



Bipolar Aberdeen news

The next self-help group meeting will take place on **Thursday 23rd February 2013** from **7pm-9pm** at the **Midstocket Church Community Centre, 35 Midstocket Road, Aberdeen, AB15 5JL.**

Following dates for meetings are:

March 21st April 25th and May 30th
(March meeting changed to SECOND LAST Thursday of the month due to Easter)

Same time and place.

Young person's self-help group

Ideas are underway to develop a monthly self-help group for younger sufferers of bipolar. The age range will be 16-25. Information about this group will be posted on the website below as soon as possible. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in attending such a group, e-mail bipolar.abdn@gmail.com

Online

Remember you can always check out our website for information about meetings, the social group and for news and events.

www.bipolaraberdeen.org.uk

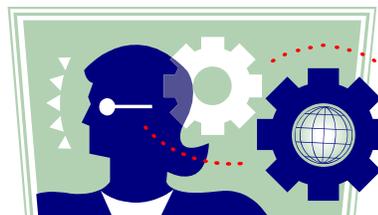
Mindfulness

May's group meeting will involve two mindfulness experts coming along and educating on how mindfulness can benefit individuals with bipolar.

Mindfulness is similar to meditation. It involves paying close and purposeful attention to thoughts and feelings in the present moment. Individuals are to notice whatever thoughts and feelings they are experiencing in a non-judgemental way.

It is reported that mindfulness can help individuals cope better with bipolar disorder in a number of ways:

- Enables people to become more sensitive to when their mood is switching and when symptoms of a high or a low are coming on.
- Can help someone be more accepting of their illness and deal better with changes in mental state.
- Recognize and reduce stress before it affects mental state.
- Can improve communication about someone's bipolar with their family and friends.



Bipolar Poetry

Taken from a very inspiring website, the following poem describes a sufferers' experience of mania.

*My body is weary,
But my mind can't stop.
Flashes – bright – white – hot,
Swift, intense, flying,
Arcing, shimmering, shuddering,
Fight their way out.
An idea zips in,
I try to pin it down,
But - fast – flash –
And away, it is gone.
Another comes, and another,
and another, and another.
Piling up, rushing, hurling, fleeting –
I wonder what happens when –
I bet no one's thought of that –
I think I'll try –

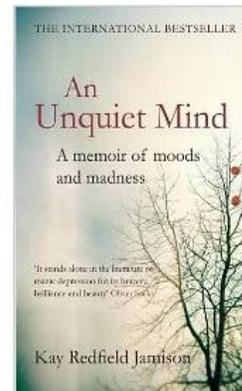
And music, delicate, beautiful, ethereal,
Every instrument's song
Distinct, clear, crystal-sharp,
Like the voice of God.
I lift my face, feel the floating light close.
The notes flit through darkened sky,
Dipping, soaring, glittering fusion –
Pale pink, silver, warm gold, bright
And bursting yellow-blue-white....*

www.bipolarpoetry.com

Book Review

“An Unquiet Mind”

By Kay Redfield Jamison.



This book describes the ups and downs experienced with bipolar disorder. It is the real memoirs of a psychiatrist who suffers from bipolar disorder. She discusses how the term “bipolar” came about and whether this is suitable to describe the disorder by. The author also accurately illustrates the degree of stigma that occurs with mental health issues and the difficulties that sufferers face when trying to hold down a job. The book is full of metaphors, detailed personal accounts and is definitely worth reading.

Bipolar Research

A lot of research has previously been carried out looking at brain differences in individuals with bipolar disorder using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Brain scans have shown that people with bipolar often have differences in brain areas that are responsible for regulating emotion. It is thought that because of this, individuals have are less able to control and monitor emotions and moods.

A new study used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to look at which areas of the brain were activated whilst patients were in a low mood and whilst patients were in a high mood; they had to try and control their responses to emotional and non-emotional pictures whilst they were in the brain scanner. .

Results showed that patients who were in a depressed state (low mood) activated abnormal areas of the brain when they had to try and control their responses to seeing sad faces. Patients who were in a manic state (high mood) showed

abnormal brain activation to all types of stimuli; i.e. when they had to control their responses to sad faces, happy faces and even non-emotional stimuli.

The results imply that certain brain areas may be important for controlling responses to emotional information and mood disorders effect the

normality in functioning of these areas. A manic mood and a



depressed mood both have different effects on emotion regulation in the brain.

This study may also encourage circuit-based treatments for bipolar disorder, such as neurostimulation and psychotherapy.

More information: [Hummer, Hulvershorn, Karne, Gunn, Wange and Anand \(2013\). Emotional Response Inhibition in Bipolar Disorder: A Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging Study of From: Trait- and State-Related Abnormalities. Biological Psychiatry, 73.](#)

Exercise can help bipolar disorder

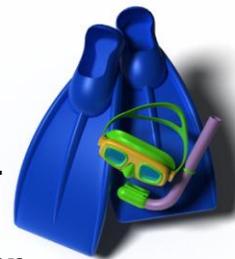
Many studies have shown that regular exercise can help to improve someone's mood whether they have bipolar or not. It also helps with sleep and emotion regulation which are important for those with Bipolar to control.

