

Mamil Mercer

September 2014

Published by NAMI Mercer NJ, Inc. www.namimercer.org

Vol. 32, No. 3

Our Mission

NAMI Mercer is a nonprofit organization of individuals and families working to improve the lives of those affected by mental illness through education, advocacy and mutual support.

NAMI Mercer Calendar

For regular support meetings, see Page 8

PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETINGS AT THE NAMI CENTER

> September 16 (Tuesday) 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Depression and Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

Jeffrey Apter, MD Medical Director, Princeton Medical Institute; Senior Attending Physician, University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro

> October 21 (Tuesday) 7:00 to 9 p.m.

"Call Me Crazy: a Five Film"

Film showing and discussion of the 2013 film in five vignettes, featuring a star-studded cast and the stories of individuals and families dealing with mental illness.

November 15 (Saturday) 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Holiday WRAP®: Using the Wellness Recovery Action Plan to Manage Your Holiday Stress Lunch provided, registration required.

> November 18 (Tuesday) 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Personalized Medicine: the current practice and future promise of tailoring psychiatric treatment to an individual's genetic makeup.

Speaker TBA

6th Annual Harvest of Hope Saturday, Oct 11, 2014

'AMI Mercer will commemorate Mental Illness Awareness Week with its sixth annual Harvest of Hope wellness conference on Saturday, Oct. 11 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville.

Sponsored in part by a grant from the Lawrence Township Community Foundation, this education event is open to consumers, their families, and the general public.

Our theme this year is "Recovery Through Discovery." Melody Moezzi will deliver the keynote address — "From Restraints to Recognition: Realizing Recovery through Advocacy." Ms. Moezzi is an Iranian-American activist, attorney, and award-winning author. Her book, Haldol and Hyacinths: A Bipolar Life, is a critically acclaimed memoir that interweaves her experiences with both clinical and cultural bipolarity.

Following the keynote address, attendees will have a choice of wellness workshops, with one session in the morning and another during the afternoon. The \$10 registration fee includes lunch. Although membership in NAMI Mercer is not required, we are offering an incentive price of \$35 to join AND attend the conference.

Workshops will provide a variety of interactive and hands-on wellness experiences. Topics include memory and the brain, an introduction to WRAP®, physical fitness, EFT tapping therapy, international folk dancing.



Melody Moezzi

chair yoga, navigating the mental health system, a 12-step program for recovery, sensory modulation, mental illness and the family, and art therapy. Dr. Mark Komrad, last year's keynote speaker, will host two "Ask the Doctor" sessions.

In addition to the workshops, all conference par-

ticipants will come together for two musical experiences. After lunch, Kevin Toft will lead a motivating group singalong. The conference will close with a joyful and inspiring drumming circle conducted by Ange Chianese.

NAMI Mercer has mailed conference brochures to members. You can register by completing the paper form in the brochure or by going to www.namimercer.org to register online. Registration closes on Oct. 3. For more information, call 609-799-8994.

NAMI Mercer will host its 13th annual Night Out with NAMI on Sunday, Nov. 9, at **Stuart Country Day School's Cor Unum** Center in Princeton. Dr. Richard Kogan,



pianist and physician, will return to present "Sergei Rachmaninoff: The **Music and The** Mind." See story on Page 3.

Executive Director's Message

That Was Then; This Is Now

s NAMI Mercer's 30th anniversary year goes by, I have reminisced about what was happening in 1984, the year of our affiliate's founding:

- ☐ Footloose, Ghostbusters and Beverly Hills Cops were the top movies.
- ☐ There were two Olympic Games—the Winter Games in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia and the Summer Games in Los Angeles.
- ☐ Mary Lou Retton was on the Wheaties box.
- ☐ Big hair styles with lots of curls and layers topped most women's heads.
- ☐ Ronald Reagan was in his third year as president, and the new Federalism was shifting social policy from the federal domain to the private sector and the states.

The comprehensive Mental Health Services Act, enacted in 1980 during the Carter administration, had established a partnership between the federal and local government in funding improved mental health services and preventive care. In 1982, however, this act was repealed and replaced with federal block grants, which funded only 11 percent of costs, leaving the balance for states and local communities

Into this climate, NAMI Mercer was born, with passionate families working to advocate for a new system of care for their loved ones and for all who struggled against mental illness.

