

ADVOCATE

VOLUME 10

MAY-JUNE, 2015

May is Mental Health Month

It is a time to remember that mental health is part of overall health.

Mental health affects thought processes, relationships, productivity and the ability to adapt to changes in circumstances or cope with adversity.

So does mental illness.

One in four adults experience mental health problems in any given year. Those problems can contribute to onset of more serious long-term conditions. One in 17 adults lives with mental illness such as major depression, bipolar disorder or schizophrenia. Approximately one-half of chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14 and three-quarters by age 24. Unfortunately, long delays—sometimes decades—often occur between the time symptoms



first appear and when people get help.

Mental Health Awareness Month is a time to learn to recognize early symptoms of mental illness and the importance of talking about concerns with a doctor or mental health professionals. Early identification and treatment can make a big difference for successful management of a condition. For example, major depression is a mood disorder that is more serious than “feeling blue” or temporary sadness. Some people may experience it only once, but more than half have at least one additional episode over their lifetimes. Be alert to any combinations of the

following symptoms:

- Depressed mood (sadness)
- Poor concentration
- Insomnia
- Fatigue
- Disturbance of appetite
- Feelings of guilt
- Thoughts of suicide

Bipolar disorder involves cycles of both depression and mania. It is different from the “ups and downs” that most people experience, involving dramatic shifts in mood, energy and ability to think clearly. Symptoms also are not the same in everyone; some people may experience intense “highs,” while others primarily experience depression. Mania involves combinations of the following symptoms:

- Euphoria
- Surges of energy
- Reduced need for sleep
- Grandiosity
- Talkativeness
- Extreme irritability
- Agitation
- Pleasure-seeking
- Increased risk-taking behavior

Schizophrenia is a different type of mental illness, but can

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Walk in the Woods

Please join NAMI Far North on Sunday May 17th for our sixth annual Walk in the Woods to celebrate Mental Health Month. Our first Walk was along the nature trail in the Ross Creek Cedars in partnership with the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness. In 2011 we walked along Trout Creek. In 2012 we partnered with The Friends of the Pend d’Oreille Bay Trail for a walk along the lake. This proved to be such a beautiful and reliable venue even in the ever changing Idaho spring weather that it is now a yearly tradition. As always, the walk is preceded by a picnic at City Beach at 1pm. Lunch will be provided if you rsvp to (208)597-2047 or namifar-north@yahoo.com. No reservations necessary to join the Walk about 1:30pm.

Get informed. Get screened. Get help.



MENTAL HEALTH MONTH
2015
MHA
Mental Health America
B4Stage4

Claudia Miewald, RN,

MSN

May 20 program

NFN welcomes Claudia Miewald, a Board Certified Clinical Specialist in Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, and Director of Kootenai Behavioral Health Center. She is a member of

the full time faculty at North Idaho College in the Registered Nursing Program. As Vice Chair of the newly formed Region 1 Behavioral Health Board, she is instrumental in advocating for and developing the new crisis center which will be located in CDA.

Dr. Scott Burgstahler

M.D.

June 17 program

Dr. Scott Burgstahler, Internist, and Medical Director at Life Care Center will share his perspective of mental illness, depression, and issues surrounding the use of medications in a skilled nursing facility.

LINKS OF INTEREST

“May is Mental Health Month”
<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/may>

“Start the conversation. End the Stigma.”
www.bringchange2mind.org

“How the brain tells good from bad” <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/news/science-news/2015/>

NAMI FAR NORTH President's Message

It is with heartfelt reluctance that I announce that two directors, Ruth McKnight and Gini Woodward are no longer on The NAMI Far North Board of Directors. Ruth, a NAMI Far North founding director has moved to Arizona. Although Gini has resigned from our board she will continue in her role as Boundary County Commissioners' Representative on the Region 1 Behavioral Health Board.

If you are, like me, among the people of today that is starving for the authentic, thirsting for sincerity,

and aching to experience genuine empathy and understanding, you would find it in these two board members. They led us as role models of kindness, compassion, generosity, and acceptance.

Their achievements strengthened our infrastructure for the NAMI signature programs: Family to Family, and Family Support Group, in Bonner and Boundary counties. They were activists in fundraising, grant writing, public communications, event organizing, health fairs, strategic planning,

community involvement, newsletter writing, and conference organizing always keeping our mission of improving the lives of individuals living with mental illness and their families and friends through education, support and advocacy as their goal.

