



THE VOICE

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS
PALM BEACH COUNTY

FROM THE PRESIDENT—BY LIZ

PRIORITIES

Why is it that the Nation overall and Florida received a "D" for its mental health services? Is it solely due to the budget cuts? Is it the fact that there is no serious commitment to improving our health services? Or is it society's failure to set human beings needs, especially those with disabilities, as a priority?

For Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI/PBC aired the video "Minds on the Edge: Facing Mental Illness". Many were invited to join in viewing this program and also to join in a community discussion. Leaders from the local state and county governments, criminal justice, and mental health providers were asked to participate. Not many responded to our in-

vites, and the two that actually attended left at the start of the community discussion. "Where are they?" "Why would our community leaders and legislators not take the time to join a public forum to try and examine our broken system?" The only answer is that it is not a priority. Unless you've been touched by mental illness, there is no way to understand the devastating impact it can have. We need our community leaders, legislators and the general public to hear our stories, learn about brain illnesses, and to look at the facts. Mental illness is definitely a challenge, but it is a challenge that we need to face now. With statistics indicating that one out of every four people are affected by a mental illness, it is imperative that we address the issues in Palm Beach County of increasing and improving services and treatment, utilizing educational and preventative programs, creating affordable housing, providing employment considerations, obtaining disability benefits, and reaching underserved populations, to name a few.

On May 24, DCF, created that public forum by holding a Community Meeting that was open to all providers, community partners, clients, legislators, advocates, staff and the general public. Palm Beach County is fortunate to have a Regional Administrator who sees that something needs to be done to revamp our system, and that "NOW" is the time to rebuild our mental health services. He sees the importance of having everyone's input in forming the objectives of DCF's strategic plan. NAMI urged its partner providers to make sure that peers were present at this meeting to have a voice in the plans to restructure our mental health system.

As we all know, the definition of insanity is "doing the same thing over and over, and expecting different results" and these public forums are our opportunity to change our current system into a model mental health care system for our citizens.

NAMI/PBC General Meeting

“UNDERSTANDING AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER”

JOIN US AT

JEFF INDUSTRIES' CAFÉ MAURICE,
115 EAST COAST AVE., HYPOLUXO

**TUESDAY, JUNE 8, 2010
AT 6:30 PM**

REFRESHMENTS

Free & Open to the Public

NAMI FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

WEST BOCA RATON

Ruth Rales Jewish Family Service

21300 Ruth and Baron Coleman Blvd., Boca Raton, FL

Meets the 1st Monday of the Month; 6:30–8 pm

(Ruth Rales also has a Family Support Group on the *Temple Anshei Shalom, 7900 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach, FL, 3rd Wednesday of the Month*)

BOYNTON BEACH/DELRAY BEACH

Hagen Ranch County Library

14350 Hagen Ranch Road, Delray Beach

Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the Month; 6:30pm

LANTANA (SPANISH-SPEAKING)

Lantana Library

4020 Lantana Road, Lake Worth, FL

Meets the 4th Saturday of the Month;

10:30am–12:30pm

LAKE WORTH

NAMI/PBC Office on 10th Ave., No., Ste D

Meets the 4th Monday of the Month; 3pm

JUPITER

County Library on Military Trail

Meets the 3rd Thursday; 6:30–8pm

WELLINGTON

Wellington Public Library on Royal Fern Dr

Meets the 2nd Monday of the Month; 6:30–8:30pm

CALL 561-588-3477 FOR INFO

CONSUMER SUPPORT GROUPS

NAMI CONNECTION

RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP

Jo's Place @ South County MHC

16158 S. Military Trail, Delray Beach

Mondays, 1–2:30pm

PEER COUNCIL MEETING

NAMI/PBC Lake Worth Office

1520 10th Avenue N, Suite D, Lake Worth

Sunday, June 27, 11:00am–12:00pm

CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN THE MENTAL HEALTH FIELD

BY YARELIE CALO-VIDAL, LMHC

Each one of us has our own definition of what culture means. For some culture may be defined as traditional ideas and related values; others will say that it is the way we were raised that influences how we act. So, the question is: How can mental health professionals better serve different people with so many different cultures? The answer: by becoming culturally competent, which means the ability to provide services cross-culturally?

To become culturally competent, first we need to become aware of our own culture and biases. We can accomplish this step by doing a self-evaluation of our past experiences with different cultures and how we felt at that particular time. We become more sensible to the needs of others when we put ourselves in “their shoes”. Second, we have to gain understanding about the client’s culture. The best way to accomplish this is by using open questions to gather the information. Ask your client about his/her traditions, values, and life approach. Third, we need to accept our differences and adapt our skills to be able to connect and establish therapeutic rapport with our clients.

