

Member Advisory Committee News



Volume 6 - Summer 2002

Dual Diagnosis & Senior Citizens

by Andrew Newelski, Consumer Advocate

Any person having two or more mood disorders is often referred to as having a dual diagnosis. Treating it is very perplexing to doctors because, like a seesaw, treat one illness and the other one comes up brandishing it's horns. Standard treatment becomes obsolete, as one type of medication may counter the effectiveness of the other.

But what if dual diagnosis included medical problems along with the mood disorder? Obvious complexities include two different fields of medicine and, of course, two sets of doctors, tests, treatments, medications and bills, to say the least. After all, you don't expect your psychologist to know how to treat diabetes, nor should you expect a surgeon to dabble in psychiatry.

Suppose that your medical health is deteriorating. The high cost of treatment and prescriptions is not included in your insurance plan, so you live on peanuts as most of your funds go toward medications. Then the community treats you like an outcast, family thinks you're just a burden and your mate or friends that you grew up with, have passed away. As relatives herd you to institutions, recovery and hope become dimmer and your flame turns to just a flicker.

Such is the plight of the "golden years". You retired to a blissful years of "what I always wanted to do, but never had the time", but instead you wind up scratching and clawing in a fight for your life. Quite often, the medical treatment is little more than pain management, while the depression begins to overwhelm you.

If you are not such person, be thankful. But be warned of impending truth. Start your battle to recovery early, because later it will not get any easier. Encircle your life with family, friends and support people, as they will pick you up after you stumble. Tell your parents and grandparents that you love them and need them. Visit them often in hospitals and nursing homes, showing them respect and dignity that they have earned. And be mindful, your kids are watching! One day, it will be you who will retire!!!

New!
See Puzzle Page 3

CAUTION!

Know the Warning Signs

SAMSHA - CMHS Publication No. CA-0001
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A variety of signs may point to a possible emotional or behavioral health problem in a child or teenager. If your child has experienced any of the warning signs below, or if the symptoms are severe, seek help immediately.

Pay attention if a child you know: Is troubled by feeling:

- Really sad and hopeless without good reason, and the feelings don't go away
- Very angry most of the time, cries a lot or overreacts to things
- Worthless or guilty a lot
- Anxious or worried a lot more than other young people
- Grief for a prolonged time after a loss or death
- Extremely fearful - has more unexplained fears or more fears than most children
- Constantly concerned about physical problems or appearance
- Frightened that his or her mind is controlled or is out of control

Experiences big changes, for example:

- Does much worse in school
- Loses interest in things usually enjoyed
- Has unexplained changes in sleeping or eating habits
- Avoids friends or family and wants to be alone all the time
- Daydreams too much and can't get things done
- Feels life is too hard to handle or talks about suicide
- Hears voices that cannot be explained

Is limited by:

- Poor concentration; can't make decisions
- Inability to sit still or focus attention
- Worry about being harmed, hurting others, or about doing something "bad"
- The need to wash, clean things or perform certain routines dozens of times a day
- Thoughts that race almost too fast to follow
- Persistent nightmares

Behaves in ways that cause problems:

- Uses alcohol or other drugs
- Eats large amounts of food and then

forces vomiting, abuses laxatives or takes enemas to avoid weight gain

- Continues to diet or exercise obsessively although bone-thin
- Often hurts other people, destroys property or breaks the law
- Does things that can be life threatening

To read this article online:

<http://www.mentalhealth.org/publications/allpubs/CA-0001/Wefsk7.asp>



**From the Desk of
J. David Moore, M.D.
FHP Medical Director**

The Warning Signs

In addition to the above warning signs, we must be paying attention to our children in order to see these signs. Many of these things listed above could be part of your child's personality make up. What needs to be seen and heard are the changes from the **NORM** with your children.

We cannot afford to let our children be monitored by the teachers and their peers as they grow up. It is our job to see them safely through their childhood and adolescence. Once we bring them into the world, our primary job in life is to try and let them grow while we try to keep them safe. It is not enough to just pay attention to their grades and their friends.

