



NAMI

Sacramento Newsletter

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Sacramento's Voice on Mental Illness

October 2008: Issue No 6.08

General Meeting

NOTICE: ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Monday, October 20

Please note that this a different date than was announced in the September newsletter and is not the usual meeting date for NAMI General Meetings (normally the second Monday of the month.)

New Board members will be elected at the October General Meeting for a two-year term starting January 1, 2009. **Ten percent of the membership must be present** to have a quorum and complete the election. For information about becoming a Board member see the announcement on page 3 of this newsletter.

Also at the October meeting Crossroads Employment Services will make a presentation on Social Security. Dee Gavaldon and Vilma Rodrigues will explain how Social Security impacts employment and work incentives. This planning assistance program includes SSI and SSDI. Do you have questions about Medi-Cal and Medicare? Don't miss this informative meeting.

Meeting Location

SMUD Headquarters Auditorium
6201 S Street, Sacramento 95817

Time

General Meetings start at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Us

NAMI Sacramento

3440 Viking Drive, suite 125
Sacramento CA 95827

(916) 364-1642

NAMI Sacramento e-mail address:
office@namisacramento.org

Website: www.namisacramento.org

Officers Get Intensive Training on Dealing With Mentally Ill

by Lauren Keene, *The Davis Enterprise*
September 14, 2008

Armando suffers from bipolar disorder, a condition aggravated by his methamphetamine addiction. He paces the sidewalk outside his home, threatening anyone who tries to cross his path.

"I run this street," he tells one woman. "If you do something, something's going to happen."

Armando goes inside his home, where his mother says she's going to call the police. He responds by throwing a television. His mother calls 911.

Three officers respond. "I'm Jaime," says one, inviting Armando to sit down. "Is there something going on that we can help you with?"

Armando is agitated at first, rocking back and forth as he tells the officers he's been up for several days "securing the streets." The officer also sits, enabling him to build a rapport with Armando by talking face to face.

After a while, Armando admits that "I just need some sleep." The officers take him somewhere he can rest and "talk to somebody." Peacefully, they leave the house.

That scene was one of about a dozen that played out at the Community and Senior Center in Woodland, where law enforcement officers from throughout Yolo county put four days of crisis intervention team training to work. The goal of the training: to help officers deal more effectively with the mentally ill by teaching them to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness, de-escalate crisis situations and conduct suicide intervention, as well as educating them about the community services available for the mentally ill.

Participants included members of the Davis, Woodland and Winters police departments, Yolo court security officers, Yolo Emergency Communications, Safe Harbor Crisis House and the Yolo County

➤ *continued on page 4*

Misunderstanding Defines Most American's View of Schizophrenia

by Eve Bender, *Psych News*

Services and support are seriously lacking for people with schizophrenia and their caregivers, according to the results of a recent NAMI poll. Schizophrenia is an oft-misunderstood disorder that remains shrouded in mystery, according to the results of a poll released by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in June. The survey, titled "Schizophrenia: Public Attitudes, Personal Needs: Views From People Living With Schizophrenia, Caregivers, and the General Public," examined attitudes about the disorder from the perspectives of those who have first-hand knowledge of the illness as well as the general public.

NAMI contracted with Harris Interactive to conduct the poll in February among 258 people living with schizophrenia and 250 caregivers selected from a group of about 9,000 people who are registered with NAMI's Web site. The 508 respondents agreed via e-mail to complete the survey. Representatives from Harris Interactive also polled approximately 1,000 members of the public in February. Those surveyed agreed to be on Harris's online research panel, a database of several million people who have agreed to participate in online research on a number of topics.

According to the results, there are

➤ *continued on page 5*



Support Groups

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

2nd and 4th Wednesday each month from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Sutter Center for Psychiatry, 7700 Folsom Blvd., Sacramento

☞ See: www.dbsasacramento.org

Contact: Andrea Hillerman at andrea@mhasc.org or (916) 366-4601; or Marilyn Hillerman at marilynhillerman@yahoo.com or (916) 648-1358.

Dual Recovery Anonymous Group

Every Monday from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. Clean and Sober Building, Loaves and Fishes, 1321 North C Street, Sacramento.

Call Susan Young at (916) 236-7679 for more information.

Early Psychosis Family Support Group

For families with a member who has a newly diagnosed brain disease. Imaging and Research Center Conference Room, UCD Med, Center, 4701 X Street, Sacramento. Call for information.

