



Website: www.sadag.org

The South African Depression and Anxiety Group

TheSADAG

December Newsletter

Wishing you a wonderful Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year

Stores are playing carols, Christmas trees have been decorated and lights can be seen sparkling as you drive down the streets at night. Small children can be seen eyeing toys that have been strategically been placed on display, and teens are ecstatic their exams have come to an end and the gloriously long December holidays now begin. The year is coming to an end - and quickly; there are only 2 Mondays left until Christmas.

For some, the holiday season means joy, family, gifts, overindulging in Christmas mince pies, holidays, excitement, a fresh slate and new opportunities and beginnings.

For others it can be an incredibly lonely time, where people are faced with sadness, loss and regret. Mental Health issues do not take a holiday, and neither does SADAG. We are open throughout the year, 365 days a year (even Christmas and New Year's Day) to help people with Depression, Anxiety, Bipolar Disorder, Trauma and Suicide attempts. During the holiday, although many patients are away, the number of calls are still very high. If you know anyone in need of help, please refer them to the SADAG [website](#) or ask them to phone any one of our various helplines 0800 456 789.

As we at SADAG reflect back on the year that was, we want to say a massive thank you to all of our incredible Support Group Leaders, Call Centre Volunteers, SADAG staff, Board Members, Sponsors, Clients, Supporters and Ambassadors. We thank you for your passion, dedication, motivation and relentlessness. You will never know the extent of the difference that your commitment and dedication makes, but we do, and we thank you.



Surviving the Holiday Blues

Friday, 13 Dec

#FacebookFriday Online Q&A

1pm - 2pm AND 7pm - 8pm

To help people cope with their specific stressors or worries this holiday season, SADAG is hosting a **FREE Facebook Friday online Q&A** with experts discussing 'Coping Tips for the Festive Season Blues.' Join the online chat on Friday 13th, with Psychologist, Viwe Dweba in the afternoon from 1pm – 2pm, and the evening chat at 7pm – 8pm with Psychiatrist, Dr Kalpesh Narsi. The expert will be sharing advice on how to stick to your medication and what to do if you find yourself struggling over the festive season.

To join the chats, LIKE SADAG's Facebook Page: [The South African Depression and Anxiety Group](#). Facebook users that would like to remain anonymous can send an email to media@anxiety.org.za and we will ask on your behalf.



'SURVIVING HOLIDAY BLUES'

Feeling lonely, stressed & burnt out? Learn tips on how to cope with holiday blues this festive season



1-2PM: Viwe Dweba (Psychologist)

7-8PM: Dr Kalpesh Narsi (Psychiatrist)

 Facebook Page: The South African Depression and Anxiety Group

 Log in via: www.sadag.org



The Christmas Blues Survival Guide

Many people who experience depression, anxiety and stress during the holidays are told or believe that they should just 'get over it'. But having the 'holiday blues' is more than a down-day... and you can't 'will' yourself out of it. Family, friends and loved ones may not understand your feelings or behaviors, and you wanting to avoid certain things or situations can create conflict.

Click below for some practical tips and tools to Survive the Holiday Blues:

- [Managing Your Mental Health During the Holidays](#)
- [When the Festive Season is not so jolly for all](#)
- [5 ways to support a loved one with depression over the festive season.](#)
- [How to have a happy and healthy Christmas.](#)
- [Where to find support this festive season.](#)
- [7 ways to beat the December blues.](#)

SADAG is open throughout the holidays – even Christmas Day and New Year's Day. SADAG is able to provide free telephone counselling, support and referrals. Call Cipla's 24 hour Mental Health Helpline 0800 456 789 or The Department of Social Development 24 hour Substance Abuse Helpline 0800 12 13 14 to speak to a counsellor 7 days a week, 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, or visit www.sadag.org for more info.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE - THERE IS ALWAYS HELP AND HOPE!



Your donation doubles. Matching for Mental Health

Christmas and the season of giving is almost upon us, and whilst for most of us this is the time to celebrate with family and friends, for many it's a dreaded time of the year – where loneliness and despair is all they can look forward to. So please consider including us in your gift giving or encourage your friends and colleagues to join you in donating even R100 each.

Best of all – in the spirit of Christmas giving, an incredibly generous donor has guaranteed to MATCH ALL DONATIONS up to the amount of R50,000 starting on November 20th and ending on New Year's Eve. Whether R50, R500 or R5000 he will match it. SADAG have already raised over R30 000.

