**National Alliance on Mental Illness, Denver Affiliate****July — August 2008**E-mail: namidenver@nami.org

Phone: 303-504-6545

Website: www.namidenver.org**Mental Health Center of Denver, 4141 E. Dickenson Place****NAMI Denver Education Meetings**

Both events below will be held at Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD), 4141 E. Dickenson Place, Denver. There is no charge for NAMI Denver education programs. For more information, call 303-504-6545.

JULY**Wednesday, July 16, 7 – 8:30 PM****SSI (Supplemental Security Income)
and SSDI (Social Security Disability
Insurance)****Sara Delashmutt, Sawaya Law Firm**

Ms. Delashmutt will cover who is eligible; the difference between SSI and SSDI; and how to navigate the system so that the process seems less daunting, mystifying and intimidating. Bring your questions to this informative presentation.

AUGUST**Wednesday, August 20, 7 – 8:30 PM****Suicide & Suicide Prevention****Jarrold Hindman, MS****Manager of Office of Suicide Prevention &
Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator
Colorado Department of Public Health and
Environment**

Mr. Hindman's presentation will include:

- ◆ *Myths and facts about suicide and suicide prevention*
- ◆ *Relationship between mental illnesses and suicidal ideation, completion and prevention*
- ◆ *Stigma related to mental illnesses and suicide*
- ◆ *Warning signs and risk factors*
- ◆ *Resources*

**MHCD Pharmacy Services
Available to NAMI Members**

The Mental Health Center of Denver has two pharmacies, located in two of its clinic buildings. Both are full-service retail pharmacies and specialize in mental health treatment. The pharmacies are able to bill prescriptions through Medicaid, Medicare D and most private insurance plans. Cash pricing is also offered at reasonable rates.

Because of MHCD's commitment to quality mental health treatment, pharmacy services are now being offered to Colorado NAMI members and families at the locations below.

MHCD Pharmacy

4353 E. Colfax Avenue

Denver, CO 80220

303-504-1299

Tim Georgia, Pharm.D., manager

Wellshire Pharmacy

4141 E. Dickenson Place

Denver, CO 80222

303-504-6699




Marilyn Siayap, RPh, manager

For more information, please contact Sue Hahn, Pharm.D., MHCD Director of Pharmacy, 303-504-6663, or susan.hahn@mhcd.org.

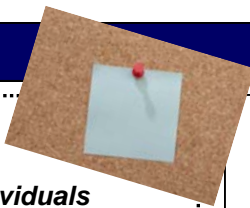
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Upcoming Meetings and Events

	What	Topic	Where	Date & Time
	Peer and Family Support Meeting <i>(Always the second Wednesday of the month)</i>	Ongoing Monthly Support Groups	4141 E. Dickenson Place	Wednesday, July 9 Wednesday, Aug. 13 7 - 8:30 PM
	Monthly Education Meeting <i>(Always the third Wednesday of the month)</i>	July meeting: SSI and SSDI August Meeting: Suicide & Suicide Prevention	4141 E. Dickenson Place	Wednesday, July 16 Wednesday, Aug. 20 7 - 8:30 PM
	NAMI Denver Board Meeting <i>(Always the last Thursday of the month)</i>	All members welcome	4141 E. Dickenson Place	Thursday, July 24 Thursday, Aug. 28 6:30 PM

Bulletin Board



NAMI Connection of Colorado

NAMI Colorado offers the following groups that provide peer support for individuals living with mental illnesses. Days and times subject to change. Before attending, please contact NAMI Colorado at 303-321-3104.

Colorado Mental Health Institute at Ft. Logan

Every Thursday, 7- 8:30 pm

3520 W. Oxford Avenue, Administration building, room 108
Denver, CO 80236

S.T.A.R. Reach Clubhouse

Every Wednesday, 7 -- 8:30 pm

2531 W. Church Avenue
(on north side of Arapahoe Community College)
Littleton, CO 80120

Aurora Mental Health Center

Every Monday, 11:30 am – 1 pm

11059 E. Bethany Drive
Broadway Room
Aurora, CO 80014

CHARG Drop-in Center

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

Every Tuesday, 7 — 8:30 pm

920 Emerson Street
Denver, CO 80218

Note from the Editor:

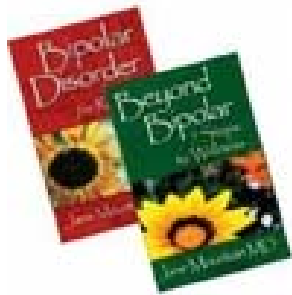
Dear Members,

You may have noticed that you did not receive a June edition of the *Dispatch*. The Board has decided to produce the *Dispatch* **every other month**, at least for the time being. In each issue, we will include the topics, dates and times of meetings for the upcoming two months instead of one. Be sure to mark your calendars!

