

# THE *ROLLERCOASTER* TIMES

Quarterly Newsletter of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) of Orange County

Issue 37

Summer/Fall 2023

*DBSA Orange County is a self-help group for people diagnosed with depression or bipolar disorder*



**COOL FRUIT** — A lot of skill goes into the artistic carving of a flower ... from a watermelon. A refreshing reminder that we should practice good self care when it's hot. Remember: Even in Fall, the Santa Ana Winds can heat things up. For tips about self-care when it's hot, see Page 5.

**Laura Gaffney Wins Annual MHAOC Honor, Page 2**

*In-person & Online DBSA-OC Support Groups, Page 4*

**OC Resources, Services & Supports, Page 6**



Past and current DBSA-OC Board members and friends join **Laura Gaffney** as she was honored by the Mental Health Association of Orange County at their 2023 Community Service Awards Gala & Luncheon in the “Volunteer” category. Shown, from left, are: Kristen Pankratz, David McConnell, Carla Donaldson, John Gaffney, Laura Gaffney, Yi Lin, Bill Mahoney, John Nguyen, Delleana McMillan, and Richard Krzyzanowski.

## Gaffney Cites Recovery, Support While Accepting MHA Community Service Award

***The following is excerpted from DBSA-OC Board member Laura Gaffney’s remarks delivered at the Mental Health Association’s 2023 Community Service Awards as she was honored in the “Volunteer” category.***

“...My pathway to recovery began 14 years ago as a volunteer for the Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance of Orange County. I want to recognize all the individuals at my table that supported me in my growth, helped me find a place of peace, and the willingness to work with individuals with mental health challenges.

Some of my duties included being on the board of directors, working in the resource center, and working tables at Resource Fairs, this includes Meeting of the Minds.

The need to have more facilitators rose and I felt this was something I could accomplish. I want to thank Bill Mahoney for his leadership and instruction during my time of learning.

Throughout the years, you have supported me through my journey in recovery. You showed me that it takes a certain understanding, to be able to run Support Groups. Every single meeting that I lead is different.

The situations I find myself in can be very challenging, and using my training helps piece all of it together to solve the problem. There is one thing, you can’t be overconfident when facing a peer support group. Your goal is ...

*(See Gaffney, page 5)*

# 7 Ways to Deal With Negative Thoughts

—From *Psychology Today*

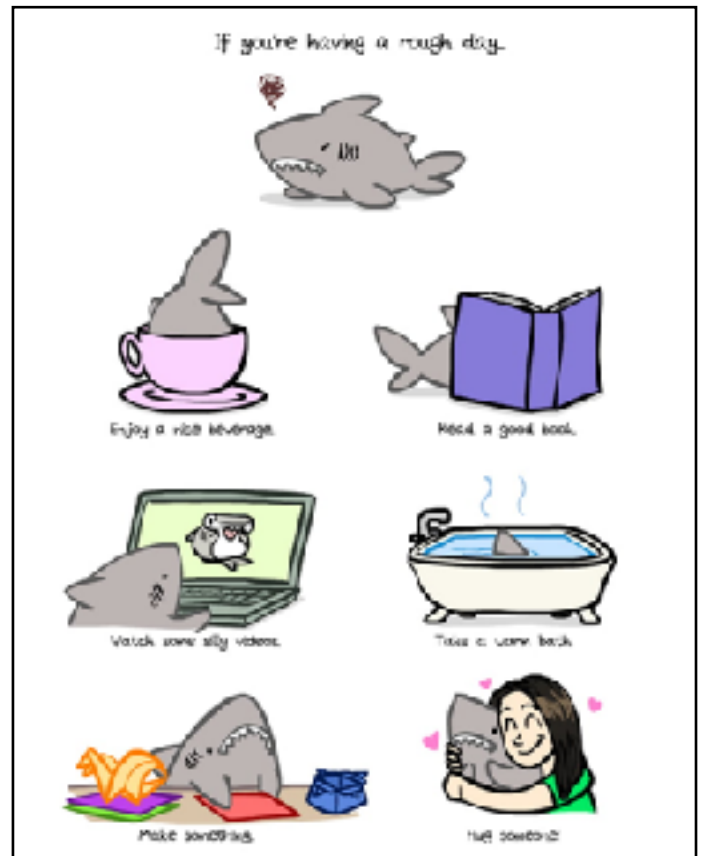
Most of us spend a lot of time inside our own mind — worrying about the future, replaying events in the past, and generally focusing on the parts of life that leave us dissatisfied. While they are common, negative or unwanted thoughts can prevent you from enjoying experiences, distract you from focusing on what's important, and drain your energy. They can also make you feel anxious and depressed.

