



REGION 1 DHW

As we settle into another long North Idaho winter, I think of C.S. Lewis who said, "Isn't it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back, everything is different..." NAMI Far North is finishing another year of support, education, and advocacy for people affected by mental illness. Although the Connection group will meet in December, this is the last newsletter for 2014 and there will not be a general meeting. Save the date for the next general meeting, January 21, 2014, when Aaron Walker will present a program on the CIT International Convention that she attended with the support of NAMI Far North.

Mental Illness: Coping with the Holidays

The heavy doses of commercialism during this time of year overload us with the expectation that we are supposed to be full of joy, parties, and gatherings of friends and families. For people with mental illness and their families the time can be a difficult reminder of our own feelings of sadness, loneliness, depression, and anxiety.

Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, Coordinator of Mental Health Ministries, provides some tips including: "Know that whatever you are feeling, it is right for you." "Live in the now! Try to let go of past regrets and experiences and find joy in the present moment. And remember, laughter is good medicine!"

Originally found at www.nami.org, the entire helpful brochure is available at: http://www.mentalhealthministries.net/resources/brochures/holiday_coping/holidays.pdf

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

November is the month that we honor our veterans and one way is to learn more about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

It is said that 1 in 30 adults are affected by PTSD each year, yet children and teens are vulnerable too. Know the symptoms of PTSD and use these 3 tips to support your loved one through their healing process.

After a traumatic incident, particularly one involving a threat of physical harm, it's common for people to develop symptoms of PTSD, such as:

- Intense, distressing memories of the event
- Increased or excessive anxiety
- Problems with sleep
- Anger and irritability
- Depression symptoms
- Social isolation

Our brains are wired to alarm us about the presence and threat of danger, so having physical and psychological responses to trauma is very normal. In fact, it's estimated that 1 in 30 American adults suffers with the symptoms of PTSD each year, with the risk being much higher for veterans.

Having PTSD is not a character flaw or a sign of personal weakness. The symptoms of PTSD tell us that there is a biological problem in the brain in response to significant trauma, and the absolute best thing that someone with PTSD can do is seek professional help.

If you have a loved one who is affected by the symptoms of PTSD, you can support them through the healing process with these 3 tips:

- **Learn all that you can about PTSD.** The more you learn about the symptoms and treatment options for PTSD, the better you'll be able to appreciate what he or she is going through, as well as to keep things in perspective. As part of this learning and support process you may want to offer to accompany your loved one to their psychiatrist, therapist or VA/clinic visits.

- **Be patient and try not to pressure your loved one into talking.** Many people with PTSD find talking about the event(s) nearly impossible. For some, talking before they're ready can make things worse! Rather than pressing your loved one to share, it's wise to just let him/her know you're willing to listen—if and when they're ready. Above all, be patient. Healing takes time, even if your loved one is getting therapy and is highly motivated to feel better. Just stay positive and provide support; let your friend or family member open up when he/she feels comfortable doing so.
- **Take time for fun and connect to a supportive community.** Having fun and laughing is one of the best ways to lower stress and release feel-good neurotransmitters. For added benefit, have fun while exercising! Take a walk, ride bikes, go on a hike, dance or do yoga together.

If your loved one is prone to isolation, you may suggest that they stay in touch with family and close friends—we are much better together. Isolating oneself while healing from PTSD is like trying to dig out information from a book in a pitch black room; while having a strong community means that support is but a phone call, email or visit away. NAMI Far North has a family support group that meets monthly on the third Wednesday of each month (except December) following the general meeting. Please join us. We offer a strong community support, and it's free! See schedule on the last page of this newsletter. —Amber Snoddy, President

NAMI Far North

CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT) UPDATE:

The monthly CIT planning committee met Tuesday, November 4, 2014, at the Sheriff's Office. Present were Holly Bonwell, Amber Snoddy, Mary Payton, Mayor Carrie Logan, Sheriff Daryl Wheeler, Aaron Walker, Robert Wraith, Police Chief Corey Coon, Lynn Pietz, and Victoria Purviance.

Region 1 will suggest to the other

Regions via e-mail that the Work Group and Steering committee combine, and be called State Wide CIT Coordination/Planning. Region 4 Boise City PD has employed a CIT Coordinator. Holly suggested that Region 1 and the other Regions could follow suit for coordination of a county CIT Coordinator.

Holly suggested that we conduct a yearly, four (4) hour refresher training for certified CIT-trained officers. This could also be expanded into an incentive for other, non-trained CIT officers; once they see the program it could inspire them to take the full course.

Victoria Purviance gave a presentation of “Co-Occurring Disorders.” The group agreed to include the presentation in 2015 CIT training.

—Lynn Pietz
NAMI Far North Secretary

CONNECTION:

How to become an insomniac

Hi my name is Jan Burt. I struggle with and am in recovery from: manic depression, O.C.D. (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) and a mixed anxiety disorder.

