



nami Southwest Washington

National Alliance on Mental Illness

The Official Newsletter of NAMI Southwest Washington

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Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Jan McKenzie | 3 |
| Diagnosing Mental Illness: Are Brain Scans of any Use? | 4 |
| Recipe: Balsamic Chicken and Vegetables | 4 |
| Tips to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts | 5 |
| Holiday Year end event Volunteers needed. | 5 |
| Obsessive Compulsive Disorder | 6 |
| Fred Meyer Rewards | 6 |
| Upcoming Classes, Events and Groups on the Bulletin Board | 7 |

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Teen Talk: (after 4pm)

(360) 397-2428

Crisis Lines:

(360) 696-9560

(800) 626-8137

Join our NAMIWalks: Win a Kindle Fire Tablet

Every journey begins with that first step! As NAMIWalks celebrates our 12th Anniversary in 2014, we are proud to be the largest and most successful mental health awareness and fundraising event in America! Through NAMIWalks' public, active display of support for people affected by mental illness, we are changing how Americans view persons with a mental illness. This is leading to ensuring that help and hope are available for those in need. Please join us as we improve lives and our communities, one step at a time.

NAMI SW WA has chosen to walk again in Portland, OR, with our friends and colleagues across the Columbia River. For those who want to visit Seattle that weekend, the NAMI WA Walk is held in Redmond, WA.

NAMIWalks is our largest fundraiser and we need your help to make it even better this year. You can do this through your sponsorship of the NAMWalk in OR or WA. If you are a business owner, or even

an individual, you can choose a special sponsorship level ranging from \$100 to \$10,000 or more. We are also asking people in the community to establish walking teams. You can do this all online by going to www.namiwalks.org and then click on either Oregon or Washington under the NAMI location tab. Register your team in either state and list your affiliate as NAMI SWWA or NAMI Clark County or NAMI Cowlitz and the proceeds come to us in SW WA.

Because of our expanded service area our goal for this event has increased significantly over last year. Please help us to reach our goal of \$15,000 by joining us today in the major event. You don't have to walk if you don't enjoy walking. You can form a virtual team and simply collect the money for your donation to us.

As an added incentive all donors to NAMI SWWA will be entered into a drawing for a Kindle Fire HD tablet, that will be awarded in June 2014.

Tips for asking for a donation

- Decide what you need. Put together a list of everyone you could ask. Prioritize them into people you feel most comfortable with first.
- Make sure you carry NAMIWalks material, brochures or handouts, printed from the site, with you.
- Ask early. People may need some time to get you a check or to visit the website to donate.
- Tell a brief but compelling story, your own or someone else's. People donate when they are moved to care.

How to raise \$500 in seven days!

- Sponsor yourself first
- Ask four family members to sponsor you for \$25 each
- Ask five co-workers to contribute \$15 each
- Ask five friends to contribute \$20 each
- Ask five neighbors to sponsor you for \$15 each
- Ask your boss for a company contribution of \$50
- Ask three businesses you frequent to donate \$25 each

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From the Directors Desk

Dear Friends,

Our spirits were saddened in February by Jan's death. Although I never met or spoke to her I heard a great deal about her kindness and compassion for everyone she met and worked with. Those are both goals we all work toward but few are able to attain them consistently. I know her spirit will remain as an image for all of us now involved with NAMI, whether we worked with Jan, were friends with Jan, or are brand new at NAMI. And to Jan's family, we all extend our condolences and sincerely hope that NAMI will remain in your thoughts just as you are in ours.

February was an extremely busy month with lots of exciting planning going on at the office. In addition to moving closer to establishing our support groups at the Clark County jail we have just found out that we will also be able to conduct groups and education with those who are going through the jail's reentry program prior to release. Lyn and Alyssa, here at the office, and Angie and Melanie, our support group facilitators in Cowlitz County, have created a brand new format for a support group that will focus largely on the three most common types of mental health issues: depression, anxiety, and stress. Right now the support group is called SWASS: Southwest WA Support Services. We are working with the Peace Health Station Two and ADAPT programs in that they, too, provide lots of tools to help people stay in recovery, just as we will do with this program. The groups will meet weekly and participants will learn many wonderful skills for staying well. We are also in the midst of planning for our Teen Support Group, classes and other events that will take place at NAMI. If you are not already participating here as a volunteer, then please join us. We need lots of help as we roll out these programs in all three counties.

