



**GENERAL MEETINGS**

NAMI Ventura County holds monthly educational General Meetings dealing with a wide range of issues relating to mental illness.

These meetings are free and open to the public, and are held from 6:45 to 9:00 pm on the second Tuesday of each month (except August and December).

**Next Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 8th, 2012**  
Vineyard Community Church  
1320 Flynn Road, Camarillo, CA 93012

**MEDITATION: A TOOL FOR SELF CARE**

**Ruth Cherry, Ph.D.**

While the combination of therapy and medication is crucial to recovery, the addition of self-awareness tools and skills can also be beneficial. Meditation is a mindfulness practice that allows you to "let go" and be present in the moment. In the fast-paced world that we live in, we often do not take the time to clear our heads and be truly present in our surroundings. This can be especially true for individuals and families living with mental illness, because we often experience high levels of anxiety or constantly racing thoughts.



Ruth Cherry, PhD will speak about meditation as a profound experience of healing. Family members as well as clients can use the practices of detachment, presence, and trust daily to improve their physical, mental, and emotional health. Meditation is to be experienced as Dr. Cherry discusses in her book, *Meditation for Sceptics*. Sceptics and meditators trust their experience, not an authority's words or tradition or experts.

Come learn to be your own expert by moving out of your head, into your heart, and trusting your personal experience of healing.

Ruth Cherry, Phd, is a clinical psychologist in private practice for over thirty-five years. She is the author of several books, including "Good People", "Matters of the Soul" and "Meditation for Sceptics". Her web site is [www.meditationintro.com](http://www.meditationintro.com)

*A Family Support Group is held prior to each General Meeting from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm*

Coming next month  
**February 12th, 2012**

**ASSERTIVE ADVOCACY FOR FAMILIES**

with  
**Robert Liberman, M.D.**  
*Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry*  
*UCLA School of Medicine*  
(see page 4 for details)



**NAMI Holiday Party a Smashing Success!**

*by Renee Foote and Mark Neal*

On Tuesday, December 11th, the holiday season became a bit brighter for hundreds of Ventura County mental health clients and providers who attended the annual Holiday Party at the Elks Lodge in Oxnard hosted by NAMI Ventura County and Ventura County Behavioral Health, with a sponsorship from Turning Point Foundation. Although the weather outside was cold and frightful, inside the atmosphere was warm and delightful, with a lot of holiday cheer and people dressed in festive attire.



The event was a smashing success and the banquet room was filled with a happy crowd of approximately 580 laughing and chatting people including local dignitaries such as Ventura County Executive Officer Michael Powers. Everyone was served a delicious holiday feast of turkey with mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, mixed vegetables, salad, and rolls. The guests also enjoyed desserts such as cake, cookies, brownies, and breads, which were baked and donated by volunteers and attendees.

Fifty volunteers gave their time checking in clients, serving food and drinks, cleaning up at the end of the night, and doing preparation work for the party. Among Friends, an adult day care center in Oxnard, ran a shuttle service with 4 vans for clients living in Board and Cares. They drove nearly 200 people to and from the party. Throughout the evening, 50 door prizes were raffled off, and NAMI gave away 385 gifts. The door prizes and gifts were made possible through donations by NAMI members and friends.

Volunteers also provided much of the evening's entertainment. Throughout the early part of the evening Nick Bridgman played dinner music on keyboard. VCBH Director Meloney Roy and several other VCBH managers and staff led the guests as they sang traditional holiday carols such as "Jingle Bells," "Deck the Halls," "Silver Bells," "Frosty the Snowman," and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas."