Passion

So much of the passion and the commitment continue today. I hear this passion in our Helpline callers, who are so eager and often desperate to obtain the information and support they need. There continue to be roadblocks all along the way to getting the appropriate diagnosis and treatment required to lead a life in recovery. I hear the passion and commitment from our Helpline volunteers, who

answer calls each weekday, and from our Family-to-Family and Basics teachers, who donate their time week after week.

And, I hear this passion in the public policy arena, as we struggle on local, state, and national levels to ensure adequate services for all who live with mental illness and to advocate for research to find a cure for serious brain disorders. Surrounded by fast-paced advances in science and technology, NAMI advocates that brain science catch up and provide more options for recovery and even cures!

Challenges

Many similar challenges are with us today as well. Today's shifting healthcare climate brings many opportunities and threats to the mental health treatment system. While more people will have health insurance, there is a shortage of psychiatrists and other mental health professionals who participate in insurance plans due to the low reimbursement rates. The extremely low Medicaid rates for doctors in New Jersey keep the poor without access to adequate medical and mental health care. The complexity of the system with private plans and public plans continues to increase, which is a real impediment for families and individuals trying to get care.

Facing these challenges, NAMI Mercer continues to provide one-on-one assistance as well as to broaden its systems advocacy efforts. It is clear that improving mental health care requires local, state and national efforts.

Stigma

Stigma was then, and stigma is now! The continuing prevalence of stigma surrounding mental illness impacts us all. The lack of accurate information about the nature of mental illnesses, effective treatments, and the possibility for recovery continues to affect people of all ages and cultures in our society. The existence of stigma prevents early intervention, which can

negatively affect treatment outcomes.

Today's instantaneous communications enable millions to hear about events around the county and the world within a few seconds. Unfortunately, learning of an event without



Sally Osmer

context or analysis can result in misinterpretation and the reinforcement of stigma. We have seen this over and over again with regard to mental illness being associated with violence.

Fighting stigma is an opportunity now as it was in 1984.

NAMI advocates need to be ready to respond with accurate information about mental illness and violence. A person with mental illness is not more likely to commit an act of violence; rather, people with mental illness are much more likely to be victims than perpetrators. The emphasis should be on increasing access to treatment for all who require it and limiting access to guns.

While these are complex and divisive issues, NAMI advocates have the responsibility to speak out about their own experiences of illness and recovery to correct misconceptions.

With these (and many other) challenges come vast opportunities for us as members of NAMI to reduce stigma. Your voice is needed as much in 2014 as it was in 1984.

Join with 430 other households to make a difference today. Let us build a future without stigma!

Sally Osmer

Executive Director

We're at the Tipping Point!

s I sit down to compose this message, I reflect on my first column for the *Messenger* as president of the NAMI Mercer Board of Directors. With two years behind me and no more than two more ahead, I've reached the mid-point of my term in office, a time to consider what impact I've had and what opportunities remain for leadership.

This 30th anniversary year has been a time for contemplation. We've talked a great deal about our history of accomplishments during the three decades since our affiliate was established. We've celebrated and will continue to recognize the visionary leadership that has brought us to this milestone of achievement. But what about our future?

Some of you may know that I enjoy reading about social change. I'd like to recommend a book by Malcolm Gladwell, called *The Tipping Point*, which describes an interesting phenomenon. The author gives several examples of a seemingly insignificant idea that spreads like wildfire. The circumstances that enable this transformation are fascinating to me.

According to Gladwell, the tipping point is the critical moment in an evolving situation that leads to a new development. It is often considered to be a turning point. Other definitions suggest that the tipping point is a time when important things start happening or when a series of small changes or incidents becomes significant enough to cause a larger, more important change. Often, we cannot identify the importance of the small changes or incidents that ultimately lead to the more significant outcome.

What is clear, however, is that change must be a part of the process. Sometimes, we hear the phrase "if it ain't broke, don't fix it!"