We know our children better than anyone else and we must watch for important changes. Never let anything become more important in your life than your children. Not only are they our greatest assets but they are our most treasured gifts and we must protect them. It is important to find a balance between trying to live their lives for them and giving them room to grow as we watch out for them. They do not have the life experience to protect themselves without our help. Let them grow up, but keep them from growing away. The world is not as safe as it used to be and we must be ever aware and alert to the signs that all is not well. By seeing the signs early and acting on them, we may prevent much heartache and pain for them and for ourselves.



STIGMA AND THE "MENTALLY ILL"

By David S. Harkins, Consumer Advocate

In our "enlightened" society the terms stigma and mentally ill seem to go hand in hand. Stigma, according to Webster's Pocket Dictionary, is a sign of disgrace. This is no surprise to those who have studied history and especially the history of mental illness.

If you are a student of history you probably know that the ancient Greeks and Romans were more tolerant and compassionate of those with mental illness than we are today. There are many references in both Greek and Roman medical literature stating from their rudimentary medical research that many mental illnesses seemed to be based in biological phenomenon.

Since most mental illnesses (i.e. Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Major and Clinical Depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, and many forms of Anxiety Disorders) are now believed to be caused by chemical imbalances in the brain and the nervous system and since human beings have basically remained the same since creation it is no wonder that mental illness has been a problem for individuals and society at large since the beginning of time.

For those who "don't measure up" in society today, there is a pervasive thinking that these individuals are inferior or deficient in some way. Thirty or forty years ago, and even to some extent today, persons with cancer were stigmatized out of fear and misunderstanding. I would like to say that this is exactly what is still happening to the "mentally ill today." The fear that causes people to stigmatize cancer patients stems mainly from ignorance, bias, and the need for a scapegoat for many of our problems. This same fear causes people to stigmatize those of us who have a mental illness.

In my opinion, the compassionate, altruistic, philanthropic, and for a time financially practical, rounding up of mental patients to "incarcerate" them in the "total institution" to "care for them" created a sub-class of citizens who have been mocked, derided, mistreated and stigmatized. I believe the movement to Community Based Treatment and Recovery Model versus the Medical Model of Treatment may be the next best step to putting an end to stigma and discrimination and really assisting those of us who have severe and persistent mental illness to take back our place in society.

The number one outcome goal of any psychiatric program should be the reintegration of persons with mental illness into society. Many times, our self-worth and dignity are compromised by the professionals who treat us because we are "mentally ill". While we all have a diagnosis based on certain identifiable symptoms we are all unique and worthwhile individuals. If you watched the movie "A Beautiful Mind" you know that a person with mental illness can recover. He can reach the peak of his career, and be recognized by his peers.

There are millions of persons in the world with mental illnesses. Most of these people just want to fit in and be accepted at whatever level they are able to function. Approximately 20% of Americans are affected by mental illness. How do you want to be judged by your Higher Power, or whatever you believe in, or by society at large, for your actions and thoughts directed at the "mentally ill?"

RESOURCES

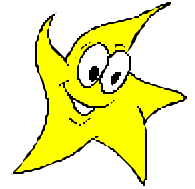
Emergency & Outpatient Contacts

- **Manatee Glens Corporation**
Emergency: 941-741-3117
Outpatient: 941 714-7277
- **Mental Health Care, Inc.**
Adult Emergency: 813-272-2958
Child Emergency: 813-272-2882
Outpatient: 813-744-8880
- **Northside Mental Health Ctr.**
Emergency: 813-977-8700
Outpatient: 813-977-8700
*After 5pm and before 8am
Weekends and holidays call:
Mental Health Care, Inc.*
- **Peace River Center**
Emergency: 863-519-3744
Emergency Collect calls accepted
Outpatient:
Lakeland: 863-499-2520
Bartow: 863-519-3750
Wauchula: 863-773-3228
- **Winter Haven Hospital - Behavioral Health Division**
Emergency: 800-723-3248
Youth Outpatient: 863-294-7062
Adult: 863-297-1702
Sebring: 863-385-5179

