



# The Outlook

Phone: (204) 786-0987  
Website: [www.depression.mb.ca](http://www.depression.mb.ca)

Fax: (204) 786-1906  
E-mail: [sdmdm@depression.mb.ca](mailto:sdmdm@depression.mb.ca)

## BEV'S BITS

As we approach the New Year, we tend to reflect on the one which has quickly passed by.

Our Association has achieved a number of milestones this past year:

- 1.) Over 10,000 Manitobans utilized our services – an all-time high!
- 2.) An increase in people attending our support groups
- 3.) Out First Annual "Strike-Out Stigma" Bowl-A-Thon
- 4.) Third Annual Comedy Nite
- 5.) Our cookbook, "Good Food, Good Mood" was published
- 6.) Held a strategic planning conference with members and staff
- 7.) Hosted the "Suicide & Youth Conference" ...and many more wonderful, positive things

We are anxiously anticipating an even busier new year – helping others to help themselves!

Bev Trachuk  
Executive Director

## *Cookbook Update*

"Good Food, Good Mood" cookbooks are still available for sale.

**Prices:** 1 for \$10.00, 3 for \$25.00

Shipping is \$2.50.

Makes a great gift! **Buy Yours Today!**

## New Support Group

### For Parents Of Children With A Mood Disorder

Monday Evenings, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
4 – 1000 Notre Dame Ave.

First Group starts January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

## *Workshop for Women.*

Their partners, or natural supports, are welcome to attend.

### The Emotional Adjustment During Postpartum "Coping With Change"

A 5-week program beginning Saturday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005, 10:00am to 12:00noon.

Mood Disorders Association Office  
#4 – 1000 Notre Dame Ave., Winnipeg

There is no fee for this program, but pre-registration is required by January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

To register, or for more information, contact us at 786-0987, or toll-free at 1-800-263-1460.

## Support Groups

### *Winnipeg Region*

#### **Monday afternoon (weekly)**

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
4-1000 Notre Dame Ave.  
Mixed Group

#### **Thursday afternoon (weekly)**

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
4-1000 Notre Dame Ave.  
Mixed Group

#### **Sunday afternoon (weekly)**

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
4-1000 Notre Dame Ave.  
Mixed Group

#### **Wednesday evening (weekly)**

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
Education Building, 431 Tache Ave.

##### **Diagnosis Specific Groups:**

Depression  
Bipolar Disorder  
Family/Friends/Caregivers

#### **1st & 3rd Thursday afternoons**

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month - Rm. PZ-406  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month - Rm. PX-235  
PsychHealth Centre, 771 Bannatyne Ave.  
Mixed Group

#### **Tuesday afternoon (weekly)**

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
Bethesda Church, 1350 Grant Ave.  
Family & Friends Group

### *Interlake Region*

#### **Stonewall**

Stonewall District Health Centre  
1st Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m.

#### **Lundar**

L. Merritt Support Centre  
3rd Monday of the month, 2:00 p.m.

#### **Teulon**

Teulon Hunter Memorial Hospital  
2nd Thursday of the Month, 7:00 p.m.

#### **Gimli**

George Johnson Memorial Hospital  
1st Wednesday of the month, 1:30 p.m.

### *Westman Region*

#### **Brandon**

"Caring and Sharing Group"  
M-435 Rosser Ave. (east entrance - upstairs)  
Wednesday afternoons, 2:00-4:00 pm

M-435 Rosser Ave. (east entrance - upstairs)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:00-9:00 pm

#### "Family Group"

Westman Mental Health Services,  
M-435 Rosser Ave. (east entrance - upstairs)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:00-9:00 pm

#### **Minnedosa**

Minnedosa Regional Library, 54 - 1st Ave. SE  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00-9:00 pm

#### **Virden**

Virden Health Centre  
1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month, 7:00-9:00 pm

### *Central Region*

#### **Winkler**

Depression/Anxiety Group  
Last Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m.

Eight Stages of Healing  
9-week Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Group  
Call Tami at (204) 325-8206 for details.

#### **Portage La Prairie**

Depression/Anxiety Group  
1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month, 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.  
Portage District General Hospital, 524 5<sup>th</sup> St. SE

### *Burntwood Region (Thompson)*

Future groups are in the works!  
Call Erin Crofford at (204) 778-7411  
for information.

## ***Eastman Region***

### **Lac Du Bonnet**

Lac du Bonnet Resource Centre, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month, 1:15-3:00 pm

### **Oakbank**

KinPlace Personal Care Home, 680 Pine Street  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm

### **St. Pierre Jolys**

Desalbury Hospital, "Health Corner"  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm

### **Steinbach**

Jake Epp Library  
Last Tuesday of each month, 7:00 pm

Community Services Building, 365 Reimer Ave.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, 1:00 pm  
(This group will not be meeting during  
July and August.)