While I agree with the sentiment that we should honor the tried and true approach, I believe that we should also be looking for new and innovative ways to serve our mission. We need to develop new programs that take us into communities that are not presently engaged in our mission.

We should seek fresh and creative ways to spread our anti-stigma message.

Promoting change requires that we each find the courage and the means to share our own personal story. We need to sow the seeds that will inspire others to come to NAMI Mercer and add their contribution to our 400 plus member households and nearly 250

volunteers.

And, as an organization funded solely by the generosity of private and corporate donors, we must maximize these financial resources to achieve the greatest impact possible, year after year.



Karen Marquis

We do intend to be here year after year until we reach our destination—a world where people affected by mental illness will be able to reach their full potential in a compassionate society. Until we achieve this vision, I am committed to NAMI Mercer's continued growth and vitality for many years to come.

Please join me in this quest. You never know when even a small change or event will lead to an important next step for NAMI Mercer.



President

Dr. Richard Kogan Returns to Night Out with NAMI

AMI Mercer will host its 13th annual Night Out with NAMI on Sunday, November 9 at Stuart Country Day School's Cor Unum Center in Princeton. This year's benefit event is the exciting conclusion of our 30th anniversary celebration and will feature the return of Dr. Richard Kogan.

Dr. Kogan, a psychiatrist and concert pianist, is known for his fascinating "Music and the Mind" lecture/recitals. On Nov. 9, he will perform the music of Russian composer Sergei Rachmaninoff and examine the influence of psychiatric disorders on Rachmaninoff's creative output.

Additionally, this year's Night Out with NAMI honors **Pat and Bob Demers** as the 2014 Pillar Award recipients. The Pillar Award recognizes individuals who have made an extraordinary, long-term contribution to

the mission of NAMI Mercer and the people it serves.

Guests are invited to arrive at 2:00 p.m. to take part in the silent auction. The benefit concert begins at 3:00 p.m., followed by a cocktail reception, sit-down dinner, and live auction.

Tickets for the concert only are \$50 per person; tickets for the concert, cocktails and dinner are \$150 per person. Supporters who join Patron Society 2015 before the event will receive complimentary tickets, the number of tickets determined by donation level. Night Out with NAMI sponsorships also are available.

For more information about Night Out with NAMI, go to namimercer.org or contact Christine Bakter, Director of Development, at (609) 799-8994 or cbakter@namimercer.org.

Partnering with the Community to Share a Message

by Joyce Campbell

AMI Mercer celebrated
National Minority Mental
Health Awareness Month on
July 17 by partnering with the
Trenton Housing Authority and
Catholic Charities (Diocese of Trenton)
to hold a Mental Health Awareness
Fair at the Donnelly Homes
Community Center in Trenton.

The message, "Seek treatment because recovery is possible," was echoed throughout the three-hour awareness fair. More than a dozen organizations were present to provide participants with information on health and mental health services available in the Trenton/Mercer County area. Kimme Carlos, a dedicated NAMI volunteer, emceed the brief program and provided insight from her personal experience.

There followed a ten-minute video produced by NAMI NJ, "Documenting Our Presence: Multicultural Experiences of Mental Illness."

A vibrant panel of consumers

responded to questions about their personal experience with stigma, the barriers in finding treatment, and how treatment helped them to recover. The audience was engaged, asking questions and

applauding panel



Kimme Carlos

members for their courage in sharing their stories.

Amini Sabubu from The Serenity Garden also shared her experience in creating "a garden for and by the community that has experienced pain caused by violence." The garden is located at the intersection of Bellevue Ave. and Prospect St. in Trenton. Ms. Sabubu urged the community to visit and become involved in the garden, a place of beauty, peace, and healing.

More than 100 residents of Donnelly Homes, adults and children, attended

the event and learned about the serious nature of mental illness and how to get help. While this was the main message, the atmosphere was full of fun as children and adults had their faces painted, won raffle prizes, and enjoyed great snacks and a barbecued hot dog dinner.

In 2008, the US House of Representatives established Minority Mental Health Awareness Month "to enhance public awareness of mental illness and mental illness among minorities." This act was in honor of Bebe Moore Campbell, author, advocate, and cofounder of NAMI Urban Los Angeles.