Drop in Centers

- **Lakeland Drop In Center**
Lakeland 863-665-4936
- **Our House - Drop In Center**
Bradenton 941-727-8704
- **Winter Haven Drop In Center**
863-294-2792
- **Drop In Center - Sebring**
863-385-9829
- **MHC - Baylife Drop In Center**
Tampa 813-673-4622
- **Access House**
Tampa 813- 972-2705
- **Day Treatment Drop in Center**
Plant City 813-707-7077

Support Groups & Services



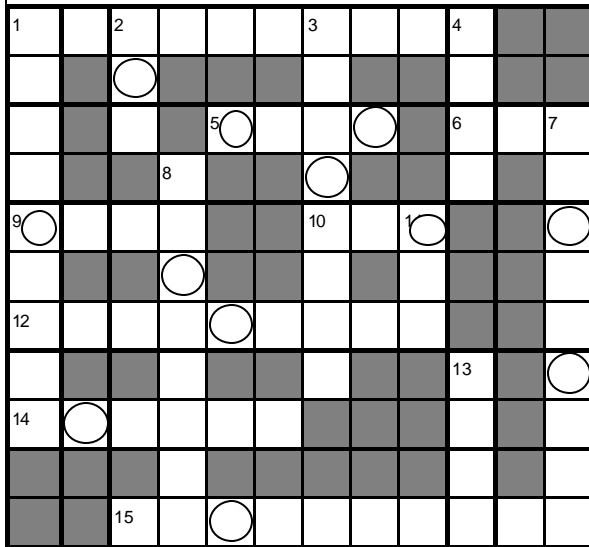
- **Hispanic Services Council,**
Puentes Collaborative - 876-7223
Monthly Support Group Meeting.
- **Kinship Care Warmline**
Information & Support 800-640-6444
- **Adoption Support Groups**
Call Susan Sampson 662-1442
- **The Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health** 974-7930
- **Florida's Child Abuse Prevention & Family Support Network** 800-352-5683
- **Polk County ADD - St. Johns Methodist**
Tues., 7 - 9pm, Winter Haven 534-0930
- **Banyon Family Support Grp.** 974-6186
for all parents, USF- FMHI
2nd & 4th Thursday 7:00p.m.

Depressive & Manic Depressive Support Groups



(DMDA)

- **Northdale Recreation Center**
15550 Spring Pine Dr., Thursday, 7:15pm
- **James A. Haley VA Hospital - Sat. 7:00pm**
1C-West, 13000 Bruce B. Downs
- **E. Pasco Wellness Center, Zephyrhills**
Monday 7:00pm, 7050 Gall Blvd., Room B



Puzzle by Andrew Newelski, Consumer Advocate

Answers on page 4

DOWN

- 1. SPELSE in Seattle
- 2. Lacking assurance (with 1 ACROSS) - OWL
- 3. Racing HOTSUTGH
- 4. It is an illness of the DIMN
- 7. Quiet and HARTWWIND
- 8. VINTAGEE thoughts
- 11. ADS all the time -
- 13. Not outgoing ITAN (with 14 ACROSS)

ACROSS

- 1. See 12 DOWN - FELSEMESTE
- 5. OROP Disposition -
- 6. If a symptom is familiar, see doctor WON
- 9. LEAP Complexion -
- 10. Body out of ASG
- 12. Always feel UDESHEXTA
- 14. See 13 DOWN - CLASIO
- 15. SPEEIDRONS may lead to suicide

After completing the crossword, unscramble the hidden message in the circled letters.

Clue: Penicillin for the soul



- **National DMDA** - 800-826-3632
- **National Mental Health Assn.** 800-969-6442
- **National Foundation for Depressive Illnesses** 800-248-4344
- **National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - NAMI Helpline** 800-950-6264
- **Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (CHADD)** 800-233-4050
- **Tampa Bay Area CHADD** 800-420-7985
- **Attention Deficit Disorder Assn. (ADDA)** 800-487-2282
- **Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)** 800-962-6817
- **Youthline** (Information & Referral Polk) 877-822-5205

