

POLARS' EXPRESS

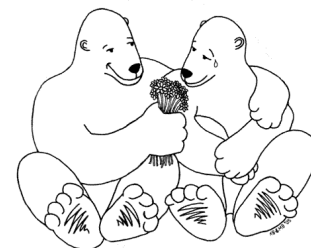
The Newsletter of the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance of Boston

December 2016, January and February 2017



Winter Calendar

Schedule of Speakers and Events





On the 2nd Wednesday of each month in McLean's de Marneffe Building cafeteria, 7–8 p.m., DBSA-Boston sponsors lectures – with question and answer sessions – on mood disorders and their treatment, recovery and wellness, and social services. Lectures are free and open to the public: [Donations Welcomed!](#)

See page 6 for backgrounds on speakers

- Dec. 14: "Moments in Time," Wendy Woodfield
- Dec. 21: **Holiday Party & the Annual Lee Paris Artisan Craft Faire!** See page 7.
- Jan. 11: "The Irritable Child," James Palmer, DO
- Feb. 08: "Families for Depression Awareness," Susan Weinstein, Co-Executive Director

Support groups meet every Wednesday: 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Wednesdays, 7–9 p.m. 2nd Wednesdays, 8–9 p.m.
McLean Hospital's de Marneffe Building cafeteria, Belmont, MA. [Members and guests are encouraged to arrive between 6:15 and 6:45 p.m.](#)

DBSA-Boston Services

- Wednesday-night Share Care support groups include Newcomers, Depression, Mania & Bipolar, Maintaining Stability, Dual Diagnosis, Family & Friends, Open Exchange, Veterans, Women's Issues, Young Adults, and Working and Coping.
- Our Drop-in groups gather Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 1:30–3:30 p.m., in McLean's de Marneffe Building cafeteria, Room 132.
- Thursdays, 7–9 p.m., Share Care at Mass General Hospital, in the Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care on the 4th floor in Suite 4A, Schiff Conference Center, Boston.
- For updates, follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BostonDBSA, or call the office. 
- Office hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., in Room 119 of McLean's de Marneffe Building cafeteria • 617-855-2795.
- DBSA-Boston, PO Box 102 (for packages: 115 Mill Street), Belmont, MA 02478 617-855-2795 • Fax: 617-855-3666 • Email: info@dbsaboston.org Website: www.dbsaboston.org
- DBSA-Boston related news is noted by the paw print. 

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The first Wednesday of each month, a Board member will be at the Welcome Table.

Board, Advisors, and Staff

Board Executive Committee

President:	Chuck Weinstein
Vice President:	Lillian Cravotta-Crouch
Treasurer:	Barry Park
Secretary:	Susan Reynolds
Past President:	Michele O'Shea
President Emeritus:	Everett Page

Board Directors

John C. Dorr	Kelley Stout
Mia Guerriero	Christian Tiongson
Bob Hanflig	

Facilitation Advisor

Chuck Weinstein, LMHC, CPS

McLean Hospital Liaison

Brian P. Brennan, MD, MMSc

Office Staff

Bookkeeper:	John P.
Office Staff:	Kelley and Suzanne

Meeting Schedules

Board of Directors:

1st Wednesdays (12/07, 01/04, 02/01) 7 p.m.

Facilitator Meetings:

1st & 3rd Wednesdays (12/07, 12/21,
01/04, 01/18, 02/01, 02/15) 5:45 p.m., Room 132

Share Care Committee:

2nd Wednesdays (12/14, 01/11, 02/08)
5:45 p.m., Room 118

DBSA-Boston news is noted by the paw print. 

The Polars' Express Newsletter Committee:
Barry Park • Susan Reynolds, Editor - see page 9

President's Letter Winter 2016-2017



Dear Friends:

We have experienced in our organization's past many significant beginnings and endings; births and deaths, comings and goings; losses and achievements; frustrations, challenges and celebrations. In October 2015, many of us were able to join together for a huge party, marking and honoring 30 continuous years of this fine organization's service to our community, and how these weekly meetings, uninterrupted by hurricanes and snow storms, have touched us, enhanced our lives, giving many hope who were hopeless. An organization that I fondly think of as my extended family.

During this past year of 2016 we also experienced a presidential campaign that was energetically and passionately fueled by such extremes of emotion, from ebullience to hatred, leading to a political climate, unlike any other, outside the war in Vietnam that I can compare it to.

This year-long campaign ended only a few weeks ago with a new President-Elect. This person who was voted into office, was elected through the electoral college, a process created by our Founding Americans to allow for what is considered to be a fair and just practice of selecting Presidents.

Throughout the years, the electoral college has had its supporters and its critics, however, at the end of the day, it exists and we use it. Having said that, it is unarguable that presidential candidates can lose even if they have the popular vote. We saw this happen a few weeks ago and it has happened other times in our country's history as well.

