



NAMI SPOTLIGHT

The National
Alliance on
Mental Illness
Seattle

FALL 2016

802 NW 70th Street
Seattle, WA 98117
206-783-9264
www.namisseattle.org



THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

What if you could fight stigma with a single story?

NAMI In Our Own Voice and Ending the Silence speakers do just that. Their presentations change attitudes, assumptions, and stereotypes by sharing the reality of living with a mental health condition.

When you are faced with a mental health condition, it can be hard to know where to turn or what to do next. It's a relief to find out that there are other people who have gone through similar experiences.

NAMI Seattle's volunteer speakers have been busy changing lives this year, sharing their experiences to pull other people out of darkness and show them that they are not alone. And while they make a big impact for others, speaking up has an impact on them, too - many of our volunteers have said how sharing their story is a big part of their personal recovery journey. Join us on November 9 for In Our Own Voice and experience the power of their stories. (Details on page 2!)

**"It's been incredibly healing. The struggle continues, but it's lessened a lot, by people who are so touched by the program, by the gratitude they share and the hugs I get afterward and the compliments about the courage I have: It's very heartfelt, encouraging and strengthening."
Gretchen, In Our Own Voice speaker**

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Our Mission. *To address the unmet mental health needs within our community through support, referral, education, and outreach.*

Our Vision. *A world where all those impacted by mental illness know they are not alone, and are empowered to live a fulfilling life.*

Our Staff

Executive Director
Ashley Fontaine, MSW

Program Coordinator
Katie Mahoney, MSSW

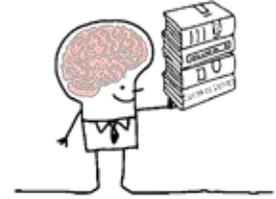
AmeriCorps Member
Selena Aston

See In Our Own Voice in Action!

Join us for a special In Our Own Voice presentation as part of our Speaker Series, and experience inspired storytelling for yourself. The NAMI Seattle Annual Member Meeting will follow immediately after the presentation. This is open to the public, so help us stop stigma by bringing a friend.

Wednesday, November 9
6:00pm-8:00pm

Greenwood Library (Free parking in the garage underneath)
8016 Greenwood Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103



6:00pm: Refreshments and time to meet NAMI board, staff, and members

6:30pm: In Our Own Voice program

7:30pm: Annual Member Meeting (the Board nominee bios are below!)

2017 BOARD OF DIRECTOR CANDIDATES



Jen Dold

Jen has degrees in Network Administration and Web Design, and is a few credits away from a Bachelor's Degree in Business from Washington State University. In 2001 when the dot-com bubble burst, she transitioned into the world of real estate and has been successfully selling residential, land and commercial real estate for almost 15 years. Jen is a born Pacific Northwesterner, raised in the waterfront community of Edmonds. She loves working hard, being challenged, finding solutions to problems, multi-tasking and navigating in a fast paced environment, and most of all the wonderful long lasting relationships that she has formed over the years selling real estate.

Jen's introduction to NAMI Seattle began 10 years ago when her youngest brother Alex developed severe symptoms of Schizophrenia at the age of 18, and her family enrolled in the Family-to-Family class. Since then she has volunteered in many capacities: answered phones, performed administrative duties, organized teams to walk in the annual NAMIWalk, and taught two Family-to-Family classes. She raised \$3,500 through an Indigogo campaign, for the pilot program of the Appreciative Learning Friday Night Young Adults support group, which is now in its 8th year. Most recently, Jen has been part of the Community Development committee and the Depressed Cake Shop planning committee, and uses her many community connections to spread the word about NAMI. Jen continues to share her experience as a family member in hopes of affecting real change for the treatment of people suffering from mental health conditions and those that support and love them.



Jessa Lynch

Jessa received her Master’s in Social Work from the University of Washington in 2013 and has since been working as a mental health inpatient social worker at the Seattle VA Hospital. She also works as needed at Harborview Medical Center in the Emergency Department and Psychiatric Emergency Services. Prior to receiving her MSW, Jessa previously worked at social service non-profits and in community mental health. She looks forward to being behind the scenes in a small nonprofit again and is dedicated to helping meet the mental health needs of our greater Seattle community. In her spare time, Jessa enjoys spending time with her family - especially with her son Owen, who was born in July 2016.



