



**THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY GROUP**

SADAG	011 262 6396
Suicide Crisis Line	0800 567 567
Pharmadynamics Trauma Line	0800 20 50 26
AstraZeneca Bipolar Helpline	0800 70 80 90
Sanofi Aventis Sleeping Disorder Helpline	0800 753 379
Substance Abuse Helpline	0800 12 13 14
Dr Reddy's Mental Health Helpline	0800 21 22 23
Support Group Helpline	0800 20 51 21

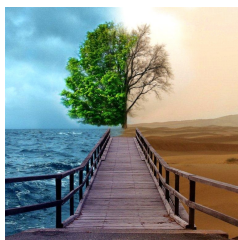
Website: [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org) • Email: [zane1@hargray.com](mailto:zane1@hargray.com) • SMS: 31393

If you do not receive this in full, please go down to the bottom under Graphic Mail and click on pdf version

## MAY NEWSLETTER

### Bipolar Awareness Day – 26th May 2012

#### Online Forums



The 26 May is National Bipolar Awareness Day. There will be four online sessions with psychiatrists and SADAG senior counsellors from Friday the 25th to Sunday the 27th of May so people across the country can get help and advice about this highly misunderstood disorder. Forums will be hosted through Lundbeck's My Support system as well as on Facebook. All these forums are open to patients, family members and loved ones, as well as anyone who has questions about Bipolar Disorder. You can download our new Bipolar brochure, sponsored by AstraZeneca, from our website – <http://www.sadag.org/> - that covers the causes of Bipolar, different types of Bipolar, what depressive and manic episodes are, as well as how to treat this mental health problem. SADAG also has other related handouts which are helpful and easy to access. For people who would like to read more about Bipolar, you can log onto the US website, <http://www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org/> and click on the brochure called "Healthy Living" to download the free brochure. You will have to give your country details just for their own records.

See below for details of online forums:

#### FACEBOOK

To join the chats, go to our Facebook page: [The South African Depression and Anxiety Group](https://www.facebook.com/TheSouthAfricanDepressionAndAnxietyGroup) or visit

<http://www.sadag.org/> and click on the button to link to the Facebook chat:

- Friday, 25 May 2012 – 1pm chat hosted by Psychiatrist, Dr Jan Chabalala
- Sunday, 27 May 2012 – 7pm chat hosted by Psychiatrist, Dr Dora Wynchank

#### LUNDBECK MY SUPPORT

To join the chats, go to <http://www.sadag.org/> and click on the button to link to the My Support chat

- Friday, 25 May 2012 – 7pm chat hosted by Psychiatrist, Dr Frans Korb
- Saturday, 26 May 2012 – 1pm chat hosted by Psychiatrist, Dr Frans Korb

For those without Internet access, SADAG's Bipolar Toll-free Helpline – 0800 70 80 90 – is open from 8am to 8pm 7 days a week, providing callers with free information about the disorder, and referrals to mental health professionals, as well as offering a link to bipolar support groups in different areas. SADAG can also be reached via its SMS line – 31393.

There will be a **Bipolar workshop in Cape Town's Valkenberg Hospital** on Monday the 28 May from 10am to 12 noon. The interactive workshop will be hosted by Suzanne Leighton and Dr Neil Horn, and will focus on Bipolar Recovery and Support. This is a community event and all are welcome to celebrate Bipolar Awareness Day 2012, [click here](#) for more details on this workshop.

#### Mental Health Forums



Many people are not able to access therapy, advice or support for their Mental Illnesses. Living with a mental illness can make people feel very isolated and alone, all the more so if they have no support system. The internet allows people in hard-to-reach areas access to support and information and it is often a good idea to join online forums and support groups where people can post questions and talk to each other. Please always choose your forums and internet information sources carefully! SADAG does not endorse any of these forums but we do value their input and support of patients and loved ones.