Sleep is a critical part of mental wellness. If I don't get a good night's rest every night, it sets the stage for me to struggle the next day with my biological brain disorders.

One time, Dr. Iddins shared how to increase the chance of relapse with a list of ways to become an insomniac:

1. Keep an unrealistic goal of the number of hours of sleep you should have.
2. Catastrophize about not meeting this goal; especially in the middle of the night. For example, “I will never be able to function tomorrow if I don't get enough sleep.”
3. Remember: the hours of insomnia expand to the number of hours spent in bed. If you need seven hours of sleep and spend 9 hours in bed you will have 2 hours of insomnia. If you take a one hour nap in the day then you will then have three hours of insomnia. So spend 10 hours in bed the next night.
4. Spend all your desperate hours fighting to get to sleep, in bed. This will make your bed a stimulus for stress.
5. Make the bed a center for other things besides sleep. For example, try reading, watching TV, writing etc. This helps you know that the bed is not just

for sleeping.

6. If you can, start taking over the counter sleep meds. They are relatively ineffective, tolerance develops within days and they suppress REM sleep. Once you get off them; nightmares sometimes occur. Also insomnia can increase later.

Take all these steps or even some of them and you are guaranteed to become an insomniac. No zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz.

If you have any questions or comments or just want to chat please email me at dannjanburt1@gmail.com or call 208-263-7928. Thanks.

—Jan Burt,
NAMI Far North Connection facilitator.



KEYHOLES

The metaphor “Keyholes” is an invitation to you the reader to view the world from the perspective of one person living with a diagnosis of mental illness. In previous issues of the Advocate, Victor Vosen started a 5 point countdown of insights from Aunt Edna, and concludes with...

#1 It's Crazy how society treats the mentally ill

In fact it's so crazy, Pete Earley wrote a 384 page book called “Crazy”. Pete wrote, describing his own family experience, “Suddenly the two of us were thrown headlong into the maze of contradictions, disparities and Catch-22s that make up America's mental health system.” It seems that nobody wants to deal with the struggles, including us, the ones with mental illness.

Society has been crazy for a very long time. Throughout history there have been burning of witches, ships of fools with no port, concentration camps, frontal lobotomies, destructive electroconvulsive ‘therapies’, insane asylums, and always... Incarceration.

According to Pete, the mentally ill get sent to prison 5 times for every time they get treatment. He stated, “Our nation's jails and prisons have become our new mental asylums. I wrote this book as a wake-up call to expose how persons with mental

illness are ending up behind bars when what they need is help, not punishment.” So that get-out-of-jail card you think all the mentally interesting carry... pfft. The reality is much grimmer for our ilk and if you commit a crime you're more likely to go to jail than receive treatment during an episode. If you are considered incompetent, they might happen to treat you... until you are deemed competent, and then send you back to stand trial. Aunt Edna and I just wish they would separate the prisoners according to musical tastes.

“Crazy” is available to borrow from the NAMI Far North lending library or learn more at www.petearley.com/books/crazy. More on criminalization of mental illness <http://mentalillnesspolicy.org/consequences/criminalization.html>



CONDUIT OF CARE

This is a response to NAMI Far North upon receipt of four boxes containing quilts, pillowcases, personal care items, arts and crafts supplies, and winter clothing: “Received your packages today! Timing was terrific as the temperature in Orofino this morning was 11. Working with our PSR and peer specialist to get the quilts and pillowcases on the units. You have been busy. Thanks again for your compassion for our patients and support of State Hospital North.”

We are still gathering all sizes of good condition adult winter coats, hats, and gloves.

To help, call 208-597-2047 or email namifarnorth@yahoo.com

FAMILY TO FAMILY

The 12-week NAMI Family to Family program will be offered in Bonners Ferry beginning in February. Call 208-597-2047 or email namifarnorth@yahoo.com for more information.

STOPPING SCHIZOPHRENIA IN ITS TRACKS

By Darcy Gruttadaro, Director, NAMI Child and Adolescent Action Center

For those experiencing psychosis, early identification and intervention matter—a lot. It lessens the long-term severity and often prevents psychosis from worsening. An effective early identification and intervention program should include the following coordinated array of services and supports:

- Supported education and employment.
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Peer support
- Family support and education
- Case management
- Community outreach
- Low dose antipsychotic medication

These services work so well because they are offered together to provide the skills and support that youth and young adults need to get better. They also take into account the context of a young person's life and the key role that peers and families play in recovery.

FEP programs reduce costly hospitalizations and put youth and young adults with psychosis on an early path to recovery.

When you fund upstream interventions, you can prevent the tragedies associated with untreated mental illness: school failure, unemployment, hospitalizations, homelessness, jail and suicide. Investing in effective programs that intervene early produces far better outcomes for individuals, families and

communities.

There are effective strategies available, so why aren't more young people getting help? One of the main reasons is that these services and supports are simply not available in communities. However, there has been progress made recently that to help ensure the availability of these resources in more towns and cities across the U.S.

