



High Country

Remembering Robin Williams

Like many of you, when I first heard the news about Robin Williams' death I felt a great sense of disbelief. As an entertainer, he transcended generations and genres to delight and inspire millions of people. He devoted his life to bringing joy and laughter to others, so it's no surprise that he touched so many people so profoundly.

Like so many, I was surprised at how much of an effect his loss had on me. I remember watching Robin with my children. He was a welcome and familiar face whose almost child-like enthusiasm connected with all of us. He brought compassion and humanity to his dramatic roles —his portrayal of a psychiatrist in *Good Will Hunting* is my all-time favorite.

As someone who gave so much of himself to others, Robin struggled privately with addiction and severe depression which can distort your thinking and make a period of depression feel endless.

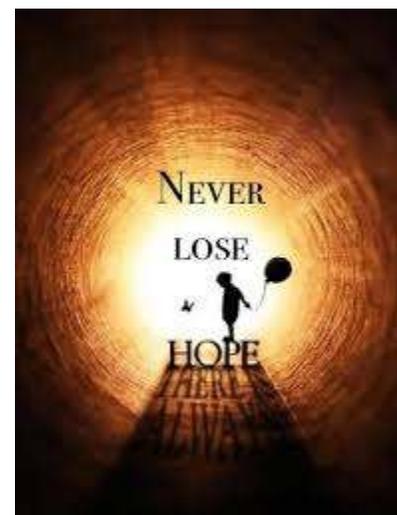
The truth is that we don't talk enough about depression. If you are worried for yourself, a friend or a loved one simply talking about it can be helpful. Learning the signs, symptoms and treatment options about depression and other mental health conditions is a place to start. You can visit www.nami.org or call the NAMI HelpLine at (800) 850-NAMI for information and support. If you are in crisis, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-TALK (8255).

We all deal with loss in different ways. Some of us might have watched Robin Williams' movies yesterday or remembered a time we saw him perform. Others spoke about how depression had affected them and how they related to him. Almost as soon as the news broke many NAMI supporters made memorial donations in honor of "Robin" or "Mork" or even "O Captain! My Captain." Others were inspired to call the NAMI HelpLine to volunteer.

Mental illness can be isolating. But it doesn't have to be. When we talk about mental illness, depression and suicide we inform each other about how to help.

Robin Williams will be missed. We wish him peace. We offer our condolences and thoughts to his family as we say goodbye to a fearless and beloved entertainer.

Dr. Ken Duckworth
Medical Director, NAMI



Next Meeting
Monday, September 8, 2014
7pm
Watauga County Public Library Conference Room
Carrie Hodges and Kim Winebarger
Suicide Support Group

Our meetings are in the Watauga County Public Library conference room. Watauga County Public Library in downtown Boone is located at 140 Queen Street, behind Mast General Store. If you get there before 7pm you will be able to go in the main door. After that we will enter and exit through the side door.



Know the Warning Signs of Suicide

How do you remember the Warning Signs of Suicide?
Here's an easy-to-remember mnemonic:

IS PATH WARM?

| | |
|----------|-----------------|
| I | Ideation |
| S | Substance Abuse |
| P | Purposelessness |
| A | Anxiety |
| T | Trapped |
| H | Hopelessness |
| W | Withdrawal |
| A | Anger |
| R | Recklessness |
| M | Mood Changes |

**If you live in Watauga
or surrounding
counties please call
828-264-HELP (4357) if
you or someone you
know is having a mental
health crisis.**

Warning Signs of Acute Risk:

Threatening to hurt or kill him or herself, or talking of wanting to hurt or kill him/herself; and or,
Looking for ways to kill him/herself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means; and/or,
Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide, when these actions are out of the ordinary.

These might be remembered as expressed or communicated ideation. If observed, seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for a referral.

Additional Warning Signs:

Increased **substance** (alcohol or drug) **use**
No reason for living; no sense of **purpose** in life
Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all of the time
Feeling **trapped** - like there's no way out
Hopelessness
Withdrawal from friends, family and society
Rage, uncontrolled **anger**, seeking revenge
Acting **reckless** or engaging in risky activities, seemingly without thinking
Dramatic **mood changes**

If observed, seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for a referral.