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The Mental Health Association in Geauga County brings you the V.I.K. Program, Parentalk Newsletter, Facilitator Newsletter, the Professional Workshop Series and The Teddy Bear Patrol. With your continued support of the Mental Health Association we can continue to provide mental health education to the Geauga County community. Your tax deductible contribution will also help us provide teddy bears to Geauga County children in traumatic situations. Become a SPONSOR by donating \$50 or more and your name or business will be listed in our next Facilitator Newsletter and on our website.

Please include your check or money order and send to:

The Mental Health Association in Geauga County
11850 Mayfield Road
Unit 1, Chardon, Ohio
44024

Yes I would like to make a donation to The Mental Health Association:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Over \$100

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The Mental Health Association in Geauga County would like to thank our 2008/2009 donors. Without you we could not continue to provide the Teddy Bear Patrol, the Workshop Series and other MHA programs.

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Thanks also to Carolyn Paschke, Attorney at Law, Computer and Technology Services, LLC and Pentair Water Treatment of Chardon for their in-kind donations. Build-A-Bear Workshop® who so generously donated Teddy Bears to us.



The Facilitator

Spring
2009

Dianne's Story

The first thing Dianne thought when she opened her eyes was "Thank God-I didn't die!"

Dianne was in a hospital and had been in a coma for days. She had made a very serious suicide attempt, taking all the medications she had, some of which were deadly in overdose. Dianne had really wanted to die. She had been depressed for months, even years, and couldn't see any other way out of her situation. Dianne had 3 young children, and was married to a controlling and abusive man. This was in 1971, when it was difficult for a woman to work and raise children on her own. Dianne felt trapped in a nightmare and saw no other way out. She felt her only option was to end her life.

Dianne was very, very lucky. She survived her attempted suicide and gained a second chance. As badly as Dianne wanted to die when she took those pills, she realized immediately when she awoke from the coma that suicide had been a desperate choice. "I really couldn't see that I had other options. When you are that depressed, you can't think clearly. Things were bad, that's true, but I couldn't see that I would get through it."

Dianne describes her experience with depression as happening in progressive stages. "First, things were 'smoky'-everything seemed cloudy, murky, and my mind had to react to things through this smoke. Next, everything became gray, and it became very difficult to function. Finally, blackness descended, and that's when suicide seemed like the only way out."

With help, Dianne found reserves of strength to weather the difficult times ahead. It wasn't easy, but Dianne sought treatment for her

depression and survived the inevitable divorce. "I found a new, independent person under the fear and passivity I had been wrapped in. There were plenty of options other than suicide, and I began to live my life again. If I had died, I wouldn't have seen my children grow up. I would have missed knowing my grandchildren. I've lived a full life over the last 30 years that wouldn't have happened if I hadn't survived that time of despair."

"The most important thing I learned in therapy was how my suicide would have affected my children. I couldn't see that when I was in the blackness-I thought they'd be better off without me. In fact, they would have carried the burden of my suicide all of their lives, wondering if they had somehow caused it."

The Geauga County Suicide Prevention Coalition is dedicated to educating people about suicide prevention, helping them understand that there are always other options. Like Dianne, people contemplating suicide want to end their pain, not their lives. When someone is in such deep emotional pain, it's hard to think clearly. The COPEline is a 24 hour hotline in Geauga County for anyone in emotional distress. The Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services funds the COPEline and Ravenwood Mental Health Center's Emergency Services, offering help to anyone

The first thing Dianne thought when she opened her eyes was "Thank God-I didn't die!"

in a mental health crisis, regardless of ability to pay.

Dianne is my mother. Her suicide attempt was a defining moment in both of our lives. For her, her survival of that attempt was the beginning of a new life. For me, I understood that depression is a real illness, like heart disease or diabetes. It, too, can have tragic consequences. I thank God every day that my mother didn't die. I can't imagine what life would have been like without her. I have always been able to talk with her about the tough things in my life.

