

THE SPECTRUM

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance of Greater Chicago



Spring Forward with DBSA-GC!

Happy Spring! We hope you are springing forward in to action to feel good mentally and physically. Our Board has been volunteering, reading, walking, spending time with family and pets and attending training to feel good.

The DBSA-Greater Chicago Board and I would like to share its most recent Spectrum newsletter. The main focus of this newsletter is to focus on articles around nutrition, mental health during COVID, understanding homelessness and highlighting events like St Patrick's Day and Daylight Savings time. We hope you find this edition interesting and useful to promote strong mental health.

We also have some important news! We're bringing back our in-person support groups the week of April 17th! Stay tuned and you will receive an email with all the details for our in-person support groups, including new times and different locations! We are also launching a Black Community Support Group, so keep an eye out for that group as well. As always, don't hesitate to reach out to us if you need anything.

Bridget Maul, DBSA-GC President

Behind the Board
**LaNae Edwards, DBSA-
 GC Board Member**



What makes you feel good for your mental health?

- Further connecting with my faith and facilitating support groups. I've made so many amazing connections through both.

What motivates you?

- My faith, family, and ability to share my journey with others.

What are you proud of in DBSA-GC?

- DBSA-GC's initiative and efforts to provide a safe space for communities of color. The work that we do in mental health is amazing.

DBSA-GC Announcements

• **Virtual Support Groups & Music Therapy:** We are still holding our free virtual events, such as support groups on Wednesdays and Sundays, along with a 50+ group every on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. We also have music therapy on the first Tuesday of each month at noon and meditation at noon every Monday. Please join us when you can. Note that beginning the week of April 17th, we will no longer host our Wednesday group virtually. Here is our [virtual events calendar](#).

• **In Person Peer Support Groups:** **Our in-person support groups are returning the week of April 17th!** We are keeping our Sunday Virtual Support Group, and you will see new times and locations for several of our in-person support groups. Stay tuned for an email that outlines the times/locations and dates of our in-person support groups.

We are also proud to announce that we are launching our Black Community Support Group on the Southside of Chicago the week of April 17th! Stay tuned for an email that outlines all of our in-person support group options in the coming weeks!

In-Person Support Groups Currently Confirmed to Return the week of April 17th:

• **ELMHURST:** Located at First Start Cafe at 1038 S York St, Elmhurst, IL. This group meets every Friday at 7:00 pm. If you have any questions about this group, contact support group facilitator John Ross at john1542chupa@aol.com or (708) 856-1992.

• **PALATINE:** Located at 700 North Ct, Palatine, IL 60067. This group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm. If you have any questions about this group, contact support group facilitator Judy Sturm at (847) 359-4140.

• **ANDERSONVILLE/UPTOWN:** Located at 1650 W Foster Avenue in Chicago, IL. This group meets weekly on

Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. Come early, street parking only. If you have any questions about this group, contact support group facilitator Wayne Hoffman at waynehoffmandad@gmail.com or (312) 502-4212.

- **BOOK CLUB:** Join us for our next **Book Club on May 28th at 10am.** The group is reading *It's Time: Living a Full and Joyful Life with Depression & Anxiety* by Elaine H. Quinn. The author, Elaine Quinn, will be in attendance to lead the book club discussion!

Academy: Celebrate a World of Flavors During National Nutrition Month

<https://www.eatrightpro.org/media/press-releases/national-nutrition-month/celebrate-a-world-of-flavors-during-national-nutrition-month-2022>



CHICAGO – In March, the Academy focuses attention on healthful eating through National Nutrition Month®. The 2022 theme, Celebrate a World of Flavors, embraces global cultures, cuisines and inclusion, plus showcases the expertise of registered dietitian nutritionists.

"The theme Celebrate a World of Flavors gives every culture a place at the table," said registered dietitian nutritionist Libby Mills, a national spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in Philadelphia, Pa. "Celebrating the cultural heritage, traditions and recipes from all people is a tasty way to nourish ourselves, learn about one another and find appreciation in our diversity."