The good news is that with dedicated practice, you can replace negative thinking patterns with thoughts that actually help. This can make a huge difference in your day-to-day happiness and comfort.

**1. Recognize thought distortions.** Our minds have clever and persistent ways of convincing us of something that isn't really true. These inaccurate thoughts reinforce negative thinking. If you can recognize them, you can learn to challenge them. Here are four common thought distortions:

- Black and white thinking. Seeing everything as one way or another, without any in between.
- Personalizing. Assuming you are to blame for anything that goes wrong, like thinking someone did not smile at you because you did something to upset her. (It's more likely that person is having a hard day and her mood had nothing to do with you.)
- Filter thinking. Choosing to see only the negative side of a situation.
- Catastrophizing. Assuming the worst possible outcome is going to happen.

**2. Challenge negative thoughts.** Whenever you have a distorted thought, stop and evaluate whether it is accurate. Ask yourself if



assuming the worst will happen or blaming yourself for something that has not gone the way you wanted. And then think about other possible outcomes or reasons that something turned out differently than you hoped.

**3. Take a break from negative thoughts.** It is possible to learn how to separate from negative thoughts. One way to do this is to allow yourself a certain amount of time (maybe five minutes) with the thought. Then take a break from focusing on it and move on with your day.

**4. Release judgment.** We all judge ourselves and others, usually unconsciously. Constantly comparing ourselves to other people or comparing our lives to some ideal breeds dissatisfaction. When you are able to let go of judgment (not easy, but possible), you will likely feel more at ease. Some ways to take a break from judgmental thoughts include recognizing your own reaction, observing it, and then ...

(See *Negative*, page 5)

# DBSA-OC

## Support Groups

**ONLINE:** *The Zoom room ID number has changed!* DBSA-OC Support Group meetings are now held using the Zoom address:

<https://zoom.us/j/6917895225>

- Monday 7 - 9 p.m.
- Tuesday 7 - 9 p.m.
- Wednesday 7 - 9 p.m.  
(*Dual Diagnosis & Open Group*)
- Wednesday 7 - 9 p.m.  
(*East Long Beach Support Group*;  
For information, contact  
[dbsaeastlb@gmail.com](mailto:dbsaeastlb@gmail.com))
- Thursday 7 - 9 p.m.
- Friday 7 - 9 p.m.
- Saturday 10 a.m. - Noon
- Saturday 7 - 9 p.m.  
(*Vietnamese Support Group*)

Meetings can be joined by phone: **(669) 900-9128**; Meeting ID: **691 789 5225**.

Unless otherwise specified, meetings are open to the public; registration is not required.

For information, contact **Laura Gaffney**,  
[lgaffney@dbsaoc.org](mailto:lgaffney@dbsaoc.org)

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A **closed group** for *Friends and Family (Non-Patients)* meets 1 - 3 p.m. on first and third Saturdays. For information, contact Jennifer Perrault, [jperrault@dbsaoc.org](mailto:jperrault@dbsaoc.org)

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For meetings conducted in **Mandarin Chinese**, see [dbsaoc.org/chinese](http://dbsaoc.org/chinese).

### IN-PERSON:

- Friday 7 - 9 p.m.  
**Mariner's Church Irvine**,  
5001 Newport Coast Drive,  
Ministry Center, Room 205,  
Irvine, 92603;
- Saturday 10 a.m. - Noon  
**Huntington Beach Hospital**  
17772 Beach Blvd.  
Basement Cafeteria  
Huntington Beach, 92647
- Tuesday 7 - 9 p.m.  
(*Transitional Age Youth, ages 18 - 30*)  
**St. Joseph Hospital**  
Sr. Elizabeth Bldg., 1st Floor.,  
Conference Rooms 1 - 3.  
1300 W. Palmyra Ave.  
Orange, 92868

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Additional meetings also are held at the three **Wellness Centers** through their tele-care services. For information, contact the Wellness Center of your choice:

