



# BIPOLAR AWARENESS DAY

26 MAY 2020

#LETSTALKBIPOLAR

Each year, Bipolar Awareness Day takes place on the 26th May, and this year SADAG is urging members of the public across the country to help create awareness about Bipolar Disorder by sharing information and telling their stories to help others know that they are not alone.

During these difficult times it is important to look after our mental health and use this time to strengthen our coping skills and learn from others to help us cope better every day. Bipolar Awareness Day is designed to raise awareness around South Africa for Bipolar Disorder and to work to eliminate the stigma that so many still feel in their own homes, workplaces and broader society. By talking about it, sharing resources and encouraging others to share their stories – we too can help people understand their condition, and hopefully reach out for help.



## Don't miss SADAG's FREE Facebook Expert Online Q&A's

During lockdown, more and more people are turning to online resources for help, self-help tips, information and advice. SADAG is hosting two online Facebook chats this week to help people living with Bipolar

Disorder and an "Ask the Expert" chat answering all questions regarding Mental Health. People living with Bipolar Disorder, as well as their friends and family members, can go online wherever they are and learn from our experts.

Join the live online chat on **Tuesday, the 26th May, from 1pm - 2pm, with Support Group Leaders, Sam Smirin and Lizl Jooste**, as they share their own #LivedExperience of Bipolar Disorder, what worked for them, how they dealt with challenges, the power of Support Groups and their most useful self-help tips and resources.

On **Friday, the 29th May**, join the live online **#AskTheExpert chat with psychiatrist and SADAG Board Member, Dr Jan Chabalala**, as he answers all your questions about symptoms, diagnosis, medication FAQs, etc.

Join the LIVE chats with thousands of other South Africans from 1pm - 2pm on SADAG's Facebook page ([The South African Depression and Anxiety Group](#)).



## SADAG's Facebook Online Chat

### Making Mental Health Matter during COVID19 1pm -2pm

#### Tuesday - 26 May



To commemorate **Bipolar Awareness Day** Sam Smirin (Bipolar Life Coach & SADAG Support Group Leader) and Lizl Joosten (SADAG Support Group Leader) will be speaking about their lived experience with Bipolar Disorder on what worked for them, the power of support groups, how to cope during difficult times and how to support family members who are not managing well



#### Friday - 29 May



"Ask The Dr" will be hosted by Dr Jan Chabalala (Psychiatrist) where he discusses Mental Health self- help tips, medication and treatment



Facebook Page: The South African Depression and Anxiety Group

Dr.Reddy's



Log in via: [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org)

## Speak Your Mind - your story is powerful



We are all affected by these unprecedented times, we are vulnerable and it is challenging. Now, more than ever, we are looking to our storytellers and "lived experience" stories to share hope and support for so many who feel stressed, anxious and overwhelmed now.

The positive impact of storytelling is immeasurable, for those who share, and those who receive. We know that lived experiences do not only provide understanding, comfort and hope but they break stigmas around mental health issues.

For Bipolar Awareness Day, you can help us by sharing your story with your community, our SADAG community and beyond.

Follow the 4 simple steps below to get started with your story:

1. **Share your story** - communicate what makes you creative, hopeful, happy and/or unique. Share your mental health journey. Share what makes you, YOU!
2. **Choose your stories image** - it can be a picture of yourself, your Furry

- Friend, or something that gives you hope!
3. **Title your story** - what do you want the world to know?
  4. **Spread your story** - share with your friends and family through email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

Share your story with SADAG – you can email your story to [help@sadag.org](mailto:help@sadag.org). Alternatively, tag us on Facebook (“The South African Depression and Anxiety Group”) or Twitter (@TheSADAG) and use the hashtag **#BipolarBrave** **#SpeakYourMind**

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## #LetsTalk Bipolar Disorder



Knowledge is power - and learning as much as we can about Bipolar Disorder, ways to cope, helpful resources and how to support a loved one, is very important to understanding the condition and how to better support someone we care about.

- Carrie Cantwell shares her blog article "**This is temporary - finding peace in overwhelming times**" on [BPhope.com](http://BPhope.com)
- SADAG Support Group Leader, Author and Bipolar Coach, Sam Smirin, article on "**De-stigmatise yourself**" which was published in the recent Mental Health Matters Journal
- "**How to handle Bipolar Symptoms during self isolation**" with very helpful tips on managing during lockdown and social distancing.
- Psychiatrist, Dr Leigh Janet, unpacks Bipolar Disorder, explains treatment and answers FAQs in this series of short online videos - [click here](#).
- **Healthy Lifestyle tips for managing Bipolar Disorder** on WebMD
- Loved ones and caregivers need support too - the International Bipolar Foundation has a range of resources, articles and helpful webinars for caregivers - [click here to access resources available for caregivers](#)
- Jessica Taylor share her article "**Handling sudden change, increased anxiety and Bipolar Disorder**" on [BPhope.com](http://BPhope.com)
- A relatable blog post on "**5 Things Affecting My Mental Health Most During Lockdown**" on [Psychcentral.com](http://Psychcentral.com)
- With more people downloading apps - here is the **top Bipolar apps from 2019**, [click here](#) for the list
- An insightful article on "**20 unexpected signs of Bipolar Disorder**"
- With more people doing online therapy, here is a helpful article by New York Times on what questions to ask your online therapist - "**Questions for your perspective therapist from your own Couch**"
- The decision to disclose your diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder can be very difficult. Read this article by Katherine Ponte about "**Everything you need to know about 'Coming out' about your Bipolar Disorder**"

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Its okay not to feel as good as you usually do during these unpredictable and difficult times. SADAG are always here to help you. There is always help, there is always hope.

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, Depression, or Anxiety, or feel like you are struggling to cope, please call 0800 456 789/ 0800 21 22 23 or visit [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org) for self-help tips to manage your mental health during these times.

**Best Wishes,**  
**Zane Wilson**

**Founder, SADAG**

[zane@sadag.org](mailto:zane@sadag.org)

SADAG Office	011 234 4837
Suicide Crisis Helpline	0800 567 567
Dr Reddy's Mental Health Helpline	0800 21 22 23
24 hr Cipla Mental Health Helpline	0800 456 789
Pharma Dynamics Trauma Helpline	0800 20 50 26
24 hr Discovery Medical Student Helpline	0800 323 323
Adcock Ingram Depression and Anxiety Helpline	0800 70 80 90
24 hr DSD Substance Abuse Helpline	0800 12 13 14
24 hr University of Cape Town Helpline	0800 24 25 26
24 hr University of Pretoria Careline	0800 747 747
University of the Western Cape Student Helpline	0800 222 333
Cipla Whatsapp Counselling 9am - 3pm	076 882 2775



Website: [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org)



The South African Depression and Anxiety Group



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