Mindy Meyring

Mindy is a true Pacific Northwest native having grown up in Edmonds and attended the University of Washington (go Dawgs!). She has a bachelor’s degree in communications which led her to a consulting career focused on developing and implementing public awareness campaigns that advance social issues and consumer brands. She enjoys working with organizations to secure measurable results and solve unique business problems through creative and strategic communications practices.

Mindy has been a longtime NAMI volunteer – she was part of the original planning committee for Seattle’s very first “Move for Mental Health” run/walk at Seward Park in 2001. Most recently she’s been involved in the ever-growing and successful Depressed Cake Shop event and is excited to see how this event is sparking positive and supportive conversations about mental health in the community. Being involved in causes that create change and make a difference is close to her heart. For fun you can find her walking her dog Marley at Discovery Park or Shilshole, paddle boarding, in a Flywheel spin class, gardening, or enjoying time with her family.

Board of Directors: Running for Reelection



Terry Proctor



Laura Umetsu, JD

Thank you to our exiting Board Members for your service to NAMI Seattle!

Gretchen Hawkins

Molly Maloney, JD, Vice President

Linda Worthington, JD

MOST VALUABLE VOLUNTEER

This edition's MVV: Aislin Percival [Ending the Silence, In Our Own Voice, Peer-to-Peer, and the Helpline]

Aislin (left) with her parents at the 2016 NAMIWalk



You are trained as a volunteer for four NAMI programs! What motivates you to volunteer in all these different capacities?

I started out with only the desire to be more active as a volunteer. Ending the Silence was a chance to do that, in addition to serving a cause I am very passionate about: educating young people about mental illness. I knew my story, particularly developing mental illness at a very young age, could be valuable, but I truly never imagined I would be any good at sharing it!

Do you remember the first time you told your story publicly? What was it like?

I was so nervous that first time. I was sure I would botch my story and ruin the whole presentation. I wrote out, practiced, and memorized my part(s). Any time I missed a single word, I would have to start over. I believed, at first, that the hardest part would be sharing something so personal with a crowd. Ironically, sharing my emotions and experiences gave me a sense of relief. These people now KNEW me, and they weren't disgusted or afraid. They didn't run away, but wrote feedback about how courageous and engaging I was! Ending the Silence, and speaking my story aloud, unleashed a passion in me for public speaking.

What words of wisdom would you share with someone who is considering "coming out" and talking about their mental health condition as a NAMI speaker?

I definitely suggest being trained for In Our Own Voice. I didn't know if I had it in me. I honestly have a great deal of unresolved negative emotional baggage surrounding parts of my story, resentment, fear, disappointment...but the sense of release that comes each time I tell my story has slowly relieved some of the burden. I am valuable; I have something to offer. It's such a validating experience.

Creating Learning Opportunities for all Students

My name is Miguel, and I was in the Youth Employment Services (YES) II program this summer. YES gives blind students the opportunity to work and gain life experiences. Working at NAMI has showed me how to be more open and successful with clients when talking to them on the phone. My experience of being able to listen to a presenter talk about Ending the Silence brought me greater understanding of the problems our young people and society face.

As a high school senior myself, I believe that Ending the Silence should be provided for all high school students. The sooner you can talk to middle and high schoolers about what really happens when you have a mental illness, the sooner we can help many of them out. I believe that if we just let go of social stigma we would become a better society. Ending the Silence can teach our younger generation of students to become more aware and be able to help out a friend when they see the signs of mental illness. The presenters used their life experience to connect with the students, and the students took something from the presentation that was much deeper than they could have imaged.

