

# GAMIGram



Volume 20 Issue 5

NAMI Glendale

July/August 2005

## 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 Tuesdays at 6:00 PM at Arden House, 1552 Colorado Street, Glendale, at the corner of Colorado and Lincoln. We encourage you to come. Enter through the front or rear entrance. Parking is available behind the building or on the street.

**NOTE: See below for information about July 5 meeting.**

### MONTHLY NAMI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**SAVE THE DATE. TUESDAY, JULY 5, 2005  
ANNUAL FAMILY POTLUCK DINNER  
AT THE HOME OF FRED AND JANE HANCOCK  
2980 Edmonton Road  
Glendale, CA 91206  
6:00 PM UNTIL 8 OR AFTER  
BRING A SALAD, ENTRÉE, OR DESSERT  
WE'LL FURNISH THE DRINKS  
DON'T MISS THIS ONCE-A-YEAR TIME  
TO "SHARE AND CARE"  
IN A CASUAL SETTING**

**MAPS AVAILABLE AT MEETINGS OR CHECK YOUR  
THOMAS GUIDE OR MAPQUEST**

**(On this one day of the year we do NOT meet at 1552  
Colorado. NAMI members, family, friends – all are  
welcome for an evening of food, fun, friendship.)**

### **Tuesday, August 2, 2005**

Regular Share and Care and monthly business meeting. Speaker TBA.

### **Friday and Saturday, August 19 and 20, 2005**

NAMI California Annual Conference: The Many Faces of NAMI California: We're All One Family. Great speakers, including Alex Kopelowicz. See Back Page for Program and Registration Information.

## WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jonée Shady

Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Independence Day. Sometimes I wonder what the meaning of this celebration really is. The Declaration of Independence was adopted on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. For many Americans it means fireworks and barbecues. But what does it mean for families with mentally ill relatives? Food for thought as I think of my brother institutionalized and not independent at all. So many of us are just hoping that our loved ones could one day live independently. Now that would be a cause for celebration, wouldn't it? I hope we will spend this long weekend with friends or family and enjoying the time with those we love.

I finally received a letter from my brother after months of not hearing. He sounded fine. No delusions this time. I plan to see him during this holiday break but it continues to be a chore for me. One of those things that has to be done though, right? So as we ask in our "Share and Care," what are we doing for ourselves? I will drive up to Atascadero tomorrow and enjoy the scenic route, get a glimpse of the ocean on the way, and do some wine tasting after my visit. Doesn't sound all that bad when I look at it like that. I guess that is how I find balance. It has taken me a while to learn this lesson but it was one worth learning.

I also want to mention an independent film that I saw last weekend. "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants" is a beautiful coming of age story about four best friends in high school who spend the summer separately but share a single pair of pants among them. My cousin called me after she had seen it and insisted that I should see this film and although I had never heard of the film nor recognized any of its young stars, I took her recommendation and did so. I was pleasantly surprised and although mental illness was not the focus of this film, the mother of one of the girls takes her own life after years of dealing with depression. The incident is subtly mentioned but the message was there without stigma. I highly recommend the film and encourage you to see it with your whole family. I would love to hear your feedback.

Well, it looks as if I made it through half of my first year as President of this affiliate and I hope you have enjoyed reading my column. I welcome any thoughts and ideas you may have for pieces for this newsletter or increasing our membership. Remember, a group is only as strong as its members.

## Dorothy Meyer Writes to the Times

To the Los Angeles Times

Thank you for your article(s) on the homeless and mentally ill, especially Sunday, June 26, as well as the previous one a few weeks ago.

The more information/stories published about the mentally ill and homeless the more the public becomes educated (I hope) re mental illness. These stories are written with sensitivity and understanding, especially with the description of the musician and his sad existence.

Hopefully with the new monies from Proposition 63 more individuals will be given the services they require.

The publication of this subject means a great deal to me and others who have children with mental illnesses. I have two sons with such disabilities. Also I am a member of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, an organization for family and friends of loved ones with the illnesses.

Your article is excellent and especially meaningful. Again thank you.

To the Los Angeles Times

I am sending you this message re your use of the words/terms *schizophrenic* and *schizophrenia* in your article Monday, April 4, 2005, headlined "Soldiers die—but for Schiavo we cry."

Use of these words/terms is totally inappropriate!

Refer to paragraph 1: "We're one of the world's most schizophrenic cultures" and in paragraph 5: "To excuse our schizophrenia we cite God as the ultimate determiner of who lives and who dies."

Schizophrenia is a very serious mental illness; it has nothing to do with "split personalities or dual personalities." It has to do with persons with paranoia, delusions, hallucinations and lack of cognitive thinking.

