

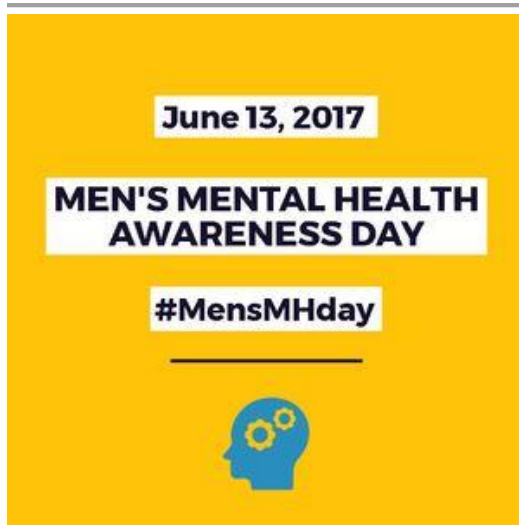
Hi there,

As you may have heard, June 13th was Men's Mental Health Awareness Day. What you may not know is that the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions often present themselves differently in men. For example, symptoms of depression in men are more likely to manifest as physical symptoms, like migraines and backaches, making it more difficult to diagnose and treat. In this month's newsletter, you'll find information and resources available to men dealing with mental health issues. Read on to learn more.

*"Obviously I am sick, but I sure as hell am not weak. I am sick, not weak."
– Michael Landsberg*

Some Facts About Men's Mental Health

- 10-15% of men are living with depression
- Men are less likely to recognize the symptoms of a mental illness and are less likely to be treated
- Symptoms of depression in men can show up as headaches, sleep problems, and anger issues
- Men are more likely than women to die by suicide



Join The Conversation

This week, we celebrated **Men's Mental Health Awareness Day**. While seeking help for a mental health issue can be challenging for anyone, there are certain barriers men face that make them less likely to seek help.

We encourage you to educate yourself about mental illnesses and their symptoms, learn about the different resources available, and seek help if you believe you may be struggling with a mental health issue.

Join the conversation on social media using the hashtag **#MensMHday!**

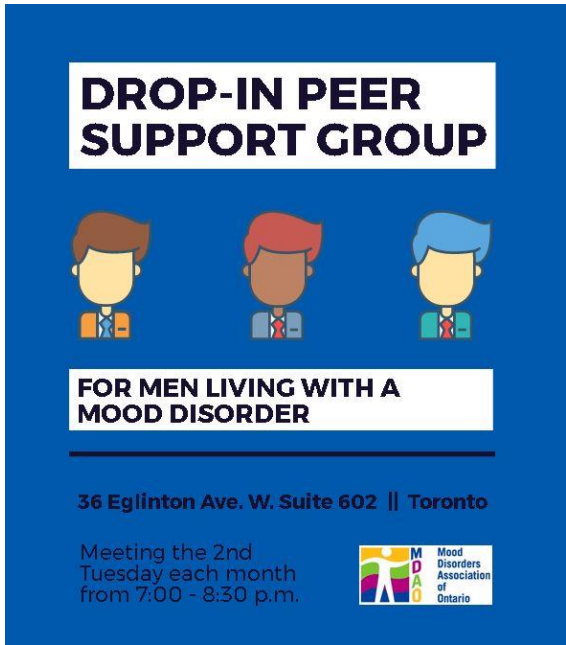
Sick Not Weak

Sick Not Weak is an online community started in 2009 by Michael Landsberg. **Sick Not Weak** is dedicated to helping people understand that mental illness is a sickness, not a weakness. This is a place where those struggling with mental illness can find support by being surrounded by others who understand their struggles.

To share your story, or to learn more about the organization, visit the **Sick Not Weak** website [here](#).

**JOIN THE
MOVEMENT.**

SICKNOTWEAK




DROP-IN PEER SUPPORT GROUP

FOR MEN LIVING WITH A MOOD DISORDER

36 Eglinton Ave. W. Suite 602 || Toronto

Meeting the 2nd Tuesday each month from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.