PLEASE SUPPORT US AND GET MATCHED! DONATE NOW! CLICK [HERE](#) to our online donate page or email admin@anxiety.org.za for our banking details or information on tax benefits.

Donate



2020 Volunteer Intake

SADAG is always looking for more Volunteer telephonic Counsellors. The increase in calls to the call centre on a daily basis, lead to the need for more people on our lines to help more people, especially over the holidays when some people feel lonely.

If you are interested in volunteering at SADAG, one must be mature, empathetic, patient and able to commit to 4 hours a week. We are already interviewing and taking on new applicants. If you are based in JHB and willing to fill in an application, attend an interview screening, do 12 onsite training shifts and 2 day intensive training workshop. For more information on volunteering at SADAG, please contact Senzi on 011 234 4837 or download a volunteer counsellor application form, at www.sadag.org – Just click on the link under the VOLUNTEER section to the Left Hand Side of the web page. Or email volunteer@sadag.org.



Tackling Substance Abuse over the Holidays

SADAG partnered with the National Department of Social Development over 10 years ago on the 24 hour Substance Abuse Helpline (0800 12 13 14). Over the last project year 2018 - 2019, the helpline received over 67510 calls between October 2018 and September 2019, 2507 online contacts and R 12 732 626.32 of free press and media to create awareness around Substance Abuse issues in SA and more. The Substance Abuse Helpline is geared up for all the extra calls during the holiday season. You can reach the Helpline over the festive season via 0800 12 13 14 (24hrs a day), sms 31312 or join the Ke Moja Online chat via www.sadag.org (Mon - Sun, 9am to 4pm).



Diepsloot Corner

Bringing Festive Cheer to the Community

Santa Shoebox Project

SADAG donated over 53 Santa Shoebox's to children this festive season. These children were either orphans, vulnerable and or affected by HIV, and SADAG wished to bring some festive joy into their lives. SADAG Counsellors and generous corporates helped with putting together toys, clothes and toiletries for over 53 Children.

All the gifts were handed out to the children on .

Thursday, 5 December in Diepsloot.

The children sang their hearts outs and it was breath-taking to see the beautiful smiles on their faces as each one of them received their own gift.



Diepsloot Counselling Container thank Stakeholders

The Diepsloot Counselling Container had a very successful and very busy 2019. The staff showed their appreciation by delivering cakes to different stakeholders, nurses, community health workers and social workers such as SANCA, Vuselela Caregivers and OR Tambo Clinic who all participated in assisting with events, patients and support group members throughout the year.



Soccer Heroes donate to Diepsloot Support Group Members

The Diepsloot Support Group hosted their last meeting for 2019. And with the generous support of Orlando Pirates and Bafana Bafana defender/footballer, Innocent Maela, as well as Bafana Bafana and Brentford FC, UK based, midfielder/footballer, Kamohelo Mokotjo who donated over 60 Christmas Food Hampers to help the Support Group Members with essential groceries over the holiday season. The Support Group Members were so grateful for the generosity as it would help them and their families so much this December. Here are lasting words of wisdom from the generous players themselves on the importance of mental health:

' Invest in your mind as much as possible, that's where your potential lies. ' - Innocent Maela

' Whats a problem to you might be normal & whats normal to you might be a problem. Be human,Be there. ' - Kamohelo Mokotjo



We hope to have a successful 2020 making mental health matter once again. If you would like to partner with us in any future projects, please contact Nono (0836498639) or send an email to nonnie@anxiety.org.za.



SADAG KZN Branch creating waves

SADAG KZN supports many active support groups all over the province. Current areas include:

Chatsworth, Durban, Durban North, Empangeni, Estcourt, La Lucia, Newcastle, Pietermaritzburg, Queensburgh, Westville, Tafelkop & Verulam.

Join one of these dedicated, focused and FREE Support Groups, they run either weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. Please check the frequency of meetings and make contact with relevant Support Group Leader as dates and times might change:

- **UKZN Student Support Group** takes place every 3rd Friday at 13.00pm - 14.00pm at Howard College Campus. Contact Noor on 081 206 3482.
- **SOLOS (Survivors of Loved Ones of Suicide) & Depression Group.** Join every first Monday of the month at 18.30pm - 19.30pm. Contact Lori on 083 652 0117 or suicideprevent@gmail.com.
- **Social Anxiety Support Group.** A FREE 6-week support every Saturday at 11.00am - 12.30pm. Contact Azeza or Kerusha on Azz_rawat@hotmail.com or kerushaharidut6@gmail.com.