#### Wellness Center Central

<http://www.wellnesscenteroc.com>

#### Wellness Center West

<http://www.wellnesscenterwest.org>

#### Wellness Center South

<http://www.wellnesscentersouth.org>

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All information is subject to change:  
Visit [dbsaoc.org](http://dbsaoc.org) for updates

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Hybrid meetings also are held by **Peer Voices of Orange County**. See the PVOC calendar for times and join links.  
(<http://www.peervoices.org>)



Depression and Bipolar  
Support Alliance  
Orange County CA  
Chapter

**DBSA OC Founder and Chief Medical Advisor:** *Himasiri De Silva, M.D.*  
**Medical Advisors:** *Gus Alva, M.D.; Clayton Chau, M.D.;*  
*Charles Tuan-Tu Nguyen, M.D.; Lawrence Sporty, M.D.*  
**Newsletter editor:** *Richard Krzyzanowski*

(Gaffney, continued from page 2)

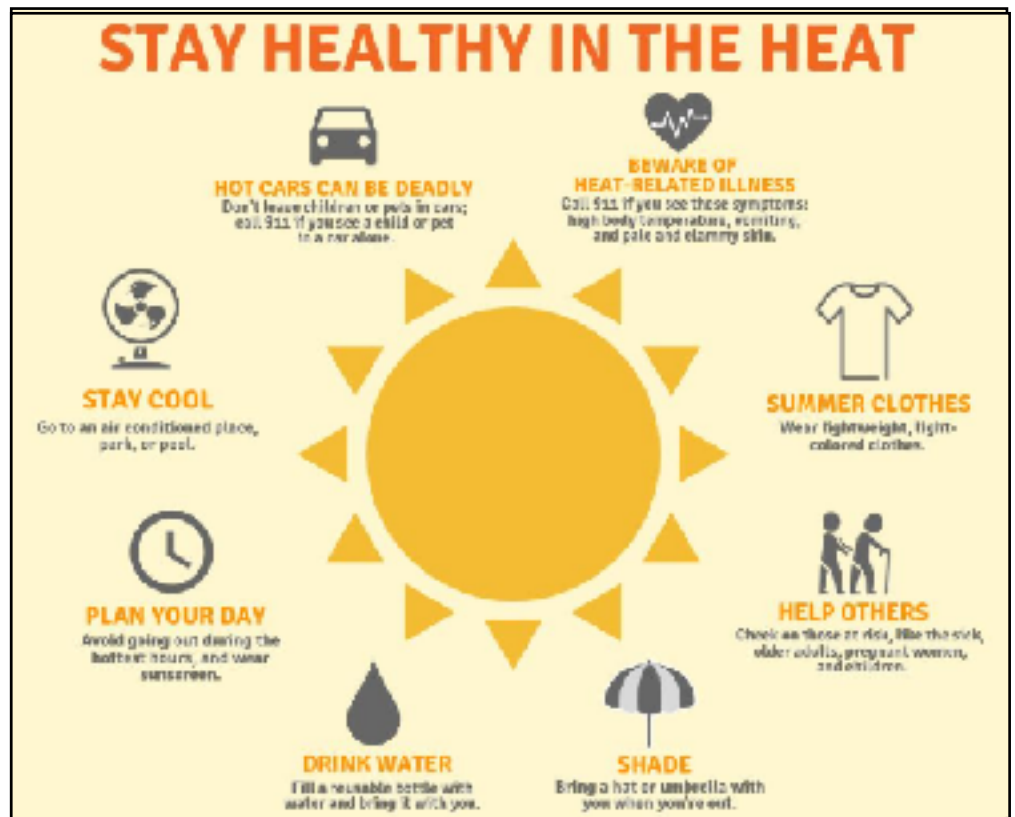
... to manage the direction that the meeting going and use your active listening skills. I am currently in a selective role as a Facilitator Trainer through DBSA National "Virtual Train the Trainer". My role is to train facilitators in different chapters across the US in the skills to run a support group.

With the help of ... the Recovery Educational Institute/Pacific Clinics, I am currently enrolled in the Peer Support Specialist Cohort 2. I have learned so much, which has given me more confidence to work with a focus on Mental Health. With my background in nursing, these classes have allowed me to refresh those skills I used the most in that field.

One of the most important things to me is sitting down with a peer and approaching them as a whole person with thoughts and feelings. Having true empathy for that person and helping them find the direction in their life to make it better.

