



NAMI

Pensacola

National Alliance on Mental Ill-

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April 2016 Newsletter

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Message from the President

The first quarter of 2016 is complete and spring is here. The first three months of the year have been very busy for NAMI Pensacola. We have realized great response to our Family to Family Education program with more people signing up for the program than we currently have room to accommodate. The response to our focus on “Education and Fun” for the fourth Thursday monthly meeting has been very encouraging. So far we have held discussions and presentations on Depression, Tai Chi, and Aroma Therapy and we greatly appreciate all of our presenters; Dr. Georgia Ketchum, Scott Mayberry, and Victoria Willoughby. Upcoming discussion for the meeting held every fourth Thursday on the month at The Pavilion at West Florida Hospital include De-Escalation and The Baker Act. Both topics are extremely relevant for individuals suffering from Mental Illness and their loved ones.

We are currently in the process of organizing the second annual NAMI Walk to raise awareness and **End the Silence** associated with mental illness. Though we have gotten off to a late start in organizing this event, we are making exceptional progress and look forward to a great turnout on May 21st. This year’s NAMI Walk will be held at the Blue Wahoos Stadium Saturday, May 21st. The event is sponsored by West Florida Hospital, Buffalo Rock Beverages, Cat Country, and Chick-Fil-A 9 Mile Rd. Various organizations are in the process of forming walk teams and anyone who wants to register can do so at www.namipensacola.com.



Florida just recently dropped to 50th in the nation in per capita dollars spent on Mental Health Care, so there is no place to go but up. The only way funding for mental health care will increase is through “End the Silence” campaigns such as our Walk and contact with our elected officials. Together we can realize increased funding and improved care for our loved ones suffering from Mental Illness in Florida and across the nation.

De-escalation and Compassionate Presence: Helping Loved Ones Weather Emotional Storms

The fourth Thursday educational meeting for April will be presented by Dannette Wallace, Mental Health Therapist in the Inpatient Unit and Intensive Outpatient Program at West Florida Hospital, scheduled for Thursday, April 28 at 6:00 pm. Dannette gives a class on this subject for the whole hospital, both for new employees as a part of their orientation and on “Education Day” once a year, for which CEU credits can be earned. Apparently she’s quite an expert!

“Usually you can feel the static in the air,” she said, “and the way you react can escalate or mitigate the problem.” She said that sensory overstimulation can be a problem, and sometimes just being quiet with them can



help. “Work on approaching the person in a calm manner,” she said, “respecting their personal space, and not clouding the air with a lot of verbiage. Offer the assurance that you’re there to help that person regain control.”

“Sometimes we allow the person to vent if they’re riled up,” she said. “The emotion peaks and then the energy is spent. We do not want to intervene and over re-react and shut it down, letting our anxiety complicate the situation.”

Dannette will discuss “red flags” that seem to trigger certain behaviors and how to be aware of cycles of behavior. “Sometimes it sets us on edge and we need ways to ground ourselves,” she said. “We need to change perspective and take responsibility for what we bring to the mix.”

There are situations in which the person is imminently violent, and that’s when you may have to call the authorities. If you call 911, ask for a CIT (Crisis Intervention Training) officer.

Mental Health Therapist Dannette Wallace, MSW

Donation to NAMI Pensacola in Memory of Lucky Gimlin

The Quality Department of West Florida Hospital made a \$75 donation to NAMI Pensacola in memory of Sidney “Lucky” Gimlin, who passed away on March 4, 2016. Mr. Gimlin was an adamant believer that mental health counseling should be available to anyone, regardless of ability to pay.

From: Debbie Wroten, Fatma Gaydon, Alexa Seely, Brenda Pearson, Jackie Thomas, Joanne Gorman, Carol Bream, Christine Lovette, Victoria Sauer, Kathy Owen, Nicol Burlemisterkintz and Karen Urquhart.

Donations of this kind are extremely valuable to NAMI Pensacola. NAMI is a grass-roots organization staffed completely by volunteers, people who give freely of their time and talents to put on meetings and programs, at no charge, in support of those who cope with mentally ill loved ones every day. To become a member of NAMI Pensacola you pay \$35, and \$10 goes to NAMI National and \$10 goes to NAMI Florida, so NAMI Pensacola benefits by just \$15. It would take 10 new members to net \$150. Donations to NAMI Pensacola are tax deductible, as it is a 501 (C) (3) organization.

Upcoming Meetings Don’t forget the second Thursday support meeting held at Lakeview Center, Bldg I, 1995 North Hernandez Street, 7:00-8:30pm, where you can talk informally with NAMI members who have been coping with a mentally ill family member or friend for years. Meetings for May will be Thursday, May 12th, 7:00-8:30pm at Lakeview Center and Thursday, May 26th, 6:00-7:30pm at The Pavilion. For more information, call 208-1609 or email namipensacola@gmail.com.