During National Nutrition Month®, the Academy encourages everyone to make informed food choices and develop sound eating and physical activity habits they can follow all year long. The Academy encourages seeking the advice of

registered dietitian nutritionists – the food and nutrition experts who can help develop individualized eating and activity plans to meet people's health goals.

"Celebrate a World of Flavors highlights the unique, cultural variety of foods available to people from around the world and the role that dietitians play in helping clients create healthy habits while celebrating their cultural foods and heritage," said registered dietitian nutritionist Rahaf Al Bochi, a national spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics in Baltimore, Md.

Registered dietitian nutritionists help clients fine-tune traditional recipes, provide alternative cooking methods and other healthful advice for incorporating family-favorite foods into everyday meals. To find a registered dietitian nutritionist near you, use the Academy's online

National Nutrition Month® was initiated in 1973 as National Nutrition Week, and it became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing interest in nutrition. The second Wednesday of March is Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day, an annual celebration of the dedication of RDNs as the leading advocates for advancing the nutritional status of Americans and people around the world. This year's observance will be March 9.

As part of National Nutrition Month®, the Academy's website will host resources to spread the message of good nutrition and the importance of an overall healthy lifestyle for all. Follow National Nutrition Month® on the Academy's social media channels including Facebook and Twitter using #NationalNutritionMonth.

Representing more than 112,000 credentialed nutrition and dietetics practitioners, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving health and advancing the profession of nutrition and dietetics through research, education and advocacy. Visit the Academy at eatright.org.

Covid 19 and Your Mental Health

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Worries and anxiety about COVID-19 and its impact can be overwhelming. Social distancing makes it even more challenging. Learn ways to cope during this pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have brought many changes to how you live your life, and with it, at times, uncertainty, altered daily routines, financial pressures and social isolation. You may worry about getting sick, how long the pandemic will last, whether your job will be affected and what the future will bring. Information overload, rumors and misinformation can make your life feel out of control and make it unclear what to do.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, you may experience stress, anxiety, fear, sadness and loneliness. And mental health disorders, including anxiety and depression, can worsen.

Surveys show a major increase in the number of U.S. adults who report symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia during the pandemic, compared with surveys before the pandemic. Some people have increased their use of alcohol or drugs, thinking that can help them cope with their fears about the pandemic. In reality, using these substances can worsen anxiety and depression.

People with substance use disorders, notably those addicted to tobacco or opioids, are likely to have worse outcomes if they get COVID-19. That's because these addictions can harm lung function and weaken the immune system, causing chronic conditions such as heart disease and lung disease, which increase the risk of serious complications from COVID-19.

For all of these reasons, it's important to learn self-care strategies and get the care you need to help you cope.



Self-care strategies

Self-care strategies are good for your mental and physical health and can help you take charge of your life. Take care of your body and your mind and connect with others to benefit your mental health.

Take care of your body

Be mindful about your physical health:

- **Get enough sleep.** Go to bed and get up at the same times each day. Stick close to your typical sleep-wake schedule, even if you're staying at home.
- **Participate in regular physical activity.** Regular physical activity and exercise can help reduce anxiety and improve mood. Find an activity that includes movement, such as dance or exercise apps. Get outside, such as a nature trail or your own backyard.
- **Eat healthy.** Choose a well-balanced diet. Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar. Limit caffeine as it can aggravate stress, anxiety and sleep problems.
- **Avoid tobacco, alcohol and drugs.** If you smoke tobacco or if you vape, you're already at higher risk of lung disease. Because COVID-19 affects the lungs, your risk increases even more. Using alcohol to try to cope can make matters worse and reduce your coping skills. Avoid taking drugs to cope, unless your doctor prescribed medications for you.
- **Limit screen time.** Turn off electronic devices for some time each day, including 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime. Make a conscious effort to spend less time in front of a screen — television, tablet, computer and phone.
- **Relax and recharge.** Set aside time for yourself. Even a few minutes of quiet time can be refreshing and help to settle your mind and reduce anxiety. Many people benefit from practices such as deep breathing, tai chi, yoga, mindfulness or meditation. Soak in a bubble bath, listen to music, or read or listen to a book — whatever helps you relax. Select a technique that works for you and practice it regularly.

