

GAMIGram



Volume 20 Issue 6

NAMI Glendale

September/October 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.

MONTHLY NAMI MEETINGS AND EVENTS

September 6, 2005 – Business Meeting

October 4, 2005 – Speaker Meeting

Dr. Ken Smythe, former Director of Outpatient Psychiatric Services with the City of Angels Medical Center, will speak on the technique called the "Release Technique," said to be extremely helpful in stress and crisis management, communication skills, and behavior modification. He recently spoke at the LA NAMI meeting and the members were very grateful.

He has been working in the field of psychology for more than 14 years and has studied many therapeutic theories and treatments for the severely mentally ill.

This technique has helped him personally in providing the answers he was searching for while dealing with a mentally ill family member.

SUPPORT NAMIWALKS LA

Saturday, October 1, 2005
Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area
Irwindale, California
Check-in 8:00 am
Walk begins 10:00 am

Write Letters asking for support
(See Page 4 for Sample Letter)
Form a team to walk the Walk
Walk as a member of NAMI Glendale team
Recycle

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jonée Shady

Greetings from Irvine.

I have just spent three days at the NAMI California conference. Attending conferences such as this one reinforces my reasons for participating in this wonderful organization. All of us from all over the state come together for the same purpose. Family members and consumers coming together to share information through workshops and networking. It is truly exciting.

Workshops included criminal justice committee work in other counties and how we can use these models to assist our family members from getting caught up in the criminal justice system and getting the treatment they so deserve. The project in San Bernardino County is a collaboration between the Public Defender's Office and the Sheriff's department working together to assist our family members. It is truly exciting to know that there are so many dedicated people working to improve the system.

I attended a Family-to-Family meeting of teachers in other counties and guess what? We all love teaching this course and all of us agree that those who take the course leave with so much information on how to deal with the different issues and are so grateful that we can provide this college equivalent course to anyone who is in need at no cost to them. (See this issue for more info about our upcoming courses in English and Spanish.)

There are many educational opportunities that Nami is trying to implement in the schools so that we can help parents of children who have mental illnesses. An education committee has been formed and will look to see what programs NAMI will adopt statewide and how we can get additional funding through grants to get all these programs going in the schools. This is a concern that we as an affiliate had hoped to explore and I know as a teacher myself, there is a great need to get the word out in the schools.

"The Many Faces of NAMI" came together this weekend for information, networking, sharing, eating, and even dancing the night away. A perfect example of mixing business with pleasure as we continue the mission of advocacy for the Mentally Ill.

WALK THE WALK – OCTOBER 1, 2005

Open Letter to Bebe Moore Campbell

Dear Bebe,

I have just finished your latest book, *72 Hour Hold*. As someone who has a brother with schizophrenia, and whose mother was the one trying to keep things together, I truly appreciated this story of a mother and what she goes through emotionally trying to simply get help for her daughter inflicted with bi-polar disease.

I had the pleasure of meeting you a few years ago at the Nami national convention in Minnesota and our paths have crossed several times since then along with those you mention in your acknowledgements at the beginning of the book. It was actually the first time I have personally known any people mentioned in any of the books I've read with maybe the exception of college professor's textbooks.

I am not a writer, so I would not dare comment on your writing per se, but I have read other books of yours and I feel you tell compelling stories and develop characters so that we the readers get to know them and can feel what they feel. I love that in a novel. I enjoy novels and even though they are fiction, I know they often come from a place of truth. *72 Hour Hold* tells a story and according to your many talks, I have heard you say you want to create an awareness of mental illness that we can all talk about. You want to fight stigma. You want us to see the human side of our loved ones inflicted with serious brain disorders. And I applaud you for all of this but I must ask you one question.

Why is there no mention of NAMI, the Nation's Voice on Mental Illness, at any place in the story? Yes, you mention NAMI Inglewood in your acknowledgements but you don't even spell out the acronym. You do talk about support groups, a place where families can go and share their experiences and feelings with others going through much of the same. In fact, I recognized many of the scenarios from your characters as those that have come up at our support groups and family-to-family classes. Many things were so familiar and I appreciated all of that but I still ask, why not tell the world who NAMI is?



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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NAMI supports you, your involvement, and your work. We welcome you in speaking at our conventions and luncheons; we give you awards for your work with NAMI. And we know you support us too, but you now have a best-selling novel that doesn't contain a bibliography that could have at least listed the web site. This book, although a novel, could help many people as NAMI has helped many people.