Call Jane Du Bet at (916) 734-2964 for more information.

Emotions Anonymous

For people working toward recovery from emotional difficulties. Tuesdays from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Wellness Center, 3815 Marconi Ave., Sacramento, or Thursdays from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 1615 Morse Ave., Sacramento. Meet in the choir room.

Contact (916) 366-0699 or see <http://allone.com/12/ea/>

NAMI Family Support Group, Natomas

Held on the second Thursday of each month from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Natomas Service Center, 3291 Truxel Road #26 (corner of Truxel and San Juan), Sacramento 95833.

Call facilitator Pat Pavone at (916) 397-7831 for more information.

Obsessive-Compulsive Support Meeting (OCD)

Every Monday from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Sutter Center for Psychiatry, 7700 Folsom Blvd., Sacramento.

Call Jim (916) 223-6541 or Steve at (916) 456-8239 for more information.

Recovery, Inc., Self-Help Mental Health Meetings

Promotes a cognitive-behavioral approach to managing symptoms and changing attitudes and behavior. Groups meet weekly.

Contact: www.recovery-inc.com

Call (916) 483-5616 for meeting locations.

Sacramento Borderline Personality Disorder Non-BP Support Group

For people who have a family member or friend who suffers from Borderline Personality Disorder. Held on the second Tuesday of each month from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Location to be announced.

Call Lee Gassaway at (916) 421-7354 or contact www.meetup.com

Social Skills Group

For teens and adults who feel socially awkward or shy.

Sponsored by Fall Creek Counseling, 5900 Coyle Ave. suite D, Carmichael, CA 95608.

Contact: www.sacramentopsychology.com

Call Dr. Debra Moore at (916) 344-0900

Meetup.com Groups

You may find other informal groups that keep their own schedules at www.meetup.com. Search for a diagnosis to find a group of people who share your interests.

NAMI Sacramento does not necessarily endorse the organizations and groups listed above. This information is offered as a convenience to our newsletter readers.

Go to NAMI Sacramento's web site at www.namisacramento.org for an extensive list of resources and crisis help available in the Sacramento area.

Upcoming Events

Walk for Mental Health

Saturday, October 4, 2008 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

South Steps of Capitol, State Capitol Grounds, Sacramento

This is our biggest fundraiser! Join us for a walk from the Capitol to South Side Park and back. There will be speakers, refreshments, entertainment and educational information. Your participation will help dispel the myths about mental illness, dissolve stigma, and raise funds for NAMI Sacramento.

Important Notice

NAMI programs should not be used to replace the specialized training and professional judgment of mental health professionals. We cannot, and will not, assume the role of a physician or therapist.

NAMI cannot be held responsible for the use of the information we provide. Please always consult a trained mental health professional before making any decision regarding treatment of yourself or others.

Educational Meetings

Family to Family Education Classes

Offered twice a year, spring and fall.

☞ www.namisacramento.org

For the current class schedule see the Sacramento NAMI web site or call (916) 399-5762.

Peer to Peer Education Classes

☞ www.namisacramento.org

The NAMI Peer-to-Peer education course is a nine-week experiential recovery course for any person with serious mental illness.

General Interest Meetings

Sacramento Mental Health Board Meeting

Held the 1st Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Sacramento Mental Health Treatment Center (Media Room), 2150 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento.

NAMI Sacramento Board of Director's Meeting

3rd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. conference Room A, 3331 Power Inn Road, suite 140, Sacramento, CA 95826.



A Message From the President



Caroline Prod,
President, NAMI Sacramento

When I joined NAMI Sacramento, I was not sure what to expect. I was familiar with NAMI as a national organization, but I did not know about the Sacramento affiliate. When I learned that NAMI Sacramento had been around for years, I was actually a little embarrassed by my ignorance. Why did I not know? Now that I am President, I ask a different question: How can I help NAMI Sacramento strengthen its role in our community? How can I reach people who are desperate to find a source comfort, support, knowledge, and understanding? I hope I can help make sure that others who need us will find us.

Recently we were accepted as a Certified Partner Agency of the United Way. This status allows us to participate in United Way events, and we expect will result in increased membership and donations. In addition, this year, we were invited to participate in Downtown Macy's Community Shopping Day, a sales event to help local nonprofit organizations raise funds. NAMI Sacramento will retain all of the proceeds from the tickets we sell. Further details about the event are on page 5 of this newsletter. This is a great way to support NAMI and a good way to start your holiday shopping.

