



Volume 23 Issue 3 www.namiglendale.org July – August 2008

Dates and Events

SHARE AND CARE

Do you need someone to talk to? Would you like some of your questions about mental illness answered? Our support group for family and friends of the mentally ill meets **every** Tuesday at 6:00 PM at, Verdugo Mental Health 1550 Colorado Street, Room 122 Glendale, at the corner of Colorado and Lincoln. We encourage you to come.

MONTHLY NAMI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Tuesday, July 1, Speaker's Meeting Set

Gary Chang, Executive Director of PLAN of California is also an attorney and the parent of a mentally disabled adult child.

He will be talking about PLAN's services and also explaining the different types of Special Needs Trusts and how they function as estate planning vehicles. These can provide for a disabled person's future financial needs while also protecting the means tested government benefits, such as SSI and/or Medi-Cal that they are, or may later be, receiving.

PLAN of California is a 501(c) (3) non-profit founded by family members in 1995 to provide proxy parenting services for their mentally disabled offspring. What this essentially means is that PLAN contracts and oversees personal support services for the disabled beneficiaries of PLAN Special Needs Trusts of which we are trustees or trust administrators.

NAMI Support Group in Spanish

Starting in July NAMI Glendale will offer twice monthly a support group for those whose primary language is Spanish. The group will meet on the 2nd and 4th. Tuesdays of each month in Room 107 at Verdugo Mental Health at 6 PM.

NAMI California Conference Dates

Please mark your calendars for the NAMI California Conference in San Francisco August 22 – 23.

Glendale Depression and Bi-Polar Group

The Glendale chapter of the DBSA meets each Thursday evening at Glendale Adventist Hospital. For times and directions visit:
http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/DBSA_Glendale/

Special Speaker at San Gabriel Affiliate

On Wednesday July 9 the San Gabriel affiliate for NAMI will have a special speaking event entitled, "**McMan's Eight-fold Path to Living Well.**" John McManamy is an award-winning mental health journalist and patient advocate. In 1999, at age 49, following severe depression and a lifetime of denial, he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Shortly after, he began researching and writing on his illness.

He is the editor and publisher of the highly acclaimed email Newsletter, McMan's Depression and Bipolar Report, and the website, McMan's Depression and Bipolar Web. He is the author of "Living Well with Depression and Bipolar Disorder: What Your Doctor Doesn't Tell You ... That You Need to Know" (HarperCollins, 2006). He also blogs for Health Central and recently started producing web videos.

In 2007, in recognition of his mental health journalism, he received the prestigious Mogens Schou Award for Public Service, awarded by the Seventh International Conference on Bipolar Disorder.

NAMI Walks for the Mind of America Team Captain Kick Off Luncheon

August 14 12- 2PM at
California Endowment Center
contact below for info today!

Email: waldaro@nami.org

Phone: 213/251-6519

Web: <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks/ca/los>

Is your adolescent depressed?

Cedars-Sinai is researching alternative treatments.

For more information, please call

1-888-CEDARS-3 (1-888-233-2773)

IRB No: Pro00009407/Ame00004362 Approval Date:

11/1/2007 Expiration Date: 7/31/2008

Researchers are evaluating the effectiveness and safety of a nutritional supplement (polyunsaturated fats, Omega-3) for the treatment of depression in adolescents (aged 13 to 21). Qualified participants will receive the following free: a psychiatric evaluation, medical examination, cognitive behavioral therapy and study medication. The study requires eight visits with free parking over eight weeks.

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Joneè Shady

Over the last few months I have attended a lot of mental health events throughout Los Angeles. People are talking about mental illness in an effort to educate the public and reduce stigma. It has been exciting to be part of an organization that is dedicated to improving the services of those living with mental illness and to be part of an ongoing fight to improve the quality of lives of our loved ones and their families.

I would like to comment on two events that included talks from authors who have recently published what I believe to be excellent books. Both authors are local but have been making national impact on perceptions we may have had of persons suffering from schizophrenia. Both of these books lend insight to how the people suffering feel about their recovery and both offer tremendous messages of hope.

I have had the opportunity to hear the authors Elyn Saks, author of *The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness* and Steve Lopez, LA Times Columnist and author of *The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music*.