My mother loves attending her grandsons' basketball games and spending "all girl afternoons" with her granddaughters. She loves having us all over to her house for family dinners. These are all joys that she would have missed out on if she hadn't survived her suicide attempt.

Don't go it alone. Help is just a phone call away. Call 285-5665 or 1-888-285-5665 for immediate help. Dianne has advice for anyone suffering from depression. "You have to find someone to talk to-a friend, mentor, or even better, a professional. You really aren't alone. Give someone a chance to help you."

We are trying to reduce our costs. If you would like to receive the Facilitator Newsletter via email contact: info@mhaageauga.org.

Michelle Doehring, Executive Director
(440)285-3945
Fax (440)285-2756
Email: info@mhaageauga.org
www.mhaageauga.org

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Chardon, Ohio 44024-9323



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Depressed? Angry? Hopeless?

or worried about someone who is?
For Immediate Help
Call COPEline:
285-5665 or 1-888-285-5665

Geauga County Suicide Prevention Coalition
geauga county board of mental health & recovery services - www.geauga.org

Mental Health Association in Geauga County's mission is to promote services and programs that are responsive to the mental health and chemical dependency needs of the citizens of Geauga County. In furtherance of this purpose, we shall: *Provide individual and group educational opportunities. *Research, evaluate and disseminate relevant information. *Increase awareness of mental health and chemical dependency causes and issues. *Address public perceptions of mental health and chemical dependency. *Support and facilitate the programs, activities and services of public and private providers. *Foster public visibility of the Association as well as other community agencies.

What is Depression?

By now, nearly everyone has heard about depression. There are advertisements on TV and in magazines for antidepressant medication everywhere we look. Prozac has become a household word. **But what is depression?**

Depression is a medical disorder—a brain disorder, where the person's feelings, or "mood" are affected. Chemical imbalances in neurotransmitters, which transmit electronic signals in the brain, are thought to be the cause. Serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine are three neurotransmitters involved in depression. We still do not understand exactly how these neurotransmitters directly affect mood, but we know that medications that help correct these chemical imbalances do relieve depressive symptoms. Many people who experience depression have other family members who have had a depressive disorder, leading doctors and medical researchers to conclude that there is a genetic aspect to this illness. Stressful and traumatic life events also increase the risk of developing depression.

Depression is more common than you may think. The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that 20.9 million adult Americans suffer from depression every year. Depression is the leading cause of disability for Americans and throughout the world, according to the World Health Organization. The good news is that the majority of people get better with treatment.

People with depression aren't "weak." They cannot just "pull themselves up by their bootstraps." The overwhelming feelings of sadness, anxiousness, hopelessness, and guilt are real and may not be related to life circumstances. The irritability, difficulty concentrating, and difficulty sleeping that many depressed people experience often can't be controlled without help. Depression can take a toll on the body as well as the mind. Fatigue, aches and pains, headaches, and other physical symptoms can cause additional suffering if depression is not treated.

*Hiding in my room, safe within my womb,
I touch no one and no one touches me.
I am a rock, I am an island.
And a rock feels no pain;
And an island never cries.*
Paul Simon - From song I Am a Rock



There are three major types of depression, called depressive disorders. Doctors and mental health professionals diagnose mental health disorders using the DSM, or Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. The DSM lists symptoms that a person must have in order to be diagnosed with a particular disorder. **Here is a paraphrased list of symptoms for depression from the National Institute of Mental Health:**

- Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" feelings
- Feelings of hopelessness and/or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness and/or helplessness
- Irritability, restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex
- Fatigue and decreased energy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering details and making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping
- Overeating, or appetite loss
- Thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts
- Persistent aches or pains, headaches, cramps or digestive problems that do not ease even with treatment

In **Major Depressive Disorder**, the symptoms are severe enough to prevent people from functioning normally. Symptoms last two weeks or longer. Some people only experience one episode, but more often, people experience more than one episode throughout their life.

