



HOLIDAZE

Holidays are supposed to be fun. "Supposed to be" is a phrase I don't use much because rarely are things the way they are "supposed to be" outside of fairytales and television shows. The holidays, from my perspective as a person and practicing psychiatrist, frequently are stressful, but also happy, but rarely one without the other. These mixed emotions are often the most difficult to understand and process. What makes the "winter holidays" so poignant for me is that they often bring back old memories both good and bad. These memories may change the whole nature of the experience for some of us in both good and bad ways. There's that mixture again. Not expecting others to feel how we feel, or to know how we feel is often a good start in having a peaceful, joyous holiday season. Even when we are not feeling our best it is possible to have a good time with friends and family when we follow a few straightforward practices.

1. Maintain healthful behaviors through the disruptions of schedule (for example continue medications, dietary habits (I know that's hard), exercise schedules, and appointments).
2. Don't assume others know how you feel. Let people know if a tradition or experience of the holidays is upsetting or bothersome.
3. Don't over-schedule yourself or upset your sleep schedule (this is hard given the multiple demands and traditions).
4. Don't demand perfection from yourself or others (the tree doesn't have to be 'perfect' this year)
5. Do remember what it's all about: Family and Friends and enjoying the time together. Even if we've had disappointments in the past we can cherish 'now' together.

There are many resources and support groups for those who don't have family during the holidays. Reach out; you may be surprised at the results.

By Dr. Laurence Karper. Dr. Karper is a psychiatrist with Lehigh Valley Health Network, and a member of the NAMI-LV Board of Directors.

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Letter from the Director

Dear NAMI Members,

I would like to welcome the new members who have joined our NAMI-LV family in the past few months. I hope that you find our support groups, educational programs and words of encouragement helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions on our services or are looking for resources.

I recently read a very inspirational story about a young man named Jordan Burnham that I want to share with you. In the fall of 2007, Jordan jumped from the ninth floor bedroom window of his apartment building in King of Prussia. At the time, he was a popular high school student, a varsity golfer, baseball pitcher and a nominee to the homecoming court. It would seem that he had everything to live for, and yet he attempted suicide.

He suffered a brain bleed, kidney failure and multiple crushed bones. The doctors told his parents they did not expect him to survive. However, today he is speaking out about the depression that nearly took his life. He is working to stamp out the stigma of mental illness and encouraging young people to talk about their mental illness and get help.

At twenty-two, with his injuries healed, he now speaks at schools and to mental health professionals. He travels all over the country turning what was a terrible tragedy into a positive. He knows that as he ages he will not relate as well with young people. He believes that now is his window of opportunity. So he's on the go all the time telling his story and hoping that it will save someone else from an ordeal like his.

I would like to think that Jordan stepping forward and telling his story will become more the norm than the exception. I hope the day will come when people with a mental illness and their family members can talk about their struggles without the fear of being stigmatized.

The NAMI Board of Directors and I, wish you a wonderful holiday.

Janet Bandics
Director



Vincent Van Gogh painted his famous Irises when he was institutionalized as a result of a brain disorder. And so, the iris has been adopted by NAMI as a symbol of hope and courage for those with brain disorders, as well as their families.

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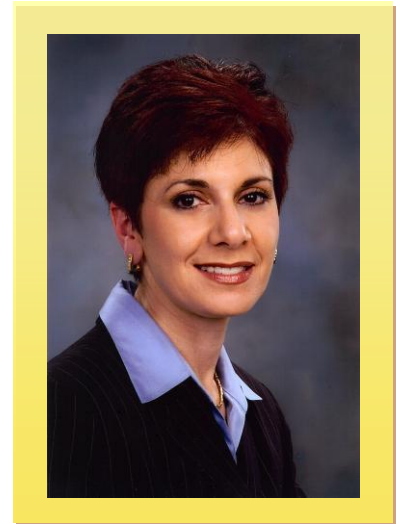
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NAMI Bio-sketch: Marla Mosser

Marla Mosser has been a member of the board of NAMI-Lehigh Valley since 2006 and has served as a facilitator of the NAMI-Can support group. She recently was appointed General Manager, Leadership and Development for FLSmidth, a global supplier of equipment and services to the cement and minerals industries. As owner/principal of MBM Coaching and Consulting for the past thirteen years, Ms. Mosser served as a global executive coach and organization development consultant who strengthened the performance, development, and renewal of leaders, their teams, and organizations. Previously, Ms. Mosser has been founder/principal of consulting firms in Chicago and New England. She began her career as a staff psychologist for The Devereux Foundation. Ms. Mosser received a B.S. in Education and an M.A. in Psychology from West Chester University, and an M.B.A. in Organization Behavior, Finance, and Management Policy from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. Ms. Mosser is married to Bart Mosser, managing partner of The Casco Group, a business brokerage firm. They reside with their two daughters in Center Valley, PA.



