

GAMIGram



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NAMI Glendale

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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. **We will meet every Tuesday in December. Mental illness does not take a holiday so we will be there in case we are needed.**

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Although this is our regular speaker meeting, we will not have a speaker this month. We usually have a holiday party on this date, **but we are not going to have a holiday party this year either.** Read ahead for a special party in January.

Since we usually contribute gifts to the Glen Roberts Child Care Center, we will give them a gift of cash instead.



TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2005

CELEBRATE
WITH US AS WE KICK OFF A NEW YEAR



PIZZA PARTY AT 6:00 PM
SHARE AND CARE 6:30 TO 7:30
LET'S MAKE THIS A TIME TO COME
TOGETHER,
MEET NEW FRIENDS,
GREET OLD ONES
AND DO WHAT WE DO BEST!

COME!

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jane S. Hancock

The following, credited to a Milton Olson, has been following me around lately. I first saw it as part of a great power-point presentation at a university meeting and since then have seen it several times on the Internet. As you read it, connect it to what we do in NAMI and what you do as a member. You might also want to predict what the lesson is for each fact before you read the lesson.

LESSONS FROM GEESE ~ from Milton Olson

Fact 1: As each goose flaps its wings it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact 2: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Fact 3: When the lead goose tires, he rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

Fact 4: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

Please turn to Page 2.

GAMI CLASSIFIED ADS Jobs Offered

Office, general duties. Fold and mail newsletter six times a year. No experience necessary. Inquire at NAMI Glendale weekly meeting.

Human Resources. Caring, sympathetic person wanted to facilitate Share and Care meetings. Should be a good listener and have the ability to pass the Kleenex box when necessary.

Secretary. Two positions available. One needs to take minutes at monthly meetings and keep them on file. The other needs to write thank you notes and send cards. Ask for Jane.

Clerical. Must own a computer and be able to use it. Job description: keep track of membership on line. If interested, see Kay.

Librarian wanted to promote the reading of books in NAMI library and check them in and out.

Editor. Must have computer skills and be able to write. Some months you will have to write the entire newsletter. If you get submissions, you will edit them. Salary double what the present editor is getting.

Host or hostess needed to make sure that everyone is welcome and comfortable at NAMI meetings. No experience necessary. See Linda or Elaine.

WORDS FROM PRESIDENT, continued

Fact 5: When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of the formation and follow it down to help and protect it. The two stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Jane's reflection: We, those of us who are active NAMI members, share a common direction, accept help and give help to others, encourage, and stand by each other in difficult times. What we don't do enough of is take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. Please help.



The *GAMIGram*, 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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The Wild Child: Coping with a Bipolar Youth A Documentary Special Produced and Reported by Karen Brown

(By the time you receive this *GAMIGram*, it will be too late to listen to this documentary which airs on December 2 at 6:00 pm on FM 88.5. However, you can listen on line at http://www.wfcr.org/features/wild_child.php.)

What is it like to have a mind you can't control?

For three young people diagnosed with bipolar disorder, it's brave journey into uncharted medical and emotional territory.

Seventeen-year-old Erin is a Nirvana fan with a history of substance abuse; Athena is a 10-year-old aspiring cheerleader who lives on disability with her single mom; Eric is a 15-year-old disciple of Conan O'Brien who still holds a record for most middle-school detentions.

Through these young people's blunt, honest, and often humorous voices, we learn about the early signs of the disorder; difficulties getting an accurate diagnosis; the trial and error of treatment; stress on family relationships; working with under-budgeted school systems; and hopes for the future.

It is estimated that about two and a half million people in the United States are diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Throughout history, prominent and creative figures are now believed to have suffered from it, including Beethoven, Abe Lincoln and Ernest Hemingway. However, diagnosing this and other mental illnesses in children is problematic.

There is controversy within the psychiatric field over whether children can even have bipolar disorder. And the illness can mimic other kinds of behavioral disorders such as Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder.

If diagnosed or medicated incorrectly, the symptoms can be profoundly exacerbated, even to the point of suicide.

Within the medical community, there is little consensus on treatment for bipolar disorder in children and that often makes things worse. Although the scientific community now knows a great deal about bipolar disorder, there are still many unanswered questions—especially for children and their families.

The children featured in this documentary, like thousands of others, approach their illness with courage and hope but it remains a long painful road to walk.

CD copies of Wild Child are available for \$15.00. Please make checks or money orders payable to WFCR and allow three weeks for delivery. Address requests to Cara Kaife Foster, WFCR-FM, Hampshire House, 3rd Floor, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003 or ckfoster@wfcr.org or 413.545.3176.

Karen Brown covers health care for WFCR, with an emphasis on mental Health.