



High Country

Greetings from NAMI President

Hi, My name is Caroline Bond and I been active in NAMI High Country since 2004. Several months ago I took on the role of Board President. While I am at the beginning of this new role I have extensive experience not only with NAMI, but also with a number of local non-profits such as Habitat for Humanity, Western Youth Network, and Hospitality House.

I am passionate about the cause of mental illness because of my own struggles as well as my work with others who have mental illness.

I hope that throughout my life I will continue to work with people who are marginalized and stigmatized in our society, for whatever reason. I am in the process of obtaining a Master's Degree in Social Work at Appalachian State University.

I became involved in NAMI while I was an undergrad at Appalachian State. There was an In Our Own Voice Presentation in the Student Union. This program, which we still offer, allows those living with mental illness to describe their experience to others. I did not know much about NAMI or mental illness. I decided to go to it to see if I related to the people talking. I was trying to figure out if the label "mental illness" fit me. Initially, upon seeing it, I decided it did not fit me. While I knew my emotions could be extreme, I couldn't accept that they were out of the typical range that many adolescent and college age people experience.

It took a long time for me to recognize and accept that some of my behaviors, thoughts, and reactions are indeed severe enough to warrant a diagnosis.

Mental illness, particularly severe depression, has certainly altered the course of my life in a number of ways, both for better and for worse.

I am lucky in that I learned early in my recovery how to navigate the mental health system. I have also had many people in the mental health field and in my personal life that have helped to guide me.

I became involved in NAMI because I struggle with mental illness and I wanted to learn more about it. I have stayed involved in NAMI because I thrive in community. I like to understand others, and I like to be understood myself.

I have seen through more than a decade of mental health treatment that there are many people who haven't had as positive an experience getting treatment as I have.

Sometimes I get frustrated and proclaim, "I just want it to be easy!" But the fact is that I struggle, a lot, and it's not easy. The thing is – everybody struggles with something. Mental illness happens to be the particular way in which I have experience. There are endless ways to struggle, and endless ways to soar. We all have the capacity for both.

There are many non-profits in the High Country area and they help with a wide range of needs. We at NAMI High Country want to fill the role of helping those who struggle with mental illness.

Our meetings are open to all – those living with mental illness, family members, professionals, students – any and all who have an interest are welcome.



Caroline Bond
NAMI High Country President

(Program Information on back)



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Upcoming Meetings:

- **Monday, September 9th at 7pm – Denise Levy to speak on Therapeutic Writing**

Denise Levy is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has worked as an in-home, family therapist and program director. Her practice experience focused on mental health, family dynamics, family preservation, residential placement, crisis management, and developmental disabilities. She is a professor at Appalachian State University and one of her areas of interest is Expressive Arts.

- **Monday, October 7th at 7pm – Murray Hawkinson to speak on Dialectical Behavior Therapy**
- **Monday, November 4th at 7pm – Lisa Curtin to speak on Addictions**
- **Monday, December 2nd at 7pm – Holiday Celebration**

Our September meeting will be at the Senior Center, located in the same building as Daymark and Social Services just past Galileo's Restaurant (Coming from downtown).

Remaining meetings will be held at the Public Library Conference Room.

Sharing Stories: In the tradition of Post Secret, and in honor of Mental Illness Awareness Week, October 6-12th, NAMI High Country is asking the High Country Community to send anonymous postcards sharing some bit or piece of your personal story as it relates to your life or journey with mental illness.

How will you condense your life or a piece of your personal story onto the front of one postcard? The only requirements are that it is post card size, and mailed to NAMI by October 12, 2013. It will be displayed on the NAMI High Country Website, unless you indicate otherwise.

Example of postcard:



*Coming up in October:
Marya Hornbacher to
speak. Marya has written
Wasted: A Memoir of
Anorexia and Bulimia and
Madness: A Bipolar Life

Date: Monday, October 28
Time: 7:30pm-9:30pm
Location: IG Greer Auditorium
on ASU Campus
Admission to the event is free

Contact us:

828-278-9293 (message only)

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Mail postcards to:
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