### **Beausejour**

East Gate Lodge  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm

### **Whitemouth**

"Whitemouth Wellness Group"  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
4th Thursday of each month, 7:30 pm

### **Pinefalls/Powerview/Fort Alexander**

Wings of Power in Pinefalls  
3rd Monday of each month, 7:00 pm

## ***Norman Region***

### **The Pas / Flin Flon**

"The Artist's Way"  
A 12-week creativity group for people with  
depression.

"Hidden Victim/Hidden Healer"  
A 10-week workshop for family and friends of those  
affected by mental health issues.

Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)  
A 4-week workshop.

Call (204) 623-7346 in The Pas or (204) 687-6006 in  
Flin Flon for more information or to register.

## ***Parkland Region***

### **Dauphin**

Dauphin Regional Health Centre, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
625 3rd St. S.W.,  
Every Tuesday, 1:30 pm

"Friends and Family Group"  
Trinity Lutheran Church basement,  
2 Kirby Ave. E.  
2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm

"Men's Group"  
Dauphin Regional Health Centre chapel  
Every Wednesday, 7:00 pm

### **Swan River**

CMHA Office, Swan River  
"Hope for Depression" Group  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month, 1:00 pm

### **Ste. Rose**

Ste. Rose Hospital  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 1:30 pm

## **MDAM 2004 – 2005 Board of Directors**

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## Inspiration

### Smell The Roses

*(letter from an 83-year old woman  
to her friend)*

My dear,

I'm reading more and dusting less. I'm sitting in the yard and admiring the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden. I'm spending more time with my family and friends and less time working. Whenever possible, life should be a pattern of experiences to savour, not to endure. I'm trying to recognize these moments now and cherish them.

I'm not 'saving' anything; we use our good china and crystal for every special event such as losing a pound, getting the sink unstopped, or the first Amaryllis blossom. I wear my good blazer to the market. My theory is if I look prosperous, I can shell out \$28.49 for one small bag of groceries. I'm not saving my good perfume for special parties but wearing it for clerks in the hardware store and tellers at the bank. 'Someday' and 'one of these days' are losing their grip on my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing or hearing or doing, I want to see and hear and do it now.

I'm not sure what others would've done had they known they wouldn't be here for the tomorrow that we all take for granted. I think they would have called family members and a few close friends. They might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles. I like to think they would have gone out for a Chinese dinner or for whatever their favourite food was. I'm guessing; I'll never know.

It's those little things left undone that would make me angry if I knew my hours were limited. Angry because I hadn't written certain letters that I intended to write one of these days. Angry and sorry that I

didn't tell my husband and parents often enough how much I truly love them. I'm trying very hard not to put off, hold back, or save anything that would add laughter and lustre to our lives. And every morning when I open my eyes, tell myself that it is special. Every day, every minute, every breath truly is a gift.

All in all, if we take the time to 'Smell the Roses' as they say, we would all lead a Better Life.

## The Later Years

### **Be Active Your Way, Every Day For Life! Age Is No Barrier.**

**Becoming more active is very safe for most people.**

But if you are in doubt, check with your doctor before becoming much more physically active. However, if you are over the age of 69 and are not used to being very active, **definitely check with your doctor first.**

Start slowly and build up – listen to your body. Accumulate 30 to 60 minutes of moderate physical activity most days. Minutes count – add it up 10 minutes at a time. Not sure? Consult with a health-care professional.

**Choose a variety of activities from each of these three groups.**

For endurance:

- Continuous activities that make you breathe deeply and feel warm
- Increase your energy
- Improve your heart, lungs, and circulatory system

For flexibility:

- Gentle reaching, bending, and stretching
- Keep your muscles relaxed and joints mobile
- Move more easily and be more agile

For strength and balance:

- Lift weights, do resistance activities
- Improve balance and posture
- Keep muscles and bones strong
- Prevent bone loss

**Getting started is easier than you think.**

- Build physical activity into your daily routine.
- Do the activities you are doing now, more often.
- Walk wherever and whenever you can.
- Start slowly with easy stretching.
- Move around frequently.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Carry home the groceries.
- Find activities that you enjoy.
- Try out a class in your community.

**Benefits increase as physical activity increases.**

Benefits when starting out:

- Meet new people
- Feel more relaxed
- Sleep better
- Have more fun

Benefits from regular physical activity:

- Continue independent living
- Better physical and mental health
- Improved quality of life
- More energy
- Move with fewer aches and pains
- Better posture and balance
- Improved self-esteem
- Weight maintenance
- Stronger muscles and bones
- Relaxation and reduced stress

**Scientists have proved that being active reduces the risk of illnesses like depression.**

*From: Health Canada website*

## What Do The Experts Think?

### Know Your Medications – Talk With Your Pharmacist

It is very important for you to know about your prescription medications. Please take a moment to read the questions below and pick which questions you would like answered. Then take this paper to your pharmacy, present it to the pharmacist, and he/she will do their best to give you the information you want.