This is the second time a writer from the Times has used this terminology incorrectly in recent weeks. It is very frustrating to us who have family members with mental illnesses. We are constantly trying to erase the



**The *GAMlgram*, 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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**Editor: Jane S. Hancock**  
[janelou@aol.com](mailto:janelou@aol.com)

stigma of mental illness. I belong to the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, a national support group for family and friends of people with mental illnesses. We are working diligently trying to educate the public re mental illness.

Please refrain from using any words or terms referring to mental illnesses unless you are writing about the illness. I would also appreciate your passing this on to other writers.

Thank you for understanding.

### **A WORD TO THE WISE: NO BENDING THE RULES** **Pat Connus**

All my life I thought I was pretty inflexible. I've tried yoga and other stretching exercises many times to increase my physical flexibility. But isn't that just an indication of something else, some deep psychological problem?

Maybe I already am pretty flexible. Maybe I am too loose. Maybe I ought to tighten the reins a little on my wild horses.

I'm talking about behavior. Sometimes I am really rude to my parents and friends. I chalk it up to my illness. "Oh, yeah," I say. "I'm sick. That's why I behave this way."

But that's no excuse for inconsiderate and irrational behavior.

I keep saying I have no control over occasional outbursts of temper. Even though they are only occasional, they are still undesirable. I use my illness as a license to fight.

I can't bend the rules. I have to be more thoughtful of my family, who have to put up with me. And because I live in an apartment building, I have to be considerate of my neighbors. Little children imitate what they see and hear. (Children live what they learn!)

I just need to practice a little self-control. I know it's easier said than done, but I have to try. So to all of those people who have been involved in domestic disputes, remember, our illness does not allow us to bend the rules.

**Ed. Note: Thanks to Pat Connus, daughter of Kay and Tom Connus, who sent us this article.**

### **SHORT OPEN LETTER TO TOM CRUISE** **Jane Hancock**

Dear Tom,

Be careful what you say. You have studied the history of psychiatry? You have studied mental illnesses? And Matt Lauer hasn't? And we haven't?

We parents and loved ones of people with mental illnesses have studied and studied and studied. We study every day as we live through the disease with our loved ones. I hope you never have to live with someone who has schizophrenia or bi-polar disorder or any other mental illness. Or rather, I hope they never have to live with you.

OCTOBER 1, 2005

## ABOUT NAMI GLENDALE MEETINGS

Kay Connus

Newcomers to our group may feel that we don't understand their problems. They are looking for a quick, easy answer and sometimes resist the advice we try to give. But we've all been where they are. There is no easy answer, no magical pill. It won't just go away.

It's extremely difficult to be verbally or physically abused and listen to accusations that don't make sense. Our first instinct is to defend ourselves—to fight back, counterattack. This generally causes the situation to escalate. The reality is that this is not our loved one. It is the illness manifesting itself and we have to step back. The hateful things thrown at us really hurt deeply. We can't understand why they lash out at us when we have always been there for them.

At our weekly meetings we try to ease the anger and frustration. We discuss different ways of coping and suggest books to help them understand the illness. We advise them to document any bizarre, threatening or destructive behavior. If a crisis arises, this information will be important in getting their loved one the help they need. We also tell them they must take care of themselves and not let dealing with the illness overwhelm them.

### NAMI Support Group Principles

- We will see the individual first, not the illness.
- We recognize mental illnesses are brain disorders.
- We aim for better coping skills.
- We find strength in sharing experiences.
- We reject stigma in ourselves and others.
- We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
- We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
- We embrace humor as healthy.
- We accept we cannot resolve all problems.
- We expect a better future in a realistic way.
- We will never give up hope.

### NAMI Support Group Guidelines

- Start and stop on time.
- Set time limit for opening stories.
- Observe rule of absolute confidentiality.
- Be respectful.
- Keep it in the here and now.
- Empathize with each other's situations.



**WALK FOR NAMI**

## RESOURCE INFORMATION

- ❑ (PMRT) Psychiatric Mobile **Response Team**, (626) 2582004 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) 9037530.
- ❑ 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**: this is a toll free telephone help-line, run by people with mental illness seven days a week, 365 days a year. This line offers Peer to Peer Support information about mental health Resources and connection to crisis lines.

### MORE FROM THE PRESIDENT Jonée Shady

#### NAMIWALKS

I want to use this forum to thank those volunteers, Kay, Carmen, Terri, and Susan, who assisted NamiLA with the stuffing of the envelopes for our upcoming walk kick-off luncheon set for August 16th. Without your help, we could not have completed the task as quickly and efficiently. This was truly a team effort.

Speaking of teams, we are looking for Team Captains for NAMIWalks LA. We will be having regular walk updates immediately following share and care on Tuesdays. Remember we are at Arden House every week from 6:00-7:30 p.m. and you can join us for it or come at the end and get involved with the Walk. Don't forget to recycle for NAMI Glendale. All ideas for raising funds, creating teams, recruiting volunteers, among other duties are welcome. Please help us out and assist Glendale in being more successful in this walk than we were last year.