#### Local Forums

- For Bipolar support and advice– please visit <http://www.bipolarsa.org.za/>. Michelle and Jay run 2 incredibly successful support groups in Cape Town and are an invaluable resource for SADAG.
- Children with Bipolar- <http://www.bpkidssouthafrica.co.za/>. If you have a child with Bipolar Disorder, or know one, this site is a must.
- Childhood Chronic Illness - Started by the mother of a child with a rare illness-Sara Asman - this site is a way to reach out and support others. Click here for the websire: <http://www.asenseofsupport.com>.
- Special needs children - <http://www.apieceofthepuzzle.net/>. Started by the parents of a child with special needs, this website with its selection of forums for parents and educators, group chat sessions, and articles is a vital resource for parents, loved ones, educators and carers of children with a disability. The website is dedicated to all special needs and disabilities regardless of age.

#### International Forums

There is a huge selection of international websites that have wonderful information. And for people who don't sleep well at night or who have time late at night, this is an incredibly useful way of connecting with others around the world.

- Bipolar online support group - [www.bipolarsupporters.ning.com](http://www.bipolarsupporters.ning.com)
- OCD online forum - <http://www.ownocd.ning.com/>  
NAMI discussion groups - <http://www.nami.org/>  
(select: *discussion groups*)
- ADAA forum - <http://www.adaa.org/> (select: *forum*)
- Social Phobia - <http://www.socialanxietysupport.com/> (select *forum*)
- Psych central – <http://www.psychcentral.com/> (select *forums*)
- DBSA - <http://www.dbsalliance.org/> (select the find support option for details of their live online support groups)



### Mental Health Summit and Conferences

SADAG attended two important conferences this month! Our CEO, Elizabeth Matare, presented a talk on teen suicide prevention at the first ever **National Mental Health Summit** to be held in the African Region at St Georges' Hotel. The South African Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, gave the keynote address at the opening of this hugely important mental health summit. [Click here](#) to read more about this very important conference and SADAG's contribution to the South African Declaration on Mental Health.

SADAG's Operations Director, Cassey Chambers, presented a talk at the **Pan-African Healthcare Conference** – the world's largest CME accredited healthcare conference. [Read more](#).



### SADAG's Monthly Counsellors' Training

This month's counsellor training meeting was held at Norton Rose Attorneys in Sandton – we thank them for their generosity and beautiful auditorium. Psychiatrist and Clinical Psychologist, Dr Frans Korb, spoke to the counsellors about a topic often forgotten or ignored - Depression in the elderly. [Click here](#) to read more about this very important issue. Ruth Katz was also present discussing Bipolar disorder. For more info click on depression, please visit our website - [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org). There is excellent information on Depression in the Elderly.



### International and Local Media

Knowledge is power and the more you read and find out about a mental illness, the more you are equipped to handle it, whether you have been diagnosed or you are supporting a loved one. We read hundreds of articles and blogs every month and try to share many with you too.

#### Local Media

The South African media covers a diversity of mental health topics each month and we are very grateful for their support of mental health education and awareness, and the information they enable South Africans to get.

Many people believe that ADHD only affects children but ADHD is not exclusively a childhood illness, but adults suffer from **Adult ADHD**. [Click here](#) to read the article by Dessy Tzoneva on adults who can't sit still from the Mail and Guardian.

There was a fantastic Afrikaans article on **Bipolar Disorder** in this month's Vrouekeur Magazine. [Click here](#) to read Christa Swanepoel's article and learn how, even though Bipolar Disorder is a chronic illness, with the right treatment you can lead a very successful high functioning life.

Feeling alone and depressed since the children left home? Your personality, support network and circumstances all influence how you weather the empty nest phase. [Click here](#) to read Catherine Eden's article, "**Empty Nest**", in Bounce magazine.

Bipolar Disorder is a difficult mental illness to cope with and dealing with the highs and lows can be stressful in itself. [Click here](#) to read "**Rollercoaster Ups and Downs and Ins and Outs of Bipolar Mood Disorder**" by Ryan Edmonds from Vision Magazine.

Facebook, in partnership with SADAG, is trying to prevent suicide and getting help to depressed and suicidal users by reporting posts with suicidal content. [Click here](#) to read Janice Keogh's article in the Beeld on **how to report a Facebook post**.