The Brand name is: \_\_\_\_\_

The Generic name is: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions for use: \_\_\_\_\_

- What is this medication used for?
- How does this medication work?
- How am I supposed to take this medication?
- Should I take this with or without food?
- What are the side effects of this medication?
- Are there any drugs, dietary supplements, or natural medicines that interact with this medication?
- Can I drink alcohol while taking this medication?
- How long before I see the effects of this medication?
- Any precautions I should take while on this medication?
- What do I do if I miss a dose?
- How should this medication be stored?

If you have had this medication before, let your pharmacist know of any problems you may have experienced.

Before you leave, be sure to ask your pharmacist if there are other important things you should know about your medications.

*From: www.elliethospital.com*

## Volunteer In Focus

### Shirley W.

Although I have only recently gotten the chance to know Shirley, she has been a great asset to the Mood Disorders Association.

Shirley came to us in January of 2003 and has been facilitating a support group for family and friends at the Bethesda Church on Grant Avenue every Tuesday afternoon from 1 to 3 pm. Shirley was the one who offered her time and skills to start this support group back in 2003. She found the church and donated her time.

I know that Shirley has been a positive influence for that support group and is well respected and appreciated by all. Thanks for all your hard work and dedication to MDAM, Shirley!

Erin Gierk,  
Co-ordinator of Volunteers

## Top Ten List Of Things A Volunteer Should Know

**10.) List your dreams and talents.** Where do you excel? What have you always dreamed of doing? What do you really enjoy or would like to try? Is there a way to prepare, learn, or try it as a volunteer?

**9.) Pick your duration.** One size doesn't fit all, just like volunteer opportunities. I've found that volunteer projects come in three sizes: one-time, short-term, and "whada'ya doin' for the rest of your life?"

**8.) Make a commitment.** Sometimes a volunteer project is an acquired taste. Give yourself a chance to have good days, bad days,

and in-between days. If after three months you see no redeeming value, than at least you can feel you gave it a fair chance.

**7.) Watch and learn.** Seasoned volunteers can teach you the 'ropes' so to speak. Observe them and follow their lead. Have confidence in the knowledge that you are capable and trainable. But balance that confidence with a dose of humility.

**6.) Ability, need, and desire.** You must have the ability to do the service, there must be a need for the service, and you must have the desire to be of service.

**5.) Unpaid doesn't mean unprofessional.** "Anything worth doing is worth doing well." All that we do, we need to do with our most sincere effort. Anything less is a disservice to those we are helping and ultimately to ourselves.

**4.) Balance is key.** Priorities add balance. Charity begins at home – keep the priorities straight. Balance out each area of your life – family, work, volunteering. If you become overwhelmed, stress will set in and you won't enjoy anything.

**3.) Stand back and admire.** Sometimes people forget to say, "Thank-you," so you will need to reward yourself. Be proud of your accomplishments – take the time to smell the rose, hear the raindrops on the pane, feel the snow on your nose, taste the cool, clear water.

**2.) Find a home or make a change.** Are you stale or still fresh? Are you learning, enthusiastic, or approaching burnout? Check yourself periodically and act upon your honest answers.

**1.) Have fun!** Life has enough drudgery; volunteering shouldn't be one of them. Giving of yourself should be uplifting and joyful. We are at our best when we learn, grow, play, and serve each other with love and respect.

*By Donald Patrick Dunn*

## For The Family and Friends

### **Before You Label People, Look At Their Contents**

*From: SAMHSA National Mental Health Information Center, Center for Mental Health Services*

When mental illnesses are used as labels – depressed, schizophrenic, manic, or hyperactive – these labels hurt.

Labels lead to stigma – a word that means branding and shame. And stigma leads to discrimination. Everyone knows why it is wrong to discriminate against people because of their race, religion, culture, or appearance. They are less aware of how people with mental illnesses are discriminated against. Although such discrimination may not always be obvious, it exists – and it hurts.

### **Words can be poison.**

The stigma of mental illness is real, painful, and damaging to the lives of people with mental illness. Stigma prevents them from getting the treatment and support they need to lead healthy, normal lives.

Stigma discourages people from getting help. At any given time, one in four adults and one in five children experience a mental health problem. Early and appropriate services can be the best way to prevent an illness from getting worse. Many people don't seek such services because they don't want to be labelled as 'mentally ill' or 'crazy.'

