

Recovery Road

Join the journey

Spring 2019

My Anxiety

Anxiety disorders are the most common group of mental illnesses in the United States. I am especially interested in this disorder because I have had degrees of anxiety all my life. Anxiety disorder can be thought of the mind or body's natural response to events that are threatening. This has been referred to as the fight or flight response to real or imagined threats.

My own experience with anxiety started when I was a child. I felt I couldn't please my father. I thought I had to be perfect. I didn't want to be separated from my parents. I told others that I "worried" or was "nervous". As I became older I was less able to cope with these feelings. It wasn't until I was in college that these feelings of insecurity began to make it difficult to function.

I experienced many unpleasant feelings. This included restlessness, obsessive worry, avoiding people, difficulty concentrating, sweaty palms, hyperventilation, shortness of breath, and excessive fears.

I "cut" classes, over slept, procrastinated, and self-medicated with alcohol and pot. I was very fortunate to be able to graduate with all this chaos in my life. After graduation the constant stressors on my body and mind along with some genetic predisposition to depression precipitated a mental breakdown and subsequent diagnosis as manic-depression or bipolar 1.

Today, I still have anxiety. I take psychotropic medication and have made some lifestyle changes such as getting enough sleep, regular exercise, and becoming more aware of my triggers or stressors.

As the director of DBSA and an active participant in many mental health support groups, I know that anxiety is very real. My experience with my own anxiety has made me much more understanding of others who also have anxiety. I also know that anyone with anxiety can still have a fulfilling life.

You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Tips to Reduce Anxiety

Over 40 million American adults deal with some form of anxiety disorder. Some only experience sporadic bouts of anxiety, other experience very disabling anxiety often coupled with a mood disorder. Psychotherapist John Tsilimparis is a leading authority on anxiety. He has written about 10 ways to reduce the intensity of anxiety.

1. **Balance Your Need for Perfection.** Stop thinking that you have to be perfect. Do the best you can and have reasonable expectations.
2. **Stop Being a “people pleaser”.** Defining your self-worth in terms of what other people think of us will exacerbate our anxiety.
3. **Let Go of the Illusion of Control.** We need to recognize we are powerless over other people, places, and things.
4. **Practice Deep Breathing vs Shallow Breathing.** Anxiety and stress will cause people to breathe shallowly, which can cause hyperventilation. Deep breathing provides more oxygen to our brains and can help distract us from what we are obsessing about.
5. **Progressive Muscle Relaxation.** The process of slowly tensing and relaxing our muscles from our toes to our necks and faces will reduce stress. It works 2 ways by relaxing our muscles and distracting our brains from what we are worrying about.
6. **Ground Yourself.** Distract your mind by doing a concrete task like mowing your yard or cleaning your house. Since our minds can't be thinking about two different things at once, consciously redirecting your mind from one thought to another can reduce your anxiety.
7. **Thought Replacement.** When you stop focusing on a negative thought and replace it with a positive thought your anxiety will decrease.
8. **Accept Your Anxiety.** Rather than attach danger to your symptoms recognize that they will ebb and flow if you don't obsess about them.
9. **Guided Imagery.** In this technique we close our eyes, breathe deeply, and imagine a place and time where we were extremely happy. When you get stressed let your mind take you to a place where you are relaxed and happy.
10. **Daily Exercise.** We know that exercise can release endorphins in our minds that give us a sense of well-being. Regular exercise for as little as 15-30 minutes twice a day can make a big difference in your anxiety level.

These ten ideas involving identifying, understanding and changing our thinking and behavior patterns. A good psychiatrist, psychologist, or support group can help us learn and sustain these techniques. By just changing our thoughts we can begin to change our anxiety level and improve of quality of life.

Start each day with a positive thought and a grateful heart. Roy T. Bennett

Recovery



Hi, I'm Cindy...sharing and celebrating recovery stories connects community members with one another and empowers those who are still struggling to know they are not alone. It also helps us to eliminate the stigma people in recovery often face and educate the public that recovery is possible. Depression is a mood disorder characterized by such signs and symptoms as sadness, fatigue, apathy, lethargy, negative self-image, hopelessness, and disruptions in sleep and appetite, leading to impaired functioning and thoughts of suicide.

Since my first experience with depression at thirteen, my perception of love has grown and changed just as much as I have. My early approach to love correlated with my mental health. When I began experiencing my illness, I was desperate to hold onto any idea that could lessen the burden of my mental health. I looked to love as a sort of medicine and as a teenage child I "had" a child at age 15.