NAMI Mercer, the Trenton Housing Authority, and Catholic Charities wish to thank the organizations that participated in the July 17 event and those who shared their journeys towards recovery.

Joyce Campbell is a NAMI Mercer Board member and Associate Executive Director for External Affairs, Catholic Charities (Diocese of Trenton).

NAMI Mercer Resumes Book Club Meetings

he NAMI Mercer Book Club is active again and welcomes all NAMI members to its next meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 17 from 10:30 am to noon in the NAMI Mercer conference room. We will discuss My Age of Anxiety: Fear, Hope, Dread, and the Search for Peace of Mind by Scott Stossel.

Stossel is the editor of *The Atlantic* magazine and a prolific writer and editor who has lived with anxiety since his childhood. According to Amazon, the memoir is "a riveting, revelatory, and moving account of the author's struggles with anxiety, and of the history of efforts by scientists, philosophers and writers to understand the condition."

In recognition of Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI Mercer held a book discussion on July 16 on *Haldol and Hyacinths: A Bipolar Life* by Melody Moezzi. Ms. Moezzi, an Iranian-American, provides Page 4 a cultural perspective for her personal experience with mental illness.

Please read some or all of Stossel's book and join us on Sept. 17 for an open, informal discussion with NAMI Mercer friends.

My Age of Anxiety

The excerpt that follows is from an interview with NPR's Terry Gross.

The Atlantic editor Scott Stossel has countless phobias and anxieties — some you've heard of, others you probably haven't.

"There's a vast encyclopedia of fears and phobias," he tells Fresh Air's Terry Gross, "and pretty much any object, experience, situation you can think of, there is someone who has a phobia of it."

Stossel's own fears include turophobia, a fear of cheese; asthenophobia, a fear of fainting; and claustrophobia. His new book, *My Age of Anxiety: Fear, Hope, Dread, and the Search for Peace*

of Mind, is both a memoir and a history of how medicine, philosophy and the pharmaceutical industry have dealt with anxiety.

Stossel says he wrote the book to help him under-



Scott Stossel

stand and find relief from — or redemption in — anxious suffering. He's a very high-functioning anxious person and in fact, before this book, most of his colleagues were unaware of his problems.

"The fear of vomiting, which for me is one of the most original and most acute of my fears, is actually fairly common. Emetophobia, it's called, and by some estimates, it's the fifth most common specific phobia . . . There are these online communities where these people seek each other out."

NAMI Walk at ETS, Princeton, May 17





Above: the EB III Top Family Team. Led by Linda Becker, the team raised more than \$9,000.

Left: dancing at the Walk led by DJ Sully of Ambient DJ Service.

Far left: Captain Jill Byoris of Team End the Stigma riding high.

Patron Reception, June 7, Nassau Club









Above left: Harris Adams and Ruth Ann Mekitarian.

Above center: Pat Demers and Maggie Hill. Above: Alex and Martha-Lisa Flinsch, Amy O'Donnell, Robert Hindes and Karen Marquis. Far left: Sally Osmer, Tom Nesi and Pam McGrew.

Left: Christine Bakter and Danita Saunders-Davis.



NAMI Picnic, July 26, at John Lasley's Home in Princeton





Above: Carol Rickard and Akavar Dylutra. Above center: James and Caryl Chambers with Pat Cannon. Above right: Libby Bartholomew and Nora Stoner with friends. Right: Anastasia Lambros, Akavar Dylutra, Gail Cipas and Lynne Foley.





WRAP® as an Evidence-Based Practice

by Akavar Dylutra

RAP® (Wellness Recovery Action Plan®) is a wellness and recovery tool developed by Mary Ellen Copeland and administered by the Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery (http://copelandcenter.com/resources/way-wrapworks). For many years, NAMI Mercer has offered WRAP® workshops as an integral part of our support and education for individuals recovering from behavioral health challenges.

Mary Ellen Copeland developed WRAP® in 1997 following extensive discussions with several dozen people in Northern Vermont who were considered to have serious mental health challenges. Many had been confined in state hospitals during their illness. These discussions focused on their personal, practical strategies to help them manage their illness.