Please check out another group led by volunteer Sandy Frischman and including Heidi Bjurstrom. Mike Jackson, Keri Stanberry and Martha Vogeler have been diligently working to create a defined program and trained team of volunteers that will be able to educate first responders, medical facilities, businesses and other organizations in the community about mental health. This is a very creative group and great things will come from it in the near future so keep your ears and eyes open wide for future announcements about their efforts.

The Bulletin Board in this newsletter provides more details about groups and classes. Remember that you must sign up for classes ahead of time. Our groups are drop-in.

In the next few days daffodils and redbuds will be blooming throughout SW WA. Enjoy spring, the fresh air and the sunshine that is to come. For your own health and wellbeing, get out and walk to prepare to participate in the NAMIWalks event on May 18th.

Best wishes,

Peggy



Jan McKenzie: March 9, 1953 – February 6, 2014

A memorial service was held for former Executive Director, Jan McKenzie, on Saturday February 9th near her home in Aloha, OR. NAMI SW WA Board President Stephanie Welty and Vice-President Ann Donnelly attended and offered condolences to her many family members and friends. Jan provided direction for NAMI Clark County from 2009 until her departure due to illness in the spring of 2013. Her spirit, kindness, and commitment are best remembered by those who worked directly with her. Here are some of the comments:

“As NAMI Clark County's first professional executive director, Jan set the organization on a course of growth and development. She touched many lives with her dedication to help individuals and families affected by mental illness.” Stephanie Welty

“I'll never forget the transformation of NAMI Office Consumer Volunteers, due to Jan's real compassion, deep love and acceptance. I can recall more than one consumer volunteer, who began with the lowest of self-esteem, hardly able to look people in the eye, and who really struggled with answering the phone in a loud enough voice. But, then, after a few months, when I would visit the office, I was amazed at their transformation, their joy, their head held high, looking people in the eye, their new sense of self.” Don Greenwood

“Jan was a very loving caring person that put others before herself. She had a big part in helping my daughter when she was having issues in her life. She gave a lot of her personal time to help others. She will be greatly missed.” Rebecca Anderson

“She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.” Ann Donnelly

“From the first to the last time I talked to Jan (a few weeks before she died) there was so much compassion and excitement for the direction of NAMI and it's members. Heaven is a happier place know that Jan is there.” Cindy Falter“

Tips to Change Negative Thoughts to Positive Thoughts

- Learn to meditate. This will teach you to focus on your breathing and focus away from your negative thoughts.
- Smile. This really does change your mood and helps relieve stress.
- Surround yourself with positive people. When you're stuck in a negative cycle, talk to people who can help you put things in perspective and won't feed your negative thinking.
- Don't play the victim. You create your life – take responsibility for it.
- Help someone. Take the focus away from you and do something nice for someone else.
- Remember that no one is perfect, and you can move forward.
- Sing. When we sing, we show our feelings and this provides an amazing stress relief.

*Its' not the years in your
life that count. It's the life
in your years.*

Steve Martin

*Every day is second
chance*

Diagnosing Mental Illness: Are Brain Scans of Any Use?

*Be so good they can't
ignore you.*

Steve Martin

*If you'll only walk on
sunny days you'll never
reach your destination.*

Paulo Coelho

During the 1980s, scientists thought that the new positron emission tomography (PET) scan technology might provide a window into the brains of people with mental health diagnoses. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has also been studied. Both of these techniques can give a clear picture of the regions of the brain based on their cell activity. In the images, highly active regions of the brain stand out from those that are less active. It is thought that different mental illnesses might show more or less activity in one part of the brain over another. The hope is that techniques such as these might help psychiatrists to more clearly diagnose specific types of mental illness rather than using behaviors. Behaviors vary from person to person especially since most people have more than one diagnosis.

The June 2013 issue of Scientific American published a good article on this topic: (<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/can-brain-scans-diagnose-mental-illness/>)

In summary, they made two points:

- Brain scans may not be able to detect early stages of a disease, however this has not been the point of any published study. All studies, to date, are with people already diagnosed with one or more mental health conditions. The major hesitation for doing studies in people with

or without a risk of developing a mental illness is that the procedure itself might change the brain.

- Imaging studies use diagnostic categories that might not be biologically valid. As more and more studies are done on the genetics of mental illness, scientists are learning more about genetic risk factors for all the types of mental illness and the fact that there are large numbers of shared genetic risk factors. Genetic analysis may end up being the best way to biologically determine a diagnosis and the only way to do an early diagnosis where treatment might be given to prevent some of the most disturbing symptoms.

