

NAMI JEFFCO  
P. O. BOX 1921  
ARVADA, CO  
80001

## MEETINGS

1st Wed. of each month-  
Education Night Meeting

No Mtgs July, Aug, Dec.

2nd Wed. of each month-  
Board Meeting

## LOCATION:

**Jefferson Center for  
Mental Health (JCMH)**

*Cedar Building:*

**9808 W. Cedar Ave.,  
Lakewood 80226**

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# The Voice of NAMI Jeffco

*Proudly serving Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties*

Winter 2010  
Formerly known as JAMI

Contact Nos. 303-349-2563  
303-279-7661



## NAMI COLORADO WALK

**Saturday, May 15, 2010**

Sloan's Lake Park—beautiful, large preserve on Denver's west side  
Sheridan and 17th Street (across from St. Anthony's Hospital)

5 K Walk (3.1 Miles)

Form a Walk Team, Join an Existing Team, Walk as an Individual  
Fundraising Goal: \$150,000

**Contact: Larry Krause NAMI Jeffco larrykrause@ymail.com  
303-202-9670**

We are looking for sponsors, volunteers, and participants to help with this very exciting event! Here is how you can help:

- ◆ Are you, or anyone you know, involved in a corporation or small business that would like to sponsor the NAMI Jeffco team?
- ◆ Start thinking about building a team of walkers...friends, co-workers, family, who want to raise money and awareness by walking together as a team.
- ◆ Volunteer to work on other parts of the walk such as publicity, logistics, etc.  
Go to [www.namicolorado.org](http://www.namicolorado.org) for updates and information!!!!!!

**NAMI Jeffco Mission Statement:** *The National Alliance on Mental Illness Jeffco (NAMI Jefferson County, formerly JAMI) is a non-profit, all volunteer organization. We are affiliated with the National Alliance on Mental Illness and NAMI Colorado. Our mission is:*

- ◆ *to provide emotional support to individuals who have a mental illness and their families,*
- ◆ *to promote education to its members and the general public about mental illness, to act as advocates for new legislation,*
- ◆ *to promote community support programs, including appropriate living arrangements linked with social, vocational, and employment programs, and,*
- ◆ *to work toward removing the stigma to mental illness through public education, and to promote research in prevention and care.*
- ◆ NAMI is a non-partisan organization. It does not endorse political candidates.

**MEETINGS— 9808 W. Cedar Ave., Lakewood (Jefferson Center for Mental Health) JCMH**

**ALL MEETINGS 7 PM—8:30 PM**

**Everyone Welcome!**

**Education Night:** First Wednesday of each month, except no meetings July, August, December

Check page 4 for upcoming presentations!

**Board Meeting:** Second Wednesday of each month

**NO MEETINGS**

**IN JULY, AUGUST and DECEMBER**

### NAMI Connection

#### Recovery Support Group

For adults living with mental illness that is expanding in communities throughout the country.

These groups provide a place that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope.

NAMI Connection groups offer a casual and relaxed approach to sharing the challenges and successes of coping with having a mental illness. Each group:

- Meets weekly for 90 minutes
- ◆ Is offered free of charge
- ◆ Follows a flexible structure without an educational format
- ◆ Does not recommend or endorse any medications or other medical therapies
- ◆ All groups are confidential and participants can share as much or as little information as they wish.

#### Principles of Support:

- ◆ We shall see the individual first, not the illness.
- ◆ We recognize that mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers.
- ◆ We understand that mental illnesses are traumatic events.
- ◆ We aim for better coping skills.
- ◆ We find strength in sharing experiences.
- ◆ We reject stigma and do not tolerate discrimination.
- ◆ We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
- ◆ We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
- ◆ We embrace humor as healthy.
- ◆ We accept we cannot solve all problems.
- ◆ We expect a better future in a realistic way.
- ◆ We will never give up hope.

For more information and locations please contact the **NAMI COLORADO** office:  
303-321-3104

**NOTICE: IF YOU ARE A MEMBER OF NAMI JEFFCO AND HAVE NOT BEEN RECEIVING OUR E-MAILS, PLEASE E-MAIL OR CALL ME WITH YOUR E-MAIL INFO! Pam 303-279-7661 pamhaynes@aol.com**

We are pleased to offer **5** drop in support groups each month for family members, etc. who are dealing with loved ones who have a mental illness! NAMI Colorado and NAMI Jeffco have two NEW groups, and the Lakewood Family Support Group maintains its successful 3 groups each month.