Stigma leads to fear, mistrust, and violence. Even though the vast majority of people who have mental illnesses are no more violent than anyone else, the average television viewer sees three people with mental illnesses each week – and most of them are portrayed as violent. Such inaccurate portrayals lead people to fear those who have mental illnesses. Stigma breeds prejudice and discrimination.

### **Words can heal.**

*Adapted from Telling Is Risky Business: Mental Health Consumers Confront Stigma by Otto Wahl (Rutgers University Press)*

Here are ten things you can do to help end the stigma that surrounds mental illness:

1.) **Learn more about mental illness.** To the extent that if you are better informed about mental illness, you will be better able to evaluate and resist the inaccurate negative stereotypes.

2.) **Listen to people who have experienced mental illness.** These individuals can describe what they find stigmatizing, how stigma affects their lives, and how they would like to be viewed and treated.

3.) **Watch your language.** Most of us, including mental health professionals and consumers, use terms and expressions related to mental illness that may perpetuate stigma.

4.) **Monitor media and report stigmatizing material.** To any number of organizations. Protest such material by contacting the people – authors, editors, movie producers, advertisers – responsible for the material.

5.) **Respond to stigmatizing material in the media.** Write, call, or email stigmatizers yourself, expressing your concerns, and providing more accurate information that they can use.

6.) **Speak up about stigma.** When someone you know misuses a psychiatric term (such as schizophrenia), let them know and educate them about the correct meaning. When someone disparages a person with mental illness, tells a joke that ridicules mental illness, or makes disrespectful comments about mental illness, let them

know that it is hurtful and that you find such comments offensive and unacceptable.

7.) **Talk openly about mental illness.** Don't be afraid to let others know of your mental illness or the mental illness of a loved one. The more mental illness remains hidden, the more people continue to believe that it is a shameful thing to be concealed.

8.) **Demand change from your elected representatives.** Policies that perpetuate stigma can be changed if enough people let their elected representatives know that they want such change.

9.) **Provide support for organizations that fight stigma.** Join, volunteer, donate money. The influence and effectiveness of the organizations fighting mental illness stigma depend, to some extent, on membership size and finances. They also rely heavily on the effort and passion of their volunteer members. You can make a contribution through them.

10.) **Contribute to research related to mental illness and stigma.** To the extent that mental illness can be understood and treated, stigma will be reduced. When we can be confident that mental illness can be treated quickly and effectively, it will be less frightening. When we know how stigma is perpetuated and better still, changed, we will be better able to assist those with mental illnesses to deal with it. Research will help us learn these things.

**“To be what we are,  
and to become  
what we are capable of becoming,  
is the only end in life.”**

-- Robert Louis Stevenson

## Resource Report

### Recovery of Hope

**What is Recovery of Hope?** Recovery of Hope is a professional counselling centre that provides service to any individual, couple, or family that desires to make a change or work through any issue or problem.

**Who visits Recovery of Hope?** Anyone who desires to make changes that will lead to a deeper sense of personal or relational well-being is at the starting point for counselling. Recovery of Hope welcomes people of all cultural backgrounds. You will be treated with respect and dignity. Some common issues that clients might request help for are:

- Depression
- Stress management
- Grief
- Anger management
- Low self esteem
- Personal growth
- Abuse and abuse recovery issues

**Who are the Counsellors?** There is a variety of male and female counsellors that are well-qualified. They follow a professional code of ethics and are ready to work with you.

**Cost?** Fees for sessions are assessed on a sliding scale based on your gross income.

**Locations?** Altona, Portage, la Prairie, Steinbach, Winkler, Winnipeg  
Appointments can be made simply by calling the office. You do not need to be referred.

#### **Information?**

Winnipeg address:

1475 Pembina Hwy. R3T 2C5

Phone: (204) 477-4673

Toll free: 1-866-493-6202

Fax: (204) 453-7748

Email: [rechope@mts.net](mailto:rechope@mts.net)

Website:

[www.edenhealth.mb.ca/recovery.htm](http://www.edenhealth.mb.ca/recovery.htm)

## What About The Children?

### *TeenHealth*

#### How Can I Improve My Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem involves how much a person values and appreciates their own worth and importance. For example, a teen with healthy self-esteem is able to feel good about their character and qualities and take pride in their abilities, skills, and accomplishments. Self-esteem is the result of comparing how we'd like to be and what we'd like to accomplish with how we actually see ourselves.

Everyone experiences problems with self-esteem at certain times in their lives – especially teens that are still figuring out who they are and where they fit into the world. How a teen feels about him/herself can be related to many different factors, such as their environment, their body image, their expectations of themselves, and their experiences. For example, if a person has had problems in the family, has had to deal with difficult relationships, or sets unrealistic standards for themselves, this can lead to low self-esteem.

