

## Mental Illness Awareness Week

Mental Illness Awareness Week takes place from October 6–12, 2019. This year, October 10 is World Mental Health Day *and* National Depression Screening Day.

### 2019 Theme: 7 Days, 7 Ways

Many people do not seek treatment in the early stages of mental illnesses because they don't recognize the symptoms. During Mental Illness Awareness Week, MHA National will focus on sharing information about 7 major mental health conditions:

- **Anxiety**
- **Bipolar Disorder**
- **Psychosis**
- **Eating Disorders**
- **Depression (On October 10 to coincide with World Mental Health Day and National Depression Screening Day)**
- **PTSD**
- **Addiction/Substance Use Disorder**

Each condition coincides with a free screening tool MHA offers at [MHAscreening.org](http://MHAscreening.org). Taking a mental health screening is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition. Screening helps catch problems early - [B4Stage4](#).

A screening only takes a few minutes, and after you are finished you will be given information about the next steps you should take based on the results. A screening is not a diagnosis, but it can be a helpful tool for starting a conversation with your doctor or a loved one about your mental health. Screening for mental health conditions should be just as normal as screening for cancer, diabetes, heart disease, or any other chronic health condition.

Not only are we sharing information about mental health conditions each day of the week, but we will also share 7 ways to start getting involved with mental health awareness and advocacy! Check it out [here](#).

From [MHA National website](#)

## How to Identify and Combat Seasonal Depression This Autumn

Autumn is a time of transition for Mother Nature—and for us regular ol' humans, too. While many of us delight in the first signs of fall (Colorful foliage! Pumpkin spice lattes! Sweaters!) many of us also feel a negative shift in mood around the same time.

Some people refer to this dip in mood as "seasonal affective disorder," or SAD, but that's not actually the diagnostic term for the condition, according to the DSM-5, the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the U.S. So if it's not SAD you're suffering from, what is it? And how can the symptoms be relieved, so you can enjoy fall to the fullest?

### What is It?

"If you look at the DSM-5 what you'll find there is no 'SAD'. You won't find it anywhere. What you will find is major depressive disorder," said Dr. Amanda Macht Jantzer, psychologist and assistant professor of psychology at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University.

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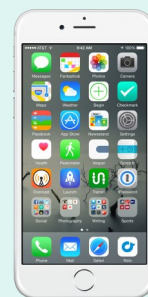


## **APP OF THE MONTH: Happify**

Need a happy fix? With its psychologist-approved mood-training program, the Happify app is your fast-track to a good mood. Try various engaging games, activity suggestions, gratitude prompts and more to train your brain as if it were a muscle, to overcome negative thoughts.

iPhone: <http://bit.ly/happiOS>

Android: <http://bit.ly/happGP>



### **Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior**

Tuesday, October 15, 2:00–3:30 PM in Rm. 302 of the County Office Building

Behavior is a powerful form of communication and is one of the primary ways for people with dementia to communicate their needs and feelings as the ability to use language is lost. However, some behaviors can present real challenges for caregivers to manage. Join us to learn to decode behavioral messages, identify common behavior triggers, and learn strategies to help intervene with some of the most common behavioral challenges of Alzheimer's disease.

**These free events are hosted by the Cortland County Area Agency on Aging's Caregiver Resource Center. Call (607)753-5060 to register.**



We are a volunteer Board of Directors that act to initiate and promote advocacy services, educational presentations, prevention programs, and information and resource referrals.

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eliminating racism  
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**AID TO VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE PRESENTS**

## **CHEFS TAKE A STAND: MEN AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

*Not your typical fundraiser...*

*Eat for a cause. Stand for a mission!*

Friday, October 4, 2019 / 6 PM to 8 PM  
Tickets now on sale at YWCA front desk!



## Seasonal Depression ...*Continued from page 1*

Jantzer said that "SAD" is essentially a colloquial term for a specific variety of major depressive disorder.

"With disorders like that, sometimes you'll have a specifier. So the specific specifier is 'with seasonal pattern,'" Jantzer said. "Basically, it is recurrent major depressive disorder, and most frequently, when it recurs, it will recur in the fall and winter months." The theories behind why seasonal depression occurs are much the same as they are for depression in general: biology and genetic inheritance, brain chemistry, environmental and cultural stress, and isolation are all thought to be factors.

In the case of recurrent major depressive disorder with a seasonal specifier, Jantzer also said younger adults and people living in more northern—like Minnesota—are at a higher risk. But seasonal depression is especially unique, Jantzer said, in that there "is some question about whether what is triggering those episodes has something to do with the sunshine. As the daylight decreases, for whatever reason, that may impact circadian rhythms and trigger this in people who have recurrent major depressive disorder," she said.

### What are the Symptoms?

Jantzer said there are some symptoms specific to major depressive disorder with a seasonal pattern, including: low energy, social withdrawal, an increased need for sleep, and/or carbohydrate cravings. But just experiencing some of the symptoms of seasonal depression does not necessarily mean you're suffering from a recurrent depressive disorder. "The thing for your readers to know is that lots of people feel a little more sluggish and kind of lower-energy as the days get shorter, but you would not be diagnosed with this unless it was really a pattern," Jantzer said.

