimunc25@earthlink.net)

Thursday: Bob Steinmetz, [bob@steinmetzmail.com](mailto:bob@steinmetzmail.com)

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**Support groups** meet at **Good Samaritan Hospital**, 3815 Highland Ave in Downers Grove.

In October:

- **Patient Support Groups** are held in the Red Oak Room on the first floor in the main wing of the hospital on Sundays from 1:00pm to 3:00pm, and on Wednesdays in the White Oak room from 7:00pm to 9:00pm.
- **Caregiver Support Groups** are held in the White Oak Room on Thursdays from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. NOTE: On October 28, the caregiver meeting will be held in the CEC conference room, on the ground floor of the North Pavilion.

Check for last minute changes at [www.dbsawest.org](http://www.dbsawest.org)

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We've been there. We can help.

**And now, some word fun. This puzzle is titled BIPOLAR DISORDER. Good luck!**

K Q W L J O Y S P U C B U C F Z O C D T E A I F I  
P I S F N C V L T H M B Q Q D Y P F N Q B J V R H  
B Y K J K B A G I T A T E D X U T A X C M A N I C  
M C Y E A O F N I M E O N O I S S E R P E D Y E T  
T O N W A D J V Z X A D K Z R S Z N I Y Y G P N M  
J F S S I B R F W Q O F O F E S X D J X C S P D F  
Y V A P N S U P P O R T L R E Y K I H D N K L S Y  
L D X N A A T Y Z T A R P B C S G W A L Q A W O M  
O M D G M W F X Z N B E C G U G B O E A J Y X A P  
J Y I B O E W P Q A D X R C U N F F Q N U R Q C Q  
A R D E P S I F F I W O D K T I E U A R P T Q X F  
I G H P Y T A M T L U O G I O T Z M R U N C S X D  
D T M E H N Q N L P O D N Z M E T S C O D B L C I  
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V P X U O U O A K C P Q K M R S A T K P N D V J A  
G I M P U L S I V I T Y G R S C F M P E S B H Z X  
F L D T T X K V U H M M A Q I I V Y Q S H L R K X  
G L Y P A R E H T L X Y S D E V N B H K Y E F F A  
A B C P X C A B H F C Z E I K I E P A M D A E A V  
Y O E B X A P H S X A M S R O T C O D R C L Z C H  
Z X V K A V N E C N I T V O A S I S O H C Y S P M  
U T R F W L E N E L L V O S F I A S H Y M Y E M O  
C W P F M T W C I L N I T M I P I I C K J L T F B  
J Y T C X C R N R L S O U L Y D S A P F G E E K E

|                |            |             |            |           |
|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-----------|
| AGITATED       | CYCLE      | FAMILY      | JOURNAL    | PILLBOX   |
| ANTIDEPRESSANT | DBSAWEST   | FRIENDS     | MANIC      | PSYCHOSIS |
| ANXIETY        | DEPRESSION | GROUP       | MEDICATION | SLEEP     |
| CHART          | DISORDER   | HYPOMANIA   | MEETINGS   | SUPPORT   |
| COMPLIANT      | DOCTOR     | IMPULSIVITY | MOOD       | THERAPY   |

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We've been there. We can help.

**DBSA West**      **WE'VE BEEN THERE. WE CAN HELP**

*The Chicago Western Suburbs Chapter of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance.*

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**BECOME A MEMBER: Print this form and mail it with your check to the address below.**

Your annual dues (\$20 for an individual, and \$30 for a family) will help us in our mission to provide support, friendship, hope and information for individuals with depression or bipolar disorder and their families.

In addition to helping to financially support our organization, you will receive our monthly newsletter, either by mail or Email.

Type of membership:    Family (\$30):                       Individual (\$20):

Type of Newsletter:    US Mail:     Email:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_    Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:      **DBSA West**

Mail Checks to:                      **DBSA West**  
   **PO Box 4646**  
   **Naperville, IL 60567**

Thank you for your generous support!