These challenges have given me a certain confidence in both the, soon to be, role of a Peer Support Specialist and being a DBSA Peer Support Group Facilitator.

Once again, thank you all for making this award possible."



(Negative, Continued from page 3)

... letting it go. Another helpful technique is to "positive judge." When you notice you are negatively judging a person, yourself, or a situation, look for a positive quality.

**5. Practice gratitude.** Research shows that feeling grateful has a big impact on your levels of positivity and happiness. Even when you are experiencing a challenging time in your life, you can usually find things (even small things) to be grateful for. Noticing the things that are going well and making you feel happy will keep you in touch with them.

**6. Focus on your strengths.** It's human nature to dwell on the negative and overlook the positive. The more you can practice focusing on your strengths and not dwelling on mistakes you've made, the easier it will be to feel positive about yourself and the direction your life is taking. If you find yourself thinking harsh thoughts about your personality or actions, take a moment to stop and think about something you like about yourself.

**7. Seek out professional or peer support** if you are unable to manage your thoughts or find they are interfering with your ability to meet your daily responsibilities or enjoy life. Professional and/or peer support can help you weather life changes.

# Services, Supports, & Resources

## **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

Dial **988** to directly connect to mental health professionals at the national *Suicide and Crisis Lifeline*.

- Veterans can press “1” to reach the *Veterans Crisis Lifeline*, serving veterans, active service, National Guard and Reserve members, Veterans also can text the *Lifeline*, short code: **838255**.

## **The OC WarmLine**

The OC WarmLine, **(714) 991-6412**, is a free and confidential telephone service providing emotional support and resources to Orange County residents, available 24/7.

- An OC Warmline chat also is available at <https://www.namioc.org>

## **The Trevor Project for Young LGBTQ Lives**

The Trevor Project: [thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org); [info@thetrevorproject.org](mailto:info@thetrevorproject.org); **(212) 695-8650** or **866-488-7386**. Text "START" to: **678-678**, for web-chat.

## **Friendship Line California**

Hotline and Warmline for seniors: **(888) 670-1360**; Institute on Aging, [ioaging.org](http://ioaging.org).

## **CalHOPE WarmLine**

**(833) 317-HOPE (4673)**; [www.calhope.org](http://www.calhope.org), [calhope@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:calhope@dhcs.ca.gov) (Also CalHOPE Connect; CalHOPE Red Line; CalHOPE Student Support; Web-based Coping & Stress Management Skills; CalHOPE Schools initiative).

## **DBSA**

**DBSA Orange County:** <https://www.dbsaoc.org/>

Additional Southern California DBSA Chapters:

**DBSA South Orange County:** <http://dbsasoc.alsirat.com>

**DBSA South Bay:** <http://www.dbsasouthbay.org>

**DBSA San Diego:** <http://www.dbsasandiego.org>

The San Diego DBSA website lists multiple, categorized links on its *Resources* page with a wealth of information about mental health conditions and treatments.

**DBSA National:** <http://www.dbsalliance.org>

## **County of Orange**

- **Orange County 2-1-1:** <http://www.211oc.org>.

A comprehensive information and referral system that provides a resource database of health, human services and support 24/7 online and through a multi-lingual hotline. Call 211 or (949) 646-4357; or text your zip code to 898-211. Toll-Free alternative number: (888) 600-4357.

## • **Wellness Centers**

Three Wellness Centers in Orange County are open daily for socializing and support:

Wellness Center West: (657) 667-6455, [wellnesscenterwest.org](http://wellnesscenterwest.org)

Wellness Center Central: (714) 361-4860, [wellnesscenteroc.com](http://wellnesscenteroc.com)

Wellness Center South: (949) 528-6822, [wellnesscentersouth.org](http://wellnesscentersouth.org)

## • **OC Links Information and Referral Line** -

Telephone and online support for those seeking information or linkage to any of the OC Health Care Agency's Behavioral Health Services. Trained Navigators provide information, referral, and linkage directly to numerous programs.

- For OC Links Chat Services Visit: [www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks](http://www.ochealthinfo.com/oclinks)

## **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**

Mental health education, advocacy, and resources.

**NAMI Orange County:**

<http://www.namioc.org>

## **Orange County Psychiatric Society**

Website contains referral lists of psychiatrists and hospitals with Psychiatric Units

<http://www.ocps.org>.