Dysthymic Disorder may be less disabling, but the symptoms last longer (more than two years). People with dysthymia have "low grade" depression that doesn't let up, and may also experience episodes of Major Depressive Disorder.

In **Bipolar Disorder**, people swing from dramatic highs to deep lows in mood (see Fall 2008 Facilitator for complete article on Bipolar Disorder). In the depressed part of this cycle, people experience the same symptoms as someone with Major Depressive Disorder.

Some less common forms of depression are **Postpartum Depression** and **Seasonal Affective Disorder**. **Postpartum Depression** can happen to women who have just given birth. **Seasonal Affective Disorder** occurs in the winter months and is related to lack of natural sunlight. In both of these types of depression, the person has symptoms of depression but the illness has a different cause.

The most concerning aspect of any form of depression is the increased risk of suicide. Depression is the leading cause of suicide in the U.S. In Geauga County, the **COPELine** is a 24-hour crisis hotline that is free. Call **285-5665** or toll free **1-888-285-5665** for immediate help.

If you or someone you know has one or more symptoms of depression, please contact your physician or a mental health provider for an accurate diagnosis. In Geauga County, Ravenwood Mental Health Services (285-3568) and Catholic Charities Services (285-3537) offer counseling and other programs to help people suffering from depression. Ravenwood offers free mental health screening to all Geauga County residents. NAMI Geauga offers support and education groups for persons with mental illness and their families (285-3945).

Treatment usually consists of medication and counseling together. SSRIs, or Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors are the most widely prescribed medications. SSRIs block the reuptake of the neurotransmitter serotonin in nerve endings, and include such well-known medications as Prozac, Zoloft, and Paxil. SSRIs have fewer side effects than older antidepressants, but do carry a risk of increased thoughts of suicide in the first few weeks of treatment. You should be monitored closely by your doctor when starting these medications.

The National Institute of Mental Health www.nimh.gov, Mental Health America www.nmha.org and The National Alliance on Mental Illness www.nami.org all have informative websites and were sources of information for this article.

Michelle Doehring, Executive Director
The Mental Health Association and NAMI in Geauga County

SUICIDAL?
Don't be afraid to ask!
Call COPELine:
440-285-5665
or 1-888-285-5665
GEAUGA COUNTY
SUICIDE PREVENTION
COALITION
geauga county board of
mental health & recovery services
440-285-2282 - www.geauga.org

Ravenwood 11th Annual Art Show
"REFLECTIONS"
Hosted by Adult Partial Hospitalization Program
Art is for sale and the Event is open to the public
June 3, 2009 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
695 South Street, Chardon, Ohio
Refreshments Served
NAMI Geauga Crafters will also be displaying their work and selling to benefit NAMI Geauga County.
Call 286-1631 Ext #206 for more information

May is Mental Health Month learn more at www.geauga.org

Support Meetings

Chardon

Family members and consumers welcome! Held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services, 13244 Ravenna Rd. Chardon, OH 44024.

Middlefield

Family members and consumers welcome! Held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Middlefield Library, 16167 E. High Street, Middlefield, Ohio 44062

Starting May 14, 2009 Caregiver Support Group

For family members. Held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services, 13244 Ravenna Rd. Chardon, OH 44024.

NAMI Connection Recovery Group

A peer group for persons living with mental illness. Meets on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services, 13244 Ravenna Rd. Chardon, OH 44024.

For more information call 440-285-3945 or email: lreed@mhageauga.org

Hand-to-Hand Education Course

This FREE 9-class education course, taught by trained family members, provides in-depth basic education and skill training for families presented with the challenges in having children or teens with serious mental-emotional disorders. Hand-to-Hand addresses the illness and medications, coping with social stigma, dealing with insurance companies and raising siblings that are well or may have problems of their own. Call 440-285-3945 or email lreed@mhageauga.org for more information and to register.

