



# SADAG KZN NEWSLETTER MARCH/APRIL 2021

Welcome to our monthly newsletter. Please read and share widely. Mental Health is everybody's business!

## SADAG KZN CONTACTS

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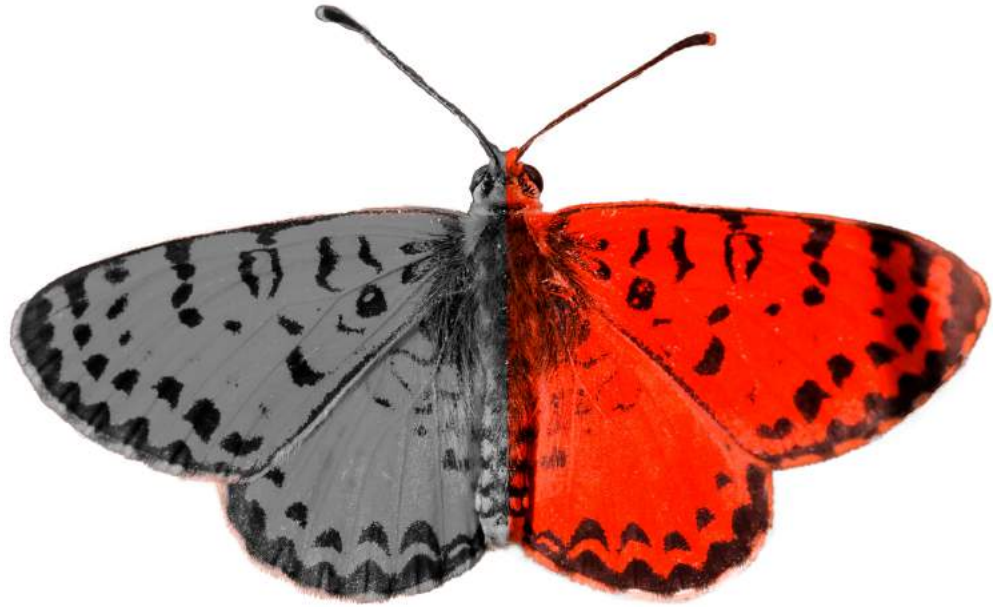
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## SADAG NATIONAL HELPLINE

0800 456 789

[www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org)



## Ways to Manage Bipolar Disorder Triggers During COVID-19

by Korin Miller, Self.com

"Having bipolar disorder means living with challenges most other people don't face, like needing to regularly manage bipolar triggers to make sure you don't have dramatic mood changes. Bipolar triggers are individual, and the way you react to those triggers can depend on the form of bipolar disorder you have. Some people may be prone to manic episodes, where they feel excited, irritable, or energized, while others experience more depressive episodes, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) explains. It's also possible to have milder manic periods, known as hypomanic episodes, or to have mixed episodes that involve both manic and depressive symptoms.

The ongoing global pandemic is stressful for anyone, but it can be particularly difficult for people living with bipolar disorder because experiencing periods of high stress is one of the major risk factors of having a bipolar episode. "Any kind of significant stress can potentially trigger either kind of episode" Jed Magen, D.O., associate prof and chair in the Department of Psychiatry at Michigan State University, tells SELF.

There are some common situations (like stress) that trigger mood episodes. But again, people may have their own specific triggers, so it's best to identify yours with the help of a doctor if you can. That said, here are some ways that you can prioritize your health right now."

- **Allow yourself to grieve if you need to.**
- **Schedule regular check-ins with yourself.**
- **Talk to your support system daily.**
- **Limit your alcohol intake.**
- **Create a plan to sleep consistently.**
- **Monitor and limit caffeine intake, if any at all.**
- **If you feel like you're struggling, speak to a mental health professional who can help you decide whether you need an adjusted treatment plan.**

## MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS IN KZN

- Free public talks & forums
- Community support groups
- CPD-accredited specialist workshops
- Youth outreach at schools and universities
- Engaging mental health events and training
- AND More...

Click here to show your  
**ACT OF KINDNESS**  
by donating to our community projects!



