

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Marjorie Antus

HOLDING IT TOGETHER FOR EACH OTHER

"You probably don't think you have a right to sleep," I said to Karen, the receptionist at the dentist's office.

"That's for sure. I don't think I have a right to sleep." We were talking about the emotional devastation of her daughter's suicide from a year earlier. Karen said she couldn't sleep the night through, and when she did sleep, she woke with her hands balled into fists. She told me she hadn't sought grief therapy because she was trying to ignore the pain—the intrusive thoughts, the nightmares, the loneliness, the constant "Why?" She was pushing it all down just to get through the day.

After trying to encourage her a little, I left the office shaken by Karen's year-long torment. I know that torment: my teenage daughter Mary died by suicide in 1995, and there was nothing anyone could say that came close to alleviating the pain.

What *did* help was someone listening to me without looking away. When a person stood with me for a moment and let me weep and murmur something about Mary's life and death, the ache eased a bit. All that person had to do—and admittedly, it's not easy—was be a human presence in the face of overwhelming grief.

In *The Art of Comforting: What to Say and Do for People in Distress*, Val Walker describes a turning point in her life when, in a time of deepest need, a psychotherapist friend sat with her all night. "She didn't judge me, diagnose me, hire me or fire me, fix me, bill me, instruct me, save me, or heal me . . . She just sat with me amid the mess in my life and the mess in my heart and allowed me to be in my pain. She just sat and held it together with her mere presence." (New York: Jeremy Tarcher, 2010)

"Holding it together for each other" is one way I describe NAMI Support Groups and NAMI Family-to-Family Education. Anyone who's ever been part of those programs knows that laughter plays a regular role; it's true. But it's also true that sighs, tears, and emotions too deep for words also regularly appear.

At those moments, there's no judging, diagnosing, fixing, instructing, or saving going on in the room—only the most delicate healing, I think, through the human presence freely offered to everyone. I've heard people talk about NAMI healing; I've also seen it in their faces.

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

By John Antus, MD

Figuring out where to start when a family member becomes ill with anxiety, depression, or inappropriate thinking can be a challenge for family members. Serious questions arise like whether that person might be a danger to themselves or others. Sudden increases in agitated behavior may even make it necessary to call 911 with a subsequent visit to the local emergency room.

Most of the time, however, families are confronted with a less urgent pattern of anxiety, agitation, or depression. That's when they can find guidance from their primary care physician.

When a family or patient calls to make an appointment, screening starts with the receptionist or office nurse. An appointment with the primary care physician follows for fuller screening of a patient's personal and medical history as well as family history.

After that, a physical and mental status evaluation takes place at which time screening questions about depression, bipolar disorder, and alcoholism are asked. Other diagnostic tests are run on blood and urine samples to check for physical diseases such as diabetes and thyroid disorders. A urine drug screen is run.

Once test results come back and the patient follows up with the doctor, referrals to specialists are made, if necessary. These specialists include psychologists, neurologists, psychiatrists, and mental health therapists.

With some disorders such as depression, anxiety, and panic disorder, a primary care doctor can initiate treatment with medications and follow up with the patient, as well.

If you're someone facing a mental health challenge in your family that leaves you not knowing where to turn for help, consider a primary care physician as the logical place to start.





Prince
William

ANNUAL MEETING

And Complimentary Dinner

MARCH 28, 2019, 6:30-8:30 pm

FROM JAIL TO JOY

MY LIFE WITH BIPOLAR

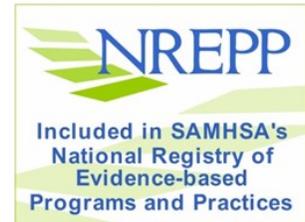


Carol Ray, PhD, is the author of PhD's Have Bipolar Too: My Story. She has contributed articles on mental health to state and county publications and has served on the NAMI Prince William board of directors since 2017.

Reservations are required for this Annual Dinner Meeting at Novant Health UVA Health System Prince William Medical Center, 8700 Sudley Road, Manassas, 20110, fourth floor conference room. **Please call 703-659-9983 by March 21 to reserve.**

Sponsored in part by:





What is the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program?

NAMI Family-to-Family is a free, 12-session education program for family, partners, friends and significant others of adults living with mental illness. The course is designed to help all family members understand and support their loved one living with mental illness, while maintaining their own well-being. The course includes information on illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety, major depression and other mental health conditions. Thousands of families describe the program as life-changing. The program is taught by trained teachers who are also family members and know what it is like to have a loved one living with mental illness.

WOODBRI

Tuesdays, 6:00 pm-9:00 pm and Saturdays, 9:00 am-12:00pm

Starts Tuesday, February 5—Saturday, March 16, 2019



Participant Perspectives

“This course overall was the single most, without a doubt, helpful and informative thing ever offered in all my years searching for answers... It has helped me to understand better and communicate more effectively with my brother.”

“The course has helped me to realize that my son is still inside the body that is often times hidden by the mental illness and that I am not alone in this.”

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Call the number below to register!

*Registration open through February 12th.