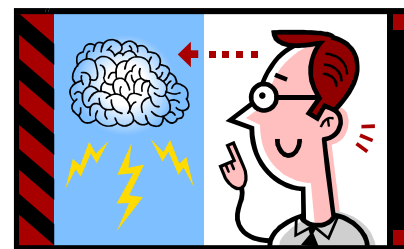
Elyn Saks, a law professor at USC, writes her story of how she came to accept her diagnosis of Schizophrenia after years of failing attempts to recover without her medication. She openly describes her symptoms, episodes, hospitalizations and how determined she was to continue her studies and receive her advanced degrees. What I found most interesting is that she had a wealth of support from friends and family yet it was her own decision to accept her illness that was needed for her to maintain a stable recovery. Although intellectually she understood what was needed to be done, she also believed that she was strong enough to overcome this obstacle even if she went against medical advice. It wasn't until after years of talk therapy from a doctor whom she trusted was she able to understand her illness and the need for her to remain on her medicine. She emphasizes how she had the same hopes and dreams that most of us have and she wasn't going to let her illness get in the way of her dreams although she had been told that her prognosis was not so good and she most likely would never be able to hold a job.

Steve Lopez describes his friendship with Nathaniel Ayers, a homeless man whom he encountered in Los Angeles, playing the violin in Pershing Square. He describes how he

talked to Nathaniel on a regular basis developing a friendship with him. Mr. Lopez wanted to help Nathaniel but Mr. Ayres didn't exactly need his help but it was evident it was the friendship that was important to him. Steve Lopez investigated and found out that Nathaniel had attended Julliard, yet here he was playing a violin with only two strings and not with a hat out to collect money. Lopez wanted to find him shelter and help but Nathaniel only wanted to play his music. Once Lopez realized that Ayres had schizophrenia, Lopez went on a journey to educate himself on this devastating illness in an effort to "save" him from the streets.

What I have learned from both these books is that we may think we know what is best for our loved ones but if they have been stripped from all dignity or have been deserted by friends and family, it is very difficult for them to accept help from others. It didn't seem that either of them was incapable of understanding what had happened to them, it was just that they needed to come to the realization of what they needed in their own time. Recovery is very personal. Others have good intentions when trying to tell loved ones what they need. These stories have made me think that it might be more important to establish friendship and trust with our loved ones. Focus on what they are interested in as much as possible instead of focusing on their illness. We mean well but may not realize the harm it may be causing our loved ones. I see my brother in a different light at the moment and maybe future conversations will not include questions about his illness but maybe finding out what he feels about issues other than schizophrenia. My brother loves music and remembers many of the bands that we grew up hearing. Maybe I should think about learning about the things that he likes and be his friend. Recovery might come to him on his own time and he may be less stressed if we don't focus on his medicine or his classes at the hospital, for example.

I thank these two authors for writing these beautiful stories. They made me really see the persons that they are. I encourage you to write your stories, and I hope that you will read these books and be inspired as I was. Never give up hope. See the individual not the illness.



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www.brainbank.mclean.org

Why Teach About Mental Illness?

Breaking the silence around mental illness creates hope.

By Janet Davis UTLA/LAUSD Educator

There are so many demands being placed on educators today, it may seem overwhelming to consider addressing one more challenge. Why teach about mental illness? The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health report focused on the role of educators in helping to address mental health concerns. The Report stated, *"While schools are primarily concerned with education, mental health is essential to learning as well as to social and emotional development. Schools are where children spend most of their day...schools are in a unique and key position to identify mental health concerns early and to link students with appropriate services."* The National Institute of Mental Health found that half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14, 75% by the age of 25. Despite effective treatments, there are long delays-sometimes decades, between the first onset of the symptoms and when people seek and receive treatment. Untreated mental illnesses can lead to more severe, more difficult to treat illnesses, and to the development of co-occurring mental illnesses.

This issue has affected me personally. My younger son Michael suffered from schizophrenia. In March he took his own life, a few weeks before his 22nd birthday. I am grateful for all the love and support our family has received from friends and colleagues, especially from my brothers and sisters who are educators. A surprising number of those who have spoken with me after Michael died shared their experiences with family members who suffer from serious mental illnesses. I knew one out of every 100 people has schizophrenia and that ten percent commit suicide, making it the major cause of death for this group. The suicide rate for people with Bipolar Disorder is even worse, fifteen percent. Somehow those numbers didn't make me realize that a lot of people I know must have a family member with a mental illness, and that those percentage numbers for suicide meant many had lost that family member. I had not realized how many people, especially young people, have a serious mental illness.