Men's Drop-In Group

Dealing with a mental health issue? Struggling with the stigma around mental health? **Talk to other men who've been there.**

Our drop-in peer support group just for men meets the **second Tuesday of each month from 7:00-8:30 p.m.** If you are living with depression, bipolar disorder or anxiety, be sure to check it out!

You'll meet other men with mental health challenges and discuss issues related to men's mental health.

No need to sign up, this group is completely free and open to anyone who would like to attend. Just come by **36 Eglinton Ave. West in Toronto at 7:00 p.m.** to join the group, you will be welcomed by our group facilitator!

For more information, visit our website [here](#).

Youth Advisory Committee

Back in April, we sent out a call for applicants for our new **Youth Advisory Committee**. We are excited to share that we have since assembled a diverse committee of 16 talented and committed youth to help us develop youth-focused training and programming. The committee will be meeting throughout the summer, and will have the opportunity to take our Peer Support Training, as well as our WRAP program. The feedback and expertise generated by this talented group of youth will ensure that the programs and trainings that we offer are adept at meeting the needs of the Transitional Aged Youth portion of the population that we serve. We are very excited for this committee to become a pivotal part of our organization moving forward!

Have You Heard About W.R.A.P.?

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) is a mental health recovery program developed by a group of people who experienced mental health and other health and lifestyle challenges. These people learned that they could identify what makes them well, and then use their own Wellness Tools to relieve difficult feelings and maintain wellness and a higher quality of life. Many people have found that using WRAP helps them stay well for longer periods of time.

This recovery program is facilitated by peers, for peers. In this hands-on workshop, people with lived experience of mental health challenges work together to design their own Wellness Recovery Action Plans in practical, day-to-day terms—to help them get well and stay well. WRAP does not necessarily replace traditional treatments, but can be used as a



WELLNESS

RECOVERY

ACTION

PLAN

Coming Soon!



compliment to any other treatment options you have chosen.

Your WRAP is developed by you. You choose who assists and supports you in your recovery, whether they are family, friends, or health care providers, as you work on your own plan for wellness. Over the course of the program, we will walk shoulder-to-shoulder as peers as we learn with each other and from each other.

To learn more about WRAP, visit our website [here](#).



CLEARING THE CLUTTER

DROP-IN GROUP

MEETING EVERY 1st, 3rd, AND 4th THURSDAY EACH MONTH

36 Eglinton Ave. West, Toronto || 7:00-9:00 p.m.

A non-judgmental peer support group for those struggling with hoarding tendencies

M D A O Mood Disorders Association of Ontario



Peer Support Drop-in Group

Is your home becoming too cluttered? Do you struggle with throwing things out? Do you have a tendency to hoard objects? You are not alone.

We offer a **FREE**, non-judgmental peer support drop-in group for people living with hoarding tendencies. No registration is required.

Come meet other individuals with hoarding tendencies and get peer support from people who understand how you feel.

Clearing The Clutter meets on the **1st, 3rd and 4th Thursday of each month** at our office at 36 Eglinton Ave. West in Toronto. For more information, give us a call at 416-486-8046 or visit our website [here](#).

Our next meeting will be on June 22, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Laughing Like Crazier Grad Show

Last month, 11 participants graduated from our **Laughing Like Crazier** recovery program and celebrated by showcasing their jokes at a soldout **Laughing Like Crazier Grad Show**.

The show was held at Imperial Pub on May 25, 2017 with 70 people in the audience and was a huge success. The comic sets were funny, poignant, and hilarious. Comics performed jokes they had written about life, love, struggles, mental health, mood disorders, and finding the humour in everyday life.

The showcase marked the end of the 14-week long program. **Cindy B.** and **Stephanie L.** facilitated the group and met with participants every week at St. Paul's Church in Toronto to help them craft their jokes and master the art of stand-up comedy.

Laughing Like Crazier is a recovery program at MDAO for those who have graduated from the **Laughing Like Crazy** program. **Laughing Like Crazier** combines peer support with practical writing and performing experience to help participants find humour in everyday situations and build resiliency. To learn more about **Laughing Like Crazy**, visit our website [here](#).