One significant event is that Congress has now required states to use 5 percent of their Mental Health Block Grant for First Episode Psychosis (FEP) programs. This means that states are obligated to set aside a certain amount of their federal funding to address the importance of early intervention.

How Is NAMI Helping

We recognize the urgency in expanding these programs. Our advocacy work and involvement in these programs is happening at all levels of the organization.

NAMI NYC Metro is partnering with OnTrackNY, an FEP program, in providing support groups and peer support for youth and young adults experiencing early psychosis. NAMI Connecticut is offering peer-run young adult support groups located close to FEP programs to make it easy for young adults to join. NAMI Minnesota has partnered with an FEP program and is creating education and support programs for youth experiencing early psychosis and their families.

Oregon was an early adopter of these services and supports, having witnessed

the success of these programs in Australia. Tamara Sale, the director of the Early Assessment and Support Alliance (EASA) in Oregon and a former long-time NAMI Oregon board member, shared how their program works successfully with youth and young adults experiencing early psychosis.

The EASA program recognizes that it can be difficult to engage youth and young adults experiencing early psychosis, so it uses strategic community approaches that meet young people where they are with messages of hope and relevance to their lives. They are flexible and persistent, even with youth and young adults that seem entirely uninterested in mental health care.

What You Can Do

FEP programs exist in a handful of communities and more must be done to spread these programs across the country. Here is how you can make sure that happens.

- Learn more about FEP programs. Understand why these programs are pivotal in creating better outcomes.
- Email or Tweet your Congressional members to thank them and to ask for their continued support of FEP programs.
- Connect with your NAMI Affiliate in advocating at the state and federal levels for FEP programs so that youth and young adults experiencing early psychosis can access effective services and supports.

The remainder of the article will be found at <http://blog.nami.org/2014/10/stopping-schizophrenia-in-its-tracks.html>

BECOME A MEMBER OF



NAMI Far North

Membership in NAMI Far North entitles you to membership in NAMI and NAMI Idaho. You will receive the NAMI Advocate magazine as well as the NAMI Far North Advocate newsletter.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Optional Information:

I AM A: _____ CONSUMER _____ FAMILY MEMBER _____ FRIEND
_____ MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL _____ OTHER

Directory:

The NAMI Far North membership directory is intended to facilitate communication and support among NAMI Far North members. It will only be distributed to NAMI Far North members who are current in their dues and who have consented to have their names and contact information published in the directory. It will not be distributed to anyone else for any purpose.

Would you like to be listed in our directory? _____ YES _____ NO

Make checks payable to NAMI Far North and send to:


NAMI Far North • P.O. Box 2415 • Sandpoint, ID 83864

You may also give your application and check to a NAMI Far North board member at a monthly meeting.

MEMBERSHIP TYPES (check one)

- INDIVIDUAL / FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (\$35.00 annual fee)
- PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP (\$35.00 annual fee)
- OPEN DOOR MEMBERSHIP (\$3.00 annual fee)
(full annual membership for individuals and families on limited income)
- SCHOLARSHIP MEMBERSHIP (full annual membership is paid by anonymous donor for individuals and families unable to afford the Open Door Membership)
- I want to make a tax-deductible donation to NAMI Far North

NAMI FAR NORTH 2014 CALENDAR

<p>NOVEMBER 11/19 Regular Monthly Meeting Bonner General Hospital Classroom 6 pm: Joyce Broadsword, Dept Health & Welfare 7-8:30 pm Family Support 7-8:30 pm NAMI Connection</p> <p>11/24 Bonners Ferry Family Support Panhandle Health District 6-8:30 pm</p> <p>DECEMBER 12/3 and 12/17 NAMI Connection Sandpoint Gardenia Center 11:30 am Lunch 12-1:30 pm Support Group</p>	<p><i>No regular evening meetings in Sandpoint or Bonners Ferry in December</i></p> <p>JANUARY 2015 1/7 NAMI Connection Sandpoint Gardenia Center 11:30 am Lunch 12-1:30 pm Support Group</p> <p>1/21 Regular Monthly Meeting Bonner General Hospital Classroom 6 pm: Aaron Walker, CIT International 7-8:30 Family Support 7-8:30 NAMI Connection</p> <p>1/26 Bonners Ferry Family Support Panhandle Health District 6-8:30 pm</p>	 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS VITAL TO THIS GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION</p> <p>Send your completed application (page 3 of this Newsletter) and membership dues of \$35 (Open Door membership: \$3) to NAMI Far North, P.O. Box 2415, Sandpoint, ID 83864."</p> </div>
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Gini Woodward, Editor
 Donna Brosh, Graphics
 If you do not wish to continue receiving this newsletter, please email namifarnorth@yahoo.com

NAMI Far North meets the third Wednesday of every month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Bonner General Hospital Classroom.



For more information about NAMI, please go to www.nami.org

Find help. Find hope.