The current pandemic has highlighted how central mental wellbeing has been for us to survive the many changes and challenges we are all experiencing. In South Africa, the month of July is dedicated to educating people about mental health and encouraging people to seek help, treatment and support if they are distressed or have a mental illness. This awareness month also aims to reduce the stigma and discrimination that people with mental health issues often experience.

During these stressful and uncertain times of the COVID pandemic, the numbers of people needing mental illness treatment is expected to increase. As the pandemic continues to impact our health directly and indirectly through added stress, this is an opportune time to empower yourself with knowledge and self-help skills.

What can you do to get help? Studies show that stigma and discrimination are some of the biggest reasons why people don’t seek help or intervention when experiencing mental illness. Misconceptions about mental illness perpetuate stigma so it is important for people to educate themselves about mental illness and also share this information with others. Sharing your own story about your mental illness journey and encouraging others to do the same helps to eradicate stigma. Getting treatment for mental distress or illness is no different from seeing a doctor for a sore throat or the dentist for a toothache. Mental illness is treatable and stress and distress can be alleviated through simple lifestyle choices and changes. Mental health matters in the fight against COVID-19. Reach out for support!
We had close to 60 attendees from around the country who consisted of students, academics, practitioners and general members of the public.

We received some encouraging comments:

"The stories of the three characters really caught my attention and how Chantelle used her own life as a reference."

"Thank you for being so open and sharing your own experiences."

"In this webinar, Ms Chantelle Booysen succeeded in demystifying mental illness as well as debunking several associated misconceptions. Drawing on her personal experience of living with Bipolar Disorder, she offered illuminating insights into what this illness entails while simultaneously offering a powerful message of hope: that people living with mental illnesses can lead meaningful lives and make phenomenal contributions to society. Ms Booysen’s ongoing involvement in advancing social justice attests to this."

We offer specialised webinars on general and specific topics on mental health. Connect with us for more information.

12 June 2020
Community Forum Webinar: Living Authentically with Bipolar Disorder
by Chantelle Booysen
We had close to 60 attendees from around the country who consisted of students, academics, practitioners and general members of the public.

26 June 2020
Listening Tools for Frontline Support Group Leaders
"We were given useful tips, and it was practical and interactive."

"I learned that it is often more important to listen to someone express themselves and their feelings freely than attempting to offer them advice. In most cases, the cathartic experience of uninterrupted expression is most beneficial."

June Activities

SADAG KZN 2020
"We were given useful tips, and it was practical and interactive."

"I learned that it is often more important to listen to someone express themselves and their feelings freely than attempting to offer them advice. In most cases, the cathartic experience of uninterrupted expression is most beneficial."
Some key mental health events, projects, engagements and supportive resources to look forward to. Look out for them all over KwaZulu-Natal!

**SADAG KZN 2020**

**What's coming up in this month**

Available to trained Support Group Leaders & Volunteers

**SADAG KZN PRESENTS**

A Guide to Starting a WhatsApp Support Group

Facilitated by Suntosh Pillay and Lynn Norton

**Thursday, 16 July 2020**

16:30 - 17:30

**RSVP before 14 July 2020**

All login details will be sent to registered attendees ahead of time.

or via email at sadagkzn@gmail.com

KZNSADAG@ANXIETY.ORG.ZA | 078 278 7047

**SADAG KZN PRESENTS**

Mental Health Community Forum Webinar

A Conversation on Refugee Mental Health

Presented by

Ms Sandy Kalyan
Psychologist

Free Online Webinar

**Friday, 17 July 2020**

13:00 to 14:00

**RSVP before 15 July 2020**

or confirm via email at sadagkzn@gmail.com

All members of the public are welcome - service users, patients, family & friends.

Webinar link & details will be sent to registered attendees ahead of time.

KZNSADAG@ANXIETY.ORG.ZA | 078 278 7047

#Mandeladay

DO WHAT YOU CAN!

STAY SAFE!

SHARE INITIATIVES!

SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITIES!

Image courtesy: www.mandeladay.com

**JULY**

World Mental Health Awareness Month

1-5 Corporate Wellness Week

10 Panic Awareness Day

18 Nelson Mandela Day
HOW TO JOIN A SADAG SUPPORT GROUP?

- Contact Kristanya for general information on 064 139 4303 or email mentalhealthmatters3@gmail.com
- Contact our 24-hour free helpline on 0800 456 789

LGBTQIA+ SUPPORT
Connect through social media where this group provides a safe space to those who need support during this time. WhatsApp on 0845800489.

THE GAY AND LESBIAN MEMORY IN ACTION (GALA) ORGANIZATION
Invites LGBTQIA+ people to submit their experiences of life during lockdown. Email queenvoices20@gmail.com.

SURVIVORS OF LOVED ONES OF SUICIDE (SOLOS) SUPPORT
Join this WhatsApp support group for those wanting additional support and connection during this period. Contact Lynn on 0782787047 or Lori at suicideprevent@gmail.com.