One-on-One Peer Support

Our One-on-One Peer Support program is alive and well! The program offers access to **one-on-one peer support sessions** with a trained peer. Both our staff and volunteer peer supporters have received extensive training in using their mental health experiences to support others going through similar mental health challenges. Free 45 minute one-on-one peer support appointments can be regularly scheduled on Mondays and Wednesdays, and alternative arrangements can be made as needed. Appointments are available in person at our Toronto location, via phone, or Medeo (a secure video-conferencing service).

For more information about this program, please contact Allison Dunning at allisondunning@mooddisorders.ca. Appointments can also be booked by calling our main line at 416-486-8046.

Canadians For Equitable Access To Depression Medication (CEADM)

In an unprecedented move, mental health professionals and leaders, advocates, doctors, academics and people with lived experience from across the country have joined together to form a coalition to ensure equitable and sustainable access for all Canadians suffering with depression. MDAO is proud to be a part of the coalition.

Through **Canadians for Equitable Access to Depression Medication (CEADM)**, these coalition members are speaking with a common voice on behalf of Canadians who need equitable access to medication to treat their depression, regardless of their income, education or access to employment benefits.

CEADM's objectives are to:

- Create awareness among policy-makers about the complexity of major depressive disorder and the effects of depression on Canadians' overall health;
- Highlight the inequity/fairness issue for many Canadians who rely on a public drug plan approval system that requires fixing; and
- Make depression care a priority among policy-makers.

See the latest news release [here](#).

MENTAL WELLNESS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ALL

THERE SHOULDN'T BE AN ACCESS ISSUE WHEN IT COMES TO TREATING ALL CANADIANS FOR DEPRESSION

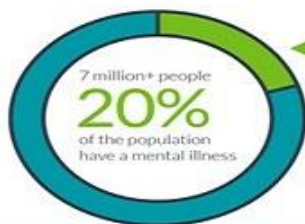
MENTAL ILLNESS

is the most significant public health issue of the 21st century.



GLOBALLY
350 MILLION+ PEOPLE

CANADA
7 MILLION+ PEOPLE



Among this huge group are many Canadians who rely on public drug plan coverage, which at the moment doesn't pay for all innovative depression medications:

- Veterans
- The elderly
- Single parents
- The marginalized
- Indigenous peoples
- People on low incomes

4,000

die by suicide
every year, including:

90% experienced mental illness



WHY THIS MATTERS

1. Depression is a complex disease requiring a broader range of choice in medications—increasing the chances of successful treatment.

Many Canadians who rely on their public drug plan to cover the cost of their medications are being left out. That's because public drug plans only cover a limited number of medications to address mood symptoms.

2. The public drug plan needs fixing.

It's clear that Canada's public drug plan system needs fixing. Canadians who rely on the public plan have limited choice compared to the broad range of medications offered to those with private plan coverage.

PRIVATE SYSTEM
(employer-sponsored)
Broad range of choice
in medications.

vs.

PUBLIC SYSTEM
(government-sponsored)
Medications that only
address mood symptoms

Imagine trying to cope with a complex disease that has
227 combinations of
symptoms, affecting:



EMOTION
mood•lethargy•disinterest



COGNITION
ability to think•focus



PHYSICAL WELL-BEING
fatigue•sleep•eating patterns

When it comes to depression, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

With 227 combinations of symptoms, Canadians with depression who rely on public drug plan coverage need more choice, not less. Improving the mental health of Canadians shouldn't be an employment lottery. It's time to fix the system.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO ALL HEALTH CANADA-APPROVED DEPRESSION MEDICATIONS FOR ALL CANADIANS



Brought to you by Canadians for Equitable Access to Depression Medication—a common national voice acting on behalf of Canadians who need equitable access to medication to treat their depression, regardless of their income, education or access to employment benefits.