I have always hoped that, through the power of love, my partner would ease my depression. If love really is the most powerful force, I thought it could probably conquer my sadness. Love is compelling and wonderful, but never cured me of my illness. As an adult, I need reminders that my depression stands by itself and requires its own special care from within me. It has taken years of trial and error before finding a unique regimen of techniques and mechanisms that has helped. I'm currently working with DBSA, sharing my continued recovery story with others, through peer support.

It is in our darkest moments that we must focus to see the
light.

Aristotle

From the Executive Director

Executive Directors Report

February 20 – April 16

It's been another busy quarter for DBSA-OK. We have been active in the following areas:

Outreach:

1. Cindy Mossman, our new outreach specialist is working with the new women's group, the Hispanic group, and the LGBTQ group.
2. I have been meeting with the Community Mental Health Centers to inform their staff about DBSA-OK.
3. We continue to go into 8 local psychiatric hospitals talking about DBSA.
4. I continue to go to the monthly PRSS trainings to talk about DBSA.

Networking:

1. DBSA is represented at regular meetings of 5 local mental health advocacy groups.
2. I keep in contact with the state legislature and have attended several coffee chats.

Fundraising:

1. We have received funds from the Network for Good.
2. We continue to receive grant money from Zarrow.
3. Outback Restaurant continues to give us generous support.
4. We are in the middle of collecting gift cards to be auctioned at the annual Picnic.

Other Activities:

1. I have conducted two facilitator training classes and 2 Summit meetings with a guest speaker.
2. DBSA continues to provide social events including Art and Movie Night.

Upcoming Activities:

1. April 13th Hispanic Health Fair
2. April 25th My Mind Matters at the Capitol
3. May 18th picnic at the Bluff Creek Pavilion
4. June 1st NAMIWalk at Myriad Gardens

**“Worry is my worst enemy – an enemy I unleash on myself.”
Terri Guillemets**

DBSA Reaching Out To Seniors

☺ Pet Therapy to reduce anxiety

Cynthia Turner, a DBSA facilitator, has a service dog named Hobe. Together they visit senior living centers where Hobe can offer comfort, help ease anxiety, and build self-confidence for the residents. Because pets live in the moment, they don't worry about what happened yesterday, or what might happen tomorrow...they can help you become more mindful and appreciate the joy of the present.



☺ Music as a coping skill

The use of music is explored as a way to cope with stressors and change, as well as improve quality of life. Live music is used to facilitate music-assisted meditation and relaxation practices. By reducing muscle tension and anxiety, music therapy supports stress management and mindfulness. **Barbara Poppe** offers her talents on the piano to advocate for DBSA while entertaining the seniors.

Calendar of events

Please mark these dates on your calendar

April

4,11,18,25	Creative Expressions
4th	Day at Capitol
10 th	Summit
14 th	Hispanic Fair
16 th	Board Meeting
25 th	My Mind Matters (Capitol)
26 th	Movie Night

May

Mental Health Awareness Month

2,9,16,23,30	Creative Expressions
11 th	Facilitator Training
18 th	DBSA Picnic
24 th	Movie Night
27 th	Memorial Day – Ofc. Closed

June

6,13,20,27	Creative Expressions
1 st	Nami Walk
12 th	Summit
28 th	Movie Night
28 th	2 nd Qtr Newsletter

“If you want to conquer the anxiety of life, live in the moment, live in the breath.”

What Can I Do?

- D Donate** Encourage others to do the same
- B Break the Stigma** Educate; increase awareness. Tell your story.
- S Spread the word** DBSA is here, we can help
- A Advocate** Ask legislators to support mental health issues.

If you need help . . .

National Suicide Prevention
800-273-TALK (8255)

Emergency
911 Ask for a CIT Officer

OCARTA for Crisis
405-812-4580

OCARTA for Friendship
405-436-4082

Oklahoma County Crisis Intervention Center
405-522-1800

Heartline
211 Ask for help with emotional distress

New Crisis "Text" Line
741741

Remember: Suicidal thoughts are temporary. Suicide is permanent. Don't give in to suicidal thoughts – you can overcome them.



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance
Oklahoma

3000 United Founders Blvd, Ste 104
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
405-254.3994
office@dbsaok.org
dbsaok.org
Find us on Facebook @dbsaok

Our Mission

To provide hope, help, education, and support to improve the lives of people with mental health disorders.

We've been there. We can help.

