

MEET YOUR BOARD: Elizabeth A. Valderas

Elizabeth A. Valderas, M.Ed. is a public educator with FWISD with a multi-cultural background in public relations, international non-profit, bilingual public education and leadership. She has been the Advocacy and Public Policy Chair with NAMI Tarrant County since 2012.

Elizabeth focuses on policy barriers to life changing treatment for those living with brain illnesses that creates thought and mood disorders affecting behavior and cognition. Advocacy priorities include; additional CIT police officer training, building community collaboration to decriminalize mental illness, public education to eradicate stigma and funding for comprehensive mental health treatment.

At a young age Elizabeth recognized the struggles of a family member diagnosed schizophrenic and another with untreated bipolar disorder. She questioned the genetic influence of these symptoms, now knowing these are illnesses and not character flaws or behavioral choices. Elizabeth continues to be a caregiver to a loved one diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder.

She participates on the JPS Trinity Springs Patient and Family Advisory Council, FWPD Community Advisory Board, Tarrant County Criminal Justice Coalition and coordinates the NAMI Tarrant County legislative advocacy coalition.

5AM THOUGHTS

Confusion hits	All I want to do is sleep	Tears stream down
My mind at bad times	But I feel like I need	Freely when its dark
You voices don't help	To be pacing	I'm free at last
When it's 5am	Back and forth	When day turns dark
And I can't sleep		And all the lights go out
'Cause my mind is racing		
500 miles a minute		

The problem with the stigma around mental health is really about the stories that we tell ourselves as a society. What is normal? That's just a story that we tell.

~ Matthew Quick

Special points of interest:

- **Community, Compassion and Creativity**
January 19
6-7:30pm
MHA Building
Lone Star Room
- **Family-to-Family class beginning**
Feb 17 or 24 in Grapevine.
Contact office.
- **NAMIWalk 2016**
October 1
Trinity Park

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Monthly General Meeting, January 21

Topic: "Clinical Trials"

Guest: Brian Maynard, Ph.D.

Support Groups: 6:00 p.m. General Meeting: 7:30 p.m.

University Christian Church
2720 South University Dr.
Fort Worth, Texas 76109

I'm not the kind of person who likes to shout out my personal issues from the rooftops, but with my bipolar becoming public, I hope fellow sufferers will know it's completely controllable. I hope I can help remove any stigma attached to it, and that those who don't have it under control will seek help with all that is available to treat it.

~Catherine Zeta-Jones

It takes a lot of courage to show your dreams to someone else.

~Erma Bombeck

Breathe Easy with AIR



What is Air?

AIR (Anonymous. Inspiring. Reliable) is the new NAMI app, a free, mobile-based social network designed for individuals living with mental health conditions and their family members/caregivers.

NAMI AIR is intended to provide another way for people to find and give support, to connect with others through smart phone and computer tablet.

AIR encourages users to anonymously share their stories and receive feedback in the form of social interactions such as “like,” “hug” and “me too.”

Also allows users to access information on how to get help, learn more about NAMI and connect with the NAMI HelpLine.

AIR facilitates personal connections with others who may be going through, or have been through, similar situations. Users are anonymous but not alone.

How do I start using NAMI AIR?

After AIR is downloaded through the Apple and Android App Stores, users will start by creating an account and selecting a group to join.

Individual living with a mental health condition
Family member or caregiver

What posts you see are determined by the path you chose (for example, If you are a caregiver or family member, the stories you see on your feed will also be from caregivers or family members). You can “toggle” between these two groups—so you can choose to engage in one group, then select the other, allowing you to interact in both communities. However, you will not be able to interact in both at the same time.

How do users know that my information is safe and confidential?

Users don't create any sort of username while signing up. All posts are completely anonymous. The only information you give is your email address. Email addresses are only used for sign in and in case of an emergency. So you can be assured that your posts and participation are completely anonymous.

- See more at: <http://www.nami.org/Find-Support/Air-App#sthash.obTvQea3.dpuf>

Do you have something to share with your NAMI family? Good news? Honors? Announcements? Art? Poetry?

Please submit it to Rachel@namitarrant.org by the 25th.

Cognitive Dysfunction in Major Depressive Disorder

The FDA is holding a meeting of the Psychopharmacologic Drugs Advisory Committee to discuss “cognitive dysfunction in major depressive disorder (MDD). This is an evolving concept and experts in the field have not yet reached consensus as to whether cognitive dysfunction in MDD is a distinct entity. The committee will consider the clinical presentation of cognitive dysfunction in MDD, as well as methods for assessing this condition.”

