



High Country

Marya Hornbacher: Tour de Force

Writer Marya Hornbacher blew into town and gave a frank, fast-paced and passionate presentation in ASU's Greer Auditorium Oct. 28th. With edgy humor and candid personal revelations, she kept the audience of more than 100 university and community members riveted for 40 minutes.

Although her original topic was recovery from mental illnesses, she swerved to the political after observing media accounts of recent mass shootings, particularly that which occurred in the Navy Yard in D.C.

"Everyone in the media immediately concluded that the shooter was mentally ill," Marya said. "They reported a troubling past including disciplinary action in the Armed Forces, believing people were attacking him with microwaves, and shooting through the floor of his apartment because his neighbor was making too much noise.

"Was he mentally ill?" she asked. "Maybe. But I AM mentally ill, and my neighbor Antoine plays his music so loud that paintings fall from my walls; he smokes so much pot that it comes up through the vents and gives me sneeze attacks; and yet somehow I have YET to shoot Antoine."

Marya repeated the refrain that 1 in 4 Americans will experience a mental illness in any given year, emphasizing that 25% of us should be a powerful force for change in public policy, in research dollars allocated to studies of the brain, in pharmaceutical research & development. "Can you imagine," she asked, "if several thousand Americans with mental illnesses converged on the U.S. Capitol? They think we just saw a government shutdown – Washington DC would be on total lockdown!"

No other group -- racial, gender, or religious -- experiences such institutional discrimination as the

mentally ill in America, she stated. "These other types of discrimination still occur in personal interactions, in private organizations and on small scales; but as a country, we do not do that anymore. Yet every day, in professional settings, in hospitals, in neighborhoods, people with mental illnesses are passed over, ignored, and avoided.

"Imagine that you are suffering from a gunshot wound to the gut," she went on. "Is a gunshot in the gut necessarily a fatal malady? No. But imagine that you went to an emergency room and were told that the gunshot wound was your own fault, that treatment would probably never work, that your insurance didn't cover gunshot wounds anyway, and that it was probably all in your head that you even had a gunshot wound. What do you think the chances are now that you will recover from your gunshot wound?"

Her call to advocacy was met with sustained applause, and for 40 minutes after concluding her talk, Marya took questions from the audience. She then graciously signed books for everyone who stood in line first to buy them and then to meet her.

Many thanks to this dynamic lady and to all those involved in bringing her to Boone. It was a NAMI High Country Coup!

Laura Anne Middlesteadt
NAMI High Country Board Member



Marya and Laura Anne

Check our website (under programs)
for audio of the event!



High Country

Monday, November 4th at 7 pm

Lisa Curtin to speak on Common Elements of Addictive Behaviors

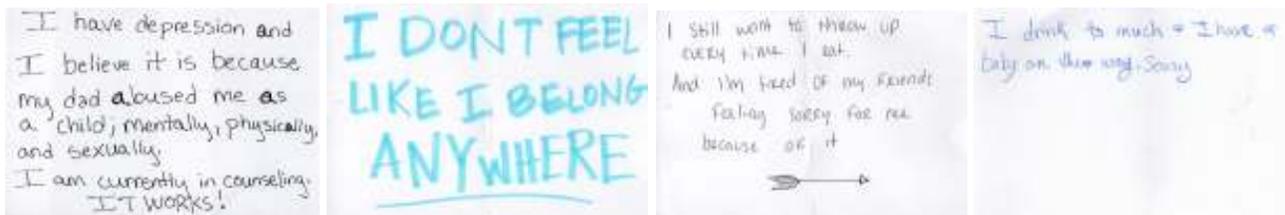
Lisa Curtin, Ph.D., is a Professor of Psychology at Appalachian State University. She received her doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Virginia Tech. Lisa's research interests are rural mental health services, addictive behaviors, psychotherapy outcome and process, and social factors and body image. She will be speaking on the common elements of addictive behaviors.

-Monday, December 2nd at 7 pm – Holiday Celebration

***Our meetings remain at the Lois Harrill Project on Aging, in the Watauga Human Services Building on W. King St. just past Galileo's, coming from downtown Boone.**

Sharing Stories Through Postcards

In the tradition of Post Secret, and in honor of Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 6-12th, NAMI High Country asked the High Country Community to share an anonymous secret with us. We put boxes at Daymark Recovery in Boone, the Hospitality House, and on the ASU Campus. Below are some of the postcards we received. We post ten postcards a week (on Tuesdays) on our website.



High Country Board Members with Marya Hornbacher