In order to become culturally competent, professionals need to acknowledge culture as a predominant force in shaping behaviors, values and institutions; respect the unique, culturally defined needs of various client populations, and believe that diversity of different cultures is as important as diversity between cultures. We need to view natural systems, such as family, community, church, healers, etc., as primary mechanisms of support for minority populations and to recognize that the concept of “family”, “community” and the like are different from various cultures and even subgroups within cultures. We have to function with the awareness that the dignity of the person is not guaranteed unless the dignity of his/her people is preserved, understand that minority clients are usually best served by persons who are part or in tune with their culture, and treat clients in the context of their minority status, which creates unique mental health issues for minority individuals, including issues related to self-esteem, identity formation, isolation, and role assumption. Mental Health Professionals need to respect cultural preferences that value process rather than product and harmony or balance within one’s life rather than

achievement, understand when values of minority groups are in conflict with dominant society values, and function with the knowledge that some behaviors are just adjustments to being different. It is imperative that professionals recognize that minority people have to be at least bicultural, which in turn creates its own set of mental health issues such as identity conflicts resulting from assimilation, and so forth.

Becoming cultural competent is not an easy task. It is an intentional process that requires self-awareness and acceptance. It is an ongoing evaluation; a constant development of new and more advanced skills, and an ongoing evaluation of progress. As mental health professionals, it is imperative that we understand the importance that culture plays in our client's mental health. So, accept the challenge and start the process of becoming culturally competent today!

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY: THE ROLE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

BY JENNIFER PICHARDO, MHA, RN,
DIRECTOR OF NURSING, SANDYPINES

The stigma associated with mental illness can be extremely damaging to those individuals dealing with it. This stigma can discourage people from receiving treatment, increase levels of prejudice and discrimination, hinder people from becoming productive in their own society, and can even promote pain, fear, mistrust, and violence for those living with mental illness.

It is the role and duty of mental health professionals to not only help end this stigma, but to promote recovery and resiliency to these individuals. The process of recovery should be individualized, person-centered, and self-directed by the individual receiving help. The individual must be respected by those around them and feel empowered and have a sense of self control regarding the decisions being made about their life. They must feel a sense of responsibility about their recovery process and what the future will hold for them. Recovery should be a continuous learning process whereby the individual grows through experiences in every aspect of life or from a holistic approach. The experiential learning process is where the individual builds resiliency. The mental health professional is responsible for providing

support to the individual and family; instilling a message of hope which can be fostered by peers, families, friends, providers, employers, and others. With this sense of hope, the individual will gain self acceptance, which will aid in their belief that recovery is possible.

The National Consensus Statement from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines recovery of mental health as, "a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her full potential".

Research has shown that people can recover from even the most severe forms of mental illness. However, people who have recovered from mental illness often do not believe that they have recovered due to the stigma discussed earlier and the sense of fear and pain in which these individuals suffer.

Resiliency as defined in the mental health community is the positive capacity of one to cope with stress or setbacks in recovery. It is the key to successfully dealing with and recovery from mental illness. It again is the role and duty of the mental health professional to assist individuals in identifying what resiliency means but to also find ways to promote resiliency in those individuals. Some ways to help build resiliency include identifying positive relationships, building self esteem, learning problem solving techniques, teaching planning and goal setting, and practicing coping skills and relaxation techniques.

Mental health professionals are vital in the recovery process for individuals with mental illness. It is part of our responsibility to end the stigma associated with mental illness and to transform the community outlook to promote recovery and resiliency in mental health.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

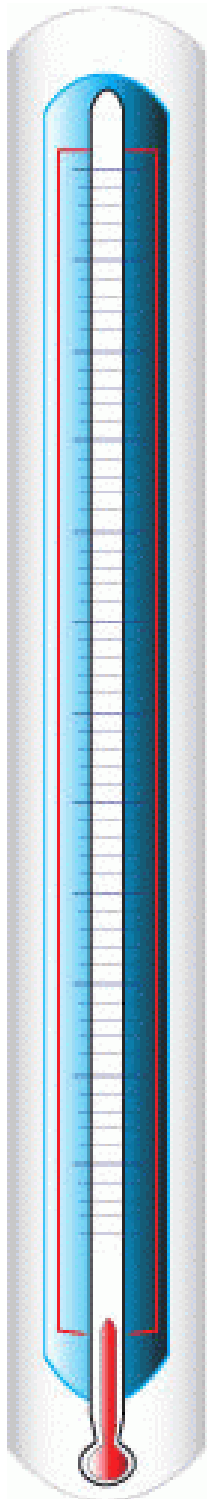
6/2/10

Board of Directors Meeting
1520 10th Ave, Ste D, Lake Worth at 5:30pm

6/8/10

NAMI/PBC's General Meeting
'Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder'
Jeff Industries' Café Maurice, 6:30pm
115 East Coast Ave., Hypoluxo
6:30pm-8:30pm (Free)

NAMI/PBC IS HAVING GROWING PAINS!



\$20,000

Help with our SOS (Support Our Space) Campaign. The number of our educational programs has increased in the last year, and as part of our Strategic Plan, further expansion is scheduled. In order to increase the number of courses we offer and the number of people we will be educating, NAMI needs dedicated classroom space and funds to support additional peer mentors. We need your assistance in raising \$20,000 for our planned growth.

