

Hill and Valley Newsletter: September, 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, will include time for questions and discussion, and may include an opportunity for attendees to personally experience hypnosis. We hope to see you then.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT FOR AUGUST

Bank Account Balances

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Checking Account Balance | \$1,232 |
| Emergency Medical Fund: | \$5,110 |

Dues Paying Members

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Individual Members | 13 |
| Family Members | 8 |
| Total Members | 21 |

Newsletter Distribution

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Email Recipients | 150 |
| Hardcopy Recipients | 62 |
| Total Recipients | 212 |
| Last Email Date | 9/8/10 |
| Last USPS Mailing Date | 9/9/10 |
| Last Board of Directors Mtg | 9/6/10 |

In the past month, we added 3 addresses to our mailing list. Our Email recipients now number 150, while hardcopy recipients stand at 62. We also received dues from 3 members.

This Month, we Focus on Medication: SSRI Drugs

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are a popular class of antidepressant medications. The first drug in this class was fluoxetine (Prozac), which hit the U.S. market in 1987.

How SSRIs work

Precisely how SSRIs affect depression isn't clear. Brain chemicals called neurotransmitters are associated with depression, including the neurotransmitter serotonin (ser-oh-TOE-nin). Some research suggests that abnormalities in neurotransmitter activity affect mood and behavior. SSRIs seem to relieve symptoms of depression by blocking the reabsorption (reuptake) of serotonin by certain nerve cells in the brain. This leaves more serotonin available in the brain. Increased serotonin enhances neurotransmission — the sending of nerve impulses — and improves mood. SSRIs are called selective because they seem to affect only serotonin, not other neurotransmitters.

Antidepressants, in general, may also work by playing a neuron-protective role in how they relieve anxiety and depression. It's thought that antidepressants may increase the effects of brain receptors

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that help nerve cells keep sensitivity to glutamate — an organic compound of a nonessential amino acid — in check. This increased support of nerve cells lowers glutamate sensitivity, providing protection against the glutamate overwhelming and exciting key brain areas related to anxiety and depression.

Therapeutic effects of antidepressants may vary in people, due in part to each person's genetic makeup. It's thought that people's sensitivity to antidepressant effects, especially selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor effects, can vary depending on:

- How each person's serotonin reuptake receptor function works
- His or her alleles — the parts of chromosomes that determine inherited characteristics, such as height and hair color, which combine to make each person unique

Antidepressant medications are often the first treatment choice for adults with moderate or severe depression, sometimes along with psychotherapy. Although antidepressants may not cure depression, they can help you achieve remission — the disappearance or nearly complete reduction of depression symptoms.

Here are the SSRIs approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) specifically to treat depression, with their generic, or chemical, names followed by available brand names in parentheses:

- Citalopram (Celexa)
- Escitalopram (Lexapro)
- Fluoxetine (Prozac, Prozac Weekly)
- Paroxetine (Paxil, Paxil CR, Pexeva)
- Sertraline (Zoloft)

Read the entire article on the by visiting our website. (www.dbsawest.org).

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 Bernadette Knudsen, our President.

Bernadette Knudsen has been the President of DBSA West since April of 2010 and has been the facilitator of the Sunday afternoon Patient Support Group meeting for five years. In Bernadette's professional career, she has worked in education, medical social work and health insurance sales; however, in April of 2003, her bipolar disorder caused her to go on Social Security.

Bernadette is a widow who has lived in the Clearing neighborhood in Chicago for 31 years. Fortunately for us, she is happy to be working toward making the mental health community aware of the good work of DBSA West and enjoys coming to Good Samaritan Hospital in Downers Grove each week.

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Bernadette also speaks Spanish and has volunteered as a tutor in ESL at Morton College in Cicero for the past 5 years.

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

DBSA is an all-volunteer organization that is 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 always 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.

Our Officers:

President: Bernadette Knudsen, beesnees1@sbcglobal.net

Vice President: Norma Wimunc, nwimunc25@earthlink.net

Treasurer: Mary Paganoni, marypaganoni@aol.com

Secretary:

Communications Director: Bob Steinmetz, bob@steinmetzmail.com

Our Support Group Facilitators:

Sunday: Bernadette Knudsen, beesnees1@sbcglobal.net

Sunday: Linda Dougherty

Wednesday: Norma Wimunc, nwimunc25@earthlink.net

Thursday: Bob Steinmetz, bob@steinmetzmail.com

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

In September:

- **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. **(Note: on September 8, the Wednesday evening group will meet in the Birch Room on the ground floor of the North pavilion).**
- **Caregiver Support Groups** are held in the White Oak Room on Thursdays from 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

Check for last minute changes at www.dbsawest.org

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

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!