Our Mental Health and Gender Initiative (MHaGI) launched its 2021 grant initiatives with a task team meeting taking place on 24 February. The initiative participated in the **Women's Voice and Leadership South Africa Learning and Sharing Summit** in March. The Awards Ceremony was held on International Women's Day on 8 March, and proclaimed the work of 23 partner organisations working across South Africa. SADAG KZN was awarded the **runner up in the Economic Justice** section for our contribution towards the **Refugee Women's Sewing and Psychosocial Project**. This project is run in collaboration with the **Tumaini Community Project** and focuses on facilitating a sustainable income generating project for refugee women; supporting women's economic independence, social connection and mental well-being. This is an ongoing project supported by SADAG KZN volunteers. The Refugee Youth project has also taken off to a good start with a focus on initiating a **peer mentoring project** facilitated by Clinical Psychologist, Sandy Kalyan. Based on the Big Brother Big Sister model, our first workshop took place on 27 March and will be followed by monthly meetings and supervisory sessions to offer **support to refugee youth living** in and around the eThekweni region.





# CONGRATULATIONS!

To our very own, **newly appointed** as **Associate Professor, Prof Suvira Ramlall**. Prof Ramlall was also appointed the **President of the College of Psychiatrists (CMSA)** for the triennium 2020-2023. We are enormously proud to have you lead this KZN team and it is such a well deserved honor as one of our most committed mental health activists and scholars.

## WELCOME!

We would like to warmly welcome our new team member, **Bukelwa Khuzwayo** as **Administrative Assistant** to the SADAG KZN team. We are looking forward to our work together over the coming months and years.



### 26 February 2021

Community Forum:  
*Complicated Grief and COVID-19*

A BIG THANK YOU to  
Suntosh Pillay, Alison Hadfield and Nthabiseng Motsa  
for hosting such an engaging and inspiring session

### 25 February 2021


Support Group Leader Training

Thank you to all the Support Group Leaders who attended.


### 25 March 2021

Support Group Leader Training

Thank you to all the Support Group Leaders who attended.




**CENTRE for  
APPLIED  
PSYCHOLOGY**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL™  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

During COVID-19 we are offering Online or Face-to-face Counselling



Psychotherapy, Counselling and Assessment Services for Adults and Children (Affordable rates for Non-Students)

- \* Depression
- \* Anxiety
- \* Trauma, Behavioral Concerns
- \* HIV/AIDS (Pre and post and ongoing Counselling)
- \* Personality disorders, Interpersonal Conflict
- \* Couple and Marriage Counselling

*The Centre for Applied Psychology Presents*  
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--For 2021 rates please contact the Psychology Clinic--

Contact Email: [Psychclinic@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Psychclinic@ukzn.ac.za) - WhatsApp-078 512 1959

## TAKE NOTE

Make a note in your diary for our upcoming Community Forum this month:

**Managing Bipolar Mood Disorder during COVID-19**

**Thursday, 29 April 2021  
13.00 to 14.00pm**

\*RSVP details to follow

## NB Dates

**24**  
World  
Schizophrenia Day

**17**  
International Day  
against Homophobia



## TALK SAFE, PLAN SAFE



Join Mums Support Network for a special delivery of The OLLIE Foundation's exclusive 90-minute suicide prevention course.

This session covers up-to-date knowledge in suicide prevention and explores questions such as;

- Why would someone consider suicide?
- What are the signs someone is thinking about suicide - are there always signs?
- Who is more or less at risk of suicide?
- How can I support someone who is suicidal?
- How can I help someone break the logic in their suicidal thinking?

The course also covers best practise techniques including CBT and TOC to give you the tools to become more suicide aware and support someone who is suicidal. This course is not suitable for anyone who is currently suicidal themselves.

Thursday the 6th of May at 4pm - online via Zoom.

## Volunteering

Volunteering Fridays are running again this year. JOIN US for our next "lunch time" session on:

**Friday, 7 May 2021  
13.00 to 14.00pm**

\*RSVP details to follow  
Email  
[mentalhealthmatters3@gmail.com](mailto:mentalhealthmatters3@gmail.com)  
for more info

If you would like to book your place, email [alexandra@mumssupport.co.za](mailto:alexandra@mumssupport.co.za)



During the time of Covid-19, some support groups are inactive with many Support Groups now hosted online and through WhatsApp groups. Contact our **24-hour free helpline on 0800 456 789** for more info on Support Groups in your area.