If you have any mental health-related news or announcements, or a story you would like to share with other members, please contact the editor at namidenver@nami.org or 303-504-6545. Your feedback is always welcome. Thanks!

Some of you may have attended April's Education meeting, "*I Am Not Sick; I Don't Need Help!*" presented by Deb Amesbury. There's good news! There is a Spanish version of *I Am Not Sick; I Don't Need Help!* by Xavier Amador, PhD. The Spanish translation, *No Estoy Enfermo, No Necesito Ayuda!* can be ordered from Vida Press at <http://www.vidapress.com/html/order.html>.

Wellness : Beyond Bipolar, by Jane Mountain M.D.



This is the second in a series of articles to be contributed by local author Dr. Jane Mountain. Dr. Mountain is a speaker, author and publisher who shares her personal experience of bipolar disorder with others. She brings her expertise as a physician and as a wellness expert. She has written two books, *Bipolar Disorder: Insights for Recovery* and *Beyond Bipolar: 7 Steps to Wellness*, which can be purchased on her website, www.BeyondBipolar.com, or at any bookstore, including Amazon. Sign up for her free e-Newsletter, BeyondBipolar on her website.

Step Two: Manage! © Jane Mountain, MD

Management Drives Resiliency.

Resiliency is the key to mental wellness. When we are having depression, our low energy level destroys our ability to be resilient to the challenges we face. Mania can cause us to bounce around like a ball on an elastic band, but instead of rebounding to a reasonable space, we fly too far in multiple directions.

Resilience means the personal and community qualities that enable us to rebound from adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or other stresses—and to go on with life with a sense of mastery, competence, and hope. (Achieving the Promise: Transforming Mental Health Care in America, July 2003)

Becoming resilient means being able to rebound without overshooting our energy into depression or mania. Management helps us do this.

Some of us can plan a trip to the ballpark, or organize a meal. Most of us can plan our wardrobe, and some of us can even plan a garden. If you think about the things you have done in the past, you may realize that you are good at planning some area of your life but not so good at others.

I was a good student and always planned my assignments well ahead of time. But do you think I can plan a vacation? Ask my family about the time we camped on the ground in a tent at the Hoover Dam in August when the temperature was 104 degrees at midnight!

Believe it or not, planning is a skill that we can all learn. We have learned the skill in some parts of our lives but not in others. Or we have skills that we don't always apply to challenging areas of our life.

When we don't plan, we fall back on coping. Our coping skills may be ones that see us through the most difficult times of our illness. It makes sense to cope the best we possibly can. But coping so often consists of reacting in the moment to the difficulties we experience. Coping can be highly effective, or it can exhaust us without moving us forward.

Management skills help us develop plans to deal with the challenges of our illness and to have plans already in place to use when difficulties arise. We can't anticipate everything in our lives, but there are some things that we can point to and say, "If this happens, I will do that." Here are a few examples:

- ◆ If I have a frustrating day, I will take a break and go for a walk.
- ◆ If I am not sleeping well for three nights in a row, I will call my doctor or prescriber.
- ◆ If my thoughts are racing, I'll check my ideas with a trusted friend before I decide what to do.
- ◆ If I don't know what to do about something that comes up suddenly, I'll sit down for ten minutes with paper and pencil and write some alternatives before deciding how to react.

Finding resilience in the face of bipolar disorder is easier when we think of management to anticipate challenges. We can add these management skills to our coping. As we do this, we will rely on management, and we'll improve our coping skills as well.

WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) Class Begins in September

A **FREE**, 8-week Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) class will begin **Tuesday, September 23, 2008** for individuals who experience psychiatric symptoms and family members. The class will be held at the Mental Health Center of Denver, 4141 E. Dickenson Place, Denver, 7:00 – 8:30 pm.

