



# NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY ([www.namislo.org](http://www.namislo.org))

Volume 25

September 2009

Number 9

## General Meeting.

**GENERAL MEETING: Tuesday September 22.** Dr. Mike Lisiak, a psychiatrist at ASH, will speak informally on issues in psychiatry here and now. Q and A to follow talk. You are welcome to bring "finger food" to share. Coffee and juice are provided.

The NAMISLOCO General Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month (except December and July) at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church on the corner of Pismo and Nipomo Sts., SLO. The *Facilitated Family Support Group* starts at 5:30 PM on the same evening and runs until 6:45 PM, so that those who want can attend both the support group and the meeting.

### November Speaker

Dr. Doug Murphy, psychiatrist in private practice in Morro Bay will speak on promising research on the brain and how it may help those with psychiatric disorders.

### Help Needed

We need a volunteer to bring coffee and juice for the general meetings in Sept. and October. (Just need to make coffee and buy juice. Everything else is provided.) Please call Nancy Griffin for more info 543-9399.

### President Obama Addresses Mental Health Care at New Hampshire Town Hall Meeting

(From [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org))

August 12, 2009

President Obama shared his vision for health care reform—and stressed his support of mental health parity—at a New Hampshire town hall meeting on Aug. 11.

Linda Becher, an audience member, specifically asked the president about access to mental health care and its impact on society. The president acknowledged the seriousness of mental illnesses and the reality that many existing insurance policies do not cover them on the same terms as physical illnesses. President Obama also expressed his desire to include mental health care as part of health care reform.

**Question:** Hello, Mr. President. My name is Linda Becher. I'm from Portsmouth and I have proudly taught at this high school for 37 years...I've been lucky enough to have very good health care coverage and my concerns currently are for those who do not. And I guess my question is if every American who needed it has access to good mental health care, what do you think the impact would be on our society?

**THE PRESIDENT:** Well, you raise the -- (applause) -- you know, mental health has always been undervalued in the health insurance market. And what we now know is, is that somebody who has severe depression has a more debilitating and dangerous illness than somebody who's got a broken leg. But a broken leg, nobody argues that's covered. Severe depression, unfortunately, oftentimes isn't even under existing insurance policies.

So I think -- I've been a strong believer in mental health parity, recognizing that those are serious illnesses. (Applause.) And I would like to see a mental health component as part of a package that people are covered under, under our plan. Okay?

### Year at a Glance

**January thru June:** Support Group and General Mtg, 4th Tuesday

**July:** Annual Picnic, July 22 **no Support Group or General Meeting**

**August:** Summer Vacation: no meeting, newsletter or support group

**September:** Support Group and General Meeting 4th Tuesday

**October 3rd:** Beautiful Minds Walk

**October:** Mental Illness Awareness Event: 4th Tuesday of October.

**November:** Support Group and General Meeting 4th Tuesday

**December:** Holiday Party: Dec 8, 2009 **no Support Group/Gen. Mtg**

The **San Luis County Mental Health Board** meets at 3:00 PM on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Behavioral Health Campus (old General Hospital). Contact the MHD office (Phone: 781-4719) to confirm date and room location.

**There are two vacancies on the mental health board for a consumer or family member.** For more information, anyone interested could call **Jane at 781-4719.**

### NAMI Launches New PSA Campaign

"Connect, and you'll find out you're not alone."

June 18, 2009

Arlington, VA— The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has released "Puzzle Pieces," a new public service announcement (PSA) initiative that encourages people to connect with each other through NAMI to help themselves, their families and their friends who live with mental illness.

An estimated one in five American families is affected by mental illnesses such as major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Without treatment, people living with mental illness may face unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness and suicide.

"We know that with early detection, appropriate treatment and support from family and friends, people with mental illness can lead healthy, rewarding lives," said Michael Fitzpatrick, NAMI executive director.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1 - PSA)

"NAMI members connect to educate each other and encourage their loved ones during their personal journeys to wellness. NAMI offers hope to people during difficult times."

The "Puzzle Pieces" campaign includes four 60-second and three 30-second radio PSAs featuring testimonials from individuals and families that describe their experiences with mental illness and the role NAMI played in their recovery. The television PSA is a 30-second spot that conveys the support and strength NAMI members give each other. Print PSAs are also available.

To view and listen to the NAMI PSA spots, visit [www.nami.org/psa](http://www.nami.org/psa).

NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization. Founded in 1979, NAMI has affiliates in every state and in more than 1,100 local communities across the country.

NAMI leaders and members are dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. As a national organization, NAMI focuses on mental health education, support and advocacy efforts to offer hope, raise awareness and initiate change throughout the United States.