Teen suicide is a very real, and frightening issue in South Africa. But what is normal teen moodiness and when should we be concerned? [Click here](#) to read Bernd Fischer's in Perdeby newspaper article on "**Students and Suicide**".

Stress in the workplace is all too common to many of us, but how does it affect us really. [Click here](#) to read Lize van Coeverden's article "**Stress: The Best Coping Mechanism**" in RISK SA Journal.

#### **International Media**

Mental illness is highly stigmatised and misunderstood; still surrounded by myths and misunderstanding. [Click here](#) to read the article: **9 Myths about mental illness and therapy**.

Many people suffering from **depression**, and other mental illnesses, cannot deal with their diagnosis because of the stigma and lack of support and understanding. [Click here](#) to read the article "Dealing with Depression - Related Stigma"

A diagnosis of **Bipolar Disorder** is tough for anyone to deal with, but for teens and young adults, facing a chronic mental illness can be earth-shattering. [Click here](#) to read a book review of the new book by Russ Federman "Facing Bipolar: The Young Adult's Guide to Dealing With Bipolar Disorder"

**EMDR** (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) Therapy is a new approach to dealing with trauma and past events. [Click here](#) to read more about EMDR and whether it is right for you.

Job **Burn-Out and workplace stress** is all too common. [Click here](#) to read 5 tips on how to cope.

**Borderline Personality Disorder** - Emotional Punching Bags. One of the toughest disorders to manage, [Click Here](#) for a first hand account of Borderline and therapists.

We get many calls from people undergoing distress after losing a loved spouse, parent, child or pet. This story could help ease some of the pain. [Click here](#) for the article on **Grief and how to cope with it**.

Facebook and suicide prevention is an international issue as more and more people post status updates indicating depression or high risk behaviour. [Click here](#) to read comments on how discussed at the American Psychiatric Conference **Facebook and other social media may work together to prevent suicide**.



### **Pfizer Mental Health Journalism Fellowship Awards 2012/2013**

One of the most misunderstood and least reported on areas of health writing in South Africa is that of mental health. In order to encourage more writers to become involved in this much needed area of reporting, Pfizer together with the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) are offering the 'Pfizer Mental Health Journalism Awards for 2012/13'.

Last year's awardees had their work published in major newspapers and

magazines in South Africa and found the added prestige of being a recipient of the Pfizer Mental Health Journalism Award opened many doors.

This year, once again we will be awarding two journalists a stipend of R25 000 per person as well as attendance to the South African Society of Psychiatrists(SASOP) Conference to be held in Johannesburg from 7th to 11th September 2012. Entries will be judged by a panel consisting of top names in South African media as well as mental health professionals.

Journalists are not required to leave their employment during their award year and are encouraged to choose timely projects that may educate the public and raise awareness about important mental health concerns.

For more information contact Marion Scher +27 82 467 6046 or [journ@icon.co.za](mailto:journ@icon.co.za)

[Click here](#) to download the entry requirements for these prestigious awards.

## SADAG Support Group Corner



Support Groups are a wonderful way of ensuring that people with a mental health disorder have a network of like-minded individuals who can, not only understand how to cope with the issues at hand, but, like the name implies, provide support to patients, family and friends of people with Depression, Anxiety, Panic, Bipolar, etc. These groups are *not* a replacement for psychiatric care, nor traditional psychotherapy, but are wonderful tools for learning more about a specific disorder, exchanging stories, sharing experiences, and providing an opportunity to address guest speakers with questions that you may have.

Please note that all Support Group leaders run the groups voluntarily. If you are interested in joining a support group, please call a counsellor at SADAG on 0800 21 22 23 or 0800 70 80 90 and they can refer you to an appropriate group. Support Group Leaders do not do telephonic counselling calls, many of them work during the day, and only run the group for face-to-face support.

[Click here](#) for list of support groups in Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal.



## Thank you to Stouf and Starfish – SADAG's SMS Systems

SADAG has two hugely active SMS systems both of which are very generously donated! A VERY big thank you to Stouf's, Chris Harrison, and Starfish's, Wayne Nelson-Esch. Those of us with computers perhaps don't always realize how vital SMS services can be to youth who need to take that first small step to getting help and accessing treatment. We receive dozens each day which vary from simple information needed, to critical immediate care. We would like to express our gratitude to both Starfish and Stouf for their support to this vital service, it has helped save many lives and we are very grateful to both companies.



