

Derby Depression Club NEWSLETTER

Dave and Elaine— Co Chairs
Heather—Treasurer
David—Secretary
Phone: 07904 300074
E-mail:
info@derbydepressionclub.org.uk
www.derbydepressionclub.org.uk

May/June 2011

**Volume 9
Issue 3**

From the Editor

April saw a week of really good weather, so is that the best we will get this summer? Lets hope not. Clearly for many the sunshine and warmth has an uplifting effect. As yet another AGM approaches, it can be a time to reflect on the past year of the Club, and look to the future for new ideas and activities. The Club has seen some new younger members recently and it is hoped that they will get some benefit and support from the Club.

New Addition to the Library

Sayings of the Buddha by William Wray

This book starts with an overview of the life of the Buddha, and an outline of his teachings.

The book has a simple saying for each day of the year taken from Buddhist texts. For those who find spirituality helpful, this could be a useful store of teachings. Not so much a book that you sit and read from cover to cover, but a daily diary of thoughts.



Our thanks to Jan Bonham for donating the book to the Club.

IN THIS EDITION

Page 1	From the Editor
Page 1	New Book
Page 1	AGM
Page 2	Depressed Celebrities
Page 3	News roundup
Page 4	Coming to God
Page 4	Learning from Japan

AGM

This years business meeting will be on Monday 4th July. We will try and keep it as short and simple as possible, but we do need to have our annual review. It is also an opportunity for members to raise any issues or items for discussion about the Club. Nominations for new committee members will be accepted up to and including the actual meeting. So far only one change is anticipated, which is the stepping down of Heather Hutchin as treasurer. Heather was a founder member, and has done the role since its inauguration 9 years ago. She now has significant family commitments, and would like to have a little more quality time to herself. Her role has been vital in keeping the Club solvent, and securing valuable grants, enabling books and equipment to be purchased. We wish her all the best and thank for her Stirling (Sterling) work. We hope she will still continue to take an active role in the Club. We are proposing that Jasmin Lee, a recently qualified accountant be elected as new treasurer at the AGM.

Change of Name

The Guinness Trust has been renamed. It is now called Guinness Northern Counties. The Club will continue to meet at the same venue (The Residents Common Room Sidney Street) and no doubt like many name changes it will continue to known as the Guinness Trust.

Our Group's Basic Aims

- Caring
- Sharing
- Supporting
- Helping
- Self-Help
- Understanding
- Non-condemning

Depressed Celebrities

A bit of old and new. Dr Samuel Johnson is a blast from the past, while you may have heard that Catherine Zeta-Jones has had a bout of Bi-polar brought on by the stress of her husbands (Michael Douglas) cancer. It appears that after a week in a special clinic she was able to continue her life. It would be nice if we could all access that sort of treatment!!!



A LIFE OF CELEBRITY, ADDICTION AND DE- PRESSION

Samuel Johnson was born over 300 years ago. Here, Christopher Howse looks back on a complex life of depression, drug addiction and celebrity. (Incidentally, Johnson married his wife 'Tetty', Elizabeth Porter, in Derby in 1735.)

Portrait of Dr Samuel Johnson, after Joshua Reynolds. Edited extract from an article by Christopher Howse in *The Telegraph*.

Whoever is to blame for it, Samuel Johnson's books are unread - but his life remains gripping. It is a tale of sexual frustration, drug addiction, fear of madness, disappointment in love, black depression and celebrity.

Johnson is just like us, only more so - and the more we know about him, the more likeable he becomes.

Although in 1791 James Boswell exposed intimate details of Johnson's life, with the first full-length biography in the modern genre, he did him no favours.

The reality was no self-help progression from a penniless arrival in London to literary fame and fortune. When Johnson was 40 years old – deep in his desperate labour to produce the *Dictionary* that made his name – his beloved wife Tetty was "always drunk and reading romances in bed".

Even when the famous *Dictionary* was triumphantly published, and Tetty was dead, things got no better. Johnson was repeatedly arrested for debt, and he had to give up the house where a collection of hangers-on had lived with him.