First Thursday of each month

Second Tuesday of each month

Third Wednesday of each month

Fourth Tuesday of each month

**For Spouses Needing Support:** Third Monday of each month

**Do You Have a Love One Who Has A Mental Illness (ADULT OR CHILD)?  
Do You Need Someone Who "Gets It"?  
PLEASE JOIN US**

**NAMI COLORADO/NAMI JEFFCO  
Support Groups — N E W!**

**Support Groups offer a safe, non-judgmental and confidential outlet for sharing with others who have gone or are going through similar experiences. Together we can get through the tough times and celebrate the good—**

**First Thursday** of each month 7-8:30 PM

FOOTHILLS COMMUNITY CHURCH

8270 West 80th Ave, Arvada

Contact: Jennie Vie 720-227-7207 jenvie06@yahoo.com

**Third Wednesday** of each month 7-8:30 PM

APPLEWOOD COMMUNITY OF CHRIST CHURCH

3780 Ward Rd., Wheat Ridge

Contact: Jeannine Rand 303-349-0479

#### **SUPPORT GROUPS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS/ OF THOSE FOLKS WHO HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS**

**Lakewood Family Support Group** is for family members of adults who have mental illnesses to offer and receive support and share with others:

When: **2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month—OPEN FREE!!!!** This is a drop in support group. Come when you can! 6:30—8:30 P.M. Call Pat O'Connell 303-432-5114 (leave message and Pat will return your call!!!)

Where: 9808 West Cedar Ave., Lakewood 80026 (JCMH Cedar Building)

Note: Pat O'Connell, a family member herself is an experienced, caring and trained facilitator for these support groups!

#### **SUPPORT GROUP FOR SPOUSES AND SIGNIFICANT OTHERS**

When: **3rd Monday** of each month **FREE!** Please call to confirm group meetings! Time: 6:30-8:30 P.M.

Where: JCMH Cedar Building (9808 West Cedar Ave., Lakewood 80026)

Facilitated by Pat O'Connell. 303-432-5114; 9808 W. Cedar Ave. is located one block north of the Alameda/Kipling Streets intersection. It is the second building on the south side of Cedar Ave.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS NAMI Jeffco**

President...Norm Bertelsen 303-349-2563 Norm@normBertelsen.com  
 Vice President...Pam Sindorf Haynes 303-279-7661 pamhaynes@aol.com  
 Secretary...Gloria Zann gloandgene@ecentral.com  
 Treasurer...Tony Rodrigues 303-570-0781 tonygrodrigues@yahoo.com  
 Summit Center Advisory Board...Norm Bertelsen  
 Membership... Kathy Bobb 303-979-7427 kbobb002@aol.com  
 Education Programs...Pam Sindorf Haynes pamhaynes@aol.com  
 Newsletter...Pam Sindorf Haynes pamhaynes@aol.com  
 Legislation...Nita Bradford 303-232-5078 nitajohn@comcast.net  
 Other NAMI Colorado Board Members: Larry Krause, Allan McCall, Jennie Vie  
 Consumer Outreach... Dennis Hofts 303-421-8522

**NAMI Jeffco CONTACT INFORMATION**

General Info: Norm Bertelsen 303-349-2563  
 Family to Family and Visions Education Classes: Pam Haynes 303-279-7661 pamhaynes@aol.com  
 Membership: Kathy Bobb 303-979-7427  
 Contributions: Roy Reed (cell) 303-952-9456 royreed86@comcast.net  
 Consumer Liaison: Dennis Hofts 303-421-8522  
 Consumer and Family Advisory Board: Foothills Behavioral Health: Lois Dupuis 303-465-4079 larjdupuis\_02@msn.com

