



SADAG Telephone	011 262 6396
Website	www.sadag.co.za
Suicide Crisis Line	0800 567 567
Pharmadynamics Trauma Helpline	0800 20 50 26
AstraZeneca Bipolar Helpline	0800 70 80 90
Sanofi Sleeping Disorders Helpline	0800 753 379
Substance Abuse Helpline	0800 12 13 14
E-mail	zane1@hargray.com
SMS	31393

March Newsletter

This month our call volumes have been around 400 calls a day!! The recession hasn't just hit the man-in-the-street and the big companies, but NGOs are taking a knock too! SADAG, in its 16th year, really needs help. We are looking for a big company to "adopt us" so we can continue the work we do. Our Phone bill alone is R60,000.00 a month. If anyone has an idea for a sponsor who would get the full benefit of a Section 21 NGO with 18a Tax Exemption, please contact Zane on 082 873 5707 or email zane1@hargray.com.

New Counselor Training at Pfizer in Sandton

On the last weekend of February 2010, just over 120 people attended the latest Counselor Training Program hosted by the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG). The training, held courtesy of Pfizer Head Offices in Sandton, was aimed at the training of new counsellors, and potential support group leaders, from over four provinces. Through guest speakers, who specialize in various fields of mental health, trainees were exposed to various topics, ranging from schizophrenia and depression, to bipolar, panic and OCD. Although the training was intense, they agreed that they left with a great deal more knowledge than expected.



Among the group attending the course was a diverse selection of men and women, from university students to those with far more life experience. Trainees travelled from all across South Africa to attend the training: Swaziland, Bloemfontein and Newcastle! Although the majority of those attending the course wish to become SADAG counselors, many also are in the beginning stages of starting mental health support groups throughout the country.

Ismail from Newcastle said: "From my background we always thought depression was only for white people, now I can see that everyone suffers from these things. We just talk about them in different ways." Zama from East London said: "SADAG has helped me to understand these mental health issues in much more detail."

Many of the trainees are students of psychology, and wish to gain more practical experience in the field. Esme, a student at the University of Johannesburg has a new-found motivation for her studies. "It amazes me how many people volunteer their free time, and do so passionately. I have found SADAG to be well organized and the staff are so friendly, helpful and driven."

SADAG was very fortunate to have professional speakers of the highest caliber addressing the trainees. Each speaker, with a floor time of about an hour each, spoke on his/her specialty in the field of mental health. Topics covered issues ranging from OCD, bipolar, and substance abuse, to panic, depression, trauma, suicide and social phobia. Trainees were also exposed to what SADAG does and the general skills needed of a counsellor working in the call-center. Many thanks must go out to our fantastic speakers: Kevin Bolon, Dr Sheldon Zilesnick, Neil Amore, Dr Colinda Linde, David Rosenstein, Dr Frans Korb, and Michael Sissison.



Overall we hope that this was the beginning of a new generation of counsellors and support groups working with the SADAG team. Many thanks must go out to organizers Cassey Amore and Emma Stevenson, both of whom were on top form in their organizational skills, and who ensured the smooth-running of the weekend. Thanks also go to SADAG CEO Elizabeth Matare. SADAG would also like to thank the counsellors who gave up their weekends to help out with talks, round-tables, and general admin, particularly Roshni, Clare, Shai, Jared, Irene, Agata, Romy, Melissa, Jane, Debbie, Ryan, Janine, Cindy and Shanne who shared their skills with those attending the training. Another special thanks to some of our support groups, Driekie and Beryl who presented very informative and insightful talks. We would also like to thank Pfizer for providing the beautiful venue in which training took place.

Finally, to all the support group leaders (new and established), and potential SADAG counselors, many thanks for your time, effort, questions and enthusiasm. We hope you all found the training educational, interesting, and motivating towards your future work in the world of mental health. It is because of people like you that we are able to help so many others in need.

Apology

Last month we wrote in the Newsletter about Medical Aid Scheme information and the new Bipolar Algorithm that has been passed. We want to sincerely apologise to Linda Trump for not including a BIG thank you to her and crediting her for not only much of the work involved with getting the algorithm passed but also for the information contained in the piece. She knows more about Bipolar and Medical Aid Schemes regarding mental illness than most people and we are so grateful for her insight and expertise. Our sincere thanks to Linda Trump for helping and pushing this process through with us.

