

 **NAMI Kitsap Newsletter** 

September, 2016

Please visit our website at www.namikitsap.org for the latest information. You can email us at info@namikitsap.org All off NAMI Kitsap programs are free and available to the community.

OUR GOAL IS TO PROVIDE EDUCATION, SUPPORT and ADVOCACY FOR FAMILIES AND FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS.

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There is a new book out that ought to be of interest for everyone in Washington. “**While the City Slept: A Love Lost to Violence and a Young Man’s Descent into Madness,**” is written by Eli Sanders, the associate editor of Seattle’s weekly *The Stranger*. He won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in 2012 for the coverage of this story.

In the book, we follow the story of two people who fall in love and then one is murdered. And we also follow the life of the murderer and his slide into mental illness as he is failed by family, the mental health and the legal system. It opens one’s mind and heart to greater understanding and empathy for all the people involved.

The author points out that the U. S. receives a ‘D’ rating for its mental health care. In our research for our NAMI Family-to-Family class last year, we found out that Washington State ranked #48 in the U. S.!

The author also points out that many people who suffer with mental illness end up getting in trouble with the law, which can be a start for getting help. However, many judiciary systems are underfunded and over-worked. In 2008 when this story was unfolding,

Washington State ranked last in the nation in terms of state spending on local courts,” which is cause for great concern.

Dan Zak (author of *The Prophets of Oak Ridge*) reviewed this book thus: “The great achievement of this book is that it shows how any crime is ultimately a failure of systems and of citizens, and that to some degree we are all complicit when a person who needs help is cast aside.” As NAMI people know, **education** and **advocacy** are essential for dealing with mental illness. The book does both in a true story. 🌱

NAMI and Election Politics

On our August Affiliate Leaders Conference call we discussed the NAMI Standards of Excellence in regards to politics since we are a nonprofit organization. Election education and engagement activities are allowed, but with restrictions.

Generally NAMI organizations **can** share NAMI priorities with candidates. We can ask candidates open-ended questions about their views on mental health, can promote voter registration, can help get out the vote by helping voters determine where and when to vote, display nonpartisan sample ballots, and distribute information about voter rights for people with mental illness.

NAMI organizations **cannot** endorse or oppose a candidate, or appear to favor or disfavor one candidate or party over

another, nor make a contribution to a candidate from NAMI, nor rate candidates on who is most favorable to NAMI's issues. These activities can be done by individual members as a personal preference.

(Go to www.nami.org/Act4MentalHealth)

Kitsap Strong

This is a new organization. "In 2015, our community joined together and created **Kitsap Strong** because we believe Kitsap County is facing a hidden crisis – ACEs – that robs our children, families, and community of their full potential. & We believe that **together**, we can: Improve the overall health & well-being of Kitsap & its residents, through the prevention of ACEs and building resilience."

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), – broadly seen as Abuse, Neglect and Household Dysfunction, including witnessing domestic violence, having a parent with mental illness or who abuses alcohol or drugs, being bullied at school, etc.

– have natural consequences.

"Many of the characteristics of people we identify as 'maladaptive' are actually an '**adaptive response**' to traumatic experiences. Our brains **adapt** in a predict-able manner to traumatic events (*edgy, hypervigilant, emotionally detached, quick to act*) that give us the best chance to survive." It's a natural process, but these are not set in stone if dealt with supportively.

"**Resiliency** requires relationships, not rugged individualism and can transform a potentially **toxic/traumatic event** into a tolerable one."

The organization has received strong community funding and support. You can Google this for more information.

[As an aside, one can see, in reading the book "While the City Slept," how this kind of community support could have prevented what happened in Seattle back in 2009.]

Mental Health Awareness Week

This year it is October 2-8, a time to be especially conscious of opposing the stigma attached to and the uneducated comments made about mental illness.

Mental Health Advocacy

NAMI supports Mental Health reform legislation that will help people living with mental health conditions by:

- Improving the *availability* of quality mental health care;
- Promoting early identification and intervention;
- Reducing criminalization (treatment rather than incarceration);
- Enforcing insurance parity.

NAMI Washington State Conference

will be held in Port Angeles, WA, September 30 - October 2, 2016.

See www.namiewa.org for more information and registration.

NAMI Family-to-Family Class

NAMI Family-to-Family Class(es) will begin in the new year (2017). Check our website later for more details as to the date and site (it will not be in Silverdale this coming year).

U. S. Congress

In July, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2646, the "Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2016," with a 422-2 vote. The bill enhances crisis response services, supports the mental health workforce and enforces the federal mental health insurance parity law.

Now it is the Senate's turn to act. Their "Mental Health Reform Act of 2016" (S. 2680) is a bipartisan bill, co-sponsored by Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Patty

Murray (D. WA), that includes promotion of suicide prevention.

There is one problem - Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has de-layed

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Representative Sherry Appleton (D)
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bringing the bill to vote despite wide-spread support. Demand a vote! ✍

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NAMI Classes and Support Groups

NAMI Family-to Family Support Groups
Bainbridge Island, 2nd Monday - 7 PM
945 Hildebrand Lane NE [Doctors Clinic]
Contact: Jeanette Rerecich 360-697- 5531

Silverdale, Last Tuesday - 7 PM
2011 Myre Rd [Doctors Clinic]
Contact: Joy Sprague 206-753-7000

Peer Support Groups

Bainbridge Island, 2nd & 4th Tuesdays -
12:30 PM (Home Town Bank Bldg)
921 Hildebrand Lane NE
Contact: Jane Cartmell 206-898-6092
Poulsbo, 1st & 3rd Tuesdays - 1:30 PM
Hostmark Community Center

703 NE Hostmark Street

Contact: Ann Clark 360-697-8509

Combined Support Group

Bremerton, every Tuesday - 6:00 PM

Depression BiPolar Support Alliance

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

700 Callahan, East Bremerton

Contact: Richard or Mark 360-377- 8509