NAMI PA's 2011 Annual Conference

Celie Walton

The annual conference began on October 27, 2011 in Harrisburg with an all day Criminal Justice Symposium, "Restorative Justice, Mental Illness and Recovery: A Model for the Criminal Justice System: Alternatives to Incarceration". The Keynote address was given by John Wetzel, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections. He reviewed and defined the growing problem of criminalization of the mentally ill, alternatives to incarceration for mentally ill people and the process and concepts of restorative justice. The day proceeded with an impressive list of speakers on the above topics.

"Promoting Health and Wellness: Managing your illness" was the theme for the remainder of the conference, Friday through Sunday. In addition full programs on Friday and Saturday, the organizers of the convention provided a drop-in center, computer café, exhibit hall offering education and information on products and services, art show created by members and friends, and a silent auction including items from jewelry to hotel stays.

Governor Tom Corbett opened the conference followed by many excellent speakers and break-out sessions too numerous to list here. I will gladly furnish information on the conference to anyone who did not attend but would like more details (call our office at 610-882-2102)

One break-out session that I found very encouraging was entitled "To Serve and Protect" which was about supporting mental health in a correctional environment. John K. Walmer, PhD was the Chief of Psychological Services for the PA Department of Corrections for many years before retiring. He spoke about the 24 male and 2 female state correctional institutions and the treatment of the mentally ill. In the state system, every person entering a correctional facility is screened for mental illness and medication is prescribed if necessary. Dr. Walmer shared his perspectives on current challenges and supportive resources for the growing population of incarcerated individuals with mental health needs. He discussed NAMI-PA based initiatives such as training for law enforcement personnel. Enhancement of family supports for offenders was another topic.

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Dr. Walmer is now a NAMI-PA Education and Training Consultant and I feel that we are very fortunate to have access to his experience and sensitivity in this area. NAMI-LV purchased the following books by two conference presenters: "A Bipolar Life: 50 Years of Battling Manic-Depressive Illness Did Not Stop Me From Building a 60 Million Dollar Business" by entrepreneur and author Steve Millard, and "Letters to Sam" by Daniel Gottlieb, PhD, author and host of NPR's "Voices in the Family". These books are available to borrow from our library.

TMS Treatment comes to the Lehigh Valley

Cortney Gillen

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) therapy is a relatively new type of treatment that has been shown to be effective for Major Depressive Disorder in adult patients who have failed to achieve satisfactory improvement from one prior antidepressant medication in the current depressive episode. "Studies demonstrated that TMS Therapy is safe and effective in patients who do not respond to prior antidepressant therapy," says Dr. Paul K. Gross, a psychiatrist at Lehigh Valley Health Network and the Medical Director of the TMS Center. "In clinical trials, patients suffering with depression experienced a significant improvement in symptoms without side effects that are common with antidepressant medications."

Since the 1980s, transcranial magnetic stimulation has been used to study the nerve fibers that carry information about movements from the brain to the spinal cord and on to the muscles. In the late 1990s, physicians began to explore the therapeutic potential of transcranial magnetic stimulation for the treatment of a variety of diseases, with depression being the most thoroughly studied to date. Since then, more than 20 randomized, controlled trials studying transcranial magnetic stimulation as a treatment for depression have been published by investigators throughout the world.

The NeuroStar TMS Therapy system is a non-invasive, non-drug medical device cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of Major Depressive Disorder. "We are excited to be providing NeuroStar TMS Therapy and to be a part of this major step forward in psychiatry," says Dr. Gross. "Many patients with this debilitating disease do not benefit from and/or are intolerant of antidepressant medications. Now, we have another treatment option for our patients: the first and only non-systemic and non-invasive treatment for depression." TMS therapy is available by prescription only and delivered under the supervision of a psychiatrist. It is a 37-minute outpatient procedure administered daily for 4-6 weeks. During the therapy session, the patient is wide-awake in a comfortable chair.

The TMS Center of the Lehigh Valley is the first and only facility in the Lehigh Valley to offer this treatment. For more information about TMS at TMS Center of the Lehigh Valley, please contact us at 610-820-0700 or visit our website www.tmslv.com.

