

# THE SPECTRUM

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance of Greater Chicago



## October 10th is World Mental Health Day

Fall is Upon Us! We are honoring October 10<sup>th</sup>, World Mental Health Day for the Spectrum. We invite everyone to join us in spreading the word that mental health is something everyone should care about together for a better world. Below are some details on World Mental Health Day and how season change can impact our mental health. We hope you will participate in our sessions and stay connected.

### *What is World Mental Health Day?*

World Mental Health Day, also known as National Mental Health Day, is dedicated to promoting the understanding of mental health education, awareness, and advocacy. It's important to raise awareness of mental health conditions and ensure that communities recognise the part each person has to play in creating a mentally healthy society. World Mental Health Day is a great opportunity to do this.

### *When is World Mental Health Day 2022?*

Every year, World Mental Health Day is held on the 10th of October. World Mental Health Day was held for the first time in 1992, and has been held annually ever since. So, mark your diaries for October 10th - World Mental Health Day - each year!

***Behind the Board***  
**Margaux Shain, DBSA-  
 GC Vice President**



**What's the best advice you've ever received?**

- Less is more.

**What do you do to make yourself feel good?**

- Staying active, eating healthy, staying connected to family and friends, taking walks with my son and dog, reading and watching shows. .

**What do you like about the DBSA-GC community?**

- The opportunity to spotlight mental health and wellness.

***World Mental Health Day Themes***

Every year, there is a World Mental Health Day theme. These are ways to focus the celebrations around a specific aspect of mental health, in order to raise awareness of a particular issue. The World Mental Health Day theme for 2022 is "Mental Health in an Unequal World", and has been officially announced by The World Federation for Mental Health.

***What is World Mental Health Day For?***

We all have mental health, just like we have physical health. Mental health is a person's condition with regard to their psychological, emotional and social wellbeing. This can affect how we think, feel and act. It's important to take care of our mental health: nurturing what's good for us and limiting things that have a negative impact on our mental health. During World Mental Health Day, we can take the time to reflect on how we can best take care of ourselves. Most people will need some mental health support during their lives:

- There are many sources of help to support people with mental health conditions, and a wide range of treatments are available.
- Most people who are affected by mental health conditions simply want to lead independent lives whilst contributing to their community and families.
- With the right support, we can help people with mental health conditions live lives that are complete, fulfilled, and free of stigma.

***History of World Mental Health Day***

• In 1992, the World Federation of Mental Health led by the deputy secretary-general at the time, Richard Hunter, created World Mental Health Day. They didn't have a precise objective other than to advocate for mental health as a whole. To say the least, it was an uphill climb to change a plethora of bad and dangerous habits that were making a difficult situation worse for people.

• The world had a host of mental health issues that weren't properly being treated. There were struggles to gain public funding for treatment in France, inhumane treatment in New

Zealand, and an overall ignorance in regards to what mental health actually is. The WFMH knew that they needed to act on a global scale to solve a global crisis.

- For the first three years, there was a two-hour telecast broadcast across the globe through the U.S. information agency satellite. The studio was located in Tallahassee, Florida and it became a useful way to get their message of advocacy out to the world. They had participation from Chile, England, Australia, and Zambia, while Geneva, Atlanta, and Mexico City pre-taped segments for the broadcast.

- The first World Mental Health Day theme was ‘Improving the Quality of Mental Health Services throughout the World’ in 1994. 27 countries sent feedback reports after the campaign and there were national campaigns in Australia and England. Continuing this momentum, WFMH board members across the globe arranged events in accordance with the day and its growing popularity among government departments, organizations, and civilians alike.
- Starting in 1995 and continuing on, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) arranged the translation of the planning kit material into Spanish, French, Russian, Hindi, Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic. As the years passed, more countries got involved and, consequently, so did civilians as the perception of mental health became more synonymous with human rights.
- The themes for World Mental Health Day expanded along with the times. Women, children, health, work, trauma, suicide, and so much more became a part of the conversation, and today, the average citizen is more knowledgeable in regards to mental health.

## DBSA (National) Virtual Summit: October 10th - October 14th

**Join DBSA National on October 10-14** as we rally our community to “Find Community. Find Wellness. Find Hope.” At this year’s national summit.

This year’s virtual Summit is packed with informative, engaging sessions designed to equip our community of mental health advocates with the education and tools needed to impact change at the individual, local, state, and national levels.

DBSA also has some fun, after-hour events planned to help you network with others who are passionate about mental health: a movie screening, a night Off-Broadway, a virtual game session, a guided meditation, and a cooking class.