Don't forget to click [here](#) to read more about what SADAG KZN are up to in their monthly newsletters. Get updates on Talks, Wellness Days, Support Groups and so much more!

SADAG KZN are in desperate need of a photocopier/printer to help make copies and manuals for awareness events. If you have a second hand printer or know someone who has one that they are willing to donate. Please contact Lynn on kznsadag@anxiety.org.za.

SADAG KZN recently hosted their end of year function to thank their wonderful staff, volunteers, support groups leaders and clients for all their support and dedication throughout the year. Thanks to the amazing team! Hoping for an even busier 2020!

For more information, please contact SADAG KZN Office at kznsadag@anxiety.org.za, kznprojects@sadag.org or call 078 278 7047.



SADAG has Support Groups in areas throughout the Country in many different provinces. Support groups bring together people who are going through or have gone through similar experiences. A support group provides an opportunity for people to share personal experiences and feelings, coping strategies, or firsthand information about their Mental Illness.

Many of our Support Groups close over the holidays and reopen in January 2020 as many of the members go away.

We would like to say a big thank you to all the wonderful speakers, Support Group Leaders and professionals that have taken time out of their busy schedules to assist us by talking at Support Groups, Clinics and Wellness Days. Experts such as Tracy Feinstein, Dessy Tzoneva, Helene` Fouche and Karin Bursey your guidance, expertise & eagerness to assist knows no bounds and we are exceptionally grateful. Thank you!

NEW Support Groups launched in November

- New Support Group for Depression and Anxiety happens every second Saturday from 12pm until 1:30 pm, at the Nelson Mandela Community Youth Centre, Chartsworth, KZN
- New Support Group for Post Natal Depression happens first Tuesday of every month at the Rooihuiskraal Library, Centurion, Gauteng

If you would like to join a Support Group in your area, please call SADAG on 0800 70 80 90, most meetings will start again in January 2020.



University of Pretoria launches Peer Support Groups for Mental Health on Campus

The UP Peer Support Groups that started earlier this year, aimed at training students to run Peer Support Groups on campus. After various training workshops on all 5 campuses, we are proud to announce that there are now 12 UP Peer Support Groups. There are 5 Hatfield Support Groups, 7 Groenkloof Support Groups, 9 Prinshof Support Groups and 4 Onderstepoort Support Groups.

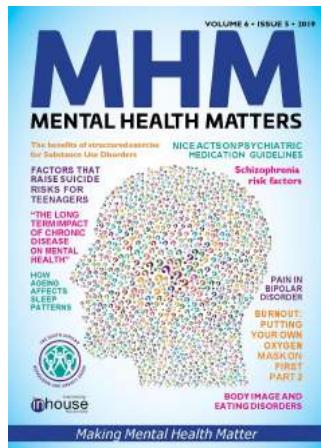
If you want more information on the #UPIlift

UP Peer Support Group Project, please call 0800 747 747 or email press@anxiety.org.za. The UP Student Crisis Helpline 0800 747 747 will be open throughout the holidays, 24 hours a day.

Mental Health Matters Journal

Have you seen our recent November journal?

- Read more about "[The long term impact of chronic disease on Mental Health](#)" by Founder & CEO of Rare Diseases by Kelly Du Plessis. .
- Explore the latest article on Burnout (Part 2) by Professor Stoffel Grobler and Psychiatrist



Dr Tejal Morar. Titled "Putting Your Own Oxygen Mask on First."

- Read the motivational article on "The benefits of structured exercise for substance use disorders" by UCT Exercise Scientist Warren Lucas.
- Read more about (NICE) acts on Psychiatric Medication guidelines by Clinical Psychologist, Lauren Gower.

If you are a Mental Health Professional, and would like to subscribe to the Journal for 2020, please click [here](#) to subscribe via the website.

If you already receive the Journal and would like to recommend topics, or you would like to write for the Journal, please email Tracy at

research@anxiety.org.za.