We gladly encourage their continuing efforts to create awareness, end stigma and better meet the needs of individuals living with mental illness.

Sincerely,

Amber Snoddy, President, NAMI

CONNECTION: My Story

I have struggled with Bipolar disorder since I was a teen. I am 59 now. I received a diagnosis in 1996 and have been hospitalized three times. During one depression I remember curling up in the fetal position on the floor. Many months were spent in bed. Life seemed hopeless and I didn't want to live. It took months before the meds started working. One time, in a manic state, I went to the women's shelter because the voices in my head said that someone was going to hurt me. Once, as a joke, I went

into a bank with a full faced Halloween mask; a manic episode that was triggered by an inappropriate medication.

When I finally received the correct diagnosis and medication from my psychiatrist, I became more stable. Going to NAMI support group, the NAMI Family to Family class, boundaries classes etc. is helpful so I can understand my illness.

Acceptance of mental illness was hard because I feared I would be like my mom who took her own life in her early 40's.

Individual coping skills are important. Here are some of mine:

1. My personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. My supportive husband, family, friends, pets.
3. Healthy habits including good nutrition, exercise, and rest.
4. Setting healthy boundaries
5. Good music, books, laughter, and chocolate.

My successes, hopes and dreams include facilitating NAMI Connection support group. As an "In our Own Voice Presenter" I share my story, hoping to diminish stigma.

If you have any questions or comments please email me at dannjanburt1@gmail.com. or call 208-



BOOK SHELF

If the game of life is played by *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff* (Richard Carlson), then Cherie Carter-Scott outlines the game in her book, *IF LIFE is a GAME, THESE are the RULES- ten rules for being human*, which comes highly lauded by author Dan Millman (*The Peaceful Warrior*). The ten rules were originally published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*.

In this short book, each of the ten chapters begins with an introduction to a

rule, followed by a discussion on the benefits of the particular rule, including whether it requires openness, trust, acceptance, or gratitude. There are poignant anecdotes and directions for what the rule requires of us to do our best in the game of life.

I took heart that it wasn't about sin or success or succor or sex, but written so that life would be more fun and more rewarding on a personal level, which means it is in an accessi-

ble language to everyone whom reads whether they are a farmer or career woman. In *IF LIFE is a GAME, THESE are the RULES*, there's a little clockwork squirrel who's willing to share, and to share with you that sometimes we create the world we like, like any squirrel who hides seeds and forgets them, which grow into trees for their children and children's children, till you get something like an oak or pine forest.

Victor Vosen,

Mental health Month continued from p. 1...

include features of mood disorders. It affects a person’s ability to think clearly, manage emotions, make decisions and relate to other people. Untreated, it also may include psychosis--a loss of contact with reality. Symptoms include:

- Difficulty with memory
- Difficulty in organizing thoughts
- Lack of content in speech
- Emotional flatness
- Inability to start or follow through with activities
- Inability to experience pleasure
- Delusions
- Hallucinations

Other types of mental illness include attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety disorders (including posttraumatic stress disorder), borderline and personality disorder. Mental Health Awareness Month is a time to learn about them. One resource is the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) which offers information through its website www.nami.org and HelpLine 1-800-950-NAMI (6264). With affiliates in hundreds of communities nationwide, including NAMI Far North, NAMI also offers free education classes and support groups to individuals and families affected by mental illness.

Anyone who experiences symptoms of

mental illness should see a doctor for a focused discussion about mental health concerns and assessment of potentially related physical conditions. The next step may be referral to a mental health specialist. A range of treatment options exist. Education and connecting with others who have walked the same path or are facing similar issues also can play an important role

During Mental Health Awareness Month, please also talk about what you learn with family, friends and others. Help end the silence and stigma around mental illness that discourages people from getting help. This is a month to make a difference in our communities.

Summary of 2015 Legislative Session

Behavioral Health related items

-Funded the legal expenses for the children’s mental health lawsuit known as the Jeff D. lawsuit, which was filed in 1980 but is now in the final stages of a settlement agreement, which will dramatically improve the quality of care to Idaho’s children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance; and lead to the successful dismissal of the Jeff D. lawsuit.