#### NAMIWALKS UPDATE

We need you! Our affiliate wants to be a strong presence at this walk. The walk is scheduled for Oct 1 with the **Kick-off Luncheon** scheduled for August 16.

Please turn to Page 4. See NAMIWalks.

## NAMI CALIFORNIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2005 The Many Faces of NAMI California: We're All One Family

**Marriott Irvine**  
18000 Von Karman Avenue, Irvine, California 92612  
Phone: 949-553-0100  
Fax: 949-261-7059

**PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES:**

The Affiliate Leaders and Presidents Council Meeting will be held on Thursday, August 18, from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**CONFERENCE:**

Registration opens Friday, August 19 at 8:00 am. Conference begins Friday, August 19 at 8:30 a.m. and closes Saturday, August 20 at 4:30 p.m.

**CONSUMER FORUM:**

A consumer forum will be held on Friday, August 19 at 12:00 p.m. If you are a consumer, and would like to participate in the forum, you must pre-register. See consumer registration.

**ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Please make your hotel reservations by calling 888-228-9290 Ask for the specially negotiated rate of \$99 (single, double, triple or quad). This special rate is good from January 26, 2005 thru August 10, 2005. **Cut off date for this rate is August 10, 2005. NAMI California cannot guarantee rooms beyond the number that have been reserved in our block, so book now!** Hotel directions will be sent with confirmation of registration.

**SHUTTLE SERVICE AND PARKING:**

Hotel Shuttle service is available from the John Wayne airport to the Irvine Marriott. Self parking at the hotel is \$6 per day.

**CONSUMER SCHOLARSHIPS:**

NAMI California encourages affiliates to offer consumers a scholarship to attend the NAMI California Conference. A limited number of consumer scholarships will be awarded by NAMI California and will be awarded on a first come, first served basis. Please contact Zima Graffigna at zima.graffigna@namicalifornia.org or 916-567-0163 for an application.

**REGISTRATION FEES INCLUDING MEAL(S)**

**Paid after July 8, 2005:**

2-Day Rate: \$160/person  
1-Day Rate: Fri. Sat. \$100/person

**On-Site Registration (no meal guarantee):**

2-Day Rate: \$170/person  
1-Day Rate: Fri. Sat. \$110/person

**Consumer Registration:**

2-Day Rate: \$90/person  
1-Day Rate: Fri. Sat. \$55/person

I will attend the consumer forum  
I will not attend the consumer forum

**Cancellation Policy: A \$35 cancellation fee to cover operating expenses will be charged to those who register but cannot attend. To cancel, you must notify the NAMI California office in writing no later than July 18, 2005. No refund will be made after this date.**

Registration forms will be available at NAMI Glendale meetings or call 818.240.7279 and we'll mail one to you. Let's really support NAMI California at this state conference in Irvine.

**A PREVIEW OF SESSIONS AND FORUMS**

**Fun, Food, and Dancing. Friday evening, August 19, 2005.**

**Awards Luncheon, Saturday, August 20 – 12:30**

**Current Controversies in the Treatment of Bipolar Disorder  
William E. Callahan, Jr., MD.**

**Improving Treatment Adherence in Serious Mental Illness  
Alex Kopelowicz, M.D.**

**A Reading and Discussion of Seventy-Two Hour Hold  
Bebe Moore-Campbell**

**In Our Own Voice: Living with Mental Illness**

**Suicide Prevention and Intervention for Families and Consumers**

**Plan for the Future: Who Will Care When You're Not There?**

**Family Advocacy Taking Shape in California**

**Increasing Affiliate Membership and Volunteer Participation**

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**NAMIWALKS Continued.**

Our goal is to raise double from last year. How can you help?

We must start now as October is closer than you think. Below is our wish list for the upcoming Walk.

- In-kind donations that can be raffled off at Kick-off Luncheon.
- Any items that we could put in a gift basket for the raffle (candles, wine, chocolate, crackers, etc.).
- Corporate sponsorship. Write a letter and send a packet or two.
- Team captains. Bring five people to the walk who can raise \$100 each.
- Articles for the GAMIGram that will stir interest.
- Places where we can place cans for donations.
- Names and addresses of all the dignitaries, politicians, and NAMI Leaders who can spread the word about the walk.
- Media contacts.
- Fundraising Committee including someone who is willing to oversee our affiliate fundraising and someone who can take recycling to the recycling center every other week until walk day.

- Any other suggestions that can spark the energy to insure that we have a successful walk that is greater than last year's!

Please e-mail Carmen Fonseca, our walk coordinator, at [fonscac@co.la.ca.us](mailto:fonscac@co.la.ca.us) if you can contribute any of the above items.