Continued on page 3

President's Letter, continued



During our facilitator's meeting, post-election, I was privileged to be a part of an impassioned discussion about the need to keep our groups a safe harbor, a neutral, unaffiliated, kind and compassionate entity that offers healthy and balanced support groups that provide the framework to continue to promote an emotionally and physically safe environment, knowing full well that many people have been extremely impacted by the outcome of this election.

I felt so proud to be associated with DBSA-Boston as I heard, which is what I hear every time I attend this regular meeting, a diverse group of people (facilitators) young adults, adults, and senior adults of different genders and orientations, religions, and unique collective life-time experiences, concerned for the continued emotional well-being of all in their groups. All the membership, without exception.

Our United States of America has its constitution, we at DBSA-Boston have our "Share Care Guidelines." "...We respond to each other with compassion and dignity. We do not confront, judge, or discriminate." From our current membership agreement: "DBSA-Boston members in good standing are entitled to the following privileges: A safe and empathic environment to aid in their personal growth..."

I suggest that all who attend, whether they are a paid member, regular attendee, or guest are afforded this as well.

During this difficult time in America for some, while others are celebrating a victory, I urge that we embrace the essence of our organization, that of compassion, respect and dignity, to continue sharing (our thoughts and feelings) and caring (about each other) unaltered and to prevail through this time becoming closer as a community of friends, family, and neighbors.

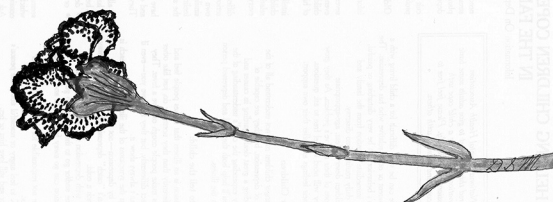
We are not unaccustomed to the giving and receiving of kind and compassionate support, to people whom we have known for years as well as equally to those whom we have never met before. We all started as newcomers.

Yet because of our organization's belief of inclusion rather than exclusion, kindness rather than mean-heartedness, sensitivity rather than being callous, effort rather than being perfect, we remain and continue to show up week after week, year after year because even though we do not necessarily agree with other people's beliefs, we defend and honor their right to express them; a hallmark of our organization.

With all the uncertainties ahead, what I can be sure of is the joy I will feel when I hear someone say: *See you next Wednesday!*

For your consideration, as I humbly continue to serve as your President,

Chuck Weinstein



Board Notices

Committees at a Glance



Activities: Organizes DBSA-Boston social events.

Communications: Develops and maintains DBSA-Boston website, and produces the newsletter.

Executive: Oversees the Board of Directors.

Fundraising: Develops fundraisers to benefit DBSA-Boston.

Marketing/Outreach: Develops strategies, materials, and programs to get DBSA-Boston better known to healthcare providers at Greater Boston area hospitals.

Membership: Manages the Welcome Table, promotes DBSA-Boston membership.

Nominations: Coordinates the nomination process for election of Board members.

Office Operations: Proposes updates/changes in office operations.

Share Care: Coordinates and oversees share care groups.

Speakers Bureau: Finds speakers and organizes schedule for the monthly speakers' series.

Training: Evaluates and proposes training sessions for facilitators.

Wednesday Night Facilitators: Schedules and coordinates facilitators for the Wednesday night share care groups.

2016-2017

Committees

Chairs

Activities:	Lillian Cravotta-Crouch
Communications:	Susan Reynolds
Executive:	Chuck Weinstein
Fundraising:	Chuck Weinstein
Marketing/Outreach	Steve Lappen
Membership:	Christian Tiongson
Nominations:	Open
Office Operations	Barry Park
Share Care:	Lillian Cravotta-Crouch
Speakers Bureau:	Mary Johnston
Training:	Bob Hanflig
Wednesday Night Facilitators:	Roberta U.

If you have an interest in serving on a committee, please speak with the respective chairperson.

Make Sure Your Membership is Current

Have you paid this year's dues? If you are not sure whether your membership is up to date, check with Treasurer Barry Park. Be sure to keep your membership active.

Current members receive discounted pricing for all parties and all Facilitator Trainings.

You can become a member or renew your membership by check or online. To do this online, go to:
http://dbsaboston.netfirms.com/?page_id=121

To pay by cash or check, pick up a form at the Welcome Table or the DBSA-Boston Office.

The Membership Committee is looking for volunteers to work at the Welcome Table on Wednesday evenings (perhaps once a month) 6:15-8:00 p.m. It's a great way to connect with other members, and to give a smile and information to people who are joining us for the first time. If you are interested, speak with Membership Chair Christian Tiongson, or call the office at 617-855-2795.