I seem to remember a few years ago I read a book by Wally Lamb, *I Know This Much is True*, a story of twins (one has schizophrenia) and although a novel, there was a wonderful bibliography at the end of the book where people could read more about schizophrenia and other brain disorders. I so wish you would have mentioned our organization. Many other novels have touted the 12-step program that now the whole world knows as AA, Alcoholics Anonymous. Won't it be wonderful when the whole world knows about NAMI, the Nation's Voice on Mental Illness?

Maybe Oprah will invite you to her show and you might mention it to her? Or maybe you could think about a mention in the paperback version?

Sincerely,

Jonée B. Shady
 President
 NAMI Glendale

Family-to-Family Classes Begin

Glendale NAMI is starting a free 12-week educational series entitled Family-to-Family for family and friends of individuals with serious mental illness. For more information call 213.461.3981 ext. 243 or email Jonée Shady--sh8djb@earthlink.net. Classes begin on September 8 and continue through December 1, 2005. No charge.

A Family-to-Family class in Spanish is also planned. Carmen Fonseca, who recently completed the training to teach the class in Spanish, was hospitalized recently with a triple bypass. Due to this surgery, she will not be able to facilitate the class at this time. We will try for early winter, possibly January and we hope that Carmen fully recovers and comes back to our Care and Share Tuesdays where she is truly missed.

By the way, thanks, Wayne Baldaro for creating and preparing the mailing for our upcoming Family-to-Family class and for arranging for a much needed space for the class.

DBSA GLENDALE - A SUPPORT GROUP
 for those suffering from
 depression, manic depression, bipolar disorder
 Glendale Adventist Medical Center
 1509 Wilson terrace, Glendale
 Tuesdays/Thursdays 6 – 8 pm
dbsaglendale@earthlink.net
 626.358.6587 or 626.794.9751

A NETWORK OF CARING

Rae Jeane Williams

Many of us know how important family and friends are to our lives. However, until my son called me a month ago distraught over an eviction notice placed on his apartment door, I had taken both family and friends for granted. Since it was late Friday I could take no action but comfort my son and tell him I would be on the phone first thing Monday morning. And I was.

I work full time so I began by canceling all the commitments I could for that week. I began compiling a list of numbers. First from my family, then friends and colleagues at work. One reference led to another and the list grew. I stayed by the phone for three days waiting for call backs; I made extensive notes of wait time, conversations. I struggled to resist hanging up when I heard Press one for English, Press two for, Press three for. I tried to remember what each number represented, then began over when my memory failed. Of course sometimes no category fit my needs. However, when I did reach human voices they all listened to my son's story and treated me kindly, referring me to other agencies if they weren't able to help.

I finally connected with an agency called Eviction Defense Network. They have a walk-in service and a \$50.00 fee. Those unable to pay the fee are referred to another service that is free. My son and I met there a week after he had received the eviction notice. While we waited two hours before we saw an attorney, I had ample time to listen to a variety of one-on-one and phone conversations between staff members and those seeking advice.

The staff impressed me with the respect with which they dealt with clients. They answered all phone calls, speaking in Spanish when necessary. When our turn arrived, we outlined our case to the attorney, who asked some questions and then took our file to consult with her supervisor. She returned after about 15 minutes to tell us they would accept our case. Since they accept only cash, we scraped together \$100.00 of the \$500.00 they charge for accepting the case. They said we could pay the remainder over time.

Before we left the supervisor had called a law firm representing landowners and had learned that they would not prosecute such a case. The supervisor and attorney thought there was conflict between federal and state law. At a dinner they were attending the next day they would be able to discuss the case with ACLU lawyers.

Within a week of receiving the eviction notice, we had legal help. We never had to go to court as the eviction was withdrawn. The agency did not need to collect the outstanding \$400.00. Instead of being on the street, my son continues to live in an environment that has allowed him to work at pulling his life together. So much of this is because of the network of friends, colleagues, and health care professionals.

I would like to share the following list of resources should anyone need them and also my email if I can be of any help.

rjwilliams@gseis.ucla.edu.

Bet Tzedek Legal Services 818.769.0136
Eviction Defense Network 213.385.8112
Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles 800.399.4529
Protection and Advocacy Incorporated 213.427.8747
Western Law Center for Disability Rights, Loyola Law Center 213.736.1000

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.

NAMIWalks Kick-Off Luncheon

Kay Connus

Dorothy and Richard Meyer, Letty Baldaro, Kay Connus, Jonée Shady and Niki Davis represented our group at the Kick-Off Luncheon held on August 16 at the Wilshire Grand Hotel. NAMI Glendale donated two beautiful baskets prepared by Letty Baldaro as door prizes.