Recognizing that you can improve your self-esteem is a great first step in doing so. Learning what can hurt self-esteem and what can build it is also important. Then, with a little effort, a person can really improve the way they feel about themselves.

Constant criticism can harm self-esteem – and it doesn't always come from others! Some teens have an 'inner critic,' a voice inside that seems to find fault with everything they do – and self-esteem obviously has a hard time growing in such an environment. Some people have modeled their inner critic's voice after a critical parent or teacher whose acceptance

was important to them. The good news is that this inner critic can be retrained, and because it now belongs to you, you can be the one to decide that the inner critic will only give constructive feedback from now on.

It may help to pinpoint any unrealistic expectations that may be affecting your self-esteem. Do you wish you were thinner? Smarter? More popular? A better athlete? Although it's easy for teens to feel a little inadequate physically, socially, or intellectually, it's also important to recognize what you can change and what you can't, and to aim for accomplishments rather than perfection. You may wish to be a star athlete, but it may be more realistic to set your sights on improving your game in specific ways this season. If you are thinking about your shortcomings, try to start thinking about other positive aspects of yourself that outweigh them. Maybe you're not the tallest person in your class and maybe you're not class valedictorian, but you're awesome at volleyball or painting or playing the guitar. Remember – each person excels at different things and your talents are constantly developing.

If you want to improve your self-esteem, there are some steps you can take to start empowering yourself:

- **Remember that self-esteem involves much more than liking your appearance.** Because of rapid changes in growth and appearance, teens often fall into the trap of believing their entire self-esteem hinges on how they look. Don't miss the inner beauty that's more than skin deep in yourself and in others.
- **Think about what you're good at and what you enjoy, and build on those abilities.** Take pride in new skills you develop and talents you have. Share what you can do with others.

- **Exercise!** You'll relieve stress and be healthier and happier.
- **Try to stop thinking negative thoughts about yourself.** When you catch yourself being too critical, counter it by saying something positive about yourself.
- **Take pride in your opinions and ideas** – and don't be afraid to voice them.
- **Each day, write down three things** about yourself that make you happy.
- **Set goals.** Think about what you'd like to accomplish then make a plan for how to do it. Stick with your plan and keep track of your progress. If you realize that you're unhappy with something about yourself that you can change, then start today. If it's something you can't change (like your height), then start to work toward loving yourself the way you are.
- **Beware the perfectionist!** Are you expecting the impossible? It's good to aim high, but your goals for yourself should be within reach.
- **Make a contribution.** Tutor a classmate who's having trouble, help clean up your neighbourhood, participate in a walk-a-thon for a good cause, the list goes on. Feeling like you're making a difference can do wonders to improve self-esteem.
- **Have fun.** Enjoy spending time with the people you care about and doing the things you love.

It's never too late to build or improve self-esteem. In some cases, a teen may need the help of a mental health professional, like a therapist or psychologist, to help heal emotional hurt and build healthy, positive

self-esteem. A therapist can help a teen to learn to love themselves and realize that their differences make them unique.

So, what's the payoff? Self-esteem plays a role in almost everything you do – teens with high self-esteem do better in school and enjoy it more and find it easier to make friends. They tend to have better relationships with peers and adults, feel happier, find it easier to deal with mistakes, disappointments, and failures, and are more likely to stick with something until they succeed. Improving self-esteem takes work, but the payoff is feeling good about yourself and your accomplishments.

*From: TeenHealth website and reviewed by D'Arcy Lyness, PhD*

### **Recovery**

By Serena Lumiere

To find true happiness in love  
You first release your pain  
You come to terms with stress in life  
Become whole once again.

Mistakes are part of living  
So put yours in your past  
But learn the lessons, learn them well  
And don't become downcast.

Begin by looking deep within  
Identify your grace  
Your beauty, love, and happiness  
Your soul you must embrace.

Then paint your world with loving care  
With strength and trust, not pride  
Be flexible and caring  
Let peace in you reside.

And when you meet that special soul  
Whose goals you really share  
Create each other's dreams with love  
Such harmony's so rare.

*From: Centre of Peaceful Light Presents  
Thoughts On Life  
www.reiki.com*

## Our Complements

### **Autogenic Training A Relaxation Technique Based Upon Body Awareness**

Autogenic Training, also known as ‘yoga of the West,’ is a century-old European method for achieving relaxation based upon passive concentration and body awareness of specific sensations. In simple terms, it is designed to reverse the ‘fight or flight’ stress response with its release of epinephrine and norepinephrine in the body. The technique was developed in 1915 by the German neurologist and psychologist, Johannes Schultz. Its effectiveness has been shown in relieving many stress-related disorders and can have long-ranging health benefits.