### Beautiful Minds Walk VOLUNTEER HELPERS WANTED FOR NAMI

**SLOCO "BEAUTIFUL MINDS WALK"**. A group of energetic folks is now planning this special event in recognition of the annual NAMI Mental Illness Awareness Week on October 3, 2009 at Laguna Lake Park in San Luis Obispo. Many helpers are needed to ensure that this ambitious event runs smoothly and provides a truly memorable experience for all who attend. To learn more and volunteer your help, please call Marcia Bess at 805-481-4847.

### SLO County / T-MHA FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

The County Family Advocates for Adult Mental Health Services offer CONFIDENTIAL ASSISTANCE, INFORMATION, AND SUPPORT to help improve the quality of life for families and caregivers, to help families and caregivers navigate the Mental Health system, and to help families and caregivers cope with the many challenges they face. Family Advocates also provide referrals and resources for further support and education.

#### San Luis Obispo County

Contact: Janice Holmes, Lead Family Advocate, Adult Services: 805-541-5144 x.171 or [jholmes@t-mha.org](mailto:jholmes@t-mha.org). Office: 277 South St. Suite Y, San Luis Obispo, CA or Henry Herrera, Family Advocate, Adult Services (Se habla español), 805-541-5144 X 129 or [hherrera@t-mha.org](mailto:hherrera@t-mha.org).

#### Have You Paid Your Dues?

A big THANK YOU to all of you who renewed your memberships and a big WELCOME to our new members! Your active memberships allow NAMI to continue to advocate for the mentally ill on the local, state and national level. The more active members we have, the more a force we can become!

Pam Zweifel, Membership Chair

**The NAMI SLOCO executive board meets from 11:30 - 1:30 on the first Wednesday of the month** at The Boysdon Room, Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, SLO .

### Ask Your Senators to Support Parity Regulations!

From <http://www.nami.org>

August 3, 2009

After years of hard work by consumers, families and advocates, Congress passed the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 on October 3, 2008. The bill requires the Departments of Labor (DOL), Health and Human Services (HHS) and Treasury to issue regulations before the effective date for the Act which is October 3, 2009. It is essential the regulations are issued to avoid misinterpretation of the law and to ensure access to critical mental health and addiction services.

Senators Al Franken (D-MN) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) are currently circulating a "Dear Colleague" letter in the Senate which will be sent to the Secretaries of the three departments responsible for issuing the regulations insisting they act quickly and consider comments filed by NAMI and other advocacy groups in response to the recent request for information (RFI).

Act Now!

Don't let years of hard work and advocacy go to waste! Make sure regulations addressing the concerns of the field are issued by October 3, 2009. Ask them to ensure parity and equality are achieved for mental health and addiction services.

Learn More

Read NAMI's comments in response to the "Request for Information" on upcoming regulations implementing the Parity Act.

NAMI-SLOCO Library:

We now have an on-line catalog of the books, tapes, CDs and DVDs in our extensive library.

Go to <http://www.namislo.org> and click on "Library"



**PEER TO PEER NEWS:** Peer-to-Peer Classes are led by mentors who have achieved recovery from mental illness and are now able to teach recovery coping strategies to others. CALL

FOR DETAILS AND RESERVATIONS (Required).

Peer-to-Peer Coordinator - Betty McGraw (541-5144 X 113)  
Email [BMcgraw@t-mha.org](mailto:BMcgraw@t-mha.org)

**NEW**-Peer to Peer is now offering "WRAP" Group-Wellness and Recovery Action Plan: an educational course in the journey to recovery.

### NAMI-SLOCO Presents "FAMILY-TO-FAMILY"



A Class offering:  
Education and Support for Family Members  
Whose Relative or Loved One Suffers from:

- MAJOR DEPRESSION
- BIPOLAR DISORDER (MANIC DEPRESSION)
- SCHIZOPHRENIA
- SCHIZOAFFECTIVE DISORDER
- PANIC DISORDER, or
- OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER
- OTHER RELATED DISORDERS

"Family-to-Family" provides up-to-date information & education on the diseases, their causes, & treatments available, as well as help & coping tools for you as the caregiver or loved one. The class is presented in 12 weekly meetings of 2.5 hours per evening.

THE CLASS IS FREE BUT PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED! CALL FOR DETAILS & RESERVATIONS for 2008/2009 Family-to-Family Coordinator – John Klimala 805-550-3889 [JohnKlimala@aol.com](mailto:JohnKlimala@aol.com).

Congratulations to all of the new Family-to-Family graduates from the North County, South county and SLO classes.