Local Articles

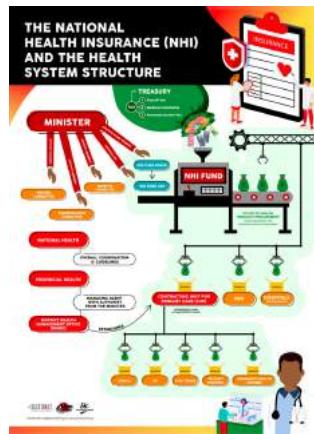
In 2019 SADAG generated a Total AVE: R 106 505 196.45 of free press. With over 567 Live Broadcasts, 888 Online articles and 800 printed stories. SADAG alone contributed to 2255 stories associated to Mental Health in 2019.

- **'If I don't keep going, it will all crash': SA doctors open up about depression.** Read [more](#) in a article by Mia Lindique in Eye Witness News (EWN).
- Feeling burnt out and struggling to cope? Read [more](#) about the **6 tips to surviving the last work weeks of 2019** in a article by Bizcommunity.
- **The good and the bad: Public psychiatric healthcare in SA.** While some strides have been made in mental health awareness and care in South Africa. There is still a long way to go. Read [more](#) in a article by News24.
- **Government urged to step up efforts to help medical staff cope with their workload.** Medical doctors, especially women, are having to grapple with personal mental health issues over and above their heavy work load. Read more [here](#)in an article by Mia Lindique in Eye Witness News.
- **7 tips and home remedies to help you stop snoring for Good!** You know you need this. Read [more](#) in an article by Yamkela Mdaka in Women Health.
- **Letter: Therapy does help.** Why I am opening up this way is because I did hit emotional rock bottom and was on the verge of suicide. [Read](#) a letter by DA Counsellor Vernon Pillay of KwaDukuza shared by The North Coast Courier.
- **What should you do if you're depressed but can't afford therapy?** Sam Beckbessinger shares more in his article by Daily Maverick. Click [here](#) for more.



International Articles

- **How to navigate the holiday season with Anxiety and Depression.** Some helpful tips for getting through this hectic time of year. Read [more](#) in the international article by Redbook.
- **10 Practical Ways to Handle Stress.** by Margarita Tartakovsky, M.S. on [Psych Central](#).
- **What to do if you feel you cannot get out of bed.** There are some simple tricks that people can try to get going once they wake up. Read [more](#) in an article by Medical Today.
- **How to help Suicide attempt survivors, from someone who has been there.** "I wish the people in my life were willing to be uncomfortable and ask about the warning signs." Read [more](#) in an article by Oprah Magazine written By Kimberly Zapata.
- **Make use of the top 25 Mental Health Apps to help you cope.** There are many apps available that offer support and coping techniques for various Mental Illnesses. Click [here](#) to take a look and learn more in the article by PsychCom.net.



Section27 turn the Spotlight on NHI

The #NHI Bill proposes a fundamental health system change. In order for South Africans to make substantial assessments of the proposals made in the #NHI Bill, it is important that everyone understands what the #Bill describes in essence. SECTION27 and Agent Orange have collaborated to bring to you graphics which summarizes key features of the #NHI Bill.

The #NHI&Me graphics explain things in a manner that makes it easier for everyone to understand -

How it will affect me as a health care user? What should I expect? Where will I get health services from? What about asylum seekers and refugees?

Share the graphics with colleagues, friends and family so that more South Africans can understand the #NHI. #NHI&Me.

- The National Health Insurance and the Health System Structure.
- How will the National Health Insurance (NHI) affect you?.



World Mental Health Day Press Workshop

SADAG in Partnership with Cipla, hosted a Press Workshop for World Mental Health Day on 9th October that had over 63 Journalists from across SA (Gauteng, Cape

Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein and Limpopo) to learn more about Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. 11 Expert Speakers presented on Suicide Prevention, Responsible Reporting, Social Media and Mental Health, Journalist's own Mental Health and exposure to Trauma.

The event was a huge success and generated over R9 169 388,67 worth of FREE press and media, and our #WOKEforSuicidePrevention was trending on Twitter throughout the day.

[Click here](#) for some of the articles and interviews from the Workshop.

* SA journos get expert guidance on how to report on suicide in SA. Click [here](#) to read more in an article by Qama Qukula at Cape Talk.

- SADAG: As many as 600 people call us every day with suicidal thoughts. Read [more](#) in an article by Mia Lindeque from Eye Witness News.
- Mental health: dangerous myths and sad facts. Read [more](#) in an article by Vuyo Mkize in City Press.