The procedure involves repeating a series of stock phrases and should be carried out daily in a comfortable and quiet place. Eight to ten weeks of training is often sufficient to restore mental equilibrium, enhance coping skills, and overcome sleep troubles. Because stress can have a negative impact on the body’s immune defense, autogenic training can also strengthen immune function. The technique may thus prevent illness or shorten the course of a disease.

The most important prerequisite for autogenic training is to make time for the exercises. Beginners should practice the basic phrases for five to fifteen minutes three times a day. Start by eliminating any distractions, let the answering machine take calls, leave a note on a door for privacy, and refuse to open the door to children during your training period. Then get yourself in a comfortable position, such as lying down on a padded surface or sitting in a chair with a sturdy back. Stay away from cold drafts or overly warm rooms.

If sitting, start the procedure in the ‘Driving Position’, as if you were driving a car. Sit in a chair with your back straight, arms resting loosely on your thighs, eyes closed, and feet set parallel on the floor. When exhaling, let your head and shoulders droop.

Basic training starts with six simple phrases that must be practiced repeatedly in sequence. They are:

- *‘My body is very heavy’* (promotes muscle relaxation).
- *‘I am very warm’* (relaxes your blood vessels and enhances circulation).
- *‘My heartbeat is calm and regular’* (regulates your pulse).
- *‘My breathing is calm and regular’* (relaxes your lungs and airways).
- *‘My abdomen is warm and relaxed’* (relaxes your stomach and exercises the abdominal wall).
- *‘My forehead is cool and clear’* (relieves tension in your head).

Say the above six phrases.

Repeat phrases after you are relaxed; add in a phrase that relates to your ailment (Example, *‘My head is cool and clear’* if you have a headache).

When you are finished, keeping the eyes closed, take deep breaths, make a fist with each hand and bend your arms toward your chest.

This should take five to fifteen minutes to do, and for beginners, it is recommended to do training three times a day to start out with.

Scientific studies have been demonstrated that when autogenic training is done properly and is practiced on a regular basis, it has a beneficial effect on the autonomic nervous system and thus on all the organs of the body. This simple technique can therefore help to relieve a wide range of problems caused by stress or nervous tensions, such as palpitations or sleep difficulties.

*From: PageWise, Inc; Melissa C. Stoppler, MD*

## Getting Better All The Time

### **Social Support: A Buffer Against Life's Ills**

Family ties, friendships, and involvement in some social activities can offer a psychological buffer against stress, anxiety, and depression. Social support can also help protect you against developing an illness and cope better with medical problems. It may even increase your life span.

Simply talking with a friend over a cup of coffee, visiting with a relative, or going on an outing with a church or club is good for your overall health. Part of that is peer influence. That is, people in your social network may subtly or directly encourage you to change unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as smoking or excessive drinking. Or they may urge you to visit your doctor when you feel depressed, which can prevent problems from escalating.

Social networks can also increase your sense of belonging, purpose and self-worth, promoting positive mental health. They can help you get through a divorce, a job loss, the death of a loved one, or the addition of a child to your family. And you don't necessarily have to lean on family and friends for support to reap the benefits. Just knowing they're available can reduce negative emotional and behavioural responses to stressful events or other problems.

**The flip side.** Social isolation, on the other hand, can contribute to depression and undermine your self-esteem and sense of purpose. It can also lead to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

But as you seek to expand your social network, beware of support systems that are

unhealthy, oppressive or rigid, or that demand conformity. These can be just as damaging as having no connections at all.

If people in your social support system are continually stressed or ill, for instance, you may suffer along with them. If your friends place heavy demands on your time and resources, or if you're unable to meet their needs, you may find yourself more anxious and depressed. You also may pay a psychological toll if you feel obligated to the people in your support network – as if you must continually repay them for their efforts – or if you feel you must conform to their beliefs or ideas.

**Give and take.** So how do you create and maintain a social support system that is healthy and balanced?

Developing, and maintaining, healthy social ties involves give and take. Sometimes you're the one giving support and other times you're on the receiving end. Recognize who is able to provide you with the most support. Letting family and friends know you love and appreciate them will help ensure that their support remains strong when times are rough.

At the same time, remember that some of the people you routinely interact with will be more demanding than supportive. Give yourself the flexibility to limit your interaction with those people to protect your own psychological well-being.

**Making connections.** Some people benefit from large and diverse social support systems, while others prefer a small circle of friends and acquaintances. If you want to expand your support network, here are some ways to do it:

- **Get out with your pet.** Seek out a dog park or make conversation with those who stop to talk.