The next step was to send surveys to about 125 similar individuals who were geographically dispersed. These surveys included what are now the five key concepts of WRAP®—Hope, Personal Responsibility, Education, Self-Advocacy, and Support. Respondents also were asked to include their "tricks" for feeling better.

Over the next few years, WRAP® was developed to help individuals combine the five key concepts with their own strategies to stay well, thus creating a cohesive plan. This personalized "Wellness Recovery Action Plan®" is what an individual develops during a WRAP® workshop.

In 2010, SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) recognized WRAP® as an evidence-based practice. This means that WRAP® was analyzed through a rigorous study and was shown to have significant and positive effects on individuals who participated in peer-led WRAP® groups.

WRAP® is presented in a variety of ways in many different venues. Not all of the methods of presentation qualify to be evidence-based practices.

Here are a few of the criteria required to qualify. NAMI Mercer's Page 6 course has been qualified as evidence-based.

1) It is voluntary. Some programs make attending WRAP® conditional on being released or offer other incentives. Individuals must attend WRAP® of their own free will and develop their own person-



Akavar Dylutra

al plan from that freedom.

- 2) WRAP® is administered by two properly trained facilitators. Some programs present WRAP® in peer support session format and assign a peer support specialist to lead the group. Certified WRAP® facilitators are trained in the nuances and importance of all aspects of WRAP®.
- 3) WRAP® facilitators are recertified every two years. WRAP® is constantly evolving. Facilitators need to be certified every two years to maintain their knowledge and understanding.
- 4) WRAP® participants receive apprpriate mentoring. Facilities that offer WRAP® are encouraged to offer ongoing support groups for those who have participated in WRAP® workshops. This encourages the individuals to share their successes and challenges as they implement WRAP® in their recovery.
- 5) Other considerations: Other administrative requirements to qualify as an evidence-based practice include group size (12-15), session length (2.5 hours), and meeting frequency (weekly for eight consecutive weeks).

Taken together, all of these items play a part in successfully presenting WRAP® as an evidence-based practice.

Our next workshop series is planned to start on Wednesday, October 1 and will continue for eight consecutive weeks. We will meet from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Please call the NAMI Mercer office at 609-799-8994 if you are interested in registering for a WRAP® workshop.

Becoming a WRAP® Facilitator

My 40-Hour Journey, April 14-18, 2014

By Anastasia Lambros

live my life trying to understand this whole idea of being in recovery. At the present moment, it means to me that I am in a state of empowerment, getting support from others, advocating



Anastasia Lambros

for myself, feeling hopeful, and understanding how my illness affects me. I learned this from really trying to comprehend WRAP® concepts.

In the past, I took the WRAP® course five times. From the beginning, I realized that there is something very different about the program, and I wanted to share this whole mindset with others. This past April, I had the opportunity to enroll in WRAP® facilitator training.

It was a refreshing approach, and I finally understand the difference between teaching and facilitating.

I practiced the facilitator role for the next week by presenting my own experiences and requesting input from others who were taking the same class.

The facilitators who trained me used the same format as the WRAP® course to teach us more about ourselves and prepare us to become facilitators.

During some challenging days, I applied WRAP® to my life and found it very effective. I admit it—the facilitators were right. The more I used WRAP®, the more useful it became. I finally came to understand that WRAP® is a lifestyle.

With this in mind, I regularly rely on WRAP® to help me get through the day.

After 40 long hours of analysis and self-learning, we made it! We were a group of new, certified facilitators. For the first time in my life, I felt truly empowered. I realized that I had never been a supporter for myself, self-advocating for the things essential to my recovery. The truth came out; if I did not advocate for myself, then who else

NAMI Mercer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Karen L. Marquis, Ph.D.

President
Joan Brame, Ph.D.

Vice President

Madeline Monheit, M.S.