**MEET THE NEW SADAG KZN SUPPORT GROUP LEADER VOLUNTEERS!**

**AZEEZA RAWAT**

**NABEELAH SEEDAT**

**BUKELWA KHUZWAYO**

**NOKUTHULA CHAGWE**

SADAG COUNSELLOR & SUPPORT GROUP LEADERS MEETING

*save the date*

9AM - 10:30AM  
SATURDAY 1 MAY 2021

JOIN US AS SADAG AND SPECIAL GUESTS SHARE MORE ABOUT BIPOLAR DISORDER AHEAD OF BIPOLAR AWARENESS DAY

CLICK LINK BELOW TO RSVP

Join us at a **FREE** Mental Health for Writers Support Group

For writers or aspiring writers who struggle with Depression & Anxiety, writers block & low motivation

**When**  
Wednesday 7 April 2021 & every second Wednesday thereafter

**Where**  
Online using Discord

**Time**  
6pm - 7pm

MENTAL HEALTH FOR WRITERS Support Group

For more Info & to RSVP  
Nazeera nazz\_rawat@hotmail.com  
Azeeza azz\_rawat@hotmail.com

INVITATION

SADAG KZN PRESENTS

**Support Group Leaders' Forum**

By Suntosh Pillay

**DO SUPPORT GROUPS REALLY WORK?**

**SUMMARY OF RESEARCH**

**Thursday, 29 April 2021**

**16:15-17:00**

Please RSVP before 21 April 2021.

All login details will be sent to you in time before the forum

Click here to RSVP  
<https://forms.gle/j6i9Bp38hPNsx6dE7>

KZNSADAG@ANXIETY.ORG.ZA | 078 278 7047

During the time of Covid-19, some support groups are inactive with many Support Groups now hosted online and through WhatsApp groups.

Contact our **24-hour free helpline on 0800 456 789** for more info on Support Groups in your area.



## 4 questions for Support Group Leader Sipho Ngcongco

Sipho Ngcongco lives in Marianhill, Durban, and started a support group in 2019. He attended a support group leader training hosted by the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG) KZN office and wanted to make a difference in his community. He answered a few questions about his group for our newsletter.

### What was your group all about?

My group consists of 8 members. We meet once a month, every first Saturday at 12 midday. We meet at local high school. My group is topic-based, and we give each other a month to prepare a discussion on how that topic affects our lives. Topics range from family, poverty, gender-based violence, toxic masculinity, the pressure to succeed, etc. The focus here is to tell and retell our stories. Therefore, we can recognize the discourses, systems and social restraints that cause us harm. This awareness is very powerful for reflection and growth.

### How have people benefited from your group?

One member went back to rewrite his matric after six years. He started from grade 11 and now he is waiting for his matric results. Another member has also made a huge career change. He was building houses ever since he was a young boy because he had to take care of his family, but he hated it, even though he was good at it. He recently got his drivers' license to fulfill his dream of becoming a long-distance truck driver. The diversity of stories and experiences in my support group is something that can help a lot of people who are not familiar with the realities we come from.

### Are there challenges you experience with your group?

One thing I have learned is that intersectionality becomes blurry when there are shared struggles. This means when we put people in the same room who have similar issues, we could easily buy into the ignorance that we all are going through the same level of hardship, when some of us are dominated by social discourses of culture, sexism, religion, gender, patriarchy, and prejudice while others are saved by our privileges in some hardships. The idea that everyone is equal in the group despite age, gender, experiences, sexuality, or religion is a beautiful idea, but it does not represent the true realities that we go back to at the end of the meetings. These are the nuances that were challenging to get right.

### How have you personally benefited from running a group?

Being a facilitator has taught me a lot about self-reflection, the power of language, and how to listen with empathy to others. My process of growth is forever developing.



# A view on Global Mental Health

by Chantelle Booysen



## 17 MAY: INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA AND BIPHOBIA

The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia was created in 2004 to draw the attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexuals, transgender, intersex people and all other people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics.

The date of May 17th was specifically chosen to commemorate the World Health Organisation's decision in 1990 to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. The Day represents a major global annual landmark to draw the attention of decision makers, the media, the public, corporations, opinion leaders, local authorities, etc. to the alarming situation faced by people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics.