- **Work out.** Join a class through a local gym, senior centre, or community fitness facility. Or start a lunchtime walking group at work.
- **Do lunch.** Or breakfast or dinner, at least once a month, and invite an acquaintance along.
- **Volunteer.** Hospitals, churches, museums, community centres and other organizations often need volunteers. You can form strong connections when you work with people with a mutual goal.
- **Join a cause.** Get together with a group of people working toward a goal you believe in, such as an election or the cleanup of a natural area.
- **Join a hobby group.** Find a nearby group with similar interests in such things as auto racing, music, gardening, books, or crafts.
- **Go back to school.** Take a college or community education course to meet people with similar interests.

**Keeping connections.** Your social support system will benefit if you take time to nurture friendships and family relationships. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- **Go easy.** Don't overwhelm friends and family with phone calls or emails. Communication can be brief – 5 minutes on the phone or several sentences. Find out how late or early you can call and respect those boundaries. Have a plan for emergency situations, such as if you receive bad news or become extremely depressed.
- **Be aware of how others perceive you.** Ask a friend for an honest evaluation of how you come across to others. Take

note of any areas for improvement and work on them.

- **Don't compete with others.** This will turn potential rivals into potential friends.
- **Adopt a healthy, realistic self-image.** Both vanity and rampant self-criticism can be unattractive to potential friends.
- **Resolve to improve yourself.** Cultivating your own honesty, generosity, and humility will enhance your self-esteem and make you a more compassionate and appealing friend.
- **Avoid relentless complaining.** Non-stop complaining is tiresome and can be draining on support systems. Talk to your family and friends about how you can change parts of your life with which you're unhappy.
- **Adopt a positive outlook.** Try to find the humour in things.
- **Listen up.** Make a point to remember what's going on in the lives of others. Then relate any interests or experiences you have in common. Sharing details about yourself and your life can also help establish rapport.

Social connections provide a sense of belonging, security, and a welcoming forum in which to share your concerns and needs. And you may get just as much out of friendships and social networks where you're the source of comfort and companionship, too. Relationships change as you age, but it's never too late to build friendships or choose to become involved. The investment will pay off in better health and a brighter outlook for years to come.

*From: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MayoClinic.com)*

## Call For Applications For MDAM BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors is calling paid members who are interested in becoming a Director to submit an application form to the Committee. Application forms are available from the Executive Director at the MDAM office.

The procedure for dealing with applicants will be as follows:

Upon receiving an application form from a paid-up member, the Nominating Committee will contact the persons who are listed as references. When the letters of reference are received, the Board members of the Nominating Committee will conduct a personal interview with the applicant. Having gleaned all pertinent information, the Nominating Committee will provide the Board of Directors with a slate of names for their endorsement. A brief biography of each candidate will be provided to the membership prior to the Annual General Meeting. The general membership shall elect their Board members for a three-year term of office. The deadline for the Nominating Committee to submit their slate of names for election is 30 days prior to the AGM. It is very important that the applications be received at least 60 days prior to the AGM. For the year 2005, the deadline for receiving applications will be July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

### **Board of Director's Role within Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba**

The MDAM Board of Directors has the responsibility to ensure that the powers, duties, and objectives of the Association are carried out. It must manage the resources and finances of the Association. It must develop and evaluate policies and programs of the Association. It must be responsible to the membership for the overall management of MDAM by presenting an annual report at the annual general meeting.

The Board meets seven times a year at approximately two-month intervals. Standing Committee meetings are scheduled between these regular Board meetings. Several Board meetings are held outside of Winnipeg. The remainder are held at the MDAM office on Notre Dame Avenue. Some meetings are held on Saturdays and some on week day evenings.

The Standing Committees of the Board for the 2004-2005 year are as follows:

The **Personnel and Executive Committee**, which consists of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chair, the Treasurer, and the Secretary. The Executive Committee members are signatory officers to the finances of the Association. This committee also deals with personnel matters.

The **Finance Committee**. The **Nominating Committee**. The **Program Review Committee**. Ad hoc committees may be struck to deal with emerging issues and projects at the Board's discretion. Fundraising is being directed by committees of members at large under the supervision of the Executive Director.

### **Qualities of a Board Member of Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba**

A candidate will:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to fulfill the Association's mission statement and to serve the people for whom the Association was created.
2. Possess a sense of integrity, an openness in expressing one's opinions, and the skills necessary for effectively working in a group.
3. Possess an orientation toward self-growth, as well as holding a positive future vision for the Association.
4. Show a willingness to make a commitment of time to attend meetings, travel to these meetings, and do the work of various standing and ad-hoc committees of the Board of Directors to which one will be appointed.
5. Show an understanding of the provincial scope of the work of the Association while bringing one's own regional perspective to the discussions before the Board.
6. Utilize one's special skills, talents, or sphere of influence to the realization of the Association's mission statement goals and to the achievement of the success of Association projects.
7. Show a willingness to support Special Projects and Fundraising activities of the Association.