Johnson's face was disfigured by childhood tuberculosis. His eyes were sunken, and someone who saw a portrait of him by Joshua Reynolds asked if Johnson was blind. He mouthed, muttered, tapped his feet obsessively and twitched.

A current hobby for some people is to label Johnson's afflictions – to suggest, unconvincingly, that he suffered from Tourette's syndrome – as if that would explain his complexity. The mind within his hulking, bear-like body remained astonishingly powerful. However, such intellectual ability accompanied his lifelong pathological depression. "I inherited a vile melancholy from my father," he declared, "which has made me mad all my life."

The nights were the worst. He was frightened to go to sleep, frightened of being alone, frightened of temptations to suicide, frightened of madness. Therefore, he stayed up in the company of friends.

Sadly, Johnson's own sexual needs were frustrated first by his wife barring him from bed, then by the woman he loved being married to another man. When they met, Hester Thrale was 23, pretty and the new mother of a little girl by her rich, mature husband. Poor Johnson! When at last Mr Thrale died, Hester Thrale went off and married an Italian singer.

Johnson chose to spend long periods without drinking because he tended to drink too much. Modern fans of Johnson are disappointed by his parallel abstinence from sexual relations outside marriage. What to him was hard-won virtue commanded by Christianity is, in a Hollywood view of life, a fault. Today, we are fascinated by the life of that tortured and complex man – yet we seldom read his books!

For those who would like an amusing take on Dr Samuel Johnson's dictionary try watching the episode from *Blackadder 3*, where Johnson is played by Robbie Coltrane.

My thanks to the Club member who sent this in.

News Roundup

Yet again the papers are providing a rich seam of articles. Here are just a few of them.

Keep Busy if you want to Beat the Blues

Those who are prone to a nice laze on the couch, be warned-Scientists say the key to happiness is keeping busy.

Even doing meaningless or unnecessary tasks makes you feel better than just sitting around bored American researchers concluded. Unfortunately our instinct to be lazy, and we cannot bring ourselves to be industrious without some sort of motivation. This the study found is an evolutionary development that to ensures we conserve energy. Behavioural Scientist Prof. Christopher Hsee conducted a survey which saw 98 volunteers complete a survey on their feelings with another one 15 minutes later. As they waited for the second study they could either off the completed Questionnaire at a nearby location and wait out the remaining time or leave it a place further away where walking there and back would keep them busy.

The students who had taken the walk reported feeling significantly happier in the second survey than the idle ones. However the majority chose the nearby location unless they were rewarded with a chocolate bar for going to the further location. Prof. Hsee of the University of Chicago said “The general phenomenon I am interested in is why people are so busy doing what they are doing in modern society. There are reasons of course such as making a living, earning money, accruing fame helping others and so on. I think there is something deeper. We have excessive energy, and we want to avoid idleness” The Professor also admitted that he gives his research assistant a useless task when he does not have anything to do. “I know it is not particularly ethical, but it keeps him happy”

The secret to happiness is chucking rubbish at the bin (and getting it in)

You know the days when the world is just not on your side? When everything seems to go wrong, however trivial? Well now there is an antidote—a website with the sole aim of putting a smile on your face.

The site www.1000awesomethings.com lists the small everyday pleasures things which make life worthwhile.

It is the brainchild of Neil Pasricha 30 who beset by personal problems (his wife left him for a start) decided to write down one happy thought or event each day for 100 days instead of wallowing in doom and gloom. Neil’s awesome things was being read all over the world by those who identified with the comfort he found in regular life. Since Neil launched his website in June 2008 it had had more than 17 million visitors and currently attracts more than 50,000 people a day. It has spawned a highly successful book which is due to be published in Britain this Autumn. At present Neil is only on 470 out of 1000 and due to be completed on April 30th 2012. Here are some of his heart warming thoughts.

Drawing on steamed up mirrors with your fingers.

Seeing on the television that the weather is much worse somewhere else.

Making footprints in fresh snow

The sound of rain from inside a tent

Getting the milk to cereal ratio just right.

Getting in to clean bed sheets

The smell of freshly baked bread

Are there any you can think of?