Moderator Mariette Hartley discussed the devastating suicides in her family and her own problems with depression. Keynote speaker Bebe Moore Campbell read excerpts from her book *72 Hour Hold* and told how NAMI helped her cope with a loved one's illness. Niki Davis gave an inspiring talk about her own severe

problems with depression and how NAMI helped her in learning how to deal with them.

NAMIWalks Luncheon and State Convention Acknowledgments

Jonée Shady

- Thank you Niki Davis for such a wonderful speech and support for NAMIGlendale. We have missed seeing on a regular basis but your words were profound and we are so proud to have you as a part of us.
- Thank you, Letitia, for putting together such beautiful gift baskets that someone forgot to acknowledge before distributing them. You can count on us to ask you to do some more.
- Thank you, Kaye for volunteering to be an "Ask Me" person at your table. Because I too chose to do this, I was not able to sit with our affiliate at the luncheon but I felt your presence.
- Thank you Lyn for stepping in at the last minute to help with registration.
- I must also thank my student service workers at Hollywood High who helped address and stuff the 1500 invitations that got over 500 attendees to the luncheon.
- At the convention, I was able to get to know my vice president, Dorothy Meyer, a little bit more and you know what, I still love her dearly. Thank you for attending, your questions, comments, and support.
- Debra, I hope you sell all your t-shirts this year; they are truly beautiful. Thanks for sitting at the walk table and putting up with the confusion.
- Terri, thanks for being you.
- And thanks to the DJ and Nancy Carter for getting him there. I danced for a solid hour and it almost felt like I was on a cruise-ship vacation because of the camaraderie and just pure fun we were able to have after dinner on Saturday. We must do for ourselves as we do for our loved ones. This was never more evident as we enjoyed the company and just had an honest good time.



Recycle for NAMIWalks

Glendale Recycling Center
540 W. Chevy Chase Drive
Glendale, CA 91204

818.552.2870

Monday-Friday 7:30 am to 4:45 pm

Saturday 8 am – 3:45 pm

Closed Sunday

Or bring your recyclables to the Tuesday
Share and Care Meetings.

Jonée's Walk Letter – to Copy or Inspire

I am asking for your help in a cause I feel is too important to let shame, stigma, or embarrassment keep me from writing this letter. On October 1, 2005, I will again be walking in: **NAMI WALKS for the MIND OF AMERICA. NAMI stands for the National Alliance on the Mentally Ill, a non-profit organization** for which I currently volunteer as President of the Glendale affiliate and a teacher in the NAMI Family-to Family program.

My brother, who has had schizophrenia for over 20 years, is currently residing in Atascadero State Hospital. He has been there for a little over a year and I see him as often as possible; I correspond regularly by mail. Although, I wish he weren't institutionalized, I know that he is at least safe and at getting treatment for his brain disorder. But isn't it a shame that it took his being criminalized in order to get treatment? Unfortunately, so many others who are mentally ill are not able to get the treatment that they so deserve.

Last year so many of you were kind enough to contribute to this walk. Those contributions assisted our organization to be able to continue to help families of the mentally ill through advocacy, education, and stigma busting. On a local level, our affiliate will sponsor family-to-family courses in both English and Spanish. We were able to increase the resources in our library and provide weekly support groups for families and consumers.

On a State level, one of the most important accomplishments was the passage of Proposition 63, The Mental Health Services Act, which we hope will restore the services that are so necessary for the mentally ill and children. Several members are participating in committees for proper implementation of this act.

On October 1, I will walk again for my brother and others like him who have been inflicted with serious brain disorders such as schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, and depression among others. Help me continue the mission to raise awareness of mental health issues, provide education and help dispel the stigma attached to these issues. Again I thank you for your past support and hope that you might increase last year's donation by any amount. Remember 100% of your donation is tax-deductible and no donation is too small. You may contribute on line at

www.nami.org/namiwalks05/LOS/jshady or you may send contributions to NAMIWalks LA, c/o NAMI Glendale, 1540 E. Colorado, Glendale, CA 91205.

REMEMBER. YOUR NAMI AFFILIATE MEETS EVERY
TUESDAY FROM 6 PM TO 7:30 PM AT 1552
COLORADO IN GLENDALE. IF THINGS ARE GREAT
IN YOUR LIVES RIGHT NOW, COME SUPPORT
THOSE WHO NEED US AS YOU ONCE DID.