**OTHER CONTACT NUMBERS**

Jefferson Center for Mental Health Information: 303-425-0300  
 Emergency Access: 303-425-0300  
 Children Services: 303-425-0300  
 TCL: 303-432-5400  
 Pat O'Connell: support info and a great resource! 303-432-5114  
 Summit Center: 303-432-5800  
 SSI & SSDI: 1-800-772-1213  
 Jefferson County Human Services: 303-271-1388  
 Medicaid: 303-271-4339  
 Food Stamps: 303-271-4047  
 LEAP: 303-271-4399

Lakewood Family Support Group: 303-432-5114 (family members)  
 North Star Depressive & Bipolar Alliance Support Group: (consumers and family members) 303-584-1957  
 Schizophrenics Anonymous: 303-432-5400 (JCMH clients only)  
 SW Denver Depressive, Manic-Depressive Support: 303-331-2599 (consumers)  
 S.T.A.R. Reach Center Schizophrenics Anonymous 303-798-0128, ask for Todd (consumers)  
 Denver West Mental Health Support: 303-331-2599 (peer support) (West Pines)  
 West Pines Support Systems: 303-467-4080 for information  
 Depression/Bipolar Recovery (Dr. Jane Mountain) 303-329-3364  
 Jeffco Family Support Network 303-425-4603 jeffcofamilysupp@aol.com  
 The Road: a drop in resource center for young adults (15-22) 303-233-0488 www.theroad4youth.org  
**BipolarConnectNewsletter** (also schizophrenia, depression, anxiety disorders): http://www.healthcentral.com/utis/news/bipolar/subscriptions.html.  
**Brain in the News** (free subscriptions) danainfor@dana.org  
**Coloradolegalservices.org**  
**Westside Behavioral Care Inc. (find a clinician/therapist who best suits your needs! 303-986-4197 www.westsidebehavioral.com**

## Norm's Notes

## A Message from Your President

We had a very successful December client party on Dec. 5 and about 65 clients attended. We had a great time and enjoyed pizza and chicken and cookies and root beer floats and played bingo. Thanks to Dennis Hofts, Ricky Kinney, Vlad Perez, Geoff Hays, Jim O'Connell, David, Kathy Bobb, Vianne Bertelsen, Tony and Marianne Rodrigues for making the party a rip-roaring success. All clients received a gift of their choosing, with many THANKS to Dennis Hofts.



Our January Education Night Meeting featured the Case Manager Specialists from JCMH. They were and are very exciting and enjoyable persons. They informed us about the issues that they face each day and how they have very SUCCESSFULLY navigated the mental health system and have succeeded in overcoming their mental illnesses. They are my heroes and I love them all. When I see them I know it is possible to see the LIGHT at the end of the mental illness tunnel.

Our next Education Night Meeting is Feb. 3. Please plan to attend. Dr. Richard Warner, internationally recognized leader in schizophrenia and other disorders which include psychotic features will be our featured guest speaker. Our Education Meetings are the first Wed. of the month at 7 P.M. at the Cedar Bldg., 9808 West Cedar Ave., (About Kipling and Alameda). Everyone is welcome. (In Dec, July, and August, we do NOT have Education Night Meetings.)

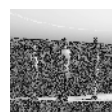
Have a wonderful new year and JOIN with us in making new "pathways of success" for persons who have mental illness issues. - Norm Bertelsen

**Useful Websites**

www.empowercolorado.com  
 www.mhacolorado.org (Mental Health America of CO)  
 www.silverribbon.org  
 www.moodletter.com (consumers)  
 www.wecanolorado.org (consumers)  
 www.beyondbipolar.com (consumers)  
 www.Schizophrenia.com  
 www.bipolarmagazine.com  
 www.bipolar.com  
 www.NIMH.org (Nat'l Institute on Mental Health)  
 www.schizophreniaconnection.com  
**www.nami.org for useful resources; online support; latest in grassroots efforts!**  
**www.nami.org/CAAC for NEW program: StrengthofUs—online community support!**

Need resources? Ideas? Go to NAMI Colorado [www.namicolorado.org](http://www.namicolorado.org) or call 303-321-3104 for information on what is happening around Colorado.

**Jefferson Center for Mental Health is a wonderful online resource** for support groups and community resources. Go to [jeffersonmentalhealth.org](http://jeffersonmentalhealth.org) and click on "Resources". For support group information which includes both JCMH clients and the general community, click on "Support Groups" which is the fourth line in the middle column. You will also find web resources, mental health articles, community organizations, county government information and other miscellaneous links!