Share Care Support Groups



DBSA is about peer-support groups. At DBSA-Boston, we provide four different venues for groups, with total attendance between 400 and 500 people each month.

When and where we provide support groups:

- Wednesday evening meetings, 7–9 p.m., in the de Marneffe Building cafeteria at McLean Hospital, Belmont. We have eleven different groups on Wednesday evenings, including Newcomers, Depression, Mania & Bipolar, Maintaining Stability, Dual Diagnosis, Family & Friends, Veterans, Women's Issues, Young Adults, a group that's resuming, Open Exchange*, and a new group, Working and Coping**.

Facilitator Coordinator: Roberta U. • Room Assignment Coordinator: Meach C.

- Thursday evening meetings, 7–9 p.m., in the Yawkey Center for Outpatient Care, 4th Floor, Suite 4A, Schiff Conference Center, at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), Boston. These are open to people who have an affective disorder and their family and friends.
- In-house groups at McLean Hospital, Belmont. These are for patients in the hospital.
- Daytime Drop-in groups, Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays (Room 132), 1:30–3:30 p.m., in the de Marneffe Building cafeteria at McLean Hospital, Belmont. Daytime Facilitator: Barry Park

*Support Group Resuming

Open Exchange

Occurs every Wednesday

Group provides an ideal opportunity for people with mood disorders to meet and talk with people from our Friends and Families group. By sharing our different perspective and life issues, we foster awareness and empathy, and help each other understand how we cope with our respective experience. It can be very helpful for friends and family members to hear stories from unrelated people who live with depression, bipolar disorder and other mental illnesses. People with mental illness may benefit from the objectivity of friends and family who are not engaged in their daily lives. *Please note that although Open Exchange is a good group for exchanging feedback and support between family, friends and people with a mood disorder, it not a family therapy group, and family members are discouraged from attending the group at the same time.*

**New Support Group

Working and Coping

Occurs every 3rd Wednesday of the month

Coping with the everyday stresses of a job can be challenging and at times seem impossible. You may feel defeated after a long shift or even a hour after you clocked in. You are not alone. The DBSA Work and Coping Group provides meaningful and supportive discussions with working peers (volunteer, per-diem, part-time, and full-time) who have mental illness. The purpose of the group is to support and learn from others by sharing personal experiences in coping with everyday work stresses and situations that may exacerbate mental illness. Topics include, but are not limited to, work-life balance, anxiety in high-pressured situations, and self-worth in the workplace. While work is the primary topic of discussion, the group is not a recruiting, job-hunting, or resume-review session. Work and Coping Group occurs every 3rd Wednesday of the month. It is open to anyone attending DBSA groups who is coping with work-related issues. We hope you can join us!

Members of the Share Care Committee: Lillian Cravotta-Crouch, Chair, Dennis H., Bob Hanflig, Sylvia M., Michele O., John P., Kate R., Roberta U., and Chuck Weinstein (ex-officio)

Go to our website to see other regional support groups: www.dbsaboston.org

Background of Speakers Presenting at DBSA-Boston Fall 2016



December 14, 2016: “Moments in Time,” Wendy Woodfield



Wendy Woodfield was born and delivered, by her grandfather, on October 24, 1943. Her typical day begins bright and early with the local morning news with Amy Goodman. Before the afternoon settles in, she enjoys a cappuccino and croissant with a healthy dose of writing. Between her moments in time, Wendy loves to swim at the Wellbridge pool near Harvard Square and take nature walks with her novio, Syd. When she can, she frequents the saltwater river of Medomack of Maine, for calm and rejuvenation.

Moments in Time is a collection of short-short stories encapsulating the expanse of Wendy Woodfield's life. Each story is complete in itself, Wendy will read three stories from the collection. “Red Canoe” describes her entrepreneurship and relationship with her family. “Sterling Keys” describes her attachment to her sons as a 50-something-year-old woman when faced with mental health challenges. “Our Tree” is a tribute for her partner and symbolizes her present life. There will be an opportunity for Q&A at the end of each reading led by the author. Wendy will have copies of her book for sale after the presentation.

January 11, 2017: “The Irritable Child,” James Palmer, DO

James Palmer, DO, is currently a second-year child and adolescent psychiatry fellow at the Cambridge Health Alliance/Harvard Medical School. He completed general psychiatry training in Arizona and prior to that completed medical school in Iowa. He is pleased with the opportunity to present regarding this topic that is so important to children, adolescents, and their families.

Child mental health has varied in its diagnosis and approach to children that are angry or irritable. This presentation will be an introduction to topics of childhood bipolar disorder and the new diagnosis of disruptive mood dysregulation disorder (DMDD).

February 08, 2017: “Families for Depression Awareness,” Susan Weinstein, Co-Executive Director

Families for Depression Awareness helps families recognize and cope with depression and bipolar disorder to get people well and prevent suicides. Their programs and activities are designed to empower caregivers and their families on their path to wellness.