The Scientific American article listed some “common comorbidities” or conditions that are most often diagnosed in the same person. These are:

- 70% of children with autism who are diagnosed with another mental illness are most commonly diagnosed with social anxiety disorder or attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- 50% of people with schizophrenia also receive a diagnosis of depression
- 38% of women with anxiety disorder are also diagnosed with a mood disorder while only 30% of men are diagnosed with both

Recipe: Balsamic Chicken and Vegetables

Ingredients

- ¼ cup bottled Italian salad dressing
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound chicken breast tenderloins
- 10 ounces **fresh asparagus, trimmed** and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 cup shredded carrot
- 1 small tomato, seeded and chopped

*You can't overcome
what you are willing
to tolerate.*

**Year-end Respite
committee meetings**

**Tuesday, March 25,
2014 at 12 pm– 1pm**

**Tuesday, March 25,
2014 at 6pm–7pm**

Directions

In a small bowl, stir together salad dressing, balsamic vinegar, and honey. Set aside.

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook for 5 to 6 minutes or until chicken is tender and no longer pink, turning once. Add half of the dressing mixture to skillet; turn chicken to coat. Transfer chicken to a serving platter; cover and keep warm.

Add asparagus and carrot to skillet. Cook and stir for 3 to 4 minutes or until asparagus is crisp-tender; transfer to serving platter.

Stir remaining dressing mixture; add to skillet. Cook and stir for 1 minute, scraping up browned bits from bottom of skillet. Drizzle the dressing mixture over chicken and vegetables. Sprinkle with tomato. Makes 4 servings.

Year End Event 2014!!! Volunteers Needed!!! By Cindy Falter

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Southwest Washington traditionally provides Clark County residents affected by mental illness and their family members with a holiday respite event. We now serve people in three counties: Clark, Cowlitz, and Skamania, and need your help even more in order to be able to provide this event to people in all three counties. All are welcome at this year end event; however we need you to help us make this a very special event for all attendees. For many, this will be the only holiday they will have. Please help make this holiday event be the best ever. **Many volunteers are needed!!!**

We want to have a planning committee for each of the three counties. I, Cindy Falter, am the Chief Elf from 2013, and I will coordinate the activities again for 2014. You can choose what you want to do and the amount of time you have to give. At the present time, we need people to call places about food and spaces to hold the events We can have people start making our signature stockings that our guests love to receive. If you are interested in helping raise funds we can use your help to figure out new strategies for bringing in the dollars to pay for the events. Do you like to make decorations and centerpieces? If so, the job is yours. The list is long but what a good chance it will be to get involved in doing something significant for others!

We also appreciate monetary donations in addition to or instead of volunteering. The events will cost around \$10,000. We will be grateful for any monetary donations you are able to provide. *All donations should be mailed to: NAMI, Consumer Holiday Event PO BOX 5353 Vancouver WA 98668.*

We thank you for your consideration and generosity to those in need. If you are interested in getting involved please attend either of the two meetings listed in the side bar next to this paragraph; both will be held at our office at 8019 NE 13th Avenue, Vancouver 98665, If you live in Cowlitz or Skamania counties and don't want to make the drive to a meeting, let us know and you can be part of the group over a conference call line. To set this up, call me at (360) 695-2823. If I am not in, leave a message with Jenny and we will provide you with the conference number to call at the time of the meeting. If you can't make either meeting but are interested in working on this event please let me know.

FRED MEYER Offers Great Opportunity for NAMI to Raise Money

Fred Meyer is donating \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and Idaho. All you have to do is go to their website and link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards.

Every time you shop and use your Rewards Card you will be helping NAMI SWWA. You will still earn your own reward points, fuel points, and rebates, just as you do today. If you don't have a rewards card you can get one at any Fred Meyer store. Thanks so much. Every penny will be greatly appreciated!!!

EDUCATIONAL FORUM IN COWLITZ COUNTY, MARCH 27: BENEFITS FOR THOSE WITH MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSES

NAMI will host its first Educational Forum this year at the PUD Auditorium at 961 12th Avenue in Longview on Thursday, March 27th at 7:00 PM. The topic is Benefits for Those With Mental Health Diagnoses. The Forum will be hosted by NAMI Board member, Frank Randolph. Four presenters will participate: Carlos Carreon, Director of Health and Human Services at the Cowlitz County Health Department will use his years of experience in mental health to talk, in general, about benefits for which people with a mental health diagnosis are eligible. Cindy Falter is the 10 hour per week benefits specialist at our NAMI Vancouver office; she is currently funded through a special program from Services for the Blind. She will talk about the role she can play in helping people apply for and receive benefits. Any person in our three county region can make an appointment with her for help in receiving benefits. Angie Corrl, a trained NAMI volunteer who is a co-facilitator for our SWASS support group in Longview, will talk about her experience of carefully following instructions in a book on benefits to file a successful application for herself after being denied twice. Local attorney, Tom O'Neil, will talk about how he can provide complete services for those who need assistance or who have been denied benefits repeatedly. We look forward to seeing a big crowd on the 27th at PUD in Cowlitz.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder by Tim Krueger