**NAMI Jeffco Education Night News  
Winter 2010 Presentations**

**Jan. 6:** Jefferson Center for **Mental Health Peer Counselors** third annual round table presentation/discussion! Vladimir Perez, Ricky Kinney and Jim O'Connell share their experiences living with a mental illness as well as their personal journeys which have enabled them to so successfully serve our community in positive employment situations AND break through stigma. We all benefit from these young men's openness and desire to support each other and the community.

**Feb 3: Dr. Richard Warner, M.D., Psychiatrist and Director of Colorado Recovery** (treatment services address schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and other serious mental illnesses specific to EACH individual). "The international mental health care community recognizes Dr. Warner as a leader in schizophrenia treatment and recovery research and development..." Dr. Warner's highly recognized work with folks who have **serious mental illnesses with psychotic features**, includes a strong track record of maintaining people who have illnesses in employment and improving their quality of life.

Author of a number of books, including: Recovery from Schizophrenia (3rd edition: Brunner-Routledge, 2004); The Environment of Schizophrenia (Brunner-Routledge, 2000); Alternatives to the Hospital for Acute Psychiatric Treatment (American Psychiatric Press, 1995); co-author with Julian Leff. Social Inclusion of People with Mental Illness (Cambridge University Press, 2006). Beginning in 1995, Dr. Warner helped direct *Open the Doors*, a global campaign of the World Psychiatric Association to combat the stigma of schizophrenia. He was closely involved in two of the anti-stigma programs, launched by *Open the Doors*— in Calgary, Alberta, and in Boulder, Colorado.

**"...with the right treatment, leading a productive life, achieving goals, and having relationships is possible for individuals with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or other psychotic disorders..."**. Dr. Warner, whom we proudly present in this meeting as our guest speaker, offers a fresh, often encouraging, and always informative look into living with a mental illness.



**Mar 3: Steven R. Owens, J.D., Attorney at Law** specializing in Estate Planning, including, but not limited to, special needs children. If you have a child or grandchild or know of someone with a child with special needs (i.e. a mental illness), including mild disabilities which simply render them vulnerable, you should attend this workshop. You **MUST** make special provisions in your estate plan for that child. We are proud to present Steve Owens in what is sure to be an informative and entertaining meeting.



Steve will address how you can: Identify the dangers facing your child and your estate plan; Ensure that there will be sufficient resources to care for your child for his or her entire life; Ensure your child's continued eligibility; Avoid estate and income taxes on your legacy; Protect all of your loved ones' inheritance from lawsuit creditors, predators who prey on the disabled, denial of medical assistance; and more! Learn how you can effectively convey loving instructions about your hopes, dreams, and aspirations for those you love.

Check out Steve's web site: [www.mydenverlawyer.com](http://www.mydenverlawyer.com)

**April 7: Deborah Amesbury, LCSW**, will conduct a power point presentation on **Colorado Law and Mental Illness!** Deborah has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for over 35 years, as well as the Director of Consumer and Family Affairs for the CO Division of Mental Health from 1995-2004 transferring in April 2004 to the CO Dept. of Health Care Policy and Financing where she was a Behavioral Health Specialist until her retirement in October 2006. Deborah is an effective, competent and captivating speaking. Her knowledge is a wealth of important information. We are honored she will be sharing with us:



**What is Colorado Law with regard to folks who have a mental illness? Colorado Revised Statute: (CRS) 27-10-101 et seq.:** The Care and Treatment of Persons with Mental Illness-effective June 2004, which includes, but is not limited to the following **IMPORTANT LEGAL ISSUES:** *Definition of the law; purpose of the law; who is a "person with a mental illness"; what are designated facilities; what are the types of designation and involuntary process? What is the process for detained individuals and how can medications be court ordered? Is there any relief for folks who simply cannot get their loved ones into treatment and must reach to the legal system for support?*

**May 5: Ronny M. Zarb-Cousin, M.A., Executive Director, and Brianna L. Severine, Clinical Director, of Blue Pine Recovery, Personal Support for Psychiatric Rehabilitation:** Serving people who have schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, personality disorder, PTSD, transitional stress and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Ronny and Brianna will speak with our community about difficulties and successes they have experienced in their team approach within Blue Pine Recovery.