Annual Holiday Party & Crafts Faire



Wednesday, December 21st 6 p.m.-9 p.m.
deMarneffe Building, McLean Hospital

Please join us for Good Cheer with a Holiday Buffet!

We provide plenty of pizza, sandwiches, rollups, cookies, cakes, hot tea, coffee and soda) and we look to you, our membership to add to the fun by bringing in your favorite homemade dish or store-bought item. Show up a bit early to help set up, if you wish. Your help is always welcome.

Annual Lee Paris Artisan Crafts Faire*

Every year we have wonderful Peer Artisans from our community who bring their goods (many handmade, one of a kind) for sale. This is a great time to buy your Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanza and Festivis gifts. There will be a unique variety of gift items: photographs, handcrafts, paintings, gift cards, jewelry, clothing, soaps, art work, Chatchkas, Ha-Ha's and Hoo-Hoo's... Bring Cash!

Live Music

Melody and the Melody-Makers are always here to bring musical cheer to all. The Melody-Makers comprise members and guests who are musicians (amateur is fine). Hear your holiday favorites.

Raffles: 50/50 & Gifts/Gift Basket Fun!

The 50/50 raffle is cash, with the winner getting 50% of all monies collected. The Gifts/Gift Basket raffle is exactly that, baskets made by our membership of cool presents, gift certificates donated by local stores and merchants, plus other assorted fun gifts. Raffle tickets are on sale every Wednesday in December up to and including the 21st.

Support Groups?

Yes, of course! We will still offer support groups from 8 p.m.-9 p.m. for all of those who would like to attend, or hang around and chat with your friends. It's all good!

Membership Drive

If you are not a member, consider joining DBSA-Boston at the Holiday Party. If you join on this night, or renew your current membership, as your first benefit of membership, you will have free access to our scrumptious buffet, a savings of \$5.00, a great incentive.

The Party is not a proper Party without You!

Please join us! Bring family and friends. \$5.00 donation for guests, \$3.00 for all current DBSA-Boston members. No one turned away!

For more information call our office (617) 855-2795
or check our website www.dbsaboston.org

* The Artisan Craft Faire is named for our long-standing member, photographer Lee Paris, who started our tradition of art shows at the Annual Cookout in 2006!

Lillian Cravotta-Crouch
Activities Committee Chair



Whispered Secrets

I stood beside your bed last night,
And whispered in your ear,
The things I long to say to you,
Held silent out of fear.
I told you of my darkness,
And my crushing agony,
And how my mind tortures me so
In a battle against me.
When you're your gravest enemy,
Afraid of your own self,
Confessions can't be made to you,
Because you'd want to help.
And when you'd try, and when you'd fail,
I'd watch you draw away,
So by your side and unexposed
I will securely stay.

This morning I lie next to you,
And watch you as you wake,
And look for signs you heard my words,
But just a smile you make,
As you draw near, so peacefully,
And whisper in my ear,
Of love you have for someone else,
And words I cease to hear.
Another day we'll live together,
My heart behind a shield,
And further you will be from me,
My inside safely sealed.

~Joy Galloway Shen

Solace

Solace...even the sound of the word
is soothing, like a whispered 'hush, lie still, all is well.'

As when you were a child. Then you could settle in, and await the night's silence with a quiet heart,
trusting, knowing you were safe.

Now solace is not so easily at hand.
So often the world within and without seems an angry maelstrom, a place of whirling sadness,
confusion, rage.

Then I look for a quiet center in myself
And those times that it appears
I hold the solace close, treasuring it, knowing now how rare it can be.

~ Anonymous

Now Offering Student Memberships!



DBSA-Boston is proud to announce the creation of a new membership level for students who are in school in any capacity (i.e. part-time or full-time high school, college, graduate, technical schools, or taking a couple classes on the side).

The Student Membership holds all the benefits of an Individual Membership for only \$15 with a valid student ID. Your student ID can be photocopied for submission or shown to the Welcome Table volunteers or members of the Board of Director in order to receive your membership.

If you have any questions about the new Student Membership, please email christian@dbsaboston.org.

Polars' Express

- The newsletter is published quarterly, the 1st of March, June, September, and December.
- As of March 2015 the Polars' Express is an electronic newsletter, available to anyone who subscribes. An abbreviated printed version is available for members only, who request it.
- **Please email your submissions to news@dbsaboston.org**, including your name, email address, and/or phone number in case the editor has questions. Author/artist name will be withheld from publication upon request.

The next submissions deadline is February 15, 2017

- Send your letters, comments, and suggestions to: Susan Reynolds, Editor, Polars' Express, PO Box 102, Belmont, MA 02478 or email: news@dbsaboston.org.