George Crooks– Executive Director
Jeannie Huey - Office Manager
Cindy Mossman – Outreach Specialist

Board of Directors

Jimmy Roberts, President
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Pete Schaffer
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Iva Cook
Tammy Lenox

Professional Advisor

Warren Harden



Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Oklahoma

Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance
Oklahoma

CONFIDENTIAL AND FREE PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

If you cannot reach the contact person please call 405-254-3994

To ensure you have the most up-to-date listing please visit dbsaok.org/support

Updated April 15, 2019

Ada

Currently closed

Bethany

Bethany Church of Christ
3301 N. Rockwell
Thursday 7:00 PM
Contact Iva 405-373-0059
Contact2 Cynthia 405-639-9623

Edmond

Edmond Public Library
10 S. Boulevard
Saturday 3:00 PM
Contact Charlie 405-745-3270
Contact 2 Sarah 405-388-5695

Seventh Day Adventist Church
4701 E. Danforth Rd.
Wednesday 7:00 PM
Child care available
Contact Van 405-313-4378

Lawton – Southwest

Lawton Public Library
110 SW 4th St.
Monday 6:30
Contact Laura 580-536-1251
Contact 2 John 580-483-4942

Midwest City

St. Luke's Lutheran Church
7501 E. Reno Ave.
Midwest City, OK 73110
Tuesday 6:30
Contact 2 Diane 405-679-5214
Contact Dawn 405-464-5252

Norman

McFarlin Methodist Church, Rm. 229
419 S. University Blvd.
Thursday 7:00 PM
Contact Diane 405-503-1948

Oklahoma City

City Care OKC Day Shelter
1729 NW 3rd Street
Monday 10:00 AM
Contact: George 405-254-3994

Crossings Church
14600 N. Portland Ave.
Monday 6:30 PM
Contact Joe 405-254-3994

Diversity Center of Oklahoma
LGBTQ+ Support Group
2242 NW 39th St.
Wednesday 6:30 PM
Contact Lee 405-706-7305

Lottie House Drop In Center 1
1311 N. Lottie
Saturday 2:00 PM
Contact Sonya 405-600-3074

Lottie House Drop- In Center 2
1311 N. Lottie
Tuesday Noon
Contact Bianca 405-600-3074

OCARTA Drop-In Center
2808 NW 31st St.
Tuesday 3:00 PM
Contact Danny 405-812-4580
Contact 2 Tyler 405-436-4083

State Office
3000 United Founders Blvd., Ste. 104
Wednesday Noon
Contact Neil 405-368-5459
Contact 2 George 405-413-7778

Shawnee

Temporarily closed
Contact George 405-254-3994

Stillwater

First Presbyterian Church
524 Duncan
Tuesday 6:30 PM
Contact Karen 405-624-1518
Contact 2 Bob 405-285-1233

Tahlequah

First Christian Church
2111 Mahaney Ave.
Contact Johnny 918-207-8366

Tulsa

Denver House
252 W 17th Pl.
Saturday 12:30 PM
Contact Lynn 515-975-3957

Yukon

First Christian Church
601 Maple
Tuesday 7:00 PM
Contact Renee 405-209-7477
Contact 2 Iva 405-373-0059

We've been there. We can help.

The phone numbers listed are personal numbers of DBSA volunteers.
Please be considerate of the time and day you call
These phone numbers are NOT crisis numbers. If you have an emergency call 911

Spring Cleaning For the Mind – Try This

Break Bad Habits:

- Tackle one habit at a time.
- Decide on a clear and unshakeable end goal.
- Break it down into incremental steps.
- Choose a start date.
- Enlist the help of your support network.
- Discover your triggers and develop strategies for defusing them.

Eliminate Negative Thoughts and Speech:

- Cultivate positive and empowering beliefs.
- Take responsibility for what happens to you rather than blaming others.
- Approach problems as opportunities.
- Take positive action whenever negative thoughts enter your mind.
- Reflect on why a particular person or problem is bothering you.
- Avoid attaching stories to people or experiences.
- Give yourself a time limit for venting.

Clear Your Physical Space:

- Make a list of areas in your home, and start with the easiest.
- For each item, ask yourself: • Do I like it? • Do I use it? • How much hassle does it cause? • Why am I keeping it? • How does it make me feel?
- Give away one item each day.
- Create a “maybe” box for items you’re not sure about.
- Every six months, get rid of any unused items in your “maybe” box.

Cultivate Gratitude:

- Make a list of things you’re grateful for—however small.
- Take time to appreciate simple pleasures.
- Write in a gratitude journal.
- Begin and end each day with a moment of gratitude.
- Express your gratitude to the people in your life.

Develop Positive Friendships:

- Commit to spending quality time together.
- Listen to each other’s viewpoint without judgment.
- Offer encouragement and compliment each other’s strengths.
- Promote each other’s freedom without possessiveness.
- Forgive each other’s faults.
- Remain sensitive to each other’s needs.

Practicing Mindfulness:

- Accept how you feel right now, rather than denying or striving to change it.
- Bring a feeling of warm compassion to your momentary experience.
- Let experiences pass without trying to hold on or push them away.
- Observe what you’re experiencing without judging it as good or bad.
- Improve your capacity for patience.