In addition to our fundraising efforts, we are working hard to strengthen our organizational framework. To that end, we are proud and happy to welcome Sontine Kalba to NAMI Sacramento's family. Sontine is our new part time Executive Assistant, and will be involved in many of our activities. Sontine will start work on October 1 and will work Monday – Friday, in the mornings.

In other news, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Steering Committee continues to meet every other Thursday evening at 7 p.m., at Sacramento County Health & Human Services, 7001-A East Parkway. The Steering Committee re-

cently approved funding to create two new mental health services programs in Sacramento County. One million dollars in funds will support a program that serves children and youth who have mental health issues and are involved in the juvenile justice system. Another program, also budgeted at \$1 million, will provide multi-disciplinary, crisis intervention, and stabilization services for older adults. These programs will be presented at a public hearing in the coming weeks. The MHSA Steering Committee is also considering several recommendations for programs that support Mental Health Workforce, Education & Training. For more information, please visit the County's MHSA web site at: <http://www.sacdhhs.com/default.asp?WOID=MHA>.

Your support of NAMI Sacramento is vital to helping us reach those who are looking for NAMI and the support we offer. Our next general meeting is on October 20. In addition to our featured speaker from Crossroads Employment Services about Social Security benefits, we will hold board member elections. You will have the opportunity to meet current board members, vote on prospective board members, and even ask questions. Please be sure to come so that we have a quorum present. We need your help to keep our organization strong.

Make a Difference - Become a Support Group Facilitator

If you have attended one of NAMI's excellent family support groups, you know what a wonderful resource they can be. NAMI support groups are led by NAMI members just like you. Please consider volunteering to help others in this important way. A support group facilitator training session is being offered in November 7-9, 2008 in Elk Grove. For information, please contact Lynn Cathy at (916) 399-5762 or Lmcathy@sbcglobal.net.

Board Member Recruitment

Have you ever thought about becoming a NAMI Sacramento Board Member? We currently have openings on the Board and are looking for people who have a commitment to our mission and want to make a difference for people with mental illness and their families. If you are interested in joining the team, please complete the questionnaire on our web site describing your background and why you want to be a Board Member. Your letter should be addressed to: Caroline Prod, NAMI Sacramento Board President, 3440 Viking Drive, Suite 125, Sacramento Ca 95827 or sent via email to: caroline@namisacramento.org. These letters will be published on the website so that the members can be informed about the prospective candidates before the Board elections at the October General Meeting.

Donate to NAMI Sacramento through CSECC/United Way

The State Employees' California State Employees Charitable Campaign and the private sector United Way campaigns are underway. This is NAMI Sacramento's first year as an official certified partnership agency. You may even see one of our volunteers at your workplace spreading the word about the work of NAMI Sacramento. You can support us by choosing our name from the list of certified nonprofit organizations and agencies. Please help NAMI to help alleviate the suffering mental illness causes by including us in your United Way/ CSECC giving. Select agency number 16962 to donate to NAMI Sacramento.

African American Volunteers Sought for Schizophrenia Study

If you are an African American consumer or family member of someone diagnosed with schizophrenia, you can help. You are being asked to help increase the understanding of African American families and how they make decisions around treatment of schizophrenia. Call (916) 265-0217 to schedule an interview to share your experience.



➔ **Officer training, from page 1**

Homeless Coalition. The Yolo County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health sponsored the training, which got its start 20 years ago in Memphis, Tenn.

“The CIT [Crisis Intervention Training] training is huge on the East coast and the Midwest,” said Michael Summers, a retired Sacramento police officer who now serves as Yolo County’s CIT coordinator. “This kind of training is valuable to all police.”

In May, a 44-year-old Woodland man suffering from bipolar disorder died of positional asphyxia following a confrontation with Woodland police, during which he was struck multiple times with Tasers and batons after reportedly acting aggressively and refusing to comply with commands. The police investigation into the incident is being reviewed by the state Attorney General’s Office.

Summers said the planning for the CIT course began about six months ago, prior to the Woodland incident. And despite its teachings, officers may still need to use force during certain situations to keep the public safe, Davis police Lt. Tom Waltz said.

CIT training “fits well into our department’s philosophy of community-oriented policing, because it’s focused on problem solving,” said Waltz, who sat on the steering committee for the CIT course.