Congrats Elyse Grieco, MSW, RSW; MDAO's Newest Mental Health Counsellor

Elyse's involvement with the MDAO began in January 2013, as a social work placement student in the **Early Intervention Program**. Following graduation from the Master of Social Work program with the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto in November 2014, Elyse began volunteering with the MDAO on the Warm Line. Elyse was hired as a part-time peer support worker for the **Family Matters Peer Support and Recovery** program in January 2015, and soon transitioned to a full-time intake worker and counselling role for the program in the summer of 2015.



Elyse's personal challenges with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) have fueled her passion for mental health and motivated her involvement in the mental health field over the past 9 years.

Highlights include; co-founding and serving as president of *Let's Talk Crazy Talk (LTCT!): U of T's Mental Health Awareness Club*, the university's first mental health awareness club established in 2008, and speaking about her lived experience at various mental health awareness events at U of T. Most recently, Elyse started the **OCD Psycho-ed Peer Support Group for Individuals** and the **OCD Psycho-ed Peer Support Group for Families & Friends** at the MDAO. Both groups take place monthly, and create a safe and supportive space for individuals to discuss their experiences with OCD.

As a full-time mental health counsellor of the **Family Matters** program, Elyse will provide short-term, one-on-one counselling to individuals and families affected by mental health challenges. Elyse's varied experiences inform her understanding of recovery, which extends beyond the idea of simply being symptom free, and acknowledges that recovery from mental health challenges is an ongoing life journey. Elyse uses a person-centered, strengths-based and solutions-focused approach to support individuals in a way that complements their unique vision of recovery.

The Family Matters Peer Support and Recovery Program is a comprehensive support program for family members who are experiencing the complex challenges associated with providing and receiving care to those living with mood disorders and/or addictions.

This program adheres to the individual peer support and recovery work that MDAO does best while expanding upon and strengthening services in the following areas:

- Clinical support services for family members between the ages of 16 – 65 challenged with complex mental health and addiction needs
- Educational resources for family members
- Recovery programs for family members
- Peer support groups
- One-on-one family peer support
- Psycho-educational programs
- System navigation
- Support networks
- Community outreach

This program is funded by the **Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)**.

Welcome Stacey Barroso; Mental Health Youth and Family Coordinator

Stacey Barroso, MSW, RSW joins us as MDAO's **Mental Health Youth and Family Coordinator**.

Stacey has five years of clinical experience in mental health, within a client-centered, strengths-based, trauma-informed and recovery-oriented approach. As a Social Worker at St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre, she provided Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Mindfulness-based treatments to clients with mental health and substance use issues. Through her role as a Counsellor at The 519 Community Centre, she has developed and maintained a strong therapeutic alliance with diverse clients with complex trauma. At St. Michael's Hospital Head Injury Clinic, she collaborated with individuals and families in the facilitation of psychoeducational support groups to meet their needs.

She still volunteers two evenings a week at The 519 providing counselling and support to the community. She has a highly developed clinical skill set and experience in helping diverse individuals who struggle with intense emotions. With these abilities, as well as her language skills in Portuguese and Spanish, and her commitment to reducing stigma and building hope, we are excited to have Stacey join our MDAO team!

Stacey's focus within her practice includes:

1. Early psychosis intervention for youth and their families.
2. Transitional Youth and their Families (parents, other caregivers and siblings). Age 16 to 29- substance abuse, concurrent disorder or dual diagnosis.
3. Community Partnerships with St. Mike's and Sunnybrook Hospital and collaborations with High Schools and Universities.

Volunteer Corner

We would like to send a big congratulations to **Barbara M.** who recently celebrated her 5 year anniversary as a volunteer with MDAO. Barbara has been volunteering with MDAO since 2012 when she helped with the **Mad About You Gala**. Since then, she has been a dedicated **TIPS Warm Line** volunteer, providing peer support and information to callers, and mentoring new volunteers. Barbara has also been a frequent facilitator of drop-in peer support groups, including our **Women's Drop-In Group**.

On behalf of everyone at MDAO, thank you Barbara for sharing your time, skills, and experiences with MDAO over the past 5 years. You have truly made a difference in the lives of many others.

Joke Of The Month

**"Did you hear about this disease going around?
It's called 'normal' and there is no cure."**

- Christine W., LLC Participant

Get social with us!