-Approved the three year, \$7.9 M. substance abuse treatment Access to Recovery (ATR) IV grant , which prioritizes treatment for veterans

involved in the criminal justice system, families involved with child protection, people who are homeless.

-Approved Behavioral Health’s \$50,000 contribution to Idaho’s Suicide Prevention Hotline, which became operational 24/7 last Fall. As of December 31, the hotline has taken 2,869 calls, including 660 from military members and families, and 147 rescue calls that saved lives.

-Approved a new nurse call interface at State Hospital South to improve communications of care nurses working on the floor, which should help prevent staff injuries.

-\$280,000 to increase the contracted rate for daily care to Idaho hospitals. Community psychiatric hospitals serve an incredibly important role for Idahoans experiencing a psychiatric emergency.

-In the media, the crisis center for north Idaho captured most of the headlines for the Behavioral Health division. “Funding a second crisis center is a true testament to the Legislature’s commitment to improve the behavioral health system in Idaho, and to the hard work of the Idaho Falls crisis center,” said Ross Edmunds, the division’s administrator. “Crisis centers are not the answer to all the challenges for effective care for Idahoans with behavioral health disorders, but are an important tool in meeting their needs and an appropriate role for state government.”

Become a Member of



When you join NAMI Far North, you will also become a member in NAMI Idaho and NAMI . You will receive the

NAMI Advocate magazine, the NAMI Far North Advocate newsletter , program notices, and NFN membership directory ***

Membership Type (check one)

- Individual/Family (\$35.00 annual)
- Professional (\$35.00 annual)
- Open Door (\$3.00 annual) *
- Scholarship **
- Other tax deductible donation

* annual dues for individuals & families on limited income

**for individuals and families who can not afford open door dues

***Membership directory is distributed only to current members who have consented to have their names and contact information published.

Would you like to be listed in the NFN directory?

_____ Name
 _____ Address
 _____ City, State, Zip
 _____ Phone
 _____ email

Optional information:

I am a : ___Consumer___ Family Member___Friend

Make checks payable to NAMI Far North .

Send to PO Box 2415 Sandpoint, ID 83864

www.nami.org/sites/namifarnorth



Email:

namifarnorth@yahoo.com
(208)597-2047

Affiliated with

NAMI Idaho and



NAMI Far North meets the third Wednesday of each month except December in the Bonner General Health classroom at 6 p.m.

Suicide Prevention Hotline

1-800-564-2120

Find help Find hope

NAMI Far North May-June 2015 Calendar

May, 2015

5/9 **Boundary County Hospital Health Fair 9-12**

5/17 **Walk in the Woods**

5/20 **Regular Monthly meeting**

Bonner General Hospital Classroom

6pm: Claudia Miewald: Crisis Center

7-8:30 Family Support

7-8:30 NAMI Connection

5/25 **Bonnors Ferry**

Family support

Panhandle Health District

6-8:30 pm

June, 2015

6/3 **NAMI Connection**

Sandpoint Gardenia Center

11:30 Lunch

12-1:30 Support Group

6/17 **Regular Monthly Meeting**

Bonner General Hospital Classroom

6pm: Dr. Burgstahler

7-8:30 Family Support

7-8:30 NAMI Connection

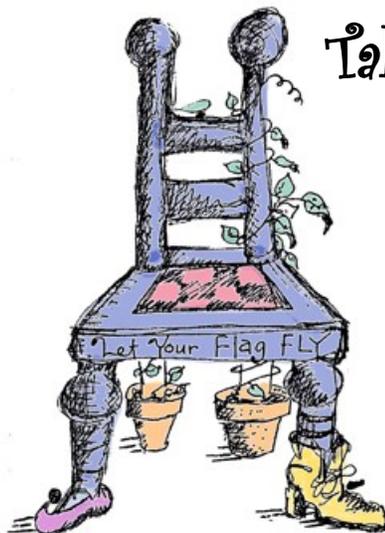
6/22 **Bonnors Ferry**

Family Support

Panhandle Health District

6-8:30 pm

May is Mental Health Awareness Month!



Take a Seat at the Table

Friday June 12

Reservations and details

online :

<http://Take-a-Seat.Eventbrite.com>

Improving the lives of those affected by mental illness through education, support and advocacy