*(contd on page 2)*

*Holiday Party (contd)*

Adding to the festivities was a circus-themed show performed in part by three volunteers who met at a recent NAMI Family-to-Family class. Rick Moore played the gregarious and colorful ring master while Dustin Wiggins played clown, juggling and riding a unicycle. There were two musical performers; Mark Neal, who sang and played banjo and Basil Augustine sang his unique vaudeville-inspired rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

Then DJ Matt Worrell of Star DJs started spinning music and instantly the floor was crowded with happy, energetic dancers. Especially popular was the "Cupid's Shuffle" line dance. Mary and Jennifer, two clients who were celebrating their birthdays, were serenaded with "Happy Birthday," sung by everyone in attendance.

The holiday party is a very important event for many mental health clients. The holiday season can be challenging for all of us, and especially for the mentally ill who sometimes feel left out and isolated. An underlying theme of the holiday party is acceptance and inclusion. That theme was clearly felt on the dance floor, with clients, providers, and volunteers all celebrating life together. An important part of the holiday

party is that every client present receives gifts so that they all feel remembered, important, and cared-for. As clients left, they received a blanket, holiday bracelet, and Hershey bar.

After and during the party tremendous gratitude was expressed by the attendees, especially clients. One voice mail left at NAMI expressed gratitude for the help of case manager Lenier Baxter who helped to coordinate transportation for the party. The message said, "I just want to thank you so much for all your help. Being mentally ill, my friend and I have trouble getting organized and doing things right. So we were there early and everything - it was very nice, you made it possible for us to have a lovely holiday and we really appreciate you and bless you, bless you. I hope you have a wonderful holiday. Thank you, Mr. Lenier." Laura Flores, Program Manager with the Turning Point Foundation wrote, "Thank you for the NAMI Holiday party. It was great! Our members and staff thoroughly enjoyed it. Next year we hope to have more participants." Vivian Cirricione, a client living at Casa de Esperanza said, "I can't remember when I have had that much fun on the dance floor. I am so grateful I went."

The holiday party was a heart-warming success made possible by generous donations and volunteer efforts. Special thanks to everyone who made the party a success! ❖

## NAMI HOLIDAY PARTY 2012



## November General Meeting A Revolving Door

by Mark Neal

November's General Meeting featured an Oscar nominated documentary entitled, "A Revolving Door" – a poignant chronicle of local youth Tommy Lennon and his family's struggles with Tommy's undiagnosed traumatic brain injury and mental illness. Through the creative use of home movies this short film offers a deeply intimate view into the emotional turmoil they experienced during Tommy's adolescent to early adulthood years as they dealt with his unexplained repeated episodes of mania, psychotic breaks, drug use, homelessness, and imprisonment. After the film, Tommy, along with his parents, Debbie and Tom Lennon stood for an in-depth, heartwarming, and informative question and answer session, during which they told the hope-filled story of Tommy's progress in his recovery since the film was made. The meeting was well attended, with staff and clients of Casa de Esperanza (Tommy's current housing) and psychology students from Moorpark College and Cal Lutheran in attendance.

Tommy's odyssey through mental illness began with a surfing accident at 16 when his surfboard struck him in the right front of his head. Though the blow was serious enough to require 71 stitches and his doctors were concerned about the possibility of concussion, no one suspected long-term brain injury. His parents now realize that Tommy was never really the same after that accident.

For the first few years after his accident Tommy's life was not all bad. After high school, Tommy started a business, fell in love, got married, and had a son. However, he began using street drugs, including heroine, and things began to unravel. His marriage fell apart, he lost his wife and son, and for the next ten years life for Tommy was a revolving door, in and out of jail, prison, and locked facilities. After a period of improvement with medication and therapy, Tommy challenged his confinement and was set free by the court. Though his intention was to improve his life, he began using methamphetamine and became homeless. The revolving door of his life continued, with periods at home, multiple hospitalizations at mental health facilities, and imprisonments. The film makes the point that today the judicial system imprisons rather than treats the mentally ill. It points to a need for more resources for families who have tried all they can and have nowhere to turn for help for their mentally ill loved ones.