To read the rest of Janet's article recently published in the United Teachers of Los Angeles newspaper visit:
http://www.utla.net/utla/unitedteacher/May_16_2008_web.pdf

News from Glendale NAMI

By Jonee Shady

Membership and Voting

Members in good standing should be receiving voting materials shortly in the mail. If you are not planning to attend the California conference in Burlingame, then make sure you vote by absentee or give your proxy to a member who will be attending. Voting for your state board to represent us at the State Level is an important benefit of membership. Make your vote count!

National Convention

At last month's National Convention in Orlando, we voted two Californians to the National Board, our own Keris Myrick and Dr. Richard Lamb, both from LA County affiliates. That

makes four of the fifteen National Board members from Los Angeles.

The National Convention brought together a wealth of information and an opportunity to see what NAMI is doing in other parts of the country. All the F2F program directors met on the first day of the conference to hear what is new in the educational programs at NAMI and what others have done that has been successful. I am pleased to say that we are working hard in Los Angeles with more offering of classes and trainings than some states in the nation. NAMI Basics is the new program for parents of young children that we hope to start here in Los Angeles as it is much needed.

Training in LA

Peer to Peer has been piloted and thanks to funding from the DMH we will be able to train 20 new peer mentors who will be able to hold Peer to Peer classes here in Los Angeles. Verdugo Mental Health hopes to hold classes as part of their clients helping clients program. Of course, NAMI Glendale will partner with VMH to make this a successful program for clients.

LA will simultaneously hold trainings for F2F teachers both in English and Spanish and I am pleased to announce that our affiliate will send two English speaking trainees and two Spanish speaking trainees to the training. We are hoping to expand our F2F program and have successfully held eight English classes and two Spanish since we started participating. Our current class was filled before we had a chance to promote it. A waiting list is being taken so if you are interested in taking F2F, please e-mail me at Sh8djb@earthlink.net. Congratulations to our recent 17 graduates, all new members to our affiliate.

Helpful Checklist for Parents of College Aged Students

Go to the link below from The JED Foundation to see **A Check List for Parents – Getting to Know Your Child's College**. What mental health services does your young adult's college have in place? <http://jedfoundation.org/>



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Mail to: NAMI Glendale Treasurer, Wayne Baldaro, c/o
 Verdugo Mental Health, 1540 E. Colorado, Glendale, CA
 91205.

GAM/gram only - \$10.00

www.namiglendale.org

RESOURCE INFORMATION**(PMRT) Psychiatric Mobile Response Team**

(626) 258-2004 for crisis management, Monday-Friday 8 am – 5pm. At other times use the Access Line.

Access Line, 24-hr: (800) 854-7771 for information and consultation, and for Psychiatric Mobile Response Team after Hours and Week ends.

(MET) operates 5 PM to 1 AM. Call Local Sheriff Station (or 911 if dire emergency) to request MET response. For general information: (562) 903-7530.

Family Advocate: John Griffin (213) 637-2311.

LA Police/Mental Assessment Response Team System – wide **Mental Assessment Response Team** (SMART.)

Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU) call (911) to request the MEU response.

IF YOUR LOVED ONE IS ARRESTED CALL: DMH Jail Mental Health Services: John Davis, District Chief (213) 229-9991.

Inmate Information Center (213) 473-6080 or (213) 473-6100.

Jail Inpatient Unit: Neil Ortego, MD (213) 893-5391.

Suicide Prevention Center, Crisis Line 24hrs 7 days (310) 391-1253.

Friendship Line: a toll free telephone help-line, run by people with mental illnesses seven days a week, 365 days a year, offers information about mental health resources and connection to crisis lines. Specially trained peer supporters are now available from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. during the week and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekends and holidays. Give us a call at 888-448-9777.