Exercise ideas:

1. You can always start slowly and ease yourself into an exercise routine. This could be by taking slow, short walks around the area that you live; alone or with a friend.
2. Join a gym: if you don't like being out and about in the cold weather then why not seek out your nearest gym. Do as little or as much as you want. If you are not sure how to use any of the machines, you can ask for an induction and a gym instructor will be more than happy to help you.
3. Swimming is a great for weight loss. The water takes your weight so swimming acts as a great low impact exercise for those who want



to take it steady. The water can also have great psychological benefits; it can be extremely relaxing and refreshing.



4. Join an exercise class or club; if you don't like exercising alone and would like some support and motivation then scope out local classes/clubs. There should be a range of activities to choose from' look online or ask at your local gym. Classes are also great for a bit of light socialising and possibly making new friends.
5. Maybe you don't want to venture out into the cold but want to avoid the gym? You could try purchasing a workout DVD to do in your own living room. It could be some light form of exercise such as yoga or fast paced such as zumba. Shops and the internet have a huge range to choose from so you can cope out what is suitable for you. Yoga is especially beneficial psychologically; it can help to alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Can fish oil help bipolar disorder?

Scientists have been interested in the fact that in Japan there appears to be much lower rates of bipolar disorder compared to the US and the UK. One interesting factor which may help to explain this apparently is fish!

Japanese people tend to centre their diets on fish. Statistics have shown that on average, Japanese individuals eat a lot more fish than US and UK individuals. Fish is high in Omega-3 fatty acids and strong links have been found with the consumption of these fatty acids and brain health.

The Archives of Psychiatric Nursing (2008) conducted a systematic review looking at Omega-3 fatty acids as a treatment for bipolar disorder and concluded that some results do depict that these fatty acids found in fish can alleviate some of the symptoms of bipolar.

Although the evidence is not wholly convincing yet, adding fish into your diet is definitely a healthy way to possibly improve your mental state. Omega-3 supplements are also available in stores; however a natural source (as from fish) is obviously the healthiest way to go about it. Fish is also great for your heart as well as your brain!



Fish Oils provide Omega-3 fatty acids, which are naturally found in oily fish such as Mackerel, Salmon, Herring and Trout . They are classed as 'essential' as they cannot be made within the body. Fish Oil supplements are an ideal way of increasing your intake of these essential fatty acids, without having to eat large amounts of fish. They are also pure and free of contaminants.

5 Steps to Deal With Negative Thinking

Everybody has negative thoughts throughout their life, what is important is not trying to erase or ignore these negative thoughts; it's about knowing that you have them and **dealing** with them *appropriately and effectively.*

Here are 5 steps to dealing with negative thoughts:

1. Don't allow negative thoughts to stay too long in your consciousness. Be aware that you have a negative thought but try not to ponder over and over again with the same thought. Let it come into your consciousness and then let it leave your again.

2. Remember that awareness of negative thoughts is not a bad thing. Awareness helps you take action against your

thoughts and try and create more positive thoughts.

3. Tell yourself that you own the negative thought and that the negative thought does not own you. Create distance between you as a person and the negative thought. Place an imaginary box around the thought, separate it from yourself and recognize that that negative thought is not you.

4. Challenge the negative thought. Find ways to challenge the negative thought; ask yourself why you are thinking this. Try and come up with logical and rational reasons of why the negative thought should not exist.

5. Try and replace the negative thought with a more positive one. Accept the negative thought put try and put a positive spin on it, let positive energy in and think of something optimistic about whatever you are thinking.





Recipe

For this month's recipe I have chosen something simple, warming, healthy and nutritious:

Chilli Con Quorn

Ingredients required:

300g pack of Quorn mince (could use extra lean minced beef as an alternative)

- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 2 bay leaves
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 300ml vegetable stock
- 1 green pepper, de-seeded and chopped
- 400g can kidney beans, drained
- 2 teaspoons corn flour
- 1 tablespoon water
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Freshly chopped coriander and red chillies to garnish
- Soured cream for serving (optional)

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Fry the onion and garlic until soft and golden. Add the Quorn mince, spices and bay leaves and fry for 3
2. Add the tomatoes, vegetable stock and green pepper and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in the kidney beans and cook for 5 minutes.
4. Mix the corn-flour with the water to a smooth paste. Stir into the Quorn chilli to thicken. Cook gently for a further 5 minutes. Remove bay leaves and discard.
5. Serve immediately with a jacket potato or boiled rice. Top with chillies, coriander and soured cream to garnish.

Serves 4 / 10 minutes to prepare and 25 minutes cooking time.

Enjoy