"The most important aspect of our work is to empower the people we serve. Often they have experienced months and years of well-meaning people telling them what they need to do and dictating their choices. They have also been disempowered by their illness and through education, coaching and support we are able to support our clients to make choices that enhance their wellness and allow them to reach their goals".



**June 2: TBA**

## FAMILY-TO-FAMILY EDUCATION COURSE

Education and Support  
for Families Dealing with Mental Illness  
**The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Of Colorado and the  
National Alliance on Mental Illness Jefferson County (NAMI Jeffco) will  
sponsor FREE 12-week "Family-to-Family" Education Courses in Jeffer-  
son County twice/year in two locations**

**Hope • Resources • Support • Education • Advocacy • Self-Care**

**The Family-To-Family course is designed specifically for the families of persons diagnosed as having a mental illness in order to provide education, support, and advocacy for those families. Topics covered include: the five major mental illnesses, schizophrenia, manic-depressive (bi-polar), major depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), and anxiety disorder. Additional topics covered include: coping skills, basic medication information, listening and communication techniques, problem solving skills, recovery and rehabilitation, and self-care for family members and caregivers**

Class Location: Littleton, Tuesday evenings, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Next course: January 26, 2010

Class Location: Wheat Ridge (Lutheran Hospital), Thursday evenings, , 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Next course: January 28, 2010

(Currently Jefferson County is working to establish more classes to accommodate the growing number of interested persons)

**Please call to Register: Pam Sindorf Haynes, Jefferson Co. Family-to-Family Coordinator  
303-279-7661 or 720-635-5796**

***For information regarding dates, times and locations of Family-to-Family classes in other areas, please contact Cheri Bishop at 303-518-1289 or NAMI Colorado at 303-321-3104. All classes are open to family members and/or caregivers of loved ones with a mental illness regardless of which county or area in which they reside.***

### Excerpt from e-mail from former F2F student:

"...I just wanted to thank you for everything you taught me in the Family-to-Family Education Course. It really helped me through this. CIT (Crisis Intervention Trained) was called to my house following a recent episode my husband experienced which landed him in West Pines Behavioral Health. My husband is doing better now and is back to work.

I was fortunate enough, after calling for CIT support, to not only get one but two CIT officers to show up at my house. The ambulance took my husband in and fortunately after a couple days he was back to normal. He is currently on a high dose of Zyprexa which seems to be doing well. There are some bad side effects with such a high dose, but so far, my husband is not showing signs of those side effects. We will see if he will remain on this or move to another med... ". - 10/22/09 M

### Recent F2F Evaluation Comments

"...Wow! Words will never be able to express my gratitude. I have a greater understanding of my son. I know I am not alone and I also know I have a long ways to go in understanding..."

"...awareness..."

"...very impressive course. Impressed with the amount of detail and research presented. Handouts are excellent..."

"...It has been extremely beneficial for our entire family, including our son. I feel far less guilt and fear—understanding that what happened was due to an illness and nothing more translating into less guilt and more understanding for him".

"...I have learned techniques I can use to better relate to my son."

### With Education comes Empowerment

#### Colorado Cares Rx Discount Drug Program [www.coloradocaresrx.com](http://www.coloradocaresrx.com)

"The State of Colorado believes it is important to make information available to the public concerning ways to purchase lower-cost prescription drugs. This web site provides links to sites that offer programs or information on how individuals or families can obtain prescription drugs for free or reduced prices."

First...go to the website, [www.coloradocaresrx.com](http://www.coloradocaresrx.com), click on the tab labeled "Drug Cards and Programs". Visit the business web sites listed on that page to see if your medication is included on their discounted drug list. If you are interested in enrolling in their program, call the nearest store and talk directly to the pharmacy to verify the drug is on their discounted list and cost, including any extra enrollment fees. You will need to know the prescribed dosage when you call.

Additionally...the same web page contains a list of **Patient Assistant Programs (PAPs)** are offered by various drug manufacturers. These programs offer free or low-cost prescription medication to qualifying individuals or families who do not have public or private prescription drug coverage. Links are also provided to other web sites offering discount drug programs.