"Mental health problems such as **depression, self-harm, alcohol and drug abuse and suicidal thoughts** can affect anyone, but they're **more common among people who are LGBTIQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer or questioning)**. Being LGBTIQ+ doesn't cause these problems. But some things LGBTIQ+ people go through can affect their mental health, such as discrimination, homophobia or transphobia, social isolation, rejection, and difficult experiences of coming out. **It's important to note that embracing being LGBTIQ+ can have a positive impact on someone's wellbeing too. It might mean they have more confidence, a sense of belonging to a community, feelings of relief and self-acceptance, and better relationships with friends and family.**

Being LGBTIQ+ doesn't automatically mean someone will have mental health issues, but may mean they're at **higher risk of experiencing poor mental health**. Around one in eight LGBTIQ+ people have experienced unequal treatment from healthcare staff because they are LGBTIQ+. One in seven have avoided treatment for fear of discrimination.

'Hate crimes' are crimes committed against people because of their race, sexuality, religion, gender identity or disability. **Members of the LGBTIQ+ community are at a greater risk of experiencing hate crimes compared to heterosexual people.** Certain LGBTIQ+ groups are at particular risk, including gay men, young people and those who are from Black, Asian and ethnic minority groups." ~ [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-lgbtqi-people](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-lgbtqi-people)

"On Wednesday 21 April, OUT LGBT Well-being joined more than 20 LGBTIQ+ and human rights groups in calling for President Cyril Ramaphosa and all South Africans to stand up to **queerphobia and hate**. The call comes in the wake of an appalling wave of hate crime murders that have rocked the country. Roché Kester, OUT's Hate Crimes Manager, was one of the speakers at a press conference at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg demanding urgent action from all sectors of society. 'Right now it feels like there is a crisis happening. People are scared to leave their houses and people are scared to be themselves. And under our Constitution, we can't have that. LGBTIQ+ people are part of South Africa and therefore they have the same rights as heterosexual or cisgender people. **Many people experience discrimination, many people also experience non-lethal crimes, and they often don't report that because they fear secondary victimisation by the police and also because they just feel like the system is failing them in terms of actually getting justice.**' The joint statement endorsed and supported by OUT LGBT Well-being can be accessed here: ~ [www.out.org.za/2021/04/21/21-april-2021-joint-statement-spate-of-hate-crime-murders-lgbtqi-people-say-more-needs-to-be-done/](http://www.out.org.za/2021/04/21/21-april-2021-joint-statement-spate-of-hate-crime-murders-lgbtqi-people-say-more-needs-to-be-done/)

If you are in need of counselling, please contact SADAG helplines or [out.org.za](http://out.org.za).

## SADAG Social media + Helplines

Facebook: "Ask the expert" chat @TheSADAG  
 Online chats: [www.sadag.org](http://www.sadag.org)  
 Tel: 0800 21 22 23  
 24/7 helpline: 0800 456 789  
 24/7 Suicide Line: 0800 567 567  
 Sms: 32312

## COVID-19 National Contacts

Toll-free helpline: 0800 029 999  
 Website: [www.sacoronavirus.co.za](http://www.sacoronavirus.co.za)  
 Whatsapp: 0600 123456

## Department of Social Development Substance Abuse Line 24hr helpline

Tel: 0800 12 13 14  
 SMS: 32312

## Narcotics Anonymous KZN

Helpline: 086 100 6962  
 WhatsApp: 079 592 2294

## Alcoholics Anonymous South Africa

[www.aasouthafrica.org.za](http://www.aasouthafrica.org.za)  
 Tel: 031 301 4959 / 301 9830  
 24/7 helpline: 0861 435 722

## Safer Spaces National Safety Services

[www.saferspaces.org.za/safety-services](http://www.saferspaces.org.za/safety-services)

## Gender Based Violence Helplines

24/7 helpline: 0800 428 428 / 0800 150 150  
 Call back: \*120\*7867#  
 Tears GBV SMS: \*134\*7355#

## MobieG Counseling for Teens

[www.mobieg.co.za](http://www.mobieg.co.za)

## Childline

24/7 crisis line: 0800 555 555

**KWAZULU NATAL**  
 Thuthuzela Care Centres

Edendale Hospital, Pietermaritzburg	033 395 4325
Madadeni Hospital, New Castle	034 328 8508
Empangeni TCC, Ngwelezana Hospital	035 794 1471
Port Shepstone TCC, Regional Hospital	039 688 6021
Umlazi TCC, Umlazi	031 907 8496
Phoenix TCC, Phoenix Unit 2	031 502 2338
RK Khan TCC, Westcliffe	031 401 0394
Stanger TCC, Stanger Regional Hospital	032 551 6632

Rape Crisis  
 Cape Town Trust

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<http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/mental/covid19.htm>

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**COVID-19 Mental Health Toolkit**