Tough Love Talk with Jared



On Wednesday the 3rd of March, Jared did a talk for a Tough Love group in Bryanston about the relationship between substance abuse and mental illness and how self-medication and low self-esteem were often reasons for starting drug use. About 20 people attended and after the talk there were many questions asked and Jared had a long Q&A session with the group. A big thank you to Jared for giving of his time to talk to the group who really benefited and enjoyed the session.

“On behalf of Tough Love I want to thank you most sincerely for arranging the talk given by Jared. It was without doubt most valuable to our group, and very well attended! The feedback was excellent with a number of questions posed after his talk.

Best wishes, Neil Ebedes”

The Janssen-Cilag Diepsloot Container Counselling Centre has just been launched!



SADAG with Janssen-Cilag have opened a counselling centre housed in a container near to the Diepsloot Clinic just behind the police station. Two trained counselors – Bronwan and Ntombi – are on site daily from 8am to 12:30pm 5 days a week offering free counselling to the Diepsloot, Kya Sands and Cosmo City communities. In addition to offering counselling for depression, anxiety, trauma and suicide, the counsellors work with schools in the area conducting school talks regarding teen suicide prevention in the afternoons, peer support groups will be set up in schools in Diepsloot. Peer support groups are often the only intervention learners have as they don't always find it easy to confide in parents or educators. Counsellors also working closely with local churches, clinics, other NGO's and the SAPS, and the Janssen-Cilag-SADAG team are working with community leaders to establish support groups in the area that will ensure a sustainable service for the whole area. SADAG would like to thank Janssen-Cilag for their commitment and dedication to mental health and for helping us fulfil a vision.



Hat Trick of Press

In one week, SADAG scored a hat trick of press in the Fair Lady, YOU Magazine, and seven pages in the Rooi Roos; and an article in The Specialist Forum on sleep disorders and depression. All this press has made our call centre busier than ever!

Teen Suicide Prevention Week



From the 14th to the 21st February was Teen Suicide Prevention Week and apart from doing lots of press and media, our trainers and counselors were busy with school talks. Teams went to Diepsloot Primary School, King David Victory Park, and to Musenga Vhadzimu Primary School. A big thank you to Bronwan, Ntombi, Nosipho, Jared, Khethi, Jade, Candice, Alex, Tim, Nathi, Tsholo, Kalliste, Danica, Phumla and Debbie for their energy, empathy and dedication.

Carter Centre Fellowship Awards



Applications for the 2010-2011 Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism

Mental illnesses constitute some of the most serious, unrecognized, and under-reported health problems around the world. As part of an international effort to reduce stigma and discrimination, The Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism in Atlanta provide stipends to journalists to report on topics related to mental health or mental illnesses.

Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter has been a driving force in the field of mental health throughout her public service career. Today, she continues her leadership through the Carter Center's Mental Health Programme in Atlanta, Georgia.

These fellowships look for proposals that will help reduce stigma and discrimination by informing the public about mental health issues and experiences. There are two fellowships available to South African journalists annually together with six American and two Romanian journalists. The South African fellows are awarded grants of R50 000 to study and report on a particular issue within the mental health field for one year as well as two expense paid trips to Atlanta. These are administered by the South African Depression and Anxiety Group.

In September, Fellows will go to The Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia to meet advisers, task force members and other fellows to discuss their project plans. The second visit comes in September, at the end of the fellowship year, when fellows present their completed projects and discuss challenges and successes in mental health reporting.

The idea of these fellowships is raise awareness and inform other journalists in the field. For more information on applying for the fellowships go to:

http://www.cartercenter.org/health/mental_health/fellowships/index.html

**FOLLOW ALL THE STEPS REQUIRED IN THE LINK ABOVE.
PLEASE SEND APPLICATIONS TO:**

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS APRIL 16TH 2010

Roshni Parbhoo-Seetha
The South African Depression & Anxiety Group
P. O. Box 650301, Benmore, 2010.

OR

Contact: Marion Scher at 082 467 6046
Email: journ@icon.co.za



Thank you Letters

"I need to commend The Depression and Anxiety Support group on the excellent service we recently received from one of your counsellors, Phumzile.