Further...if you click on the tab labeled, "Public Health Care", you will find links to various Colorado Insurance programs, including but not limited to Colorado Child Health Plan Plus, Colorado Indigent Care Program, Colorado's Medicare and Medicaid Programs...

### NEW!

**NAMI Family-to-Family  
Education Course will soon  
be offered in Adams  
County!**

**Please contact:**

**Jennie Vie**

**720-227-7207**

**[jenvie06@yahoo.com](mailto:jenvie06@yahoo.com)**



Jefferson Center for Mental Health 4045 Wadsworth, Suite 20, Wheat Ridge,  
CO 80033 Attn: Fran

### APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE AT ALL JCMH LOCATIONS!

**Your gift will help provide dental services to individuals coping with mental illness.**

Filling the Gap Dental Program (FTG) is a unique program providing NO COST dental services to adults with severe mental illness living in Jefferson, Gilpin or Clear Creek County. JCMH continues its work with NAMI Jeffco to ensure the success of the program. The FTG Program has received numerous awards from state and local entities as well as the Channel "Everyday Hero Award" to Donna Grano, NAMI Jeffco, for the outstanding services the program provides.

Qualifications: Must be an adult; Have a diagnosis of a severe mental illness; Live in Jefferson, Gilpin or Clear Creek County.

### Wellness Now!

Classes which help Create Positive Changes  
Wellness education...a lifetime of rewards  
303-432-5032 Jane Harris, MS, Director  
Wwww.wellnessnowjcmh.org

Jefferson Center for Mental Health  
**Classes are FREE to ALL residents  
Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties**

Examples of course offerings:

Walking for Wellness

Dance, Rattle and Roll

Exploring your Creative Side

Anger Management

Weight Loss Support (free pedometer included)

Boundaries; Gentle Yoga

Smoking Cessation; Stress Management

### Household Items Wanted! Jefferson Center for Mental Health Cedar's Closet



Taking good working order/clean/and otherwise conventional items for folks moving into their own living accommodations who have very little! Clothing, most particularly MEN'S JEANS, SHOES, pots and pans, small appliances (coffee pots, toasters, microwave ovens), furniture including but not limited to COUCHES, CHAIRS, DRESSERS, towels, sheets and blankets. Think in terms of what it is like to move into a new apartment without any provisions! Call Natalie 303-432-5400 at JCMH., 9808 W. Cedar Ave., Lakewood.

Many consumers have utilized Cedar's Closet and are always so appreciative of the resource. JCMH Consumers also donate their belongings to the Closet in an effort to give back to others that may need assistance.



### West Pines Behavioral Health, Wheat Ridge

Assessment and Referral Dept. 3/467/4080

Philosophy: "...treating the whole person and educating the family by providing a series of healthy life skills training sessions....this support system often includes the clinicians at West Pines, family members, and therapists and psychiatrists within the community..."

Services: Assessment and Referral; Acute Inpatient Program for Psychiatric/Mental health stabilization for adults and seniors, for Chemical Dependency, for dual diagnosis treatment....Partial Hospitalization Services...Outpatient Programs including Chemical Dependency, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy.

### Jeffco Family Support Network

For Families with Kids struggling with having Mental Illness  
303-426-4603 Jean Trombley,, Executive Director

Mission: ..to help families in Jefferson County, whose children have emotional, social, behavioral, and mental health issues and may be a risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system. The mission includes empowering families to utilize essential community support services and providing the community with a family voice.

### Highlands Behavioral Health, Littleton | 877-974-4445

Inpatient Programs: **Adults** (18 and older)...crisis stabilization; substance related disorders with psychiatric symptoms, depression, bipolar, anxiety disorders,, schizophrenia, OCD, Substance related disorders

**Adolescent Inpatient Psychiatric Program** (13-18)...crisis stabilization, substance, depression, bipolar, anxiety disorders, OCD, schizophrenia  
Partial Hospitalization Programs: Adults...program addresses the full spectrum of psychiatric disorders; including dual diagnosis.