This meeting is open to the public for viewing in person or via webcast. If you have comments or discussion you would like to provide the committee with, you can do so in person or in writing. “Interested persons may present data, information, or views, orally or in writing, on issues pending before the committee.

Written submissions may be made to the contact person on or before January 20, 2016.

Oral presentations from the public will be scheduled between approximately 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on February 3, 2016. Those individuals interested in making formal oral presentations should notify the contact person and submit a brief statement of the general nature of the evidence or arguments they wish to present, the names and addresses of proposed participants, and an indication of the approximate time requested to make their presentation on or before January 11, 2016.

Time allotted for each presentation may be limited. If the number of registrants requesting to speak is greater than can be reasonably accommodated during the scheduled open public hearing session, FDA may conduct a lottery to determine the speakers for the scheduled open public hearing session. The contact person will notify interested persons regarding their request to speak by January 12, 2016.”

“FDA intends to make background material available to the public no later than 2 business days before the meeting. If FDA is unable to post the background material on its Web site prior to the meeting, the background material will be made publicly available at the location of the advisory committee meeting, and the background material will be posted on FDA’s Web site after the meeting.” The background material as well as webcast information can be accessed on the web at <http://www.fda.gov/AdvisoryCommittees/CommitteesMeetingMaterials/Drugs/PsychopharmacologicDrugsAdvisoryCommittee/ucm475314.htm>. The Agency will post the webcast access information by February 1, 2016.

The person to contact with written comments or a request to speak is:

Kalyani Bhatt
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research
Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
WO31-2417
Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002

Phone: 301-796-9001
Fax: 301-847-8533
Email: PDAC@fda.hhs.gov

FDA Advisory Committee Information Line 1-800-741-8138
(301-443-0572 in the Washington DC area)

My scars show pain & suffering, but they also show my will to survive. They're part of my history.

~ Unknown

Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed. It means the damage no longer controls our lives.

~ Unknown

Mental health... is not a destination but a process. It's about how you drive, not where you're going.

~ Unknown

SUPPORT GROUPS

You will find insight and more effective coping skills, and learn to reduce the unreasonable stigma around mental illness. Additionally, support groups provide a place to network with other persons about how they have solved problems and found help.

Support Groups are led by NAMI-certified individuals with a lived experience in recovery as a family member or individual with lived experience of mental illness

NAMI TC, Southlake-76092 <i>Family Support Group</i>	January 4/ February 1 <i>First Monday of every month</i>	7:00 to 8:30 pm <i>White's Chapel United Methodist Church</i>
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185 South White's Chapel Blvd. Park on the East side of the building and go to the entrance north of the sanctuary. Room 2130 in Evans Hall.

NAMI TC, Ft. Worth-76107 <i>Family Support Group</i>	January 11/February 8 <i>Second Monday of every month</i>	7:00 to 8:30 pm <i>MHA-TC/NAMI Office</i>
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3136 West 4th Street

NAMI TC, Johnson County 76058 <i>Family Support Group</i>	Jan 14/ Feb 11 <i>Second Thursday of every month</i>	7:00 to 8:30 pm <i>Joshua City Library</i>
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located on the High School Campus in Joshua. The address is Highway 174.

NAMI TC, Ft. Worth-76109 <i>Family & Peer Support</i>	January 21/ February 18 <i>Third Thursday of every month</i>	6:00 to 8:30 pm <i>University Christian Church by TCU</i>
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2720 S. University Drive. Please join us for our monthly meeting and pot luck. Support groups for caregivers and adult consumers are held before the general meeting. Park on the north or east side of the church as entry is on the east side. Registration is on second floor.

NAMI TC, Arlington 76013 <i>Family Support Group</i>	January 28/ February 25 <i>Last Thursday of every month</i>	7:00 to 8:30 pm <i>Trinity UMC, Arlington</i>
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1200 West Green Oaks Blvd. Enter at south door. Room C-210 on the 2nd floor

*H.O.M.E., NRH 76180 <i>Peer and Family Support</i>	Jan. 10 & 24/ Feb. 14 & 28 <i>Second and fourth Sundays</i>	5:00 to 7:00 pm <i>The Hills Church of Christ, North Richland Hills</i>
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Room 207. Individuals with mood disorders and their loved ones are invited to this support group meeting

*Caring Friends, Weatherford 76086 <i>Peer and Family Support</i>	Every Tuesday <i>First United Methodist Church Weatherford</i>	6:00 to 8:00 pm
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301 S. Main. In Akard Hall. Enter door at corner of Columbia and College Ave.

*Not a NAMI-certified group

You will find a group of people with similar life experiences that you will listen to and learn from; so you can apply and relate to your own life. Together we explore topics related to a healthy lifestyle and changes one can make.