We had a very complex, distressing incident at SAHETI last week and Phumzile was able to offer immediate assistance and then called me back twice in the afternoon and again in the evening to update me on information she had gathered from Janine.

Phumzile is an asset to your organisation. We were able to implement her suggestions immediately at the following morning's staff meeting and separate subject meetings. In doing so, we resolved our concern. With her assistance, knowledge and thorough approach what could have been a tragic situation ended well.

Please pass on our thanks. Kindest regards and heartfelt gratitude to your amazing team

Michelle Wootton-Price"

"I talked to the counselor and he was very helpful, because he referred me to the career counselor at the campus and the social worker - they both deal with things like this. Also he promised to send me the printed materials from SADAG, so that I can read on my own. THANK YOU!" (TM)

NGO Corner

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends would like to hold Sibling Meetings for surviving children in Cape Town and are asking for feedback of interest. Meetings are planned to start in March and will probably be held on Saturday mornings. Anyone interested please contact Suzette on 084 568 8402.

Laughter Therapy



Do you feel burnt out? Have you lost your spark? Laughter Therapy may be just what you need. From one-on-one to one-to-many laughter workshops, private laughter coaching, social and corporate wellness days, and specialized laughter workshops for Stress Management, Performance Enhancement, Team Building, Health Care &

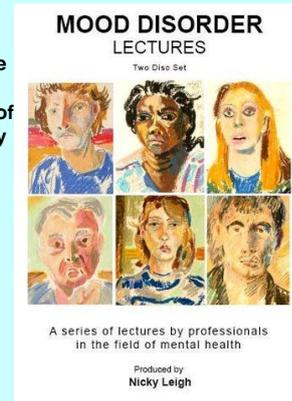


Healing, Orphanages, Schools, and more. To enquire about laughter therapy or your laughter needs, please contact Anjana Lala on 083 209 0199 or email ican00AA@gmail.com

DVD: Mood Disorder Lectures

A series of lectures by professionals in the field of mental health accompanied an exhibition by Nicky Leigh in Pietermaritzburg. It was aimed at informing the public about depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder and to offer help to sufferers as well as to family members. Dr Stewart Lund, Dr Maria Dobрева, Prof Graham Lindegger, Floss Mitchell, Shevonne Rautenbach, Tim Barry and Nicky Leigh all presented valuable talks. Now a DVD for the Mood disorder talks has been made available. The talks were excellent and well worth listening or to give to someone who was unable to attend as a gift.

There are limited copies available at a cost of R140 + R25 postage. To order your copy, please contact Nicky on 033 346 165, cell 073 157 3190 or e-mail info@nickyleigh.co.za or to find out more go to <http://www.nickyleigh.co.za/>



Striking Out Stigma surrounding Mental Health in Kwa Thema



The South African Depression and Anxiety group (SADAG) held a workshop on the 18th March for the community of Kwa Thema. The presentations given by various trainers from SADAG were aimed at community workers, members of Non-Government Organizations (NGO), church groups, youth groups, traditional healers and home based care workers.

The workshop focused on topics that were in need of increased awareness in the community. They included: what is depression and its treatment, how to cope with trauma; suicide prevention; and how to start a support group.

Amongst those who attended were from the Department of Health, Child Welfare, Ikhayaletu Centre, the Kwa Thema Old Age Home to name a few. Participants had nothing but praise to give. They confirmed the workshop had indeed succeeded in achieving its goal. Handy Nkosi from the child welfare said 'I face these issues on a daily basis. Now I have a better understanding of how to handle them.' Everyone left the workshop with new knowledge as well as their own speaking books to take back and use at their various organizations.

Andile Siluma from Nokuphile Community services commented 'I will be able to use what I have learnt today because I run a support group for teenagers.'

The event was coordinate by local resident Bongi Msimango and opened by Joshua Tshwala and by Elizabeth Matare, SADAG's CEO, and was packed with over 200 participants and many that had to be turned away.

Sphiwe Boshomane from the Kwa Thema Old Age Home said 'I see depression every day but until today did not realise what it was. Now that I understand the illness I know how to deal with the patients. I will no longer isolate them as I did before'.



We wish you all a happy Easter holidays and safe travels.
Remember SADAG will be open throughout the long weekend.

Sincerely,

Zane Wilson

Founder

zane1@hargray.com