WEBSITES



- www.ncptsd.org
- www.hhs.gov/
- www.fema.gov/kids/
- www.icisf.org/911.htm
- www.nimh.nih.gov
- www.disasters.org/dera/dera.htm
- www.nami.org/youth/terrorism.htm
- www.ala.org/alcts/publications/
- www.disaster.html
- www.behavenet.com
- www.floridahealthpartners.com
- www.mentalwellness.com
- www.schizophrenia.com
- www.psych.org
- www.bpkids.org
- www.nami.org
- www.reintegration.com/
- www.chadd.org
- www.ecacparentcenter.org
- www.tbmda.org
- www.adoption.about.com
- www.federationoffamilies.org
- www.mentalhealth.org/default.asp
- www.samhsa.gov
- www.fmhadvocate.org



- **Sarasota** - 5220 Ventura Ave., 941-745-3518
- **Brandon**, Center Place Library, 619 Vonderburg Rd., 685-4818
- **Florida Mental Health Institute, USF**, Westside Conference Center, Wed. 7:15pm
- **St. Joseph's Hospital**
Wed. 7:30 pm Conference Room C
- **Largo** Tues., 7:30pm, 1645 Seminole Blvd., Rm 406, 727-584-8693
- **Center Place Library, Brandon**
7:15pm, 619 Vonderburg Rd., 685-4818

(NAMI)

- **Lakeland** - St. David Episcopal Church 7:00pm, 863-616-9642
- **Winter Haven** - 863-293-6589 1st Tuesday, 7pm, 1201 1st St. S.
- **Town & Country Hospital** - 249-9935 6001 Webb Rd, Sunday, 7:15pm,

(Florida Health Partners-FHP)

- **WinterHaven**.....863-293-1121, Ext. 3672, Monday 3:00pm, 1201 1st St. S.
- **Bradenton**....Wed. 2:00pm, Mantee Glens 6th Ave. Counseling Center, 941-714-7277
- **Bradenton**....Thurs. 6:00pm Mantee Glens 6th Ave. Counseling Center, 941-714-7277

NAMI Listings

- **Hillsborough County** 813-989-2410
- **Manatee County** 941-778-5605
- **Polk County** 863-644-4763
- **Avon Park** 863-452-5991
- **Highlands County** 863-452-5991

Phone Numbers



- **St. Joseph's Child Advocacy Center** (813) 231-9497
- **Kids Behavioral Helpline** - Hillsborough County - Information & Referral for parents with troubled kids **DIAL 211**
- **Child Care Resource & Referral** 813-744-6740
- **Special Needs Resources** 800-535-1910
- **Florida Adoption Information Center** 800-96-ADOPT
- **Protection & Advocacy** for Individuals with Mental Illness 800-342-0823
- **National Assn. for Dually Diagnosed** 800-331-5362
- **National Family Caregivers Assn.** 301-942-6430
- **National Institute of Mental Health** 800-421-4211

Become a
"Concerned
Citizen"
Join the FHP
Peer
Advocacy Group



Our next meetings will be at St. Joseph's Hospital Medical Arts Building,
Fri., June 21 from 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Wed., July 24 from 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.





Summer Vacation: Survival Tips for Parents

It is the time that children have been waiting for. Summer is finally here. For a few months, they will have more time to play, take part in sports, and learn new skills. For some children, however, no school and extra time on their hands means nothing to do and time for getting in trouble.

Some children may think that because they are "on vacation" their parents must be on vacation too. Children may feel hurt when placed in day care, day camp, with grandma, or left in the care of their older brothers and sisters while their parents work.

What Can Parents Do?

- Explain to your child that you must still work, but that you want to spend some special time with him when you can.
- Tell your child that you are looking forward to many fun times with her when you have time off from work.
- Set aside some special time each day for your child.
- Let your child help plan things to do on the weekend.

Suggested Activities

- Fly a kite together in the park.
- Make something together.
- Offer to bring snacks to your child's next sports event.
- Enroll your child in community swimming lessons.
- Learn to play an instrument together.
- Plan a cookout for the weekend.
- Make your child's favorite television show a "family event" with popcorn and snacks.
- Take turns with friends and their children doing things together.
- Read to your child before she falls asleep.
- Ask your child to help plan a camping weekend.
- Take part in some of the free or low cost weekend activities listed in your local newspaper.

Sometimes parents are very busy and making special time for a child can be hard. When parents pay even a small amount of attention to a child, he feels loved and wanted. This makes a child less likely to feel hurt, ignored, or to act out.