“This isn’t a silver bullet. It’s not going to eliminate the need to use force on an individual if officers need to,” Waltz added. “But we’re hoping this will help them de-escalate a situation before they need to do that.”

Last week’s training was provided by law-enforcement officers, mental health professionals and family advocates. The course included lectures and site visits to mental health facilities in Yolo and Sacramento counties. Those visits, Summers said, “show how debilitating a mental health illness can be.”

“Yolo County Sheriff’s Deputy Jerry Lazaro said he found valuable the course’s instruction on how to identify and respond to various mental-health conditions. “Not every behavior is going to be approached in the same way, said

Lazaro, a 19-year sheriff’s department veteran. He said the training is particularly useful for newer officers “who haven’t been exposed to (mental illness.)”

On Thursday, the officers put their training to use in a series of scenarios based on real-life situations. They included a visit to a woman who is suicidal following a break-up with a boyfriend, an elderly woman with dementia who reports her husband to police, and a developmentally disabled woman who has trouble communicating with a store owner who believes she is shoplifting.

The scenarios were presented by the PointAcross Info Network, a Bay Area-based team of role players with backgrounds in mental health, substance abuse, and forensic psychiatry.

“We imitate things we’ve seen in our own experience,” said Donna Wolfe, who heads the company. “You can tell there’s a cohesiveness in this group. They already possess what it takes to have a genuine dialogue.”

After each scenario, the officers critiqued one another on their responses. “It’s nice to have more options,” Winters police Officer Jose Ramirez said of the CIT course. “You’re getting a lot of tools for your toolbox, and it really opened my eyes to a lot of the programs that are available.”

Reprinted with permission from The Davis Enterprise.

Openings at Welcome Home Housing

Welcome Home Housing has two openings for women. Our homes are located in the Rosemount area of Sacramento, near Watt Ave. and Folsom Blvd. Program fees of \$650 include rent, food, services and the company of three other delightful women. Residents must be willing and able to manage their own medications. Call Lynn at (530) 666-0202 or (916) 505-5232 or Connie at (916) 543-6755 for more information, or go online at: welcomehomehousing.org.

2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

Caroline Prod,
caroline@namisacramento.org

VICE PRESIDENT

Pat Pavone,
pavone@surewest.net

TREASURER

John Gilbert,
jgilb1@pacbell.net

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linda@clarityweb.com

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Belinda Beckett

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Al Lipson

Sherrie Sala-Moore

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COUNTY SUPPORT STAFF

Marilyn Hillerman, Adult Family Advocate,
(916) 875-5644

Andrea Hillerman, Adult Consumer Advocate,
(916) 875-4710

Dave Schroeder, Family and Youth Advocate,
(916) 875-4183

Become a NAMI Volunteer

NAMI is currently recruiting volunteers for the following positions:

- Consumer Program Co-Leader
- Family to Family class teachers, English and Spanish speakers wanted
- Family to Family Class Coordinator
- Event Photographer

If you can help, please contact Pat Pavone at pavone@surewest.net or (916) 359-2366.



➔ Schizophrenia, from page 1

some prominent misconceptions about the nature of schizophrenia among the public: for instance, 64 percent of those polled believed that “split or multiple personalities” are a symptom of schizophrenia. However, symptoms such as drug or alcohol abuse, insomnia, or disorganized speech pattern were not widely recognized. About 60 percent of those polled also believed that violent behavior is a symptom of schizophrenia.

For the most part, people polled understood that schizophrenia is a medical illness (85 percent) and that with treatment, people who have schizophrenia can lead independent lives (79 percent). “[Americans] know schizophrenia is a medical illness affecting the brain, but it is largely misunderstood,” said NAMI Executive Director Michael Fitzpatrick in a press release announcing the results. “There are gaps in knowledge and access to treatment.” In addition, less than half of those polled (46 percent) replied that they would tell a friend if they had been diagnosed with schizophrenia. Some findings on attitudes hinged on whether the person with schizophrenia was receiving treatment.

For instance 77 percent of those surveyed reported being uncomfortable working with a person with schizophrenia who has not received treatment compared with 24 percent who would feel uncomfortable if the person with schizophrenia was receiving treatment.

Slightly more than 70 percent of those surveyed would be afraid for their own safety around a person who had been treated for the disorder, according to the results.