The WRAP class will help participants to:

- ◆ Identify their strengths, resources and coping methods (wellness tools);
- ◆ Determine what they need to do each day to feel as well as possible;
- ◆ Identify things that might cause (or trigger) problems and wellness tools that can help them get through any difficulties that might arise;

- ◆ Recognize the first signs that things are not going well and know what to do to feel better;
- ◆ Understand when things are getting worse and use wellness tools to get through difficult times;
- ◆ Develop a crisis plan to ensure, as much as possible, that they will get the support and treatment they need and prefer when they are unable to make decisions or care for themselves; and
- ◆ Create a post-crisis plan that will help them return to wellness after a very difficult time.

For more information and/or to register for the class, contact Deborah Amesbury, 303-744-1817 or DebBAmesbury@msn.com.

WRAP is a gift you give yourself!

NAMI Denver Family to Family Class begins September 9



Want to take a “life changing” course?

If you are a family member of a person with mental illness, please join us. You will learn about the major mental illnesses including schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and others.

You will receive current information about medications and you will learn all about the brain and the biology of brain disorders.

You will come away with skills to better cope with the stress and worry of care-taking.

The course meets weekly for twelve weeks and begins on Tuesday September 9. To learn more please call Kathryn Chaney at 303-744-0288 or e-mail Cecil296@aol.com.

Sutherland Seminar Series Offered in Boulder

The Robert D. Sutherland Center for the Evaluation and Treatment of Bipolar Disorder at the University of Colorado at Boulder is hosting a series of seminars on topics related to bipolar disorders. The seminars are designed for adults with a bipolar disorder and their family and friends and are open to anyone in the community who wishes to better understand bipolar disorders.

Topics for the seminars include Bipolar Diagnosis, Lifestyle Choices, Medication Overview, Relapse Prevention Plans, and Suicide.

For more detailed seminar descriptions visit <http://rdsfoundation.org> and click on “document downloads.”

When: Thursdays, 6-7:30 pm, beginning July 10 and ending September 25. Each session stands alone; no commitment or pre-registration required.

Where: Room E214 Muenzinger Psychology Building, University of Colorado – Boulder.

Cost: A \$10 per person donation is appreciated, but no fee is required.

In the News

VOICE AWARDS: Fighting Stigma, Hollywood Style

Story courtesy of the NAMI Advocate

It's been a long time coming, but Hollywood has finally rolled out the red carpet for the fight against stigma — through the annual Voice Awards, presented this year at Paramount studios in Los Angeles.

Emmy Award-winning actor Joe Pantoliano hosted ceremonies on May 28, along with Nikki Blonsky, who starred in *Hairspray*.

The awards honor actors, writers and producers, as well as individuals living with mental illnesses, for raising public awareness of mental health issues.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services sponsors the Voice Awards through the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as part of the federal government's Campaign for Mental Health Recovery.

Special Awards

- Comedian and actor **Howie Mandel**, who hosts the prime-time game show "Deal or No Deal," received a SAMHSA special recognition award for advocacy based on his experience living with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). He is the official ambassador for SAMHSA's Children's Mental Health Awareness Day, observed during Mental Health Month.
- The lifetime achievement award was presented to **Larry Frick**, director of the Appalachian Consulting Group in Georgia, who for 13 years served as director of consumer relations and recovery for the state's Department of Mental Health. His story recently was featured in a chapter of the book *Strong at the Broken Places*.
- **Marvin Alexander**, age 20, was honored for young adult leadership, based on work as a former coordinator for *ACTION for Kids* in Arkansas. He is a licensed social worker currently pursuing graduate studies in Florida and a member of *Youth MOVE* (Motivating Others through Voices of Experience), a subsidiary of the National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health.

Following the official Voice Awards ceremony, **No Kidding, Me Too**, founded by Pantoliano to lead entertainment industry support for public awareness on mental health issues, presented its own first-ever award to **Sally Field**, whom NAMI honored in 2001 for her role in as Maggie Wycenski, in six episodes of the television show, *ER*, portraying her long, difficult struggle with bipolar disorder, as the mother of one of the nurses.