Family-to-Family Education Course

This FREE 12-class education course, taught by trained family members, provides in-depth basic education and skill training for families and friends presented with the challenges in having a loved one diagnosed with a severe mental illness (biologically-based brain disorder). Our next Family-to-Family class will be offered in the Fall. Call 440-285-3945 or email lreed@mhageauga.org for more information or to include your name on our next class list.

NAMI Crafters

Meets for fun and friendship on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. at Ravenwood's South Street Office, 695 South Street, Chardon. Call 285-3945 for details.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 - 11:30 a.m.

WomenSafe Spring Luncheon

Behind the Scenes Speaker - Michael Bloom, Artistic Director Cleveland Playhouse
Banquet Rm, St. Mary's, 401 North St., Chardon
\$25.00 per person
Call Nancy Temple at 285-3741 for Reservations

June 3, 2009 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

11th Annual Art Show - "REFLECTIONS"

Hosted by Adult Partial Hospitalization Program
Art is for sale - Event is open to the public
Benefits Ravenwood Mental Health Center
NAMI Geauga Crafters to benefit NAMI Geauga
Call 286-1631 for more information

Thursday, June 25, 2009

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers

Annual Golf Outing
Pleasant Hills Golf Course
(440) 255-0678 for more information

Saturday, May 16, 2009

KIDSFEST

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Berkshire High School
Burton, Ohio
FREE! for children and families

June 13th from 9:00 till 5:00

Trash to Treasure Sale Saturday

Ridgeview Farm in Mesopotamia
Coffee and donuts in the morning;
Hot dogs / chips in the afternoon.
Benefits *Friends of WomenSafe, Inc*.
Call Nancy 285-3741 for more information.

Sunday, September 13, 2009

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers & Geauga County Board of Mental Health & Recovery Services

Walk for an Addiction Free Society (Gauga)
2 mile Recovery Awareness walk through the City of Chardon.
Call 255-0678 for more information

Thursday, May 21, 2009

Gauga County Annual Behavioral Health Care Dinner

St. Denis Party Center, Chardon
285-2282

June 18, 2009 - 7:00 p.m

NAMI Geauga Annual Meeting

The West Woods - 9465 Kinsman Road (Rt. 87)
Dr Penny Frese, Speaker "Moving Into Advocacy"
Also the Film Claire's Story - Refreshments Served
Call 285-3945 for more information

Sunday, September 20, 2009

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers
Walk for an Addiction Free Society (Lake)
5 K Recovery Awareness walk through the City of Painesville.
Call 255-0678 for more information

Dina Dinosaur Camp - For children age 3-6

Session A: June 15-July 1
Session B: July 13-July 31
Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays - 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Call 285-3537 Ext 23 or 27 or 1-800-242-9755
Registration ends May 29, 2009

NAMI Walk 2009

On August 29, 2009, NAMI Geauga will join NAMI Greater Cleveland and NAMI Lake County for the Walk for the Mind of America at Voinovich Park in Cleveland. NAMI Geauga has participated in this leisurely 2.5 mile walk for the last two years, and we are looking forward to this year's event. NAMI Walks raise funds to support our education, support and advocacy programs. Please join us and thousands of others as we Walk for the Mind of America. To register for the walk call 440-285-3945 or email lreed@mhageauga.org for more information.



2008 NAMI Walk

NAMI Speaker Meeting Schedule

Our speaker meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month. These are Open House meetings, the public is welcome. Bring a friend. Most meetings are held at the Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services, 13244 Ravenna Road, Chardon 44024 (Rt. 44 across from UHHS Geauga Hospital) at 7:00 p.m. Below is a list of our scheduled speakers for the next six months. For further information or to join the Geauga chapter of NAMI please call 440-285-3945.