Take care of your mind

Reduce stress triggers:

- **Keep your regular routine.** Maintaining a regular daily schedule is important to your mental health. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise. Also set aside time for activities you enjoy. This predictability can make you feel more in control.
- **Limit exposure to news media.** Constant news about COVID-19 from all types of media can heighten fears about the disease. Limit social media that may expose you to rumors and false information. Also limit reading, hearing or watching other news, but keep up to date on national and local recommendations. Look for reliable sources, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Stay busy.** Healthy distractions can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression. Enjoy hobbies that you can do at home, such as reading a book, writing in a journal, making a craft, playing games or cooking a new meal. Or identify a new project or clean out that closet you promised you'd get to. Doing something positive to manage anxiety is a healthy coping strategy.
- **Focus on positive thoughts.** Choose to focus on the positive things in your life, instead of dwelling on how bad you feel. Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for. Maintain a sense of hope, work to accept changes as they occur and try to keep problems in perspective.

- **Use your moral compass or spiritual life for support.** If you draw strength from a belief system, it can bring you comfort during difficult and uncertain times.
- **Set priorities.** Don't become overwhelmed by creating a life-changing list of things to achieve while you're home. Set reasonable goals each day and outline steps you can take to reach those goals. Give yourself credit for every step in the right direction, no matter how small. And recognize that some days will be better than others.

Connect with others

Build support and strengthen relationships:

- **Make connections.** If you work remotely from home or you need to isolate yourself from others for a period of time due to COVID-19, avoid social isolation. Find time each day to make virtual connections by email, texts, phone or video chat. If you're working remotely from home, ask your co-workers how they're doing and share coping tips. Enjoy virtual socializing and talking to those in your home.
- **Do something for others.** Find purpose in helping the people around you. Helping others is an excellent way to help ourselves. For example, email, text or call to check on your friends, family members and neighbors — especially those who are older. If you know someone who can't get out, ask if there's something needed, such as groceries or a prescription picked up.
- **Support a family member or friend.** If a family member or friend needs to be quarantined at home or in the hospital due to COVID-19, come up with ways to stay in contact. This could be through electronic devices or the telephone or by sending a note to brighten the day, for example.

Recognize what's typical and what's not

Stress is a normal psychological and physical reaction to the demands of life. Everyone reacts differently to difficult situations, and it's normal to feel stress and worry during a crisis. But multiple challenges, such as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, can push you beyond your ability to cope.

Many people may have mental health concerns, such as symptoms of anxiety and depression during this time. And feelings may change over time.

Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling helpless, sad, angry, irritable, hopeless, anxious or afraid. You may have trouble concentrating on typical tasks, changes in appetite, body aches and pains, or difficulty sleeping or you may struggle to face routine chores.

When these signs and symptoms last for several days in a row, make you miserable and cause problems in your daily life so that you find it hard to carry out normal responsibilities, it's time to ask for help.

Continue your self-care strategies

You can expect your current strong feelings to fade when the pandemic is over, but stress won't disappear from your life when the health crisis of COVID-19 ends. Continue these self-care practices to take care of your mental health and increase your ability to cope with life's ongoing challenges.

Understanding Homelessness Circadian Rhythms Impact Our Mental Health

By Hank Trenkle, DBSA-GC Board Member and Support Group Facilitator

I guess I could be called a guru for the homeless, both people and dogs. I have been a volunteer for trying to help both homeless people, and dogs. My experience at a people shelter is something like 30 years. The same time span at a dog shelter. When a person is a volunteer I have learned that you get back more than you give. The feeling of trying to help people, and animals in need is very rewarding. Why are people homeless? There are many reasons. No one wants to be homeless. This is not a situation that a person gravitates to, or desires. Here are some experiences I have encountered among the homeless population:



1. **No marketable skills.** In this day and age, a person must try to obtain a skill that is desired by our corporations, and companies. We are in an age where technology skills are very important. Some people do not have or are not capable to master the technology demanded in today's world. Thus, many people today do not have the skills needed to obtain a good job. I am referring to a job that pays for food, transportation, and housing. Yes, there are still jobs that do not require the elements I will refer to. Thus, such a person may become homeless as these jobs do not pay for the areas I mention above. I have seen many examples of this – people living in a homeless shelter but do not have a job that will pay for the items I refer to above.
2. **Most shelters do not allow a person to stay forever** – these shelters require a person to “remain on task” to seek a job that will pay a “living wage.” These shelters guide a person and give training to obtain a “living wage” job. If this is not done while in the shelter, a person may find themselves in a situation where they are again out on the street.
3. **Problems with family.** Many times, a person has issues with family, and they are told to leave.
4. **Some people have felonies in their background.** These people are often unemployable, and thus find themselves homeless. Very few corporations, and companies will hire a person with a felony. Thus, with no income, they find themselves homeless. I have seen many examples of a person about to be hired for a “living wage” job and then the employer learns the person has a felony in their background. Thus, many times, this person is not hired. If a person has a felony in their background, it is very easy for a prospective employer to learn this.
5. **Many homeless are simply unemployed because of mental illness.** Mental illness can run the whole spectrum of conditions. The most common is depression, bipolar illness, and anxiety. Anxiety often is a “traveling buddy” of the illnesses I have just mentioned – if a person has a mood disorder, very often they will have an anxiety disorder. Often, it is hard to discern the “lead illness.”
6. **Some people have no desire to work.** If this is the case, they cannot support themselves and find themselves homeless.

7. **Some people have very bad communication skills.** This means they usually don't do well in an interview for a job and thus, are never hired.
8. **Some people in the job search, do not show up for an interview,** or are late for the interviews.
9. **Some job seekers do a very poor job in filling out an employment form.**

To sum up, there are many challenges when a person is seeking a job. If a person does not meet these challenges, they may not be able to obtain a job. No job may lead to homelessness. Please keep this in mind when you encounter a homeless person.

Daylight Saving Time

Daylight saving time 2022 began at 2 a.m. local time on Sunday March 16th in most of the United States. This means that the sun will set close to or after 7 p.m. in major U.S. cities like Chicago (6:55 p.m.), Los Angeles (6:59 p.m.) and New York (7:01 p.m.), according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Some lucky cities like Raleigh (7:20 p.m.) and Houston (7:29 p.m.) will experience even longer days.

Contrary to the popular misconception, daylight saving time lasts longer than half the year. Rather, it stretches over a nearly eight-month period and comes to an end on Sunday, Nov. 6, 2022.

Daylight saving time: Fact and fiction

- It's daylight saving time, not daylight "savings" time. You are saving daylight, not savings daylight.
- The system was first proposed over 200 years ago as an economical suggestion to maximize daylight hours and conserve candles.
- The Germans were the first to officially adopt the light-extending system in 1915 as a fuel-saving measure during World War I.
- From 1986 to 2006, DST in the U.S. started in April and ended in October but was extended to March through November beginning in 2007.
- About 70 countries around the world observe DLS.
- Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and most of Arizona don't observe the time change.



How does the daylight saving time change impact health?

According to the American Heart Association, in addition to the fatigue, the transition can also affect your heart and brain. Hospital admissions for an irregular heartbeat pattern known as atrial fibrillation, as well as heart attacks and strokes, increase in the first few days of daylight saving time.

"Daylight saving time feels kind of like jetlag from traveling across time zones," said Dr. Angela Holliday-Bell, a pediatrician and certified clinical sleep specialist.

"Your body needs time to readjust to a new light/dark cycle, so it can be hard on the body and hard on sleep," Holliday-Bell said.

This cycle, also known as the circadian rhythm, is a fine-tuned system that our bodies use to regulate time, she said. For most people, that cycle is about 24 hours and 15 minutes.

"It dictates all the processes that occur in your body -- including sleep, wake and digestion," said Holliday-Bell. Even the immune system is controlled by your circadian rhythm, meaning "when you lose an hour, you're losing some immune function as well," she explains.

Sleep deprivation can also slow the executive function of the brain, which explains the increase in car accidents seen with the time transition of daylight savings. Mood can suffer too.

Experts agree that there are several strategies to prepare your body all year round and for the days leading up to daylight savings time.

Will the U.S. ever get rid of DST?