WHAT COURAGE REALLY LOOKS LIKE

By Danei Edelen | Oct. 07, 2016 | Republished from NAMI.org

“Thank you for sharing your story; you are so courageous,” a woman said to me at one of my “In Our Own Voice” presentations. As usual, I smiled and thanked her. **It always surprises me when people thank me for speaking out—that the “speaking out” aspect is what they believe is most courageous. Yes, speaking out is cathartic. But when you’re like me, living with mental illness, what’s far more courageous is the journey to speaking out.**



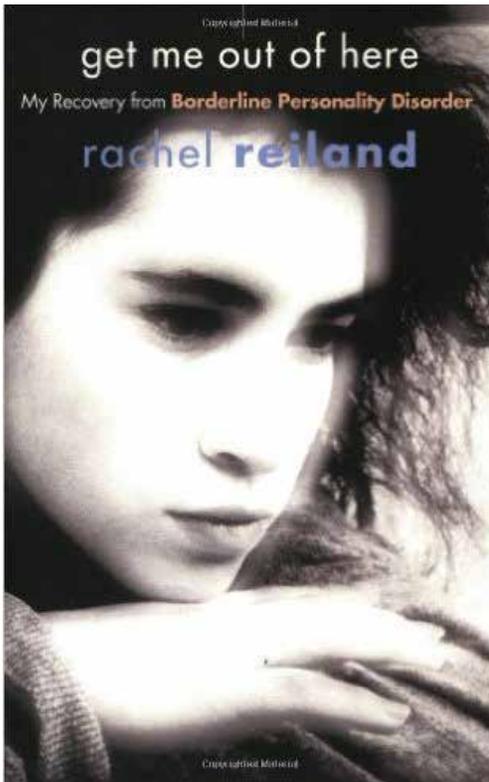
Courage is telling someone you are hearing voices in your head.
 Courage is deciding to stop self-medicating and ask for help.
 Courage is allowing someone to drive you to the hospital so you can voluntarily check yourself into the psych ward.
 Courage is walking into a room of concerned relatives only weeks after your psychotic break, even though your body feels like it consists solely of egg shells shaped like bones.
 Courage is getting up and taking a shower, after days in bed.
 Courage is learning to let negative thoughts just float out of your head.
 Courage is talking yourself into going to the gym just for today.
 Courage is getting out of bed, exercising and collapsing back into bed thinking, “I tried.”
 Courage is searching for a new psychiatrist that your insurance will cover after relocating to a new city.
 Courage is believing that this time, this new medication will lighten your depression.
 Courage is finally feeling good enough to change your hair style.
 Courage is saying “no” to a beer when all your buddies are drinking.
 Courage is saying: “I was sick, but now I am better,” on a job interview.
 Courage is clenching your teeth when a colleague calls someone “crazy.”
 Courage is asking an acquaintance to lunch.
 Courage is explaining to your friends that you have a mental health condition.

Is speaking out courageous? Maybe to you. **Speaking out is a relief.** Speaking out is sharing my story with others so they can understand how many people fight invisible battles every day. I am thankful that I have the ability and opportunity to speak; I know so many people who live with mental illness who cannot speak out. But it is far from my most courageous act.

Danei Edelen is married and lives with her husband and son in Cincinnati, Ohio. Danei owns Instant Marketing LLC. Danei has a bachelor’s degree and over 20 years in marketing. She is also a NAMI presenter for the Southwestern Ohio chapter speaking to groups of all ages to help end the stigma. She blogs for the Challenge the Storm, and the Mighty. Danei enjoys, reading, writing, exercise and learning about nutrition.

BOOK REVIEW: GET ME OUT OF HERE

Compassion & hope for those experiencing Borderline Personality Disorder, By Peggy Dolane



Have you ever felt frustrated trying to explain what it feels like to be emotionally out-of-control to someone who has never experienced extreme mental distress? If so, you may want to recommend to them the book *Get Me Out of Here: My Recovery from Borderline Personality Disorder*, by Rachel Reiland. This memoir is a firsthand account of a young woman's struggle with, and recovery from, Borderline Personality Disorder.

As a mother of a teenager who has struggled with emotional regulation, I found this book to be moving, inspiring, and insightful. Moving because of the author's brutal self-awareness and honesty in describing her struggles. Inspiring because she was able to find her way through the darkness of despair into a future filled with hope. And insightful providing me a glimpse into my daughter's journey using stories that I could emotionally relate to and have great compassion for. After reading the book I find I have greater insight into her struggles, less frustration at the pace of recovery, and a better understanding of how I can be helpful to her in that process.