P.O. Box 1423, Woodbridge, VA 22195. 703-659-9983 info@nami-pw.org

Tthank you to our Sponsors:



PERINATAL MOOD AND ANXIETY DISORDERS

**By Lydia Anderson, Professional program support coordinator & Woodbridge Coordinator
Postpartum Support Virginia**

Do you know the #1 complication of pregnancy and childbirth? Anxiety and depression during pregnancy and the first year after giving birth affect up to 1 in 5 new or expectant mothers and their families. These illnesses – also known as perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, or PMADs — are the #1 complication of pregnancy and childbirth. Women of every culture, age, income level, and race can develop PMADs. Symptoms can appear anytime during the two-year span from conception through baby's first birthday with the onset of symptoms being gradual or sudden. Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders are caused by changes in biology, physiology, environment, and expectations.

PMADs are temporary and can be treated with a combination of self-care, social support, talk therapy, and medication if necessary. Support groups offer the opportunity to validate experiences, share coping strategies, and gain support and encouragement. Postpartum Support Virginia has 23 support groups statewide, 2 of which are in Prince William County in Manassas and Woodbridge.

MANASSAS:

NOVANT/UVa Health Prince William Medical Center

8700 Sudley Road, Manassas

Use Hylton Birthing Center entrance and check-in at reception/security desk.

1st & 3rd Fridays each month

10 — 11:30 am

info@postpartumva.org

WOODBRIDGE:

Woodbridge Support Group – Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center

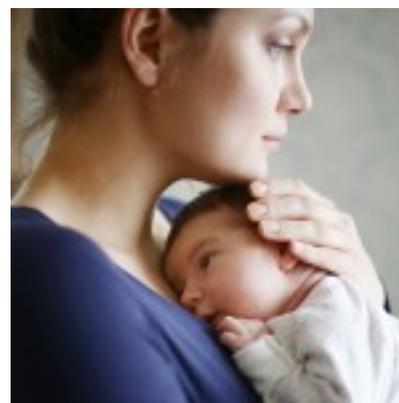
2300 Opitz Boulevard, Woodbridge

Hylton Education Center

2nd & 4th Tuesdays each month

10 –11:30 am

woodbridge@postpartumva.org



NAMI PRINCE WILLIAM FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

The challenges of mental illness do not only affect an individual's family members but also friends, teachers, neighbors, coworkers and others in the community. "Family member" and "caregiver" refer to anyone giving emotional, financial or practical support to a person with a mental health condition. Whether you're providing a lot of assistance or very little, the information and support you receive from a NAMI Family Support Group can help you better understand the issues that you might face. (Excerpt from: <http://www.nami.org/Find-Support/Family-Members-and-Caregivers>.)

The most important thing to know is YOU ARE NOT ALONE. Below are the two NAMI Family Support Groups currently being held in Prince William County:

WOODBRI

Second Tuesday of the Month, 7:00 pm to 9:00pm
Sentara Potomac Hospital
Room "C" in the Hylton Education Center
2300 Opitz Boulevard, Woodbridge, VA
Contact: Donna Fortunato, 571-437-4579



HAYMARKET:

Third Tuesday of the Month, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Haymarket Gainesville Community Library
Community Room
14870 Lightner Road, Haymarket, VA
Contact:
Bonnie Cuppett, 703-659-9983

Most family members attend the groups when their loved one is in crisis. When the crisis is over, they stop coming. Get in the habit of attending every month, whether things are going well or not. That way, if a crisis does hit, you know where you need to be. And remember, there are others who are new to this journey, and they need the support you can



Come as You Are sends a message to individuals at all stages of body acceptance and eating disorders recovery that their stories are valid. We invite everyone, especially those whose stories have not been widely recognized, to have the opportunity to speak out, share their experiences, and connect with others.



Febuary is touted as the month of LOVE. For many who may be alone, this is not a special time. However, this month, NAMI-PW would like to promote the mantra "I AM ENOUGH." Each one of us has a special purpose, so we want to invite you to try to connect with someone this month, whether it is saying hello to someone at the grocery store, holding the door in an elevator, commenting on how nice someone looks at the doctor's office. Reaching out and offering kindness generates love. And remember, above all else, we need to love our selves.



Prince William

P.O. Box 1423, Woodbridge, VA 22195-1423

T 703-659-9983 Email: info@nami-pw.org Website: nami-pw.org

MEMBERSHIPS: Household \$60 Regular \$40 Open Door \$5

*SPONSORSHIPS: Professional \$75 Corporate \$250

I want to donate _____

*Sponsorships are separate from membership and are considered donations to NAMI Prince William.

Please complete the form below and mail your membership/donation to the P.O. Box noted above, or pay online through our secure website at: nami-pw.org

Members are NAMI-PW's lifeblood; your membership 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.

Respect, Compassion & Hope ... NAMI Works!

Check here for renewal: Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/St: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

I'd like to volunteer for NAMI-PW's 2019 Go Green for Mental Health Walk/Run.

I wish to receive NAMI National's solicitations.

NAMI Membership exists at 3 levels: Affiliate, State & National. NAMI Prince William (NAMI-PW) 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. PLEASE NOTE: If making a donation, in order for NAMI-PW to receive your full donation, please send your donation to the NAMI-PW office. Thank you!

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