Service Agencies

L. A. County Mental Health Referrals

800-854-7771

L.A. Human Service Agency

Referrals

800-339-6993

Access Transportation

800-883-1295

Protection and Advocacy

213-427-8747

Service Agencies continued

California Youth Crisis Hotline

800-843-5200

Child Abuse Hotline

800-540-4000

Domestic Violence / Sexual

Assault Hotline

800-339-3940

Elder Abuse Hotline

800-992-1660

Substance Abuse Hotline

800-564-6600

Vocational Rehabilitation

www.dor.ca.gov

916-263-7365

Sober Living Referral Center

800-799-2084

Social Security Administration

800-772-1213

Medi-Cal Application

626-791-6334

General Relief

626-791-6222

In-Home Support Medi-Cal

888-944-4477

Legal Assistance

Free: 800-399-4529

Low Cost: 800-233-5129

Shelter Hotline

800-548-6047

Homeless Health Care

213-744-0724

Senior Referrals

800-777-7575

In Home Health Care

800-908-7030

Access / Psychiatric Mobile

Response Team

800-854-7771

Suicide Prevention & Survivor

Hotline

877-727-4747

Support Groups

National Depressive Association

800-248-4344

National Mental Health Association

800-969-6642

Al-Anon

818-760-7122

National Alliance on Mental Illness

800-950-6264

Glendale 310-663-3844

National Manic and Depressive Association

800-826-3632

Dual Recovery Anonymous

877-883-2332

Support Group Referral

877-742-7349

Alcoholics Anonymous

800-923-8722

Narcotics Anonymous

626-359-0084

Cocaine Anonymous

310-216-4444

Emotional Health Anonymous

626-287-6260

Co-Dependents Anonymous

818-906-6608

323-969-4995

Anxiety/Fear Support

310-306-0766

Divorce Support Group

626-583-2715

Anger Management

626-795-9172

Overeaters Anonymous

626-795-9901



The **GAMgram**, the Community's Voice on Mental Illness, is published by NAMI Glendale to educate its members and the general public about issues affecting the mentally ill.

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Hope and Recovery: A Mother's View

By Helen Delany

A few months ago, my daughter Niki Davis received a certificate that will allow her to live independently, in her own apartment. This means something. It is the culmination of years of struggle, hard work, hard lessons learned, and everlasting hope. We sang to each other on the phone. "...Things look swell, things look great. Gonna have the whole world on a plate..." It's true. Everything's coming up roses.

I'm writing this because I am so proud of her remarkable life. All of us who read the GAMIGram know far too much about fear, worry, and sadness. God knows Niki and I have had our share of nightmares, but that day was different. That day was about victory.

Niki has been diagnosed for some years now with bipolar disorder and PTSD. This isn't about Niki's story. Every person with a disorder and every family member who has seen one of these diseases up close and personal already know the story. But I will say this, lest anyone think otherwise: Niki never had a light case. It has taken years of trial and error, regimes of medication that fell short or actually caused harm, some that her body rejected, hospitalizations, physical breakdowns, the rushing onslaught of mania and the descents into crushing depressions, the ignorance and failures of those whose responsibility it was to protect and care for her, and certainly not least, the death of her brother, her soul-mate and spiritual twin. That day, and every day of her life is a victory because Niki is still here, teaching me, teaching all of us, that you don't have to die from an incurable disease, and that life, her life, all of life - is sacred and recoverable.

I think a lot about the extraordinary things she has done to get to this day. For instance, Niki has never lost touch, has never gone into total isolation or rejection of her sisters or her stepfather, or me. At different times, she has gone to her sisters, lived with them. She has reached out to me, even when life was darkest for her. So many of our telephone conversations were confusing, torturous, and painful, but we did the best we could and we never stopped talking. I've always known that was our saving grace. I'll don't know how she did it in some of those dark days. I'm just grateful. I'm aware of our miracle every time my cell phone lights up with the words, "Niki is calling."

She has a great capacity to believe. Niki loves my husband as if he was her biological father, and he loves her as if she were his own child. She trusts him to do his best for her. They were talking on the phone one day about suicide when I heard him say something wonderfully simple. He said, "Just don't die, Niki. Stay alive and something will happen." Not too long ago, Niki told me that for nine years the level of her medication kept her thinking about suicide. It was those words from my husband Bill, she said, that kept her alive. She didn't die and something did happen. A more alert doctor entered her life and changed her medication. But for nine awful years, Niki had to choose life every day.