Cortney Gillen is the TMS Coordinator at the TMS Center of Lehigh Valley.

A Different Kind of Gift

Lori Christine Young

A friend recently asked me, if I had one thing to offer, what gift I would give to the world? For whatever reason, this question stayed with me. As I considered some of the more obvious things: world peace, curing disease, abolishing crime and abuse-- they did not answer the question that was niggling inside of me. I wanted the answer to be unique to my experience, to be reflective of what is important to me and those that I care about. As I considered my own significant struggles with anxiety and what the pivotal moment of healing was, I knew I had my answer. Simply this: *We are so much more than we think we are.*

Let me see if I can explain. Many people, myself included, believe that whatever we think or feel is "The Truth". In other words, if I think my husband is being a jerk to me, then he must be a jerk. If I feel hurt by something you have said, then you were hurtful. But, consider this: perhaps my husband was completely innocent and just reminded me of someone who did not treat me well. Perhaps you said something innocuous and did not have any intention to be hurtful. What can happen is that our minds make an interpretation --we create thoughts that are not reflective of reality. We have all likely realized, at one time or another, our uncomfortable feelings are coming from within us rather than being imposed upon us like the above examples.

But let's take that one step further. What if we applied that to our mental health? What if those thoughts of hopelessness or worthlessness had no more power than a fly buzzing at our window? What if the situations you imagine happening and cause you great anxiety were no more than just a random thought floating through your brain like a rain cloud? What if those experiences of compulsion or addiction or needing control were really....*nothing*? In my own experience, I found that I would get "kidnapped" by these irrational fears, and, at times, allow them to take over my life. I gave these thoughts a lot of energy! The problem is *not* that we have these thoughts and feelings; the problem is the power we allow these thoughts and feelings to have over us.

What I am saying to you is hardly unique. Teachers of mindfulness, depth, psychologists, the contemplative traditions of Christianity, practitioners of Kabbalah in the Jewish faith, Buddhists and many others, have been teaching this for centuries.

The part that was the most healing for me, and the piece that I most want to share with you, was learning that there is so much more to me than the difficult thoughts and emotions that made up my anxiety. I could give up these thoughts, but the healing was in learning to trust this 'other' part of myself, this part we feel when we are at peace, when we are caught up in some kind of life- giving or creative task, when we are in nature or when we are feeling clear and sure of ourselves.

It is this 'other' part that I invite you to begin to recognize. Once you begin to recognize it, you can give it more strength as opposed to thoughts about obsessions, anxieties, depressions, or addictions. Do not get me wrong. It is no easy task to shift your power from these difficult thoughts and emotions to the part of yourself that I am identifying here as the true self. Remember, you are not only changing the thought patterns of *your* lifetime, but you are changing the thought patterns that have been passed down through the generations. But it *can* be done. Many need the help of a therapist or spiritual director or guide, but it is important to remember that we give power to what we pay attention to.

One of my favorite authors, Martin Laird, gives a wonderful analogy. He says that our thoughts and feelings are only the weather at the top of the mountain. You are the mountain. The thoughts and feelings are expected and important. Sometimes the weather is fierce and we may feel the rain or the thunder or the snow--but as a mountain, we are largely undamaged by this. In this season of giving, I wish I could wave a magic wand and have you open your eyes to the pure, whole, undamaged part of the self that is real and unsullied--the mountain.

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I hope that this message will be heard by those who most need to hear it: You are the mountain, you are not the weather. My own clients have been my greatest teachers in this as they find the courage to dismantle the difficult thoughts and emotions and trust the beautiful mountain they each are. For all of you, I wish you not only a glimpse of your mountain, but that you find what you need to rest there in this season of hope.

Lori Christine Young is a professional counselor with an emphasis in integrated spirituality. She is a mother of 4, married 28 years and deals with issues of mental and emotional health both professionally and personally.

Sharing their stories: *In Our Own Voice* Presenters

In mid-November, Susan Morrison from Hope Springs and Eli Steinbrecher from Recovery Partnership attended a two-day training session for *In Our Own Voice*, sponsored by NAMI-PA. In this training program, students learn how to speak to an audience to present their personal experiences with mental illness. The *In Our Own Voice* training will allow Susan and Eli to share their stories of being diagnosed with a mental illness, their road to recovery and how they maintain that recovery.