MUMS SUPPORT NETWORK
Online support for mothers and mothers-to-be. Online meeting every Monday and Thursday during Lockdown at 10AM on Zoom. Contact Alex on 0837880689 or email alexandra@mumsupport.co.za.

REFUGEE WHATSAPP SUPPORT GROUP
With support group leader Peter Buhendwa for members of the refugee community living in and around Durban. For more information WhatsApp Peter on 076 662 9899.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR FRONT LINE HEALTH WORKERS
For more info or to join this group please WhatsApp Lynn on 078 278 7047 or email Lori at suicideprevent@gmail.com.
Special notice

Tumaini (Hope) Project: Supporting refugees and asylum seekers during Covid-19

Your support for refugees and asylum seekers in our community is invaluable, they depend on your goodwill for basic needs. Please pledge your support by visiting https://www.backabuddy.co.za/champion/project/tumaini-project or clicking here.

Township Yogi Film Global Release

Award-winning Township Yogi documentary was released globally on 21 June and has been receiving wonderful, positive reviews from viewers and the international yoga community!

Click here to learn more about the film.
CRISIS OF CARE

#CrisisOfCare WhatsApp Helpline provides free accessible emotional and support services to service-users for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our team of counselors come from six provinces including Gauteng, North West, Free State, Northern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga; who provide diverse psycho-social services on WhatsApp.

Our team comprises of academics from recognized institutions of higher learning, Social Workers, Psychologists, student Social Workers, Community Counselors and Community Healthcare Workers.

Helpline:
+27 68 013 7551
12h00-00:00 CAT

HERE’S TO THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ENCOURAGING LOVE, SUPPORT AND HEALING FOR THE WORLD.

Black Women Caucus Initiative
@blackwomenscaucuisingwe

DPPG
DURBAN PRACTICING PSYCHOLOGISTS’ GROUP

Private psychologists offer free support

Your mental health matters during the national lockdown and Covid-19 outbreak. If you are suffering from unmanageable anxiety, depression, loneliness, isolation, grief or trauma – make contact with us and we will find someone to assist you. This will not replace an in-depth, diagnostic consultation; and is only a brief intervention for immediate support and education.

Email: exec@dppg.org.za

For a national list of psychologists, email Fatima@psyssa.com

University of KwaZulu-Natal

The world has changed, but we get through this together

We are offering free online support (3 sessions):

Feeling anxious, uncertain or just want to connect?

Talk to us

Dr. sweetheart

078 967 8989

The UKZN Psychology Clinic is run by registered psychologists and trainees.

Support groups will be run over the next few weeks over Zoom. For more information, contact Fatima@psyssa.com.
It was first proposed in 1958 in Paraguay as "International Friendship Day". It was initially promoted by the greeting cards' industry. Evidence from social networking sites shows a revival of interest in the holiday that may have grown with the spread of the Internet, particularly in India, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. Mobile phones, digital communication and social media have contributed to popularize the custom. Those who promote the holiday in South Asia attribute the tradition of dedicating a day in the honour of friends to have originated in the United States in 1935 but it actually dates back to 1919. The exchange of Friendship Day gifts like flowers, cards and wrist bands is a popular tradition on this occasion. Friendship Day celebrations occur on different dates in different countries. The first World Friendship Day was proposed for 30 July in 1958, by the World Friendship Crusade.

On 27 April 2011 the General Assembly of the United Nations declared 30 July as official International Friendship Day.[1]

In a number of studies, friendship and social support have been linked to better physical health outcomes, like lower rates of heart disease. One such study (published in the Annals of Behavioral Medicine in 2007) revealed that young men and women who discussed difficult parts of their lives had a lower pulse and blood pressure when a supportive friend accompanied them. Friendship is an important factor in our physical health, but what affects does it have on our mental health?

A 2009 study from the Journal of the National Medical Association surveyed 300 men and women at a free health clinic in Buffalo, New York. They found that respondents with insufficient perceived social support were the most likely to suffer from mental health disorders like anxiety and depression. A good friendship requires a balance between individuals–one where the needs of each are met. Good friendships have a myriad of benefits, such as increased feelings of belonging, purpose, increased levels of happiness, reduced levels of stress, improved self-worth and confidence.

While good friends can help you through traumatic events and can even help you to quit a bad habit you've picked up, toxic friendships can leave you feeling drained, stifled, unsatisfied and often unequal. Friendships are unique because they are tied to so many aspects of your life–your family, work, hobbies. When you have a toxic friendship, these feelings can permeate all of these areas as well. If a particular friendship is isn't meeting your needs, it may be time to reassess whether it deserves a space in your life. Humans by nature are social animals. Our friendships can have a tremendous impact on our lives–which is why it's important to make sure that they are leaving you feeling supported, understood, and happy.[2]