### **Future Board Meeting Dates:**

April 6, 2005 – MDAM office – Winnipeg

May 25, 2005 – Selkirk

July 27, 2005 – Winnipeg

September 17, 2005 – AGM -- Winnipeg

## Notes From The Editor

### Attention, Members!

Many thanks to those who have renewed their memberships. If you find errors on your mailing label, please contact the office at 1-800-263-1460.

For the current year, memberships are to be renewed by **April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005**. Those who have not done so by **April 30<sup>th</sup>** will be dropped from our membership and mailing list.

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### Tributes and Acknowledgements

We are grateful for donations received in memory of:

Stuart Colpitts  
Anne Fuddy  
Julia Krawchuk  
Ann Lapchuk  
James Horvath  
Jim Kennedy  
Godelieve Sones

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### Research Study

For patients who are dealing with depression.

**Qualified** individuals will receive \$50 for completing a telephone survey.

Call **1-888-482-0463, extension 215**.  
Refer to **Study 2797**.

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### New faces!

MDAM would like to welcome Kathleen, Laureen, Edward, Richard, Jenine, Mike, Deniz, Cindy, Amber, and Keith to the **Volunteer Team**.

### Support Group for Parents of Children with Bipolar Disorder

Third Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm.

Upcoming events:

**April 20<sup>th</sup>** – Open Discussion

**May 18<sup>th</sup>** – Speaker, Jennifer Osborne Crolley on Classical Homeopathy, A Natural Remedy.

Everyone is welcome!

**South Winnipeg Family Information Centre.**

**For more information, call 284-9311**

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### Original material wanted.

Do you have a story to tell or a poem to share? We welcome submissions to the newsletter. If you have something you think we could use, please send it to:

Editor, c/o MDAM,  
#4 – 1000 Notre Dame Avenue,  
Winnipeg, MB, R3E 0N3  
or fax us at (204) 786-1906.

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### Bipolar Disorder 1 Clinical Trial St. Boniface General Hospital

Do you feel like you are on an emotional roller coaster? If so, you may be eligible for a research study.

For more information, please contact **Lois at 237-2805**.

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### Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC) Movie Night

Fun and Free!

Come out **every second Tuesday** to enjoy companionship, popcorn, and films that feature disability issues.

Check the ILRC Newsletter, *OPTIONS*, or call the office at **947-0194** to learn more.

**Provincial Office**

4-1000 Notre Dame Ave.  
Winnipeg MB  
R3E 0N3

Phone: (204) 786-0987  
Fax: (204) 786-1906  
Toll-Free: 1-800-263-1460

**Westman Outreach Office**

M-435 Rosser Ave.  
Brandon MB  
R7A 6S2

Phone/Fax:  
(204) 725-8555

**Central Outreach Office**

Eden Mental Health Centre  
Box 296, 309 Main St.  
Winkler MB  
R6W 4A8

Phone: (204) 325-8206

**Eastman Outreach Office**

#3 – 227 Main St.  
Steinbach MB  
R5G 1Y7

Phone: (204) 326-2623  
Fax: (204) 346-0423

**Selkirk Mental Health Centre**

Box 9600  
825 Manitoba Ave.  
Selkirk MB  
R1A 2B5

Phone: (204) 482-3810



**PsycHealth Outreach Office**

PZ-395 PsycHealth Centre  
771 Bannatyne Ave.  
Winnipeg MB  
R3E 3N4

Phone: (204) 787-3220

**Norman Outreach Office**

Box 3754  
The Pas MB  
R9A 1S4

Phone: (204) 623-7346  
Fax: (204) 623-5528

**Burntwood Outreach Office**

Box 764  
Thompson MB

Phone: (204) 778-7421

**Interlake Outreach Office**

Box 903  
Winnipeg Beach MB  
R0C 3G0

Phone: (204) 389-4178  
Fax: (204) 389-4187

**Parkland Outreach Office**

Room 343, Dauphin Regional Health Centre  
625 3<sup>rd</sup> St. S.W.  
Dauphin MB  
R7N 1R7

Phone: (204) 622-4104

**Membership Renewal / Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

New: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

(Circle One) Adult / Family / Student / Senior

**I agree to abide by the bylaws of the association and to maintain confidentiality in respect to all personal information of any member of the association.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: 4-1000 Notre Dame Ave. Winnipeg MB R3E 0N3

**Membership Fees:**

**Student \$15.00/year**

**Senior \$20.00/year**

**Adult \$25.00/year**

**Family \$35.00/year**

**Why become a member of the Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba?**

If you want to be part of an organization that is consumer driven and believes that everyone can help themselves in their own recovery, you should belong!

If you believe in the work MDAM is doing, show your support through membership.