The one critique I have of the book is the psychiatrist that she saw used traditional psychiatric analysis as the primary method of intervention. Today most treatment for BPD is based in Dialectical Behavior Therapy and spends less time on looking for the causes of emotional distress and more on helping patients learn strategies to cope with strong emotions in the moment.

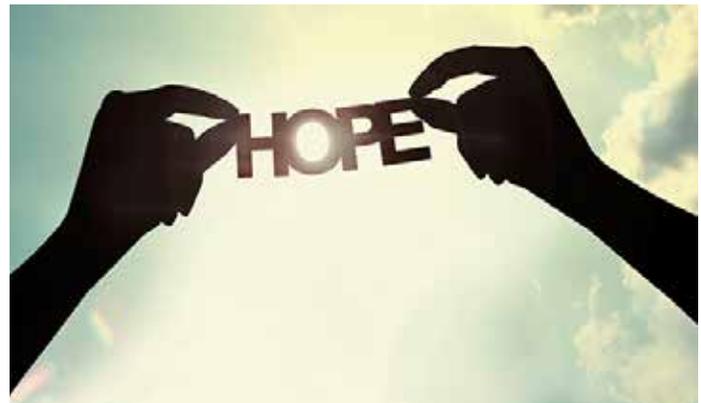
Nevertheless, I'd strongly recommend *Get Me Out of Here* as required reading for therapists who seek insight into the minds of their patients and family members who are looking for understanding and hope.

DECEMBER 14: AFTER-HOURS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

Join us for an evening of community, compassion, and hot cocoa. We'll be sharing hope and cheer for the upcoming year with greeting cards for people in treatment at Western State Hospital.

Wednesday, December 14 at NAMI Seattle HQ!

Drop in between 5pm and 8pm to write a card or two and hang out with other NAMI members.



IN MEMORY OF RICK LAUFFER

Lucy Woodworth, Past Board President, NAMI Seattle

On May 8th, my husband, Erich "Rick" Lauffer, unexpectedly passed away from complications from pneumonia at age 60. Rick was an advocate and supporter of NAMI Seattle and was grateful for the help he received from NAMI, especially through the Family-to-Family course and the Family-to-Family Grads support group. He was frustrated by the "broken mental health system", the need for more research and better treatments and the ignorance about mental illness which perpetuates discrimination and stigma. He supported NAMI's efforts to address these issues.

In the past year, inspired by the "Black Lives Matter" movement, Rick was especially focused on the need for Crisis Intervention Team Training (CIT) for police. He was appalled by reports that a large percentage of people shot by police have mental health problems. He believed that CIT training would help to reduce these numbers.

Though at times disheartened by the daunting issues faced by those living with mental illness, Rick wrote: "Yet there is hope! Many family members heal over time and get back to being able to have good functioning lives of happiness! It is what we all wish for. And it happens every day."

Thank you to the many people who donated to NAMI Seattle in Rick's memory.



NAMI SEATTLE MEMORIAL FUND

In Memory of Erich "Rick" Lauffer

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Trez & Mike Buckland
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Gavin & Brenda Fysh
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Patricia Chiarelli

In Memory of Cecilia E. Rongren

Nancy Foley
Ev Eldridge
Cheryl Colman
Joan McNabb
Bev Wilson

GET REGISTERED!

NAMI Seattle is a proud co-sponsor:
The King County Behavioral Health Legislative Forum
Wednesday, December 7, 2016
6:00pm-8:00pm
Town Hall Seattle
1119 8th Ave., Seattle, WA.

Register online! www.kingcounty.gov/legislativeforum
Doors open at 6pm, program at 7pm.
This is a free event.

For more information on the forum, or other upcoming events, visit www.namiseattle.org/events



King County



SAVE THE DATE



We are hosting two MHFA classes:

Saturday, December 3rd - South Seattle
Saturday, December 10th - North Seattle

Check your calendar, and stay tuned for more details! We will send out an email with specific start times and locations in about two weeks. **Scholarships are available** through the King County Consumer Training Fund.

Learn more about **Mental Health First Aid**.

