

# SDA NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

June 1st 2009

STEVENAGE DEPRESSION ALLIANCE

## Depression Awareness Week 2009

Stevenage Depression Alliance's contribution to Depression Awareness Week this year was to hold a seminar at the Stevenage Borough Council Offices. At the event guests were able to hear talks from the founder of Stevenage Depression Alliance, Pam Todd from Depression Alliance and Gabi Willoughby from [Scriptbusters](#) a social enterprise who provide training and mentoring programmes for those wishing to improve the quality of their relationships and communication abilities.

Lorna Garland, founder of SDA, gave a talk on how the group came into existence, and her own experiences of depression. Pam Todd, who is the Membership Services Coordinator for the national charity Depression Alliance, told the audience of the work that DA undertake and particularly their recent report Daring to Choose, which gives ten recommendations for greater choice in depression and mental health treatment and services.

Gabi Willoughby spoke of her experiences with depression and how the work she does can be another way of treating and coping with depression. More on page 2.



Registered Charity No. 1096741



## Stevenage Day June 14th

Once again this year we will be holding a stall at the 50th Stevenage Day.

This year's stall theme is to decorate your own bag. You can come over buy a cotton shopping bag of us then use a choice of decorative

techniques to personalise your bag.

Visitors will also be able to pick up information on the Stevenage Depression Alliance group and other much needed information on the subject of Depression.

So please come over to us and say hello and we will try to answer any queries you have.

Stevenage Day  
King George Playing Field  
Sunday June 14th

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We're on the web, visit us  
at  
[www.stevenageda.org.uk](http://www.stevenageda.org.uk)

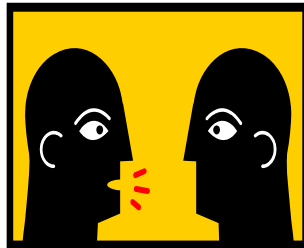
## Depression Awareness Week Cont...



The event was well attended and received high praise, with guests going away with a better understanding of depression and its effects.

Our thanks go to Sharon Chatterly and Jessica Linacre from Stevenage Borough Council for their help in organising the event.

## Talking Therapy



In the last newsletter we looked at medication in the treatment of depression. It is probably the treatment most people think of when they think about

depression. It can help lift your mood, but it does not tackle any underlying problems you may be experiencing. There are lots of different psychological therapies. No one is better than the other as with medication there maybe a particular one that suits you best. All sorts of therapies are

available on the NHS, but be prepared for waiting lists. If you decide to choose private therapy, make sure that you select a registered or accredited therapist.

The following are some of the most popular psychological treatments:

“No one is better than the other, as with medication there maybe a particular one that suits you best.”

**Cognitive Therapy** works by challenging negative thought patterns, and suggesting changes to destructive behaviour. How you think largely determines how you feel; when you are depressed, you feel very negative.

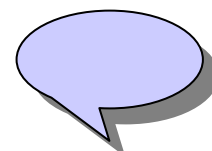
**Interpersonal Therapy** focuses on your relationships with other people. It teaches you how to communicate more effectively and

improve your view of yourself.

**Psychodynamic Therapy** helps people to understand past conflicts, release aggression and reduce feelings of guilt or inadequacy.

**Counselling** refers to a range of techniques and approaches, some of which draw from the above

therapies. Counselling can offer people the opportunity to talk through issues in their everyday lives that may be contributing towards their depression, rather than aiming to treat more deep-rooted problems.



## Exercise

Many people with depression experience a loss of energy and constant feelings of tiredness. So thinking about exercise is probably the last thing you want to do. But taking some form of gentle exercise could make you feel more positive.

This sort of treatment is can be effective for those with mild depression as it gives you something to focus on, be helpful in boosting your self-esteem and it is

thought exercise can release feel good chemicals, endorphins

If you think to when life gets stressful, maybe after an argument, when you go off for a walk to cool down, you feel so much better when you get back.

Taking up some form of physical activity does not necessarily mean going to the local gym, most people with depression would find that difficult to undertake anyway.



Physical activity can be a simple a walk to the shop, doing some gardening, cycling, or even housework.

You could keep a record of how much you do, something to refer to later to see how far you've come.

"Exercise... can be effective for those with mild depression"

## All Being Well Roadshow

The national charity Community Service Volunteers (CSV) with support from the Big Lottery Fund, are holding an "All Being Well" Roadshow in Stevenage. The Roadshow is designed to help improve and promote healthier lifestyles to the Region through three main topics; Healthy Eating, Regular Physical Exercise and Good Mental Health.

Stevenage Depression Alliance along with the Stevenage Wellbeing Centre will be at the roadshow to promote good mental health, so come down to find out more about what we can provide.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June

Stevenage Town Centre

Next to the Fountain

10.00am until 4.00pm.

## SDA Group

The Group meets every Wednesday with different times each week.

Week One: 11am-1pm

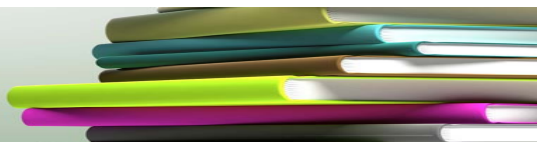
Week Two: 7pm-9pm

Please come when you can, don't worry about turning up late. You don't have to come every week, and you can stay as long as you want. Tea and Coffee is provided free of charge. We look forward to seeing you.



The Stevenage Depression Alliance Room at the Stevenage Wellbeing Centre.

## Book Reviews



### **What Should I do with my Life?**

By: Po Bronson

This is not a self-help book for depression but I found it to be a book that had uplifting qualities running throughout.

The book looks at that universal question we all ask at some point in our lives.

The author travels around the world interviewing people who themselves are asking this question. What is interesting is the fact that everyone has a different background but each has reached a point where they wonder; why were they put

on this earth.

The nice thing is that the people in the interviews aren't young people coming of age but people who have lived a huge portion of their life. All the stories end differently, there is no final solution to the stories, and the people in it don't necessarily say 'that's it I've found what I'm looking for'.

You may think that by reading this you will feel reassured that, yes it will one day all fall into place. But you are reassured that not everything will, but that instead of worrying about not quite knowing your direction in life, you should

embrace it, this uncertainty.

This is the feeling I got from the book, as when you read about these people, where they have come from, what they've done, why they make the choices they make; you think that no matter what they have all lived interesting lives, they're not boring, they all have interesting stories to tell.

So life is a journey, some parts will be really awful and others will be the best, but more importantly you'll have a hell of a story to tell.

Lorna Garland

9/10

## Recession Depression

Lloyds TSB have implemented a survey which revealed that one in five Britons say they are suffering from 'recession depression'.

Younger people who have not lived through a depression as an adult were more likely to experience shock at the situation, and be worried about losing their jobs, keeping up with the debts that were racked up in the good times and worry about maintaining their current lifestyles.

The government has also recently announced a £13 million investment towards services such as; talking therapies and a network of employment support workers, who will offer advice and support on how to get back into the job market.

It is not yet known how much of an impact the economic downturn will have on those with mental health issues or those who don't. But any situation that brings more anxiety into people's lives is bound to have some repercussions.

So the government are looking to prevent people falling into long-term worklessness and assist people who develop mental health problems because of the recession, and this can only be a good thing.



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**Do you have something to contribute to the newsletter, maybe a review or a personal experience you'd like to share. Then please send anything to [info@stevenageda.org.uk](mailto:info@stevenageda.org.uk) or to the above address before August 25th.**