The survey also characterized certain aspects of the lives of those living with schizophrenia - among consumers polled, there was an average of 8.5 years between experiencing the first symptoms of schizophrenia and being diagnosed with schizophrenia.

According to the results, lack of services was a critical problem. Only 29 percent of those surveyed reported receiving vocational rehabilitation, 20 percent received job-placement assistance, and 17 percent were provided with public housing.

More than a third (39 percent) of people with schizophrenia said that their diagnosis made it more difficult to access health care for medical problems. The majority reported that the crisis care (92 percent), hospital beds (83 percent), assertive community treatment (77 percent), and care managers (76 percent), and care managers (76 percent) were helpful services.

Caregivers responding to questions about people with schizophrenia were most often parents of the affected individuals (68 percent). Siblings comprised 12 percent of caregivers, and spouses or significant others 7 percent.

Almost half of caregivers surveyed (41 percent) reported providing care to an individual with schizophrenia for more than 10 years. The vast majority (90 percent) worry about what will happen to the individual when they die.

Recommendations from the report authors, who included psychiatrists and mental health advocates, include earlier and more widespread recognition of schizophrenia symptoms, training of primary care health professionals about schizophrenia symptoms and treatment, and continued research of new treatments for the disorder.

Host An “In Our Own Voice” Presentation

In Our Own Voice is an anti-stigma presentation given by consumers to all types of community audiences, large and small. The focus is on living well with mental illness and the presentation centers on the themes of Dark Days, Acceptance, Treatment, Coping Skills, and Successes, Hopes and Dreams. If your group is interested in hosting a presentation, if you would like to become a presenter, or if you would just like more information on the program, please contact Kathleen Derby at the NAMI Sacramento office: (916) 364-1642; office@namisacramento.org

Shopping to Support NAMI Sacramento

NAMI Sacramento is participating in two new programs that allow you to give financial support to NAMI at no cost to you - while you shop!

Macy’s Community Shopping Day

As we announced in the September Newsletter, NAMI Sacramento will be one of the participating agencies in the annual Macy’s Community Shopping Day on November 22 (the Saturday before Thanksgiving) at the Downtown Plaza stores. By purchasing a ticket for \$10 you are entitled to 10-20 percent discounts on most Macy’s merchandise during the pre-sale period (November 12-21) and on the day of the event itself. And, if you buy something priced \$25.00 or more on November 22, you get \$10 off—making the ticket free! NAMI will get the full proceeds from all tickets sold. Tickets are for sale at the General Meetings or contact Dawn Correia at the NAMI office at (916) 364-1642.

Goodshop.com

This is a completely easy and painless way to help NAMI while shopping online. Go to www.goodshop.com. Type in NAMI Sacramento in the box asking for the name of the charity you wish to support. Choose the store from the dropdown box - there are over 600 of them including Amazon, Macy’s, Nordstroms, Sears, Eddie Bauer, Home Depot, Flowers.com to name a few. You will be immediately connected with that store’s website—where you shop and order just as usual. That’s all there is to it. You don’t need to register or give any information. Goodshop will automatically donate a small percentage of what you spent to NAMI Sacramento.

November Newsletter Contributions

We welcome submissions to the newsletter. The due date for the next newsletter is October 12. Submit to Belinda Beckett at nimabima@aol.com. Submissions may be edited.



Wonders Never Cease

by Rose Silva, member of NAMI Sacramento

When you are the mother of a seriously mentally ill adult child who refuses any treatment, your life is filled with angst, guilt, grief and frustration. However, once in awhile it is also filled with wonder and amazement. There are times when someone whose mind has no reality boundaries can be the voice of profound truth and extraordinary clarity. There are also times when damaged brains can produce information that is simply astonishing.

Recently, my son and I took an arduous bureaucratic journey through the housing voucher program sponsored by the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. Believe me, this is not an adventure for the fainthearted. Without a lot of help, I can't believe that anyone who is disabled (let alone someone with a mental disability) could possibly meet all of the requirements for successful negotiation of a low-income housing subsidy. Nevertheless, we forged ahead undaunted.