All online donations are processed via a secure server in the safest possible manner. No information will ever be shared with a third party. Tax deductible contributions can be made through our website at www.namipbc.org by either PayPal or credit card, or by sending a check made payable to "NAMI/PBC" and sending it to NAMI/PBC, 1520 10th Ave., No., Ste D, Lake Worth, FL, 33460. Another way you can help is to check with your employer's Human Resources department to find out if they have a Matching Gift program. Thank you for helping

**\$50
\$0**

NAMI/PBC continue to be The Voice on Mental Illness in Palm Beach County!

PEER COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

BY CRISTINA ANDREOLI

Dear Peers,

June 1 is the deadline for the submission of possible names for the Peer Council Newsletter and for related articles under the theme New Beginnings and topics such as: things others don't know about us; things we collect; recipes; recovery; milestones; movie reviews; and book reviews. We, on the newsletter committee, really look forward to your submissions! Let your creativity flow!

The Board of NAMI/PBC has agreed to support the newsletter production, including defraying the mailing costs of the newsletters to all NAMI peers. It has also agreed to donate a t-shirt for the naming of the newsletter contest mentioned above.

HEALTH TIP: THE DARK SIDE OF CAFFEINE

ELIZABETH FLOCK, FORBES.COM

1. I don't drink coffee! Caffeine isn't my problem.

Coffee isn't the only source of caffeine. A cup of tea has 40 mg (coffee is about a 100 mg per cup). So if you have that second chai in the afternoon, and then another—well, do the math. Other sources: soft drinks (20 to 40

mg) and energy drinks (anything up to 400 mg). In most countries caffeine consumption for an average adult is more than 200 mg a day.

2. What exactly is caffeine?

C₈H₁₀N₄O₂ is a chemical compound found in beans, leaves and fruits of some plants. It's a natural pesticide for them, paralyzing and killing insects that try to feed on them. On humans it acts as a stimulant on the central nervous system and has psychotropic effects. It increases heart rate, blood pressure and respiration, and it is mildly diuretic.

3. Wait, how is caffeine a drug?

Caffeine is a drug of abuse, like alcohol or cocaine, because it meets these two criteria: "reinforcing efforts" and "adverse effects which can cause harm to self or society." Reinforcing effects is science talk for "addictive": The more you have, the higher your tolerance levels and the more you need. Take it away, and you experience withdrawal symptoms: Drowsiness, inability to concentrate, irritability, depression, anxiety, flu-like symptoms, motor skills impairment and more.

4. What if I keep drinking my daily cup? I'd feel fine, right?

If it's just a daily cup. But overuse can develop into "caffeinism," which may cause muscle twitching, insomnia, headaches and heart palpitations. Over a long period your stomach acid will increase, which can lead to

ulcers and other diseases. Even with a mild overdose, about 300 mg or so (3 cups of coffee, 7 cups of chai), you can get "caffeine jitters" and all sorts of other painful side effects. You can actually die from an overdose of coffee.

5. Moderation is the key?

If you take low doses or seldom drink it, caffeine produces the positive effects everyone loves: increased alertness, happiness and sociability.



Lining up for SandyPines' snow cones—
DCF's Splash to Recovery at Pioneer Park, Belle Glade.



DCF's "Splash to Recovery" at Calypso Bay Water Park, Royal Palm Beach, NAMI Board members, George and Susan Ottmer

National Alliance on Mental Illness of Palm Beach County
1520 10th Avenue North, Suite D
Lake Worth, FL 33460

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33460
PERMIT NO. 1327

Or Current Resident

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS
PALM BEACH COUNTY'S VOICE ON MENTAL ILLNESS
ADVOCACY, EDUCATION & EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ARE AT THE HEART OF OUR SERVICES.

NAMI/PBC Membership

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voting | \$45 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$55 | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional | \$65 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Open Door | \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$15 |

NAMI Membership exists at 3 levels: Affiliate, State & National; with just 1 payment, you'll be joining all 3 at once! As a member, you will receive: cutting-edge newsletters & publications, like *The Voice* & *The Advocate*, action alerts & leadership opportunities, plus advanced notice of upcoming meetings, classes & events.

NAMI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, charitable organization—contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. *Together*, we can continue to fight for all those affected by mental illness. *Thank you!*

1520 10th Ave N Ste D
Lake Worth, FL 33460-2069

T: 561.588.3477

F: 561.588.3499

WWW.NAMIPBC.ORG

INFO@NAMIPBC.ORG

Check here for renewal:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/St: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

I'd like to support NAMI's
with a donation of:

- \$5 \$10 \$25
other: \$ _____

I'm interested in volunteering with NAMI/PBC.

I wish to opt out of NAMI's solicitation.

*Members are NAMI/PBC's
lifeblood; your joining
helps us continue to provide
free outreach, support &
education. In bringing
mental health issues to
wider attention, we advocate
for better treatment...
As our membership base
grows, our voice becomes
stronger...*