Join us on the
Hope Hike
& the *Hope Bike*

The Hope Hike and Hope Bike

October 2019

The Hope Hike and Hope Bike, organised annually by the Ithemba Foundation (ithemba means hope in isiXhosa) is to raise awareness around the importance of mental health and to

break the stigma still surrounding mental disorders such as depression and anxiety, was held in October for Mental Health Awareness Month. The Superhero Blue Team, organised by Mari Ware-Lane and Debbie Uys, complete with their own superhero squad, inspired everyone with their positivity and hope at the Cape Hope Hike.

Click [here](#) to visit the website for more pictures from the event.



University of the Western Cape Student Services Summit

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) held a Mental Health and Wellness Colloquium on the 26 November 2019. The purpose of the event was to present the preliminary findings as well

as discuss the way forward with regards to the research that was carried out by Researcher Dr Bronwyn Dworzanowski in collaboration with The Centre for Student Support and UWC. SADAG run the UWC Student Helpline 0800 222 333 and Students were given the number if they needed support or help after completing the survey. The Researchers main aim was to find out what Mental health looks like at Universities and what the needs of Students are and what can be done in the near future.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the findings and what happened at the event.



In memory of Douglas Morrice

Thank you to Karen for the donations made in memory of Douglas Morrice. This group of riders who did the 947 cycle challenge on Sunday (17/11) raised a total of R21,250 for the SADAG Suicide Call Centre.

These donations will go far in assisting SADAG to cover some of the costs incurred by the call centre: telephonic counselling, seeking and updating resources on behalf of callers, contacting the callers loved ones, and making contact with the various hospitals and police stations nationwide. This helps to ensure that people who face difficulties due to mental health issues have access to a highly valuable resource every day of the year and that they always have somewhere to turn in their hour of need.

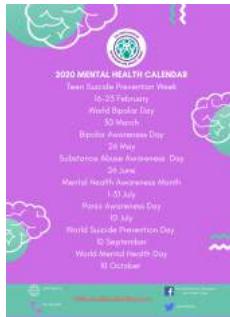
Again our most sincere thanks for your kindness.



Feedback from Callers

These are the comments that motivate our volunteers to keep doing what they do.

- *Hi, I just wanted to reach out to you to say thank you. Joe was an awesome speaker for the event and it has had very positive feedback internally. Attendance exceeded expectations and the handouts disappeared pretty quick too. Thank you for all the good work that you, Joe and your organization does. - P*
- *Thank you so very much for referring me to a counselor. He called me back and he helped me a lot. He helped me by just talking, listening and understanding me as a parent. Thank you so much. - A*
- *Yes a very friendly and helpful lady called and assisted me. Thank you very much, it is very much appreciated. - A*
- *Thank you, they responded within an amazing time frame and have been very helpful. - P*
- *Thank you and your team for the assistance! After chatting to your counselor I feel like there is some room to move again! Your help is greatly appreciated. - T*



Save The Date

Mental Health Awareness Calendar

2020

Are you aware of which days of the year are most important for Mental Health? Look no further, click [here](#) for the 2020 Mental Health Calendar. Raise Mental Health Awareness with us all year! - cause everyday should be Mental Health Awareness Day,



SADAG appreciates YOUR Donations

- Thank you to the Student Council (Student Representatives) at Rosebank College who have made a donation to SADAG as part of their community project. We are so grateful for your donation.
- A big thank you to the employees of Hatch, who recently did a collection for a casual day initiative and raised R3,947.40.
- Thank you Lynne Smurthwaite for your donation to our Suicide Crisis Call Centre. Your donation is a huge help to so many in need of counselling.
- A sincere thanks to Stouf, for continuing to provide SADAG with the sms platform that is used by thousands of patients who need to be urgently in touch with us.
- We would like to thank Trunuty Communications who have so kindly upgraded our phones, provided new headsets, implemented system upgrades many times and have a technical consultant available at all times for support that is necessary.
- We would like to send a HUGE thank you to Ultimate Data Sciences – and

especially to Gavin and Johan – for donating R44,929.50 worth of IT assistance to SADAG. Without them we would have been lost.

SADAG are open throughout the festive season. We would like to thank our dedicated volunteers and support groups for their endless commitment and dedication throughout the year. We couldn't do it without you!

Many thanks to the many who are sending us donations we greatly appreciate your funds.

Look after yourself these Holidays and wishing you all the best for 2020. Remember - there is always help! There is always hope!

Best Wishes,
Zane Wilson
Founder and Director
zane@sadag.org

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