There aren't many public policy issues on which about **75% of Americans dislike the status quo** and there is no real partisan divide. But nothing gets done to avoid the switching between daylight saving and standard time because Americans agree on the problem but not the solution.

The fight over daylight saving time has been going on for more than 100 years now. Should we turn the clocks forward in the spring and set them back in the fall? If not, then should we either stick with daylight saving time or the more traditional standard time?

At least 18 states have passed bills to stop the time change, and another 22 are considering it this year, according to the **National Conference of State Legislatures**. Some federal legislators, like **Republican Sen. Marco Rubio**, have also proposed nixing the time change.

Ultimately, the decision hinges on Congress, which would have to amend the Federal Uniform Time Act of 1966. It turns out that, as it is with many other issues and national debates, there are competing special interests with a lot of money at play.

The U.S. Department of Transportation, which oversees daylight saving time, says the additional sunlight later in the day saves energy, results in fewer traffic and pedestrian fatalities, and reduces lawlessness, since "more people are out conducting their affairs during the daylight rather than at night when more crime occurs."

A permanent shift to daylight saving time could mean more children get ready for school and adults head work in the dark, and year-long standard time would make sunsets earlier.

How can people prepare themselves for the time change?

Try to prepare the body gradually to losing that hour of sleep. Slowly adjusting your sleep schedule about a month in advance can lessen the time change's blow.

ABC News Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Ashton said eating lightly throughout the day can help keep circadian rhythms balanced.

Minimizing screen time and avoiding bright lights also helps.

"Be aware of changes in our mood. This can really affect people, and I think it's important not to dismiss those changes," she said.

The Spectrum

Thank you for reading! Got Spectrum Newsletter Feedback? Do you like what you are reading and/or do you want more? We would love to hear what's on your mind. Please reach out to us if there are topics and ideas you would like to include or share in the next quarterly Spectrum. Anything goes – events, memorials, celebrations, recognition, thank you's, etc.

2022 Spectrum Schedule

Q1: Feb-Mar

Q2: May-June

Q3: Aug/Sept-Oct

Q4: Nov-Dec

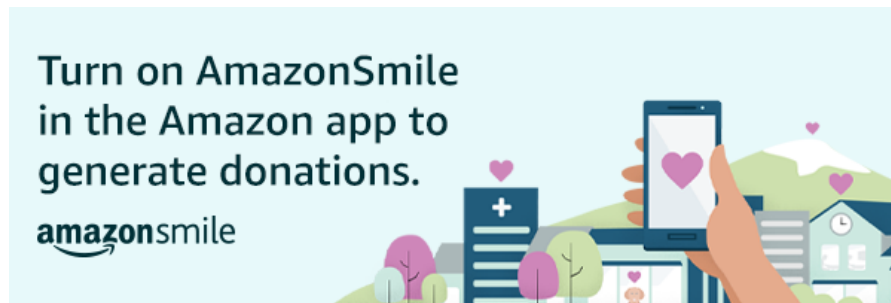
If you'd like to submit an article, event, celebration, recognition, etc. to be included in our Spectrum, please submit to Margaux@dbsa-gc.org and we'll be happy to review!

Get in Touch with Us

If you are feeling alone, please know we're here to support you. Your recovery matters to us. If you're experiencing a difficult time, please reach out and we'll do what we can to help you get back on track. For questions on our peer lead support groups or anything else on your mind, or to get more involved, please reach out to us at: wecanhelpt@dbsa-gc.org and visit dbsa-gc.org. We'd love to speak with you and build our community foundation stronger.

Amazon Smile

Shopping online? Support DBSA-GC by shopping with Amazon Smile! At NO CHARGE to you, just choose DBSA-GC as your preferred charity and a portion of your purchases are donated directly to us every time you shop on Amazon! Follow this [LINK](#) to shop on Amazon and AmazonSmile gives back to DBSA-GC! Thank you.



Wrap Up

In closing, we wish you a good spring season. Take care of yourself and make time to do things that feel good. Stay connected with us since this community supports you.

For future Spectrum newsletters, if you want to share an article, testimonial or photo, please submit it to Bridget@dbsa-gc.org and Margaux@dbsa-gc.org.

Warm Regards,

***DBSA Greater Chicago
Board***