Jantzer said to be diagnosed with major depressive disorder with a seasonal pattern, the patient must:

- Experience depressive episodes during a particular season or seasons.
- Experience a remittance, or absence of symptoms, during the other seasons.
- Experience these symptoms for at least two years in a row.
- Have symptoms that are not due to a recurring known stress, like regularly being unemployed during the winter as a part of your vocation.

A good indicator of whether a person has seasonal depression is to examine the impact of the symptoms on one's life, Jantzer said. Occasional autumn ennui is OK; days or weeks of stagnancy could be a sign of something more serious. "All of us have fluctuations in our mood. All of us, from time to time, just want to stay in bed. All of us, from time to time, feel sad and want to eat some comfort food," Jantzer said. "So it is when these symptoms become intolerable, when they're interfering with your life—when you can't get to work, when you can't get out of bed day after day—that's when it's time to seek help."

To read the entire article, including things you can do to prevent SAD, click [here](#).

By Alyssa Zaczek, Saint Cloud Times



### BOOK SHARE PROGRAM

The Mental Health Association of Cortland County offers a book share program, developed for Mental Health related readings only. (Fiction or non-fiction) It's *free* - your client gets to *keep* the book, and therapists can send multiple requests for books for multiple clients! Please note, there is a cap on funding, so be mindful of your requests. For more information or to make a request, email us at: [mhacortlandny@gmail.com](mailto:mhacortlandny@gmail.com)





## Childhood Poverty and Adult Health Outcomes

According to a 2018 study by Michelle Hughes, MA, MSW through the North Carolina Institute of Medicine and The Duke Endowment, poverty is one of the most pressing public health issues facing us today. It negatively impacts nearly every indicator of child well-being and strongly correlates with unfavorable adulthood health outcomes such as prevalence of chronic diseases.

Hughes' study indicated that "being poor is associated with so many childhood adversities that it may be considered an ACE (adverse childhood experience) in itself, more pervasive and persistent than all others. As children's economic circumstances are inextricably tied to those of their families, promoting family financial health by mitigating poverty as an ACE is critical to expanding opportunity."

While these sentiments likely ring true, many of us find ourselves wondering, "What can I as one person do to help those in poverty who are struggling?"

One way you can make a direct impact on this significant issue is to volunteer to participate as a Navigator in the Opportunity Community project being led by the Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO) (details [here](#)).

## You can change the lives of those who are struggling in your community. How?

Join us in making Cortland County a Opportunity Community for everyone.

✓ Leadership Summit

Navigator Training

Opportunity Conference  
10/26/2019

✓ Prosperity Summit

Can you be a navigator (mentor) to a neighbor in your community?

### FREE NAVIGATOR TRAINING

October 9  
6 - 7:30pm  
or

October 16  
2-4pm

at

CAPCO  
32 N. Main St.  
Cortland, NY  
13045



If not me, then who?  
For more information or to

**SIGN UP**

CALL JOYCE 607-753-6781



## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND SUPPORT

### Food for Thought—VAPING: What's It All About Wednesday, October 9, Noon–1:00 PM

New location: TC3 Cortland Ext Ctr, 157 Main St, Cortland  
Learn about the latest trends in vaping and the associated health risks. We will be covering the recent changes in the law, statistics, updated health advisories, and what we as a community can do.

RSVP required to [lbarbin@fscscortland.org](mailto:lbarbin@fscscortland.org).

### 607 Healing Hearts

**Monday, October 21, 6:00-8:00 PM**  
**165 Main St, Cortland**

Grief support group for parents/guardians who have experienced the death of an adult child.

For more info: [607healinghearts@gmail.com](mailto:607healinghearts@gmail.com)

### Cortland LGBT Men's Group (Monthly)

**Cortland LGBT Resource Center, 165 Main St Suite B**  
For more information: (607) 756-8970

### Parents & Change Support Group

October 21 — November 18 — December 16  
**6:00 to 7:30 PM**

**Community Center, 90 Central Ave, Cortland**

Contact: Becky Tripp ([parentsandchange@yahoo.com](mailto:parentsandchange@yahoo.com))

### Caregivers Support Group

**Thursday, October 24, 3:00-4:00 PM**

**Conf Rm B, Basement of GCMC, 134 Homer Ave, Cortland**

For those who provide support for someone aged 60 or older.

For more info: Caregivers Resource Center (607) 753-5060.

If you have an upcoming community event or article you would like considered for inclusion in the MHA Newsletter, send your submission to [kristin@sevenvalleyshealth.org](mailto:kristin@sevenvalleyshealth.org) by the 14th of the month prior, or subscribe to the newsletter via email.

**Disclaimer:** The information presented here does not constitute professional medical advice. Individuals respond to treatment for mental health conditions in different ways, and treatment plans often need adjustment over time. Patients should work closely with their doctor and other health professionals in order to achieve optimal control of symptoms.