

# THE SENSITIVE SCOOP

## Consumer Newsletter

For *any* Woman living with Mental Illness

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*The Sensitive Scoop is now available on the MSS website at [www.mss.mb.ca](http://www.mss.mb.ca)*



In November Tina, from the Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba, spoke to the Women's Group about SAD. Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD, is a mood disorder that affects some people as winter approaches. As fall begins the lack of sunlight causes symptoms of depression. Symptoms may include sleeping too much, lack of energy and craving for sweets and carbohydrates. These symptoms usually stop as the spring approaches and the hours of sunlight increase. A smaller number of people can be affected by a condition called Reverse Seasonal Affective Disorder in the summer months presenting symptoms of depression such as anxiety. A few of the treatments mentioned for SAD include light treatment, anti-psychotic medication and cognitive-behavioral therapy.

**Some ladies who attended the presentation provided the following comments concerning SAD.**

*I was most affected when the speaker said that 50% of the nation's productivity was affected adversely. I believe people suffering from depression can be helped effectively. Do not stress them out by giving them full time jobs but rather encourage them to participate in part time jobs involving trades like cooking, sewing and pottery, which can be sold and thus increasing the nation's productivity positively. It also can be a fun time activity and can be very therapeutic.*

*Shekinah Emmanuel*

*The presentation was good and I found out that SAD might affect an individual to a certain extent. They may be more tired and fatigued during the winter season.*

*Maureen*

*I liked the personal stories from Tina about her life with bipolar with the details about SAD.*

*Ruth McLean*

*Focus on an exact time frame or have a daily routine like going to bed at 10:00 p.m. every night. Get up at the same time every morning. If you drive and feel out of control be sure to pull over to the side of the road until you can put your thoughts together. Have a positive outlook and remain focused.*

*Tricia O.*

*Having a positive attitude was one suggestion to combat SAD. This can be challenging however, depending on where a person is in one's journey to recovery.*

For more information about SAD, and other Mood Disorders, please contact the Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba located in FACES at 100 – 4 Fort Street, Winnipeg, MB R3C 1C4 (204) 786-0987.

## Understanding and Managing Tips on Cholesterol

(Information originated from a dietician from Youville Centre)

Cholesterol occurs naturally in all humans. Your body needs cholesterol to make hormones and Vitamin D to keep cell walls healthy. Your liver makes most of the cholesterol your body needs. There are two main types of cholesterol found in your blood. "Good" or HDL-high density lipoprotein is the good cholesterol that can reduce plaque build up on your artery walls. High Density (HDL) levels lower your risk of heart disease. The "bad" cholesterol (LDL) is low-density lipoprotein. This type can cause a build up of plaque in your arteries and raises your risk of heart disease if the LDL is high.

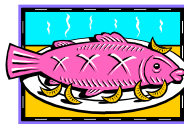
**When to see the Doctor:** There are many factors that put someone at risk. It is recommended that you have your doctor test your cholesterol if you have high blood pressure, have a history of heart disease, stroke, or diabetes, smoke or recently quit smoking, are a female and over the age of 50 or post-menopausal, or have waist measurement of 88 cm (for females). Your doctor will assess your cholesterol levels with you and give you suggestions of lifestyle changes to help you keep your cholesterol levels in tact.

I personally was diagnosed with high levels of cholesterol. Some changes that I found most helpful were as follows: I find keeping as active everyday as possible, like going outside and getting light in my eyes, simply doing housework and /or walking in the mall or taking short walks outside and gradually taking longer walks, helps to keep a healthy weight. Therefore note that a healthy lifestyle can help you control blood cholesterol levels. You can do this by achieving a healthy weight, being physically active and enjoying a healthy eating pattern (i.e. low in saturated and trans fats).

**Tips to keep cholesterol in check:** Learning the nutrition facts on food labels helps you make informed food choices. Eat healthy meals like fish two to three times per week (canned) or without batter, such as Pollock, that is inexpensive. I buy it in bulk or a big package and separate it at home into small portions to freeze. Eat fruits and vegetable to your hearts content. To keep my cholesterol at bay I sprinkle ground flaxseed in whatever I am making, often in oatmeal cereal, soups, salads, or even stews. It has no taste but is very healthy, according to the dietician, though use sparingly at first. Walnuts or almonds can be added to salads, and baking. Other foods to help keep your cholesterol in check include: eggs fortified with omega 3's fatty acids, wheat germ, oat bran, barley, lentils, and kidney beans! I've been learning that whatever I eat my body gets used to it. At first I did not like using almond butter instead of peanut butter but now I crave the wholeness of it and that also holds true for me with generic name walnuts, both available from Superstore. Garlic added to my cooking is another health booster, as we may all know from our forefathers. Use low fat cooking methods such as baking, broiling, or steaming and try to avoid fried foods. Limit your intake of red meat as it contains saturated fat and limit high-fat dairy products, shortening or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, hard margarine, or pre-made foods that have extra preservatives in them.