We hope that mental health providers here in the Lehigh Valley will take advantage of this uplifting presentation. For more information and to schedule a presentation, please call the NAMI office.

Joey Pantoliano Speaks at Cedar Crest College

Celie Walton

Emmy award winner, Joey Pantoliano, famous for the HBO series "The Sopranos", spoke to a full house at Cedar Crest College Samuels Theatre on October 6, 2011 during Mental Illness Awareness Week.

During his presentation, Joey described how he experienced a revelation while filming the movie "Canvas" with Marcia Gay Harden a few years ago. "Canvas" is about a woman who suffers with schizophrenia. The script dealt with the many faces of her illness and how it affected her husband and son. As the filming progressed, Joey began examining his own family and realized that his mother (now deceased) had bipolar disorder. Before this revelation, he always thought that his mom was choosing to behave unpredictably and irrationally.

Joey himself has been diagnosed with clinical depression. As he began to share details of his illness with others, he realized the prevalence of mental illness. "No Kidding, Me Too!" is the title of a new documentary produced by Pantoliano depicting various interviews with teens and adults living with brain disorders. "No Kidding, Me Too!" is also the name of a newly created organization which advocates for a more open dialogue on mental illness. This organization also aims to crush the stigma associated with mental illness.

To learn more about Joey Pantoliano and his organization, please visit our NAMI Lehigh Valley library and borrow this DVD.

NAMI Support Group Schedule & Resources

For Adult Consumers:

Easton:

1st Monday of Each Month - 7 PM

Governor Wolfe Building
45 North 2nd St., Easton, PA 18042

Bethlehem (2 groups):

3rd Monday of Each Month - 7 PM

NAMI Lehigh Valley Office
802 West Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018

Weekly on Thursdays - 5:30 - 7 PM

NAMI Lehigh Valley Office
802 West Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018

For Families of Adults with Mental Illness:

Easton:

1st Monday of Each Month - 7 PM

Governor Wolfe Building
45 North 2nd Street, Easton, PA 18042

Bethlehem:

4th Tuesday of Each Month - 7 PM

NAMI Lehigh Valley Office
802 West Broad St. Bethlehem, PA 18018

Allentown:

3rd Monday of Each Month - 7 PM

St. Timothy's Evangelical Lutheran Church
140 South Ott St. Allentown, PA 18104

For Families with a Child or Adolescent with Mental Illness:

Bethlehem :

4th Monday of Each Month – 6:30 PM

NAMI Lehigh Valley Office
802 West Broad St., Bethlehem, PA 18018

Book Review: Bipolar Disorder Doesn't Defeat Him

Diane Gilroy

At the NAMI-PA convention in October, Steve Millard was a featured early-morning speaker. Standing behind a podium isn't anything new for Millard. For the past 50 years, this marketing guru has helped companies as diverse as L.L. Bean, Reader's Digest, and Brookstone sell their wares. In fact, he built his own \$60 million business—despite having bipolar disorder.

Now retired, Millard has written *Bipolar Life*, a book that recounts how he went through denial, deep depression, and hiding his illness. When he accepted bipolar disorder as part of his life, his fear of it faded. He was able to take advantage when he was at a high point and to bear with his lows until they passed. He tells about the treatments, doctors, and even the books that helped him most as he struggled to take charge of his life.

This book is a good read whether you're interested in learning more about dealing with bipolar disorder or how an advertising manager rose to become a nationally recognized marketing expert.

Honorable Mention in DBSA Contest: Chet Miller

Chet Miller, a member of the NAMI LehighValley Board of Directors, is also a member of and a support group facilitator for the Lehigh Valley Depression and Bipolar SupportAlliance (DBSA). He entered this organization's national Facing Us Video Contest with an entry titles, Some Thoughts On Mental Illness. His entry won an Honorable Mention Award, providing a cash award, and his entry is posted on the internet at www.facinguscontest.org.

Congratulations, Chet!

Help Needed for Basket Donations

Help Needed - NAMI-LV will hold our annual Spaghetti Dinner this spring. We have a great basket auction at the dinner which raises much needed funds. Your help in filling the baskets would be greatly appreciated. If you can donate items for the baskets they can be dropped off at our office on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. However, please call first to make sure someone is here to take your donation. Ideas for donations are: empty baskets, baby items, spring items, chocolate, Easter, gift cards to restaurants, etc. As always, thanks for your help.



NAMI Lehigh Valley
802 West Broad Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

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Lehigh Valley's Voice on Mental Illness