Registration is \$25. [Click here to register and see the schedule!](#)

## Tips for looking after your mental health

Making sure you look after your mental health is just as important as looking after your physical health. Here are some suggestions that everyone can try, to help manage stress and look after your mind.

1. **Spend time with or in nature.** You may go to a local park, find a tree-lined street to travel down; visit a nature reserve or go to an allotment or garden. Spending time in natural surroundings or with animals is proven to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety and improve your mood.
2. **Practice meditation or mindfulness to find calm and restore (Join Sam on Monday’s at 12pm for meditation!).** There are lots of ways to include mindfulness in your day — you can take time to focus on your breathing or try out mindfulness coloring.
3. **A few times a week, take time to move.** Mind and body are one; so, whether it's going for a walk, climbing, swimming or attending a yoga class, movement is a great way to de-stress, increase feel-good hormones and improve your overall health.
4. **Have a digital detox.** Phones and social media can cause us to feel anxiety and pressure. Taking some time away from technology, whether it's short breaks away from your phone or a day when

you limit all technology, can be really helpful for reducing stress and worry.

5. **Talk it out.** If you're ever worried about your mental health or start to feel like you're becoming stressed or anxious, talking to someone you trust, such as a friend or family member, is a great way to calm yourself down and look after yourself.

## 5 Ways the Change of Seasons Might Affect Your Mental Health

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/when-your-adult-child-breaks-your-heart/201710/5-ways-the-change-seasons-might-affect-your>

Sometimes it can seem like it's mandatory to like fall. Everyone is abuzz with talk of pumpkin spice lattes, sweater weather, and rain boots. If seasonal changes are difficult for you, you might feel alone. The truth is that for many people, the transition to fall is tough and the transition to winter is even tougher. Understanding why seasonal changes can be difficult can help you devise strategies to make this season a better season.

### *Seasonal Affective Disorder*

Every year, about five percent of Americans experience a condition called seasonal affective disorder. Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is seasonal depression. Though doctors think it might be related to changes in light levels outside, some people develop SAD during the summer months so its cause remains poorly understood. SAD gets better when the season changes but it can cause depression ranging from mild to debilitating, for months at a time.

# 11 Autumn Self-Care Ideas

for People who Struggle with Self-Care

by Sharon Martin, LCSW

1. Have some fall fun (a trip to the pumpkin patch or football game, see fall foliage, etc).
2. Savor a warm drink.
3. Contribute to a cause you believe in.
4. Set Boundaries.
5. Ask for help.
6. Enjoy the last bits of warm weather.
7. De-clutter.
8. Create a fall/winter exercise routine.
9. Keep a gratitude journal.
10. Take steps to prevent colds and flu.
11. Bake.



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The good news is that SAD is highly treatable, often with light therapy, outdoor activity, and sometimes with medication. If you find your mood shifting every year or if you've noticed that this fall you just can't get into the season, then seasonal affective disorder could be the culprit.

### Reactions to Daylight Savings Time

"Falling back" means getting an extra hour. It also means spending a lot more of the day in darkness. Research is increasingly uncovering ways that Daylight Savings Time affects physical and mental health. For parents, it can mean a disruption in their child's routine that requires getting up earlier. For everyone, it means more daytime darkness. This is a risk factor for depression in people with seasonal affective disorder. It can also decrease access to vitamin D, a primary source of which is sunlight. Adequate vitamin D intake is key for many basic bodily processes, and vitamin D insufficiency has been linked to depression.

### *Inadequate Access to Light*

Daylight Savings Time means spending less time in natural sunlight. Cold weather, particularly in northern regions, can compound this phenomenon. This increases the risk of depression, and can also alter circadian rhythms. Many people feel more tired and less hopeful during the winter months, even when they're not depressed. For some, the lack of adequate daylight may alter their food intake and hunger level. So weight gain at the holidays could be due to hunger signals from your brain, not just the availability of too much pumpkin pie.

### *Holiday Traditions and Family Feuds*

Commercials and Christmas stories act as if everyone has a loving, supportive family with whom to spend their holidays. Movies treat family feuds as hilarious, not heartbreaking. In reality, most people have some disputes with family members. For some, the holiday season means going home to abusive parents or siblings, or deciding whether to spend time with unkind in-laws.

If your family has died, holiday traditions can spur memories of holidays past, triggering grief, guilt, and a cascade of other painful emotions. But with so much pressure to be happy at the holidays, many people who struggle with the loss, disagreements, and family abuse feel ashamed that their holidays don't look like the "perfect" ones they see on television.