She's willing to listen, and she's a doer. Bill told Niki something else during one of their talks that she used to change her life and the lives of others. He told her that the best way to stay well was to help others. Anybody that reads this GAMIGram knows that Niki's life is now about service to the mentally ill. Bill and I and Niki's oldest sister Debbie

were in the audience when, in June of 2006, in Los Angeles, at the Hope and Recovery Conference, Niki was one of the featured speakers. We couldn't hold back the tears of happiness and immense pride as she made a stirring, inspiring speech. And in San Francisco, she received NAMI/California's highest award for consumer advocacy for the mentally ill, and rightfully so. She has been in the trenches - a protestor and a lobbyist. She has been an active member of GAMI and Glendale DBSA for years. She has personally helped countless others in countless ways, not the least of which are her yoga classes. Even while struggling with her own disorders, Niki got certified by the world-renowned Kripalu Yoga Institute as a yoga instructor. Now she gives it back.

She has engaged in intense research, learning more about her disorder, discovering the benefits of neurofeedback and submitting to it herself. It's made a difference in her life that has been nothing short of dramatic. Her medications are way down. Her organizational skills are improving every day. She's resuming her art work, one of the joys that too much medication took away. She has learned the transformational practices of deep meditation and visualization. She eats well and is vigilant about what she puts in her body. Last summer, she house-sat for me, caring for our cat, transforming a spoiled little brat into a calm, well-behaved animal. Even my tomatoes and herbs, sickly and weak from our drought, perked up under her care. We missed her so much when she left.

I know that Niki's story is what it is and that there are so many of our loved ones who can only do what they can do. But I needed to write about Niki because we all need to hope. We need to believe that sometimes there is a miracle. We need to understand that hard work does bring results. We need to see for ourselves, looking at her life, that having a disorder does not mean that one is a disordered person. In my eyes, Niki is God's perfect loved one. In my soul, I know that she came into this world to be a testament to faith, grace, and strength, to lift those who cannot yet lift themselves out of darkness.

Last night, I picked Niki up from the airport. She's here again, to care for our cat and our house. We laughed and talked for the two hours it took us to get home. At 1:30 in the morning, Niki was still full of hope and joy, still trying new things, still testing her boundaries, teaching me, helping me to see life through her beautiful eyes. Still choosing life. She walked in the door, and our cat was beside himself with joy. That's what she brings with her. Her life is not perfect. It's not easy. But today was another victory.

Local Glendale Depression Study Offered

A new study in our Glendale clinic--for depression--patients are paid \$5600 for participation--they will be an in patient for 31 days--will be able to have visitors--lap tops--there will be a hair dresser for them plus manicures and pedicures--lots of activities etc--contact: Hilary at lottiedottiebags@aol.com for more information.



Save the Date: October 4, 2008
Santa Monica Promenade



Have you ever wanted to remember someone or honor someone in a very special way? NAMIWALKS LA has a beautiful sponsorship opportunity that does just that. Imagine that you are walking for NAMI and along the walk you come across the name of a loved one who has passed away or someone special whom you would like to recognize and honor. This year NAMI Glendale lost many loved ones and we will honor Fred Hancock, Rosalie Haas, Michael Davis Johnson, Jace Peterson and Rodney Wallace's sister Karla.

NAMI Glendale is once again participating in NAMIWALKS and we are committed to raise \$5,000 in sponsorships. Many people find it difficult to approach businesses, so we are appealing to our membership to sponsor the walk through memorial sponsorships. For \$250 you can have one of these beautiful markers placed along the walk which will take place in Santa Monica on Oct 4.

Please make your check payable to NAMIWALKS LA and send it to our treasurer, Wayne Baldaro, along with the name of the person whom you would like to honor or remember.

Together we can help make a difference! Please call me at 818-957-3185 or email me at lettybaldaro@iwon.com if you have any questions.

Thank you all for caring!
Letty Baldaro
Walk Rep

Team Captain Kick off Luncheon

August 14 12- 2PM

California Endowment Center

Contact below to RSVP today!

Email: waldaro@nami.org

Phone: 213/251-6519

Web: <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks/ca/los>

Family to Family Reunion Set

Save the Date: September 6, 2008 for a Family to Family Reunion. If you are a graduate of a Glendale Family to Family class you may contact Letty Baldaro at lettybaldaro@iwon.com to receive the details of a planned graduate reunion.

Missed an issue? Want to share a GAMlgram with someone? Use the online GAMlgram Archive to view previous issues and share great articles and information with others. Here is the link:

http://namiglendale.org/gamigram_archives.htm

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