MONTHLY MEETING—JANUARY 21

Topic: “Clinical Trials”

Speaker: Brian Maynard, Ph.D.

Thursday, January 21

Support Groups at 6:00 pm

General Meeting and Pot Luck Dinner at 7:30 pm

The world of reality
has its limits; the
world of imagination
is boundless.

~Jean-Jacques Rousseau

COMMUNITY, COMPASSION & CREATIVITY NAMIWALKS MEETING

Tuesday, January 19— 6-7:30pm, MHA Building

Join us as we listen and brainstorm with the community to bring awareness about mental health during the Mayor’s week of compassionate service. Please come share your ideas for our walk!

Descriptions of Dissociation

Depersonalization

Common: ‘I felt strange / weird’, ‘I felt as if I was floating away’, ‘I felt disembodied / disconnected / detached / far away from myself’, ‘apart from everything’, ‘in a place of my own / alone’, ‘like I was there but not there’, ‘I could see and hear everything but couldn’t respond’

Less Common: ‘puppet-like’, ‘robot-like’, ‘acting a part’, ‘I couldn’t feel any pain’ ‘like I was made of cardboard’, ‘I felt like I was just a head stuck on a body’, ‘like a spectator looking at myself on TV’, ‘an out of body experience’, ‘my hands or feet felt smaller / bigger’. ‘when I touched things it didn’t feel like me touching them’

Derealization

‘My surroundings seemed unreal / far away’, ‘I felt spaced out’, ‘It was like looking at the world through a veil or glass’, ‘I felt cut off or distant from the

immediate surroundings’, ‘objects appeared diminished in size / flat / dream-like / cartoon like / artificial / unsolid’

Other dissociative symptoms

Memory: “I drove the car home/got dressed/had dinner but can’t remember anything about it”, “I don’t know who I am or how I got here” (fugue state), “I remember things but it doesn’t feel like it was me that was there”.

Identity: “I feel like I’m two separate people/someone else”.

Other: “I felt like time was passing incredibly slowly/quickly”, “I get so absorbed in fantasy/a TV program that it seems real”, “I felt an emptiness in my head as if I was not having any thoughts at all”.

Source: Jon Ston. Dissociation: What Is It and Why Is It Important? *Practical Neurology*, 2006; 6: 308-313.

All you need is love.
But a little chocolate
now and then
doesn't hurt.

~Charles M. Schultz

I always think that if you look at anyone in detail, you will have empathy for them because you recognize them as a human being, no matter what they've done.

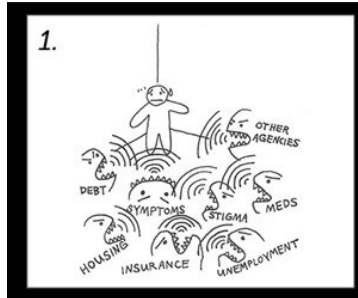
~Andrea Arnold

Gratitude is the state of mind of thankfulness. As it is cultivated, we experience an increase in our "sympathetic joy," our happiness at another's happiness. Just as in the cultivation of compassion, we may feel the pain of others, so we may begin to feel their joy as well. And it doesn't stop there.

~Stephen Levine

Showing Empathy and Understanding to Those Who Need Help

By Emily Brooks | Dec. 16, 2015



When living with a mental health condition, it can weave through all aspects of our lives. In addition to managing our own private conflicts with symptoms or medications, we may also balance external pressures and limitations, such as stigma, tension at work or increased financial burden. When this becomes unbearable, it can feel as though we're trapped in a corner—with everything and everyone trying to get the best of us. Unfortunately,

these are the times when we are stretched thin, and there is little of ourselves free to give.

In situations like these, it can help to know that there are others out there who understand because they've been through it too. NAMI's online discussion groups are a great way to get involved with an encouraging community that's always available. Some people may prefer in-person reassurance through our local NAMI support groups. At NAMI, we may offer peer support or referrals to warm lines, which serve as an outlet to vent, get feedback and connect with other people who can empathize.

- See more at: <http://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/December-2015/Showing-Empathy-and-Understanding-to-Those-Who-Need#sthash.3AADOlbr.dpuf>

FDA Basics

Can I buy medical products online? How do I know they're safe?

While buying medical products online can be easy and convenient, FDA urges you to be very careful. Some Web sites sell products that may not be safe to use.

Before buying from a Web site, look for the VIPPS (Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites) seal. The VIPPS seal means that the Internet pharmacy is safe to use because it has met state licensure requirements, as well as other criteria of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. See <http://www.nabp.net/programs/accreditation/vipps/> for a list of pharmacies that display the seal.