### *Pressure to Keep Up*

For almost everyone, the transition to fall initiates a cascade of holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and more. Holidays are fun, but they're also work. The pressure to appear to be having fun while working to keep up with the neighbors, your family, and your friends can be overwhelming. There are decorations to buy, meals to make, presents to purchase, and endless events to attend. Skip out on anything, and you might feel guilty and like you're not making the season sufficiently magical. But do it all and fade into exhaustion and emotional turmoil. It can feel like a no-win game.

### *Managing Stress as the Season Changes*

Stress is not an inevitability of seasonal changes. It's a product of the way many of us choose to live. This means it's changeable. For people overwhelmed by seasonal affective disorder, painful stress, or



family conflict, therapy can be a powerful ally. Medication may also help, particularly when minor stress turns into major depression. Some other strategies that can help you make it through:

- Making a list of priorities for the season. Don't give into pressure. Do the things you really enjoy and forget about the rest.
- Getting access to plenty of natural light by spending some time outside or sitting under a sun lamp.
- Maintaining a regular schedule, even when cold temperatures tempt you to sleep in.
- Starting your own family traditions, particularly if you have a conflict with your family of origin.
- Taking care of your body. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, at least five days per week. Eat plenty of healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Even if every seasonal change in years past has been difficult for you, this one can be better. Take time to protect your mental health and watch the transition to autumn and winter become your favorite time of year.

## DBSA-GC Support Groups

### Zoom Support Groups

We are still holding Zoom support groups on Sundays at 7pm, an ages 50+ group on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 7pm, a back community support group on Fridays at 5pm, and a support group on Saturdays at 10am. Here is our [virtual event calendar](#).

### In-Person Peer Support Groups

**Our in-person support groups are BACK!**

- **PALATINE LIBRARY:** Located at 700 North Ct, Palatine, IL 60067. This group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm. If you have any questions about this group, contact support group facilitator Judy Sturm at (847) 359-4140.
- **ANDERSONVILLE/UPTOWN Ebenezer Lutheran Church:** 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](mailto:waynehoffmandad@gmail.com) or (312) 502-4212.

**DBSA GREATER CHICAGO**      Join us for a peer support group

# PEER SUPPORT GROUPS


IN PERSON OR VIRTUAL

To stay up to date on all our groups, please visit us at [www.dbsa-gc.org](http://www.dbsa-gc.org)

IN PERSON GROUPS	VIRTUAL GROUPS
<p>WEDNESDAYS AT 7PM: ANDERSONVILLE/UPTOWN AT EBENEZER LUTHERAN CHURCH</p> <p>1ST &amp; 3RD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7PM: PALATINE LIBRARY</p>	<p>SUNDAYS AT 7PM: GENERAL PEER SUPPORT GROUP</p> <p>2ND &amp; 4TH THURSDAY MONTHLY 7PM: AGES 50+ SUPPORT GROUP</p> <p>FRIDAYS AT 5PM BLACK COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP</p> <p>SATURDAYS AT 10AM: GENERAL PEER SUPPORT GROUP</p>

More in person groups on the way as venues begin to open again.

Stay Tuned!



*Thank you for your patience as we continue to find new locations to host additional in-person groups.*

# 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*

Q4: Nov-Dec

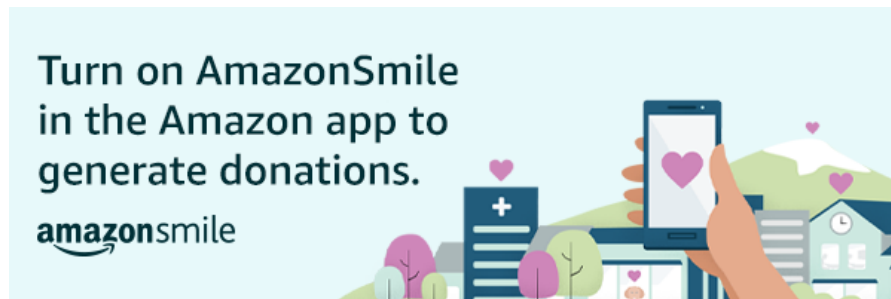
If you'd like to submit an article, event, celebration, recognition, etc. to be included in our Spectrum, please submit to [Margaux@dbsa-gc.org](mailto:Margaux@dbsa-gc.org) and we'll be happy to review!

## 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: [wecanhelpp@dbsa-gc.org](mailto:wecanhelpp@dbsa-gc.org) and visit [dbsa-gc.org](http://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 fall and winter 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](mailto:Bridget@dbsa-gc.org) and [Margaux@dbsa-gc.org](mailto:Margaux@dbsa-gc.org).

Stay well and connected with us,

***DBSA Greater Chicago Board***