**MHAC (Mental Health America of Colorado) www.mhacolorado.org 720-208-2238**

**RESOURCES of all sorts! Free or reduced cost services including web links, resource database, mental health screenings, find a therapist, ask for Amanda or e-mail Amanda**

### SUPPORT RESOURCES

**NEW LISTING: WRAP support group! Call Deborah Amesbury 303-744-1817 or e-mail at DebAmesbury@msn.com.**

**Recovery Group:** An adult consumer driven support group based on cognitive therapy as an important tool towards recovery. Meets Mondays at 1 p.m. - 2:15 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 10th and Brentwood, Lakewood. Other locations on different nights. Call 303-458-7680, leave a message and your call will be returned! At 2:15, Mondays, another support group called **Emotions Anonymous** meets in the same Lakewood location.

**North Star DBSA:** Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance; 10257 York Place, Thornton 80229; 303-584-1957 every Monday 7 P.M.—9 P.M. www.northstarDBSA.com

**DBSA Metro Denver aka Beyond Bipolar:** located across from the museum on CO Blvd. in Denver, 303-329-3364; a dynamic support group under the guidance of Dr. Jane Mountain, author of books about bipolar illness. Dr. Mountain has bipolar and is a practicing M.D. This group also serves family members/caregivers and friends.

**The Denver West Mental Health Peer Support Group** at West Pines Behavioral Health, 3400 Lutheran Parkway, Wheat Ridge; This group is support for folks who have bipolar illness and meets Tuesdays 7 P.M.—9 P.M. 303-429-4950 www.denverwestsupportgroup.org

**Jefferson Center for Mental Health (JCMH):** call to see if you qualify to join in the free support groups! www.jcmh.org 303-425-0300

**www.oflikeminds.com**, or now known as "**Mindletter.com**" is an online connection and resource for folks who have mental illnesses. It is a wonderful resource for support and information. It is consumer run and looking for persons interested in getting involved.

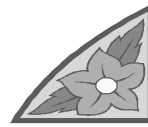
**www.wecancolorado.org** an online resource based in Colorado with ties to the Mental Health Association of Colorado run by and for all folks who have mental illnesses.

**www.FacingUs.org** : Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA), a unique web site with interactive features enabling folks with bipolar disorder to create their own personal wellness tools, a sort of online "clubhouse".

**http://users.erols.com/ksiacca:** Dual Diagnosis (Mental Illness, Drug Addiction and Alcoholism) website.

**www.empowercolorado.com**—Support group for families raising children with emotional or mental health issues. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at Jefferson Unitarian Church, 14350 W. 32nd. Ave., 7-9 P.M. 303-432-5219

**NEW LISTING:** Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health—Colorado Chapter presents **Parents' Night!** Connect with other families and parents who have had similar challenges raising children/youth experiencing social, behavioral, emotional, and mental health issues. You will obtain trainings and education on how to become a more effective advocate for your children, find ways to navigate systems and resources in the community. Childcare and dinner always provided at no cost. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 9200 West 10th Avenue, Lakewood 80215 RSVP: Anna 303-425-4615 or Rachel 720-497-7787.



### Why did you stop taking your medications?

People always ask me that question when I give them my psychiatric history. My history unfortunately includes a few trips to the hospital after stopping my meds. I usually answer them with a glib, "well, it's not like taking aspirin". I will never go off my meds again, whenever I have gone off them, I have had negative consequences, but this is the most common thing that people ask me, so, here are the reasons:

I take 5 difference medications per day. These are the 4 major side effects that my medications have caused past and present:

Lack of mental sharpness—this is very scary to me. I don't care that I can't remember the name of the band that plays some song on the radio. The real problem is when I can't remember the solution to a problem at work that I came across 2 weeks ago.. It affects my livelihood if I can't do a good job at work. It prevents me from getting promotions and pay raises.

Fatigue/sleepiness—I work with a group of people who go out to a bar every Friday after work. I have never gone out with them. If I have a choice of doing something socially or going home and sleeping, I will always pick sleeping. It makes for a not so great social life. I used to look forward to weekends when I could go to movies, go out to dinner, go on a hike, meet someone for coffee. Now the thing I most look forward to on the weekends is sleeping any time of the day.