‘Pacemaker that curbs obsessive compulsive disorder’

Patients with severe obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) have been successfully treated with a ‘pacemaker’ inserted in the brain.

By putting thin electrodes through the skull and delivering an electrical current doctors have been able to ease the symptoms of the distressing condition for more than 50 volunteers. The technique called deep brain stimulation therapy is only approved in America for the most serious cases of OCD where victims are unable to live normal lives. The £200,000 a time treatment had also been used on patients who are battling depression, Parkinsons disease, and Tourette’s syndrome.

Around 1 in 100 people including David Beckham are thought to suffer from OCD. They are plagued by compulsive thoughts and desires to repeat tasks, arrange objects in a particular ways or obsessively wash and clean.

Dr Benjamin Greenberg, the psychiatrist who pioneered the technique at brown University Rhode Island told the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington ‘These techniques are promising, but must be used with an abundance of Caution. This is reserved for the small proportion of people who are severely disabled and have not benefited anywhere near adequately from very aggressive use of conventional Treatments’

10 things to learn from Japan – SKYNEWS reported this a few days back.

1. THE CALM

Not a single visual of chest-beating or wild grief. Sorrow itself has been elevated.

2. THE DIGNITY

Disciplined queues for water and groceries. Not a rough word or a crude gesture. Their patience is admirable and praiseworthy.

3. THE ABILITY

The incredible architects, for instance. Buildings swayed but didn't fall.

4. THE GRACE (Selflessness)

People bought only what they needed for the present, so everybody could get something.

5. THE ORDER

No looting in shops. No honking and no overtaking on the roads. Just understanding.

6. THE SACRIFICE

Fifty workers stayed back to pump sea water in the Nuclear-reactors. How will they ever be repaid?

7. THE TENDERNESS

Restaurants cut prices. An unguarded ATM is left alone. The strong cared for the weak.

8. THE TRAINING

The old and the children, everyone knew exactly what to do. And they did just that.

9. THE MEDIA

They showed magnificent restraint in the bulletins. No silly reporters. Only calm reportage. Most of all – NO POLITICIANS TRYING TO GET CHEAP MILEAGE OUT OF THE DISASTER.

10. THE CONSCIENCE

When the power went off in a store, people put things back on the shelves and left quietly. With their country in the midst of a colossal disaster - The Japanese citizens can teach some lessons to us all.

** Miracles happen everyday. Change your perception and you shall see them all around you - **

Two Mexican detectives were investigating the murder of Juan Gonzalez. 'How was he killed?' asked one detective. 'With a golf gun,' the other detective replied.

'A golf gun! What is a golf gun?'

'I don't know. But it sure made a hole in Juan.'

An old man goes to the Wizard to ask him if he can remove a curse he has

been living with for the last 40 years. The Wizard says, 'Maybe, but you will have to tell me the exact words that were used to put the curse on you.'

The old man says without hesitation, 'I now pronounce you man and wife.'

FUTURE DATES

9th May 2011

23rd May 2011

6th June 2011

20th June 2011

4th July 2011

18th July 2011

Coming to God by Roger Smith

Here I am a rotten wretch

Nothing can excuse my sin

But your blood poured from your hands

You died that I might live

You call me over to your side

And, Lord I am on my way.

Life's like a roaming sea,

Desire and duty pull apart.

Scared of the world and myself,

But here I am a ransomed soul,

Clasped closely to your breast.

With nothing standing in the way

To know and live your life,

Immense and freely given.

A man is recovering from surgery when the Surgical Nurse appears and Asks him how he is feeling.

'I'm O. K. But I didn't like the four letter-words the doctor used in Surgery,' he answered
'What did he say,' asked the nurse.

Moe: 'My wife got me to believe in religion.'

Joe: 'Really?'

Moe:

'Yeah. Until I married her I didn't believe in Hell

A blonde calls Delta Airlines and asks, 'Can you tell me how long it'll Take to fly from San Francisco to New York City?'

The agent replies, 'Just a minute.'

'Thank you,' the blonde says, and hangs up.

Editorial Note Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Derby Depression Club or the Depression