## Teen Suicide Prevention Brochure

New brochures are available for schools on teen suicide prevention. This brochure includes warning signs of teen depression and suicide, causes and what to do to help a friend, student or peer. SADAG has been doing many school talks on suicide and substance abuse across four provinces. There is still place available in Gauteng for four more talks. Any schools interested in hosting SADAG for a school talk, please call Raadiyya or Lungelo on 011 262 6396. Please contact SADAG for brochures or [Click Here](#) to view the new Teen Suicide Prevention Brochure.



## Seminar on Child Sexual Abuse in Pretoria

The Child Trauma Team is hosting a seminar on the 31<sup>st</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June in Pretoria on "Dealing with child sexual abuse in South Africa". Please visit <http://www.childtrauma.co.za> for more information or call the team on 012 998 1364.



## External Talks

SADAG has been invited to present a number of talks, wellness days and training days– from schools to multinational corporations, we are always





happy to share our information and create awareness about mental illness and its treatment.

#### **Crawford College Talk for Peer Counsellors**

On Thursday the 10th of May 2012 SADAG was invited to the Crawford College to address students who now form the peer counsellors' initiative at the school. [Click here](#) to read more.

#### **Randfontein Local Municipality Wellness Day**

SADAG recently attended the Randfontein Local Municipality Wellness Day to create awareness about mental illnesses. [Click here](#) to read more about our day in Randfontein.

#### **Sappi Wellness Day**

Sappi frequently hosts employee wellness days and recently SADAG went to Sappi in Braamfontein to create awareness and educate employees on Mental Health. [Click here](#) to read more about our day at Sappi.

#### **United Church School Talk**

Recently SADAG presented talks about suicide prevention at the United Church School's Grade 7 to 12 learners and teachers. There were excellent questions and comments from both learners and staff. [Click here](#) to read more.

#### **King David High School**

SADAG was contacted by King David Victory Park to address their Grade 12 learners on Anxiety, Stress, Depression and Suicide. A teacher's workshop is being planned to follow up this essential talk for learners who are under a lot of stress at this time of year. [Click here](#) to read more.

#### **Boksburg North Police Station**

One of the sectors that SADAG feels very strongly about educating and helping is the South African Police. Policemen and women put their lives on the line for us every day and experience trauma daily – yet are often not told how to get help. [Click here](#) to read about a recent talk to detectives at the Boksburg North Police Station.

#### **Pretoria SANCA and Department of Education Bullying Talk for Teachers**

SADAG Support Group Leader and Psychologist, Suzette Heath, spoke to 140 teachers about teen depression and the issue of bullying, and how if left untreated can lead to serious issues related to anxiety, depression and even suicide, as seen in the recent cases in the press of students committing suicide due to bullying. There was a great response from the audience and many teachers felt that the practical steps and tools that were given during the talk will not only help them develop protocols within their own classrooms, but also help their schools develop an anti-bullying campaign. We would like to thank Suzette very much for giving up her time out of her busy practice.



### **Some Thank You's from our Callers**

Thank you for your help today, it's awesome to know there are people out there who care, many thanks

**Kind Regards**  
**H.**

*Caroline did phone me soon after I sent my e-mail. She was a great help and very supportive and I feel much better about the situation. I need to understand my son's illness and will try and find out as much as possible about it. Thank you very much for your assistance, I appreciate it very much!*

**Kind Regards**  
**S**

*"Thank you a million times, your help has literally changed my life and made me want to help others too."*

**(An SMS thank you JS)**

**Thank you to all our supporters, volunteer counsellors and trainers for all their hard work and dedication.**

**If you have any stories you'd like to share with us, or want to get in touch, please email me on [zane1@hargray.com](mailto:zane1@hargray.com) or visit [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org).**

Sincerely,

**Zane Wilson**  
**[zane1@hargray.com](mailto:zane1@hargray.com)**

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