## esperanza

From <http://www.nami.org>

In the Summer 2009 issue of *esperanza*, the new anxiety and depression magazine, the effects of depression on a marriage or long-term relationship are explored. Depression in one spouse complicates the challenges of marriage, but couples can thrive when they work together to manage the illness.

### Hand in Hand

**Mariages thrive best when depression becomes "our problem"**

**by Sharon Anne Waldrop**

As a professional party entertainer, Phil S. of Sanbornton, New Hampshire can light up every face in the room with his comedy magic show and balloon twisting. But he can't cheer up his wife, Cedar, when she's experiencing a period of depression.

"It's very hard for me when my wife is suffering and she can't talk to me about it," says Phil, 45.

Every marriage has its challenges, but the issues multiply when one spouse has depression. Communication problems arise, or deepen, when a spouse withdraws during a depressive episode. The other spouse may feel shut out—not to mention angry and resentful at having to shoulder more responsibility for household tasks and child-rearing.

Withdrawal can also affect the couple's social life, leaving the well spouse prey to boredom and frustration—or determined to pursue a separate social life, which may deepen the emotional distance in the marriage.

A study of 774 married couples, published in the Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology in October 2004, found a strong correlation between depression (and to a lesser extent, anxiety) in one spouse and marital satisfaction for both spouses. The more severe the depression, the less satisfied both partners were with the marriage. In discussing the results, researcher Mark A. Whisman, PhD, of the University of Colorado at Boulder, drew a strong connection between seeking mental health services and survival of the marriage.

The fact is, depression in one partner affects both parties in the marriage. About half the adult population (ages 15 and older) in the U.S. and Canada is married, but no hard statistics turn up on how many of those marriages are affected by mental illness. Given that major depressive disorder affects 14.8 million American adults in a given year—or about 6.7 percent of the U.S. population ages 18 and older—the potential number of married Americans touched by depression could be as high as 28 million annually.

In Canada, meanwhile, government agencies calculate that about 11 percent of men and 16 percent of women will experience major depression in their lifetimes, with more than a million Canadians experiencing a major depressive episode annually.

The widely publicized statistic that half of all marriages end in divorce has come into dispute in recent years, with social scientists pegging the peak figure in the U.S. closer to 40 percent. It's impos-

sible to quantify the link between depression and divorce, but several studies done in the 1990s suggest that a history of depression increases the probability of separation and divorce, perhaps by as much as 70 percent.

While many factors go into deciding which marriages fail and which survive, one big influence seems to be how proactive both members of the couple are in dealing with the depression. Although each partner has a different role to play—the spouse with depression must take steps to manage the disorder, while the spouse who is well should seek education and provide support—it's working together that helps the marriage thrive...

Read the full article, "Hand in Hand," from *esperanza Magazine* at <http://www.hopetocope.com/>



### REQUEST FOR A SPANISH-SPEAKING MEMBER INTERESTED IN TAKING TEACHER TRAINING FOR THE SPANISH FAMILY - TO - FAMILY CLASS.

Please contact John Klimala@ 550-3889/929-3299 if you are interested or know someone who is interested in training to become a Family-to-Family teacher in the Spanish-speaking community.

### DONATIONS GREATLY APPRECIATED. PLEASE MAKE DONATIONS TO: NAMI SLOCO, P.O. BOX 3158, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93403.

NAMI SLOCO (IRS ID# 77-0099671, CA non-profit # C1535087) is a 501(c)(3), charitable, non-profit, tax-exempt organization. Donations and contributions are tax-deductible as provided by law.

### T-MHA YOUTH FAMILY PARTNER, FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP. For parents, guardians, and caregivers of minor children who experience emotional or behavioral problems

For more information please contact either Jackie Garza, Ph: 805-458-6388, email: jgarza@t-mha.org or Patty Ramirez, Ph: 805-541-5144 x129, email: pramirez@t-mha.org.

### Consider inviting "IN OUR OWN VOICE" TO MAKE A PRESENTATION TO YOUR GROUP.

This program is a 1.5 hour presentation on stages of mental illness recovery by 2 people that have achieved recovery. For information, contact Betty McGraw, 541-5144 ext. 113 or [BMcGraw@t-mha.org](mailto:BMcGraw@t-mha.org).



**Our Librarian, Carole Wallace requests that we return library books at the monthly meetings.** Please help Carole by returning your books so they can be shared with other members.

## NAMI 2009 Membership (membership in NAMI SLO CO also includes membership in NAMI Cal. & NAMI Nat'l.)

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS  
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

PLEASE PRINT

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (DAY) \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (NIGHT) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NAMI SLO CO is a charitable, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization affiliated with the NAMI California and NAMI.