May 2009 - Cancelled

June 18, 2009 - Dr. Penny Frese will show the film "Claire's Story" and discuss her family's experience with mental illness and Moving Into Advocacy. The West Woods - 9465 Kinsman Road (Rt. 87).



Drs. Penny & Fred Frese

July 16, 2009 - NAMI Annual Picnic - location to be announced

August 20, 2009 - PLAN of Northeast Ohio - PLAN provides home-based, family centered mental health services to persons with schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder and depression and to their families.

September 17, 2009 - Dr. James Rodio, Medical Director of Ravenwood Mental Health Center, will discuss forensic psychiatry and treatment.

October 15, 2009 - Joseph Bergant, superintendent of Chardon Schools, addresses Mental Health in our schools.


November 19, 2009 - Lt. Scott Niehus of the Geauga County Sherriff's Office and Deanna Brant, Director of Emergency Services at Ravenwood Mental Health Center discuss Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for Geauga County law enforcement and emergency professionals.

A calendar of our events on is on our website at: www.nami.org/sites/namigeauga.


Services from Agencies Funded by the Geauga County Board of Mental Health and Recovery Services


 Ravenwood Mental Health Center provides community based services that are responsive to the mental health and addiction recovery needs of Geauga County. They include adult & youth services, outpatient counseling and psychiatric care, Intensive Home Based Services for families and children, culturally sensitive treatment for the Amish and African American communities in Geauga, the One-on-One Program, Bridges, STOP, New Beginnings, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), Supportive Employment, and Therapeutic Group Home for Youth.

Ravenwood (440)285-3568.
Middlefield Office (440)632-5355
www.ravenwoodmhc.org

 Children in the **Big Brothers/Big Sisters** program are matched with an adult role model who serves as a mentor to them. These children, who come from single-parent families, benefit from having additional guidance and support in a one-to-one relationship.

Call (440)352-2526 or Toll-free or TDD: 1-800-222-2440
www.bbbsneo.org

 **Mental Health Association in Geauga County** promotes services and programs that are responsive to the mental health and chemical dependency needs of the citizens of Geauga County. We offer the Teddy Bear Patrol, the Professional Workshop Series, Very Important Kid Program, ParenTalk Newsletter, Facilitator Newsletter, and assist with the Panorama Newsletter. We are proud partners with NAMI Geauga and the Suicide Prevention Coalition.
(440)285-3945 TDD
www.mhageauga.org

 Geauga County Educational Service Center - **Teen Institute (TI)** for the Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse is a teen peer-prevention program. In this program, teens are taught about drug and alcohol abuse and how to do prevention projects in their schools and the community. (440)279-1706

Emergency
Copline: 1-888-285-5665
24-Hour Crisis Management
TDD/TTY Use Ohio Relay @
1-800-750-0750

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers provides residential, outpatient, and prevention services for persons whose lives are or have been affected by their own or another's use of alcohol or other drugs.

Outpatient services include: alcohol and other drug assessment, crisis intervention, individual and group counseling,

and dual diagnosis treatment. Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers also offers the Mike Link Driver



Intervention Program and drug-free workplace programs. The Center's prevention services

strive to educate and inform the community on issues related to tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

440-285-9119

Catholic Charities Community Services is dedicated to helping families and individuals heal, strengthen and enrich their valued relationships for effective and healthy living. Services provided: Counseling, Employment and Training for Adults, Youth Employment Program, Family Violence Intervention Program, Older Adult Services, Volunteer Guardian, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation and Parent Enrichment Groups.

Call (440)285-3537 Voice or
TTY 1-800-242-9755
www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org

WomenSafe, Inc., The Green House provides emergency shelter and support services for survivors of domestic violence throughout northeast Ohio. WomenSafe is a non-profit organization that offers 24-hour crisis management, shelter, court advocacy, hospital advocacy, counseling, art therapy, education, referrals and support to adults and children who are survivors of domestic violence. All services are provided free of charge.

(440)286-7154

www.womensafe.org