Crossword Puzzle Answers from page 3

Down:
 1. Sleepless
 2. Low
 3. Thoughts
 4. Mind
 5. Pool
 6. Now
 7. Mind
 8. Regulate
 9. Pain
 10. Gas
 11. Sad
 12. Exhausted
 13. And
 14. Social
 15. Depression

Across:
 1. Sleepless
 2. Low
 3. Thoughts
 4. Mind
 5. Pool
 6. Now
 7. Mind
 8. Regulate
 9. Pain
 10. Gas
 11. Sad
 12. Exhausted
 13. And
 14. Social
 15. Depression

Protecting Yourself in the Sun



When you take psychiatric medications, you may need to take some extra steps to protect yourself when it's hot and sunny. Remember to always use sunscreen (SPF 30) and wear clothes that cover your arms and legs. Try to shade your face by wearing a big hat that provides protection from the sun's direct rays.

If you are taking any medications from the following list, you should use special skin care, such as sunblock, while in the sun.

- amitriptyline/Elavil
- amoxapine/Asendin
- desipramine/Norpramin
- doxepin/Sinequan
- imipramine/Tofranil
- maprotiline/Ludiomil
- trimipramine/Surmontil
- haloperidol/Haldol
- mesoridazine/Serentil
- molindone/Moban
- perphenazine/Trilafon
- risperidone/Risperdal
- thioridazine/Mellaril
- trifluoperazine/Stelazine
- trifluorpromazine/Vesprin
- chlorpromazine/Thorazine

Some medicines can keep your body from cooling down naturally. If you are prescribed these medicines, stay inside where there is air conditioning when the weather is very hot. Here is a list of these kinds of medicines:

- trihexyphenidyl/Artane
- biperiden/Akineton
- benztropine/Cogentin
- amitriptylene/Elavil
- doxepin/Sinequan
- trimipramine/Surmontil
- vchlorpromazine/Thorazine
- thioridazine/Mellaril

Consumers, Advocates & Family Members



Our Member Advisory Committee meets Quarterly. If you would like to attend these meetings, or would like to be placed on our mailing list, contact Suzy Lange at 813-246-7201 or 1-800-808-0832, Ext. 7201.

For more information about Florida Health Partners Consumer Affairs Program call John Massolio at 813-246-7219 or 1-800-808-0832, Ext. 7219.

The First Meeting

By Bruce C. Collins, Consumer Advocate

My name is Bruce C. Collins, and a long time ago I was diagnosed with Manic-Depression. I remember vividly the very first meeting I attended. Taking that first step was not easy, as I did not know what to expect. Finally one night, I gathered enough courage to go, realizing that I really needed help and had nothing to lose.

So back in 1987, I went to my first support group meeting at a local church hall near Brandon where I met John Massolio, the founder of the support group in Tampa Bay. He was wonderful as our group facilitator. All of us learned that John went through some really difficult times, as we all have.

Everything we talked about was kept strictly confidential using first names only, going around the room sharing our illnesses and experiences. It was such a gratifying feeling, knowing that I am not alone and where I felt safe talking about my illness to others with same diagnosis and who really understood me. Most people with Bipolar Disorder feel it's just them with the mood swings; manic one day and depressed the next.

As I left my very first meeting, I felt so good about myself. I would wait for the next one with great anticipation. The group was very beneficial and perhaps the turning point in my life. I learned a lot about my illness and met some wonderful people whom I call close friends, even now.

Today, 15 years and many ups and downs later, I still depend on these support group meetings and I don't know what would have happened if I never got the courage to go that first time. Now, we have become a close family, helping each other and our facilitator, providing valuable input, sharing experiences and comfort to anyone in crisis, even if they are not ready to talk.

There are so many people in our society in need, but do not know where nor how to get help. The emotional support I received from so many people for so long has helped me to cope with my illness. I could go on forever, describing the benefits of support groups and how they have given me hope. You will start your road to recovery just as I have, with knowledge that you are not alone.

For more information about meetings see page, 2 or call Depressive & Manic Depressive Assn. Support Groups at 813-878-2906.