Obsessive compulsive disorder is classified as one of the more severe and difficult to treat conditions of all anxiety disorders. Obsessions are intrusive and distressing thoughts. Compulsions are things that patients do over and over again. They are disturbing, time consuming and can cause impairment to life.

Most affected individuals have other psychiatric disorders as such as depression and anxiety as well. An ongoing therapeutic argument exists between those who believe that OCD is a separate illness with its own set of symptoms or, in fact, simply a type of anxiety disorder. OCD is treated by a combination of SRI

medications (serotonin reuptake inhibitors) and cognitive behavioral therapy. Cognitive behavioral therapy can be helpful to people diagnosed with OCD, because therapist assists the client in selecting specific strategies to address those problems. Some researchers contend that organic flaws in the brain filtering and processing mechanisms are, at least in some part, responsible for the illness.

In conclusion, OCD is a severe and disabling illness that is best treated by understanding its organic and environmental roots. Successful treatment involves addressing both factors.

If you're going to be able to look back on something and laugh about it, you might as well laugh about it now.

-Marie Osmond

Do not forget small kindnesses and do not forget small faults.

Chinese proverb

Bulletin Board

 **Parent Support Group** offers an opportunity to meet others who have children with mental health issues. It is a time to learn new skills, and to meet others who are in a similar situation. **The group meets every Wednesday morning from 10:30 am to noon at the NAMI office in Vancouver. For more information call Lyn at (360) 695-2823.**

 **Family to Family**, like all NAMI programs is a free course for family and caregivers of an adult with severe mental illnesses. The material covers the clinical treatment of these illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively. The teachers are trained family members. **A new 12 week class will begin the week of March 24th; the exact day of the week and time has not been set. Please call the NAMI office to sign up. This is not a drop in class.**

 **Peer-to-Peer** consists of ten two-hour classes led by mentors who are personally experienced at living well with mental illness. The material provides many tangible resources: an advance directive; a “relapse prevention plan” to help identify tell-tale feelings, thoughts, behaviors, or events that may warn of impending relapse, with tips on how to organize for intervention; exercises to help focus and calm thinking; and survival skills for working with providers and the general public. **Peer-to-Peer begins on March 6th at 6:30pm, at our Vancouver office, following Connection Support Group.**

 **SWASS Stress, Anxiety and Depression Support Group** consists of twelve two-hour classes for people with any type of mental health diagnosis, or not, who are experiencing anxiety and depression symptoms and who need to learn recovery strategies and self-care skills to deal with everyday symptoms. Drop-ins are welcome, and we believe you will want to continue to participate in this group over and over because you will continue to learn new coping skills at each gathering. **One group meets at the Cowlitz County Health Department at 900 Ocean Beach Highway on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Groups will begin in Clark this month and in Skamania in April, we hope.**

 **Support the Supporters** is for anyone who has, by choice or by chance become a caregiver. If you are a professional or a family member who needs help finding time and learning new skills to do better self-care you are welcome to join us. Once a month a volunteer will provide 30 minutes of Tai Chi, yoga, breathing, and other such training to help reduce stress and get in better touch with what your body might be telling you about your stress levels. **This group is open for drop-ins. It meets twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30 PM**

 **Teen Support Group** is for high school aged students who are living with and recovering from a mental illness. Topics include overall wellness, stress management, self-care and other recovery focused skills. **Please call NAMI Southwest Washington at (360) 695-2823 for more information about this group.**

 **NAMI Basics** is a free 6-week education program for parents and other caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental illnesses. The material discusses illnesses and their potential treatments; resources for parents and care givers; and teaches the knowledge and skills that all family members can use to cope more effectively. **Basics will begin again in Cowlitz and Clark counties in late April or early May. Please call (360) 695-2823 to put your name on our enrollment list.**

You don't have to be great to get started, but you have to get started to be great.

Les Brown

“The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score.” – Bill Copeland

Help support the one in four Americans who will be affected by mental illness this year.

Thank you for being part of the team!

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