NAMI SLO CO  
P.O. Box 3158  
San Luis Obispo, Ca  
93403

New  
 Renewal

\$30 Individual  
 \$35 Family  
 \$50 Friend  
 \$7 Client

DONATION \_\_\_\_\_

**Mental Health Support Groups In SLO County**

**Facilitated FAMILY SUPPORT Groups**

**San Luis Obispo**

4th Tuesday of the month 5:30 to 6:45 PM  
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
 Pismo and Nipomo Sts. SLO

**San Luis Obispo**

Tuesday Afternoons T-MHA Orientation Class 12:00-1:00  
 Tuesday Afternoons T-MHA Family Support Group 1:00-3:00 PM  
 Facilitated by Janice Holmes  
 Transitions Mental Health Association  
 277 South St. Suite Y, SLO.  
 Any questions Contact:  
 Janice Holmes, Family Advocate  
 805 541-5144 X 171

**Atascadero**

Third Monday of every month  
 6:30 -8:00 PM  
 5395 El Camino Real "B" (parking behind bldg.)  
 Info. Call James or Diane @ 461-1286

**Youth Family Support Group**

Multiple Groups meet weekly throughout the county.  
 T-MHA Youth Family Partners  
 Contacts: **Jackie Garza**, Ph: 805-458-6388, email: jgarza@t-mha.org or  
**Patty Ramirez**, Ph: 805-541-5144 x129, email: pramirez@t-mha.org

**PEER RUN SUPPORT GROUPS**

*Support for individuals with all major mental illnesses or co-occurring disorders are invited to attend.  
 (No Charge for attending)*

The times for these meetings change often so please call  
 Jessica Vieira TMHA's Socialization/Peer Programs Manager  
 541-5144 EXT 165 JVieira@tmha.org  
 San Luis Obispo  
 452 Higuera St

**Peer Support**

**Dual Recovery Anonymous**

**SLO Peer—Run support groups are now also offering  
 "W.R.A.P." - Group-Wellness and Recovery Action Plan:  
 an educational journey to recovery.**

**Atascadero**

5395 El Camino, Suite B.  
 Peer Support

*(Continued in next column)*

**Paso Robles**

Paso Robles Library Storybook Rm.  
 1000 Spring St.  
 Peer Support

For info call Betty McGraw, 541-5144 x 113 or  
 BMcGraw@t-mha.org.

**MEDI-CAL PATIENTS' RIGHTS ADVOCATE**

Gerald Clare 781-4700

T-MHA Special Projects Coordinator for: **"The Shaken Tree: Families Living with Mental Illness"**. John Klimala, Special Projects Coordinator, Transitions-Mental Health Association Phone: 541-5144 ext. 125; Email: jklimala@t-mha.org

**Family Advocate, Adult Services**

Janice Holmes, Lead Family Advocate  
 T-MHA Phone 541-5144 X 171  
 Henry Herrera, Family Advocate, Adult Services (Se habla espanol)  
 T-MHA Phone 805-541-5144 X 129 or hherrera@t-mha.org

For corrections to this section please contact  
 Ed Garner - egarner@calpoly.edu

**Officers**

Lisa Kelley President..... 788-0869  
 Ian Fenwick Vice-president .....  
 Pam Zweifel Secretary ..... 543-1825  
 Nancy Griffin Treasurer..... 543-9399

**Standing Committee Chairs**

Naoma Wright Publicity.....543-5232  
 Roger Gambs Newsletter, Peer to Peer Liaison.....461-6590  
 Ed & Kathy Garner Newsletter & Website.....550-3117  
 Carole Wallace Librarian..... 771-9063  
 Cindy Lamas Membership ..... 466-4691  
 Norma Hoffman Housing..... 544-2725  
 Rae Belle Gambs Forensic.....461-6590  
 Mary Jo Paxton—  
 Support Group Facilitator ..... 489-0575

**Special Committee Chairs**

Lillian Bareither - Newsletter Mailing..... 595-2821  
 Jerry Howe – Farmers Market..... 543-2261  
 John Klimala-  
 Family to Family Coordinator ..... 550-3889  
 Lisa Kelley—  
 Parents and Teachers as Allies Coordinator ..... 788-0869  
 Carole Wallace NAMI Basics Coordinator.....771-9063  
 Lisa Kelley NAMI Basics Coordinator .....788-0869

**NAMI SLOCO WEBSITE: [www.namislo.org](http://www.namislo.org)**

Next Meeting  
 Sept. 22, 2009  
 ([www.namislo.org](http://www.namislo.org))

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