Other tips for buying online:

- Don't buy from sites that will sell you prescription drugs if you don't have a prescription.
- Use sites that have a pharmacist to answer your questions online.
- Only buy from sites based in the United States.

Go to your doctor or clinic before using any medicine for the first time.

Free time! 7 ways to savor it

You work hard. So how are you at relaxing? It should be easy, right? When we're busy, it can be tough to unwind. We'd like to and hope to ... when we get around to it. Relaxation and recreation are more than wants — or wishes. They're essentials for your well-being.

When you enjoy your downtime — free from work or duties — it offers an emotional lift that gives you energy and confidence to tackle everyday challenges. Losing yourself in leisure may even decrease harmful stress-related hormones and strengthen your immune system. The bottom line: You can be happier, healthier and more productive when you take time for leisure.

A new kind of to-do list

Day-to-day life can get full and hectic. And when free time is limited, it's that much more precious. So make the most of yours by pursuing activities that soothe your mind, spark your creativity or otherwise give you a boost. Do you need a little inspiration? Here are seven quick ideas to get you started renewing and recharging:

1. Put "me time" on the calendar. Treat it like an important appointment — because it is.
2. Power off. If at all possible, designate times at home to unplug completely. That means no TV, Internet, cellphone, computer, etc.
3. Revive a blast from the past. Pick up a hobby you once enjoyed — whether that's tennis, knitting or playing the trombone. Or reach for a dream – maybe you've always wanted to try your hand at painting or playing the piano.
4. Take a nature break. A light breeze. Blue skies. A flowing stream. The natural world can calm your nerves and re-energize you.
5. Play. Give yourself permission to be a kid again. Get out a board game, a basketball or modeling clay. Encourage others to join in. Play spurs imagination and promotes creative problem solving. Best of all, it makes us happy.
6. Pair fun with fitness – after checking with your health care provider that an increase in activity is alright. Take a bike ride. Or walk around one of your favorite neighborhoods or parks. Invite a friend along — and you've got a triple win for well-being: You're recharging, getting some exercise and strengthening your social life.
7. Delight in small moments. Even on your busiest days, do at least one feel-good activity. It can be something simple. Call a friend who makes you laugh. Read a chapter in a good book. Take a warm bath.

Grapefruit Juice and Medicine May Not Mix

Grapefruit juice can be part of a healthful diet—most of the time. It has vitamin C and potassium—substances your body needs to work properly. Grapefruit juice and fresh grapefruit can interfere with the

action of some prescription drugs, as well as a few non-prescription drugs.

This interaction can be dangerous, says Shiew Mei Huang, acting director of the Food and Drug Administration's Office of

Modern conveniences grant us more free time to focus on spiritual needs and devote more time to personal service. But the basic element which should never change in the lives of righteous young women is giving service to others.

~ James E. Faust

Sometimes, you need to be alone. Not to be lonely, but to enjoy your free time being yourself.

~ Unknown

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Grapefruit Juice and Medicine May Not Mix (continued)

Clinical Pharmacology. With most drugs that interact with grapefruit juice, “the juice increases the absorption of the drug into the bloodstream,” she says.

“When there is a higher concentration of a drug, you tend to have more adverse events.”

For example, if you drink a lot of grapefruit juice while taking certain statin drugs to lower cholesterol, too much of the drug may stay in your body, increasing your risk for liver damage and muscle breakdown that can lead to kidney failure.

Drinking grapefruit juice several hours before or several hours after you take your medicine may still be dangerous, says Huang, so it’s best to avoid or limit consuming grapefruit juice or fresh grapefruit when taking certain drugs.

Examples of some types of drugs that grapefruit juice can interact with are:

- some statin drugs to lower cholesterol, such as Zocor (simvastatin), Lipitor (atorvastatin) and Pravachol (pravastatin)

- some blood pressure-lowering drugs, such as Nifediac & Afeditab (both nifedipine)
- some organ transplant rejection drugs, such as Sandimmune & Neoral (both cyclosporine)
- some anti-anxiety drugs, such as BuSpar (buspirone)
- some anti-arrhythmia drugs, such as Cordarone and Nexterone (both amiodarone)
- some antihistamines, such as Allegra (fexofenadine)

Grapefruit juice does not affect all the drugs in the categories above. Ask your pharmacist or other health care professional to find out if your specific drug is affected.

Note from contributor: you can also read the Consumer Medication Information provided with your prescription to see if it warns you against grapefruit juice (see April’s newsletter – What is that Stuff!?!).



Changing Minds One Step at a Time

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