When the time came for the qualifications interview, I was extremely anxious that my son would not be able to get through the interview without launching into one of his irrational monologues, featuring multiple voices and references to bizarre and often offensive delusions. When his name was called, I took a deep breath and prayed that we would at least be able to get through the interview without being thrown out of the building. We were ushered into a very small room with a middle-aged woman that appeared to be of Middle-Eastern ancestry. When she introduced herself, she spoke excellent English, but with a slight accent. My son immediately picked up on the accent and asked her if she was Iranian. She looked offended by his remark and I began to sweat. "No, I am Afghani," she said. At this, my son laughed and said, "ah, then you must be familiar with the work of the great poet, Abdul Rahman Baba." I began to sweat even harder but, to my amazement, the caseworker's face lit up and she smiled. "I am most impressed that you know of Abdul Rahman Baba. He is one of the greatest poets that ever lived and a source of great pride to the Afghan people."

Then my son proceeded to say that Afghanistan has a great cultural heritage, but that "the Poet of Divine Love" is an inspiration to all of humanity, especially the environmental movement. I was simply stunned when the caseworker got tears in her eyes and thanked my son for his kind words. I calmed down and the rest of the interview went well, as they amiably chatted about Baba's poetry. The voucher application was approved.

I have no idea where my son acquired his knowledge about this Afghan poet, but he was once a brilliant student and an avid reader. Somewhere in his brain, that brilliance still lives and it served him well in that interview. It was a moment of joy that will live in my heart forever.

Resource for Residential Treatment for Children

NAMI has developed *A Resource for Families Considering Residential Treatment Program* to help families make an informed decision about sending their children to a residential treatment program. Although most children with mental illnesses respond to standard treatments, some children with more serious mental illnesses continue to struggle. Residential treatment programs, including wilderness therapy programs, boarding schools, academies, behavioral modification facilities, and boot camps are often considered once families have exhausted all community mental health care resources. While some residential programs offer nurturing and caring environments and use evidence-based interventions, others are highly dangerous and damaging. The most concerning programs are those that operate under the philosophy that young people must be broken before they can be helped. These abusive methods can confer permanent psychological damage and divide the young person from his or her family.

This new web resource is intended to help families distinguish between residential treatment programs that are safe and those that may be damaging. To access the resource guide please go to: www.nami.org/Content/Groups.CAAC/A Resource for Families Considering Residential Treatment Programs for Their Children.

NAMI in the Community



NAMI Sacramento Board Vice-President, Pat Pavone, and NAMI Sacramento Office Assistant, Dawn Correia at the CSECC/United Way campaign kick-off at the Sacramento Convention Center on September 5.



Michael Paravagna, Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator for the City of Sacramento, at the September General meeting speaking about programs for individuals with disabilities, including mental disabilities.

Wanted: Volunteer Family to Family Coordinator for NAMI Sacramento

Would you like to be a part of a team that helps set up the Family to Family classes? Please contact Lynn Cathy for a job description at (916) 399-5762 or Lmcathy@sbcglobal.net. The time commitment is an estimated 15-20 hours total per year as we have two other coordinators who work in tandem for this volunteer program!



The Doctor's Corner

Dr. Robin Zasio is a local Licensed Clinical Psychologist and owner of the Anxiety Treatment Center at: www.anxietytreatmentexperts.com. She offers an Intensive Outpatient Treatment Program, as well as individual, group, and family therapy services.

She addresses mental health questions submitted by NAMI Sacramento members, consumers, and readers.

Submit your questions to:
✉ drrobin@sierrabg.com

Dear Dr. Robin,

I have been suffering from Depression off and on for several years now. After re-searching treatments for Depression, I learned about Cognitive Behavior Therapy and how it may be helpful. What are your thoughts about this type of treatment? Also, what are your thoughts about involving family members in the therapy process?

Jennifer B

Dear Jennifer,

Thanks for your question, Jennifer. It sounds like you've done some good research as Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is shown to be one of the premier treatment modalities for Depression. Let me explain why. When an individual gets depressed, as you may know, it is very hard to see the good things in life. There is a tendency to focus on the negative, making it hard to see the positive aspects of life. This is compounded by the symptoms inherent in depression, some of which include: sadness, fatigue, hopelessness, loss of interest in pleasurable activities, feelings of worthlessness, difficulty concentrating, and in some cases, thoughts of death. Certainly, when one is feeling like this, it's hard to feel or experience happiness.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy is designed to help individuals uncover how negative thinking (cognitive distortions), affect how one feels, and then translates into their behavior. So for example, if an individual wakes up in the morning and has the thought "There is no reason to get out of bed," it will tend to cause them to feel badly, and then probably remain in bed. This is an example of "black and

white" thinking, or "all or none thinking." If they examine the evidence to their statement of "no reason to get out of bed," it's possible that they may find several reasons to get out of bed. For example, walk the dog, eat to nourish their body, spend time with a friend, etc. As you can see through this therapy, one can uncover different distortions that feed depression, and change them into more realistic thinking patterns. Admittedly, it's a lot of work but very helpful in helping to break the cycle of depression.