Weight gain—This doesn't really need any explanation but there are very few people who would be happy about taking medication(s) that cause weight gain. One of the medications I take has a side effect of possibly causing diabetes. I see that it's a chance I have to take but there are millions of people with heart disease and other conditions who don't take their medications and the side effects don't include the likely possibility of contracting another serious chronic illness.

Tremor—I don't have this problem anymore because I don't take Lithium. I work on a computer all day. When I was taking Lithium, I would have significant problems using my mouse because of my hand tremor. I would accidentally drag folders to the wrong location. My hands would also shake when I was just standing around.

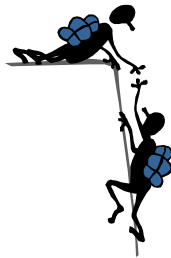
I know people say the side effects are a small price to pay for the good that psych medications do in return. It's easy to say that when they've never taken a psychotropic drug. I know, because I said the same thing when I was in college before I had a mental illness. My uncle had schizophrenia and committed suicide during the summer before my junior year. My father called to tell me that he had died. The first thing I asked was "how"? When I found out he committed suicide, my next question was "why did he go off his stupid medications"? See, karma exists!

At work, I used to lead monthly meetings concerning implementing new software on computers. When I was taking a lot of Lithium, there was one meeting where I said, "...this will be rolled out on March, 1996" when the actual date was 2006. I had a major tremor and could not dial the correct conference call number. One person said to me during the meeting, "...it looks like you are Jonesing for a fix". Well, I no longer lead that meeting, in fact, I don't go to any meetings at all. Our department went through reorganization and I'm now in an entry level position. It's not that I don't have the intelligence to work at a higher level. It's that I gave the appearance at one time that I was some kind of drug addict.

I had cancer when I was in my 20's (Stage II Hodgkin's Lymphoma). For most people, the diagnosis of cancer is among the worst things they can imagine. It's actually the 2nd worst thing a doctor has told me. The side effects I had for treating my Hodgkin's were definitely tough: I had 2 surgeries and 50 rounds of radiation over a 6 month period. The main side effects were that I had a very sore throat and could barely swallow a glass of water. I was also tossing my cookies on a regular basis. With Hodgkin's it was easier to handle because it was only a 6 month period, not a lifetime. Because of the Hodgkin's, I have to take thyroid medication every day. It's like taking a sugar pill and I have never entertained the idea of not taking it, because it has no side effects whatsoever. While it was a hard time in my life, it was short and now it's just fun to show people the tattoos I had to get for radiation and big scars from the surgeries. Dealing with side effects from my medications for schizophrenia has been incomparably more difficult. - D

### Warning Signs that might indicate someone is suicidal. Many also can indicate depression. For more info [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

- ◆ Feeling hopeless, taking no pleasure in activities
- ◆ A change in sleep habits or appetite
- ◆ Dramatic mood swings
- ◆ Withdrawing from friends, family and society
- ◆ Feeling anxious or agitated
- ◆ Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
- ◆ Acting restless or engaging in risky activities
- ◆ Increased alcohol or drug use
- ◆ Feeling trapped, like there's no way out
- ◆ Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose
- ◆ Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- ◆ Threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- ◆ Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, pills or other means.



### I'm Not Sick

Carolyn Fricke (Family-to-Family class member. Nov. 09 gift to the class for week 12 class reflections)

*I'm hiding in the closet and I don't know what to do  
The voices in my head say I really hate you.*

*My family says they love me but how can that be  
When the voices in my head say they really hate me.*

*I'm jumping off a cliff not knowing what will come  
My life is such a mess and I've turned into a bum.*

*I pull my hair, I'm wearing a wig, I'd really like to stop;  
I wash my hands again and again oh no! It's time to mop!*

*I shop a lot and spend a lot of money; then my husband says,  
"Oh no not again honey!"*

*They take me to the doctor, who says that I am sick,  
He wants me on medicine but I'm not sure which one to pick.*

*I'm not sick, not sure why they keep saying something's wrong  
With me, if I were I'd take the medicine and go to therapy.*

*If they were in my head, if they could only see, life isn't about  
Them because it's all about me!*

*So we play this game, "I'm not sick, I'm not" and for their patience  
I love them a lot!*

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