Consumer Leader Awards

- **Paula Comunelli**, founder and CEO of *Listening Well* an organization for personal and professional development for individuals, organizations and communities.
- **Joan Esnayra**, founder and president the *Psychiatric Dog Society* (PSDS), who gave up her career as a geneticist to become an advocate for people living with mental illnesses. She has presented at NAMI conferences.
- **Herminio Maldonado**, a NAMI member, works with the Bronx Peer Advocacy Center in New York City and has participated in conferences, workshops and training throughout the country. He is a member of the steering committee for the National Association of State mental Health Planning Directors (NASMHPD) Office of Technical Assistance, formerly known as the National Technical Assistance Center (NTAC).
- **Marley Prunty-Lara**, a 23-year old University of Minnesota communications student from South Dakota, has been a voice for campus and culturally competent mental health services. She has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives, been interviewed on Minnesota Public Radio and was a speaker at the first NAMIWalk in South Dakota.
- ♦ **Sharon Wise**, a NAMI member, is a wellness recovery action plan facilitator (WRAP) in Washington, D.C. who has traveled the country as an advocate for healing through art. She runs the only a consumer-run advocacy and drop-in center in the nation's capital.

Television Awards

Writers and producers were honored for specific episodes of television series that involved characters and plots involving mental illness. Stars from the shows attended the awards ceremony. The television series honored were: *Crossing Jordan*, *Dirt*, *Friday Night Lights*, *General Hospital*, *House*, *Huff*, *Monk*, and *The Sopranos*.

Feature Films

Films that were honored were: *Canvas* PG-13; *Home of the Brave* R; and *Reign Over Me* R.

Documentaries

Documentary winners were: *Cracking Up*; *The Secret Life of a Manic Depressive*; *Through My Eyes*; and MTV's True Life series for *I Have Autism* and *I Have Tourette's Syndrome*.

In the News

NAMI Reports that Schizophrenia is Twice as Common as HIV/AIDS, but Americans are Misinformed About the Illness

Arlington, VA—Twice as many Americans live with schizophrenia than with HIV/AIDS, but a major report by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reveals most Americans are unfamiliar with the disease.

"Americans are not sure what to think about schizophrenia," said NAMI executive director Mike Fitzpatrick. "They know schizophrenia is a medical illness affecting the brain, but it is largely misunderstood. There are gaps in knowledge—and access to treatment. Misinformation, misperceptions, and misunderstanding represent a public health crisis."

The report is available at www.nami.org/schizophreniasurvey. It is based on an on-line survey conducted by Harris Interactive among the general public, caregivers and individuals living with schizophrenia.

Approximately two million Americans live with schizophrenia. Two-thirds do not receive treatment, even though the disease can be managed successfully.

The report offers five recommendations:

- ◆ Public education
- ◆ Closing the gap between symptoms and treatment
- ◆ A welcoming healthcare system
- ◆ Education and support for caregivers and individuals living with the illness
- ◆ Greater investment in medical research

The survey found the average age at onset was 21, but a nine-year gap exists between symptoms and treatment.

- ◆ 85% of Americans recognize schizophrenia as an illness, 79% believe that with treatment, people with the diagnosis can lead independent lives, but only 24% are familiar with it. Many cannot recognize symptoms or mistakenly believe they include "split" or multiple personalities (64%).
- ◆ 79% want friends to tell them if they have schizophrenia, but only 46% say they would themselves. Even with treatment, 49% are uncomfortable with the prospect of dating a person with schizophrenia.
- ◆ Among people living with schizophrenia, 49% said doctors take their medical problems less seriously, even though the report notes that the death rate from causes like heart disease or diabetes is 2-3 times that of the general population.
- ◆ A vast majority believe that better medications (96%) and health insurance (82%) would be most helpful to improving their condition,
- ◆ Caregivers agree better medications are needed. Approximately 80% have difficulty getting services for loved ones, 63% have difficulty finding time for themselves, and 41% have provided care for more than 10 years.

"We know what to do to increase recovery, but it requires public support, which depends on public attitudes," Fitzpatrick said.

NAMI— National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - is a grass-roots, family and consumer, self-help, support, education, and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with severe mental illness.

NAMI Denver Board Members: Kathryn Chaney, Acting President; Michael Callahan, Secretary/Treasurer; Members at Large - Maureen Martin, Anjali Budhiraja

NAMI Denver Dispatch Editor: Anjali Budhiraja; Distribution: Deborah Amesbury

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