Secretary

Laurie Russell

Treasurer

Lauren Agoratus, M.A.
Liliana Attar
Joyce Campbell
Akavar Dylutra
William P. Hayes, M.D.
Hon. Joseph E. Irenas
Lori Jacobi
Sarah Kleinman
Jeremy Mann
John E. Marsland, Jr.
Ivy Minely, Esq.
Tom Pyle, M.A.
Zia Rahman, Ph.D.
Jason Redd, Esq.
Carol Rickard

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Sally T. Osmer, L.C.S.W.

DIRECTOR of OPERATIONS Danita L. Saunders-Davis

DIRECTOR of DEVELOPMENT Christine Bakter

> EDITORS Madeline Monheit Elisabeth Hagen

THE NAMI CENTER

of Mercer County

Lawrence Commons, 3371 Brunswick Pike, Suite 124 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

(609) 799-8994

home@namimercer.org www.namimercer.org

NAMI Mercer's New Board of Directors, 2014/15



Back row, I to r: Jeremy Mann, Bill Hayes, Liliana Attar, Lori Jacobi, Carol Rickard, Akavar Dylutra, Zia Rahman. Front row: Karen Marquis, Joan Brame, Maddy Monheit, Joe Irenas, Sarah Kleinman, Ivy Minely, Laurie Russell. Not shown: Lauren Agoratus, Joyce Campbell, Tom Pyle, John Marsland, Jason Redd.

Two New Members Join NAMI Mercer's Board



L to r: Carol Rickard and Lori Jacobi.

Carol Rickard's expertise is in stress management and coping skills. She has written more than a dozen publications on these topics. In 2008, she founded WellYOUniversity, LLC, a health education company. For the past 12 years, Carol was a social worker for Capital Health Systems in Trenton. She now works full time on WellYOUniversity. She writes, "I have watched NAMI Mercer grow over the years to become such an integral part of the lives of individu-

als and families living with mental illness.It is a privilege to become a part of the hope and help NAMI Mercer provides."

Lori Jacobi is Associate Director, Clinical Management at Otsuka Pharmaceutical Development & Commercialization. She has been working in the research of psychiatric medications for 22 years. Prior to that, she was a mental health counselor on the inpatient psychiatric unit at Capital

Health Regional Medical Center in Trenton.

Throughout her life, she has worked with patients with developmental disabilities and mental illness and has been a passionate advocate for education on mental illness and stomping out the stigma.

Lori has always wanted to get involved with NAMI and plans to be a trainer for the Family-to-Family course.

WRAP® continued from Page 6 would really know what I needed?

So, miracles do happen. At least that was how I felt at the close of the training. Looking back, I do see a

change in my approach to life and my recovery in a more positive way and that there is hope for all of us—even after taking the WRAP® course five times.

SAVE THE DATES!

Harvest of Hope Wellness Conference, Oct. 11



Night Out with NAMI, Nov. 9
Dr. Richard Kogan presents Sergei
Rachmaninoff: The Mind and the Music



NAMI Mercer Groups

Support Groups:

NAMI Connection Support Group: Recovery support group program for people living with mental illness. Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. This group is open to anyone with a mental illness, no registration required. NAMI Center. Call us for more information.

IFSS/NAMI: Support for families of adults with mental illness. Mondays, 5:15 to 6:45 p.m., at Lawrence Rd. Presbyterian Church. Tuesdays, 5:15 to 6:45 p.m. at NAMI Mercer, and Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Kingsbury Towers, 1 Kingsbury Sq., Trenton.

Education Classes:

WRAP®: An eight-session Wellness and Recovery Action Plan program for people living with mental illness. New classes start Wednesday October 1, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the NAMI Mercer Center. Call NAMI Mercer about the next session.

FAMILY: A Family-to-Family class starts September 11 and runs for 12 consecutive Thursdays from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. This class is for family members of adults who have mental illness. Contact NAMI Mercer to join the next session.

NAMI Basics, a six-week class for parents or caregivers of children and adolescents with behavioral or emotional challenges. The fall semester will be co-sponsored by the Mercer Family Support organization: Sept. 17 to Oct. 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

All NAMI Mercer support groups and classes are free, but registration is required for classes. Contact us by phone or email to inquire about the classes.

ADDRESS LABEL GOES HERE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT #257 TRENTON, NJ