Regarding your second question about incorporating the family, I do believe it can have benefits. If those who care about you understand more about the cycle of depression and specifically, how CBT can help you, they can better support that process. Also, family members may provide information to the therapist about their observations that may be helpful to further understand how to help you. Of course, as a therapist myself, I always leave that decision to my clients. I hope this answers your questions. For more information about CBT treatment, visit www.CognitiveBehaviorTherapyExperts.com.

Sincerely,

Robin Zasio

Wanted: Volunteers to Share Their Stories and Help Others

NAMI Sacramento is seeking volunteers to share their stories - their experiences and perspectives- about how mental illness has effected their lives. We are looking for individuals who are willing either to appear on camera or to be interviewed by a print journalist. By sharing actual stories, we can increase awareness of the many problems and shortcomings of the mental health system. The more the public is aware of, the more likely resources will be utilized and solutions found.

A Bipolar Family, A Schizophrenic Heritage, A College Student with Depression and Developmental Disorders - NPR Draws Awareness to Mental Illness

In recent weeks National Public Radio (NPR) has broadcast programs about various aspects of mental illness and the struggles - and sometimes triumphs - of the individuals and families featured.

The first of these, broadcast on August 28, 2008 on the radio program *Talk of the Nation* featured author Patrick Tracey whose recent book, *Stalking Irish Madness: Searching for the Roots of My Family's Schizophrenia* traces his family affliction with the disease back five generations. An excerpt from the book and an audio recording of the program can be found on the NPR website at www.npr.org. Type "Tracing the Roots of 'Irish Madness'" into the search box.

The second program featured author David Lovelace whose recent memoir, *'Scattershot' A Bipolar Family Portrait* describes living with bipolar disorder - his own and that of his mother, father, and brother. He talks about the terrifying experiences and the gifts that come from the illness. This program also aired on *Talk of the Nation* on September 4, 2008. An audio recording of the program, an excerpt from Tracey's book and an extensive blog about the story are available on the NPR web site. Type "Scattershot" into the search box.

Sending a mentally ill child with developmental disabilities to college was the subject of a third NPR program. On the Morning Edition program on September 16, Michelle Trudeau spoke with a mother and her son about their family's carefully considered approach to sending the son, a highly intelligent young man who suffers from clinical depression and has attention-deficient disorder and Asperger's, a form of autism, away to university. An article describing their discussion and an audio recording of the program can be found on the NPR web site. Enter "An Autistic Student's Journey to College" in the search box.

NAMI Sacramento Membership Form

Please join us! Join others in your community dedicated to improving the lives of people with mental illness in the Sacramento area. Become part of our grassroots revolution and make a difference! Either detach and mail in the membership form below, or join online at www.namisacramento.org/membership. Collecting this information helps us to serve our members better. Your information is treated confidentially and will never be shared outside of NAMI. Please print clearly.

Name: _____ Address/City/Zip: _____

(circle one)

Home/Work/Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

(check one)

Your relation to the consumer:

- I'm a consumer
- Family member
- Friend
- None, just interested

Ethnicity:

- Asian
- African/Black
- Hispanic/Latino
- Caucasian/White
- Other
- Decline to state

If you are a consumer, please enter your primary diagnosis:

- ADHD
- PTSD
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Dual diagnosis
- Unknown
- Major depression
- Other
- OCD
- Decline to state
- Panic disorder

If you are the consumer's family member, please enter your family relation to the consumer:

Membership type:

- Consumer, \$15
- General, \$35

Newsletter preference:

- E-mail
- Postal mail
- Both
- Don't send

You can help! Volunteer with NAMI Sacramento:

- Contact me about volunteer opportunities

Please consider an additional donation of:

- \$100 or more
- \$50-\$99
- up to \$50

Make checks payable to NAMI Sacramento. Mail to NAMI Sacramento Membership Chair, PO Box 2154, Fair Oaks, CA 95628. NAMI Sacramento thanks you for your support. Your donations directly help those with mental illness.

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3331 Power Inn Road, Suite 140
Sacramento, CA 95826



Sacramento, CA

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