The above is from my own personal diet experience used for my own bill of health and it is some of what I learned from the dietician that did the three-hour workshop at Youville Health Centre, plus from the handouts she gave us to take home. Other sources of information were brochures from: the Heart and Stroke Foundation; the Canadian Egg Marketing Board; the Health Canada Food Guide and the Canadian Diabetes Association.

**HEALTHY CHOLESTEROL: " WHAT'S YOUR REASON FOR MONITORING IT"??** Monika Anema



**"Inspiration: All good things which exist are the fruits of originality." by John Stuart Mill.**

## **"Name That Feeling" Program for Children - Manitoba Schizophrenia Society**

### **We R-O-C-K : We Respect, we are Open, we have Courage and we show Kindness**

"Name That Feeling" is a program offered by the Manitoba Schizophrenia Society, for children who have a family member with a mental illness. (This includes any mental illness, and any family member.)

Since 2002 this program has been offered to children 7 years and up. For teenagers (over 14), who don't want to join a group, individual sessions are offered.

When a family encounters a mental illness it can be overwhelming, coping with everyone's needs and giving support. Sometimes children get left out of the puzzle simply because so much energy is being directed to the person who is ill, and to navigating the mental health system.

Maybe it is felt that children will not understand, or they will be too frightened if told the truth. All of this is very understandable and it is a huge load on any family to help their children through this difficult time.

"Name That Feeling" can help when the family is ready. It is a seven-week support group that offers young people the opportunity to discuss their needs and feelings as they relate to living with a family member with a mental illness. Confidentiality is a priority. If a child prefers to listen rather than share, this is respected. No reports are kept. The sessions cover such topics as "What am I feeling?", "What's mental illness?", "Taking care of myself", and "Other people's attitudes." There is no charge for the program, and requests can be made by anyone.

Each session includes sharing, games, topic related exercises and readings, and the ever-popular snack! The program is held after school on Thursdays from 5:00 p.m. – 7 p.m. or during the day in the summer months. The groups consist of 5-6 participants and two facilitators. The atmosphere is more like a club than an extension of the school day, and each group chooses a club name.

From 7 years of Name That Feeling evaluations, we have compiled the following: When asked "What is the hardest thing for you about living with mental illness in your family?" the children have said: -frightened by different moods, not understanding mental illness, embarrassed, angry, disappointed, scared from yelling or fighting, sad their parent gets tired and can't do things, and frightened their parent will hurt them self.

Parents and Guardians have said the following when asked: "Do you feel Name That Feeling has been beneficial for your child?" - Yes, he knew he wasn't alone, felt more understood, supported, educated and in touch with how she felt about her parent's illness. It's a place to talk openly about anything, and their attitude and outlook improved vastly. She is more self-confident, relaxed and less angry, less anxious and less feeling sick at night.

Participants in the group said this when asked "What did you learn from Name That Feeling?": - The sickness is not your fault, not something to be ashamed of, can be treated and it's not your whole life. Also, I didn't cause it, it can't be cured but there is always hope, it is a chemical imbalance in the brain, it can happen to anyone at any time, I am not alone, and ways to look after myself, and cope.

What is the future of "Name That Feeling"? As the requests come in, we will accommodate. Each seven week session is geared to the ages and specific needs of that group. Sometimes there is a gem of a surprise, such as the group that took the initiative to write a play around their situation, which was rehearsed and performed to a closed audience. We have had many requests for a "graduate group" which would be ongoing throughout the year, and this is being considered. The facilitators are very grateful to the families, children's agencies, and, of course, the children themselves, for putting their trust in the program, and for allowing us to have the privilege of working with these delightful young people.

Facilitators for "Name That Feeling" are Jane Burpee, Public Education for MSS and Sherri Matsumoto, past Outreach Worker for MSS and currently working with the Children's Program and the Voice Hearing Workshops offered by MSS. For further information and registration please call Jane at 786-1616. If a family would like their child to meet with the facilitators prior to the decision to join the group, please call 786-1616 to make an appointment.

by Jane Burpee

# Women's Program Schedule

January February 2009

*Meetings are held on Thursday afternoon from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM at 4 Fort Street (FACES) although sometimes we go on an outing. Any women living with a mental illness are welcome to attend. Occasionally we are out of the office for an activity so please call to confirm your attendance at 786-1616.*

## January

- Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>**                    **Writer's Group** - Participants can bring in poetry or short stories they have written to receive positive feedback from other group members.
- Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>**                   **Speaker - Ann from Women's Resource Center**  
– Nutrition and Healthy Eating Ideas
- Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>**                   **Sharing and Planning** – This is your chance to suggest programming ideas and discussion issues in a safe place respecting confidentiality.
- Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>**                   **Movie Day** – A relaxing time to enjoy a movie at FACES.

**Happy Valentine's Day**

## February

- Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>**                    **Writer's Group**
- Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>**                   **Arts & Crafts** – Have fun making something to take home.
- Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>**                   **Games Day**
- Feb. 26<sup>th</sup>**                   **Bowling** – Come out and enjoy a couple of non-competitive games. Try to beat your own previous score.



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