When the lights came on after the film, the emotional response from the audience was evident, as many wiped tears from their eyes. Tommy and his parents stood and answered questions and the story they told was filled with hope. Tommy showed remarkable poise speaking to such a large audience and his bright smile, authenticity, and honesty were infectious. He shared that recently there was a turn of events in his life that unexpectedly helped him in his recovery. In January of this year, Tommy's father had a stroke, which brought Tommy's family together. They helped Tommy get

relocated off the streets and now he is taking personal responsibility for his recovery and deeply wants to get better. He is currently living at Casa de Esperanza, doing lots of group work, attending Narcotics Anonymous meetings, focusing on his health, and taking classes to become a peer counselor. He wants to be there for himself and others. Tommy now believes in a higher power and, smiling, told the audience, "this is the real me, who was there all along, waiting to come out."

Tommy is currently working to get his message out to the public. He is seeking to give presentations to interested organizations that would include showing the film and a question and answer period with him. Anyone who knows of organizations who may be interested in hosting one of his presentations or anyone who might volunteer to provide transportation should contact the NAMI Ventura County office for more information. ❖

## PROVIDER EDUCATION PROGRAM

The NAMI Provider Education Program on Mental Illness is a 5-week course that is specially designed for staff at public agencies, or for private practitioners, who work directly with people living with severe and persistent mental illnesses. Here are some comments from attendees:

*"I would absolutely recommend this course to colleagues at my agency to get the clearest understanding of mental illness. This course is a must!"*

*"I have been a social worker for 20+ years, but I found a new depth of empathy and compassion, specially in dealing with systems and providers, that I didn't realize was possible before taking this course."*

*"Extremely useful in helping providers like myself understand the complexity of mental illness and the impact it has on the family."*

### **Class Begins: February 6, 2013**

5 Wednesdays, 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm

### **Class Begins: March 18, 2013**

5 Mondays, 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm

### LOCATION

Ventura County Medical Center  
Cafeteria Conference Room

3291 Loma Vista Rd., Ventura, CA 93003

The five-person teaching team consists of two Family teachers, two consumers, and one mental health professional, all with lived experience of mental illness.

This FREE training course is for mental health professionals, case managers, residential care givers, front office staff, R.N.'s, psychologists, homeless outreach workers, vocational rehabilitation and job counselors, club house programmers, psychiatrists, therapists, and all those who serve individuals with serious mental illness. 15 CEUs are available at no charge for licensed clinicians.

For more information, see the Provider Education page at [www.namiventura.org](http://www.namiventura.org). Register today. Call NAMI Ventura County at (805) 641-2426. ❖

**NAMI General Meeting  
Tuesday February 12th, 2012, 6:45 pm**

**Assertive Advocacy for Families to Participate in  
Treatment of their Mentally Ill Relative  
with  
Robert Liberman, M.D.**

Families are an untapped resource for improving the quality and effectiveness of the diagnosis, treatment planning, success of treatment and rehabilitation and recovery of their loved ones who experience severe and disabling mental illness. Sadly, families are often excluded from the key periods of time when their relative is being evaluated and treated by mental health providers and systems of care. The spurious and groundless "curtain of confidentiality" must be opened by family members, patients and providers alike to insure that diagnosis and treatment are provided accurately and effectively.

Dr. Liberman will describe strategies and tactics for family members to unite in gaining full access to the mental health services provided to their loved ones. He will bring copies of his recent book, "Recovery from Disability: Manual of Psychiatric Rehabilitation", for signing and selling at a discount to those attending the February meeting.

*Dr. Robert Liberman is a Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry, UCLA School of Medicine and Director of the UCLA Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program*

**An Interview with Dr. Robert Liberman**

*by Mark Klein*

*I have been fortunate to have known Dr. Robert Liberman for almost 30 years. At this time, he serves as my Life Coach; in the past, he has been my psychiatrist and my therapist. The full interview with Dr. Liberman was written for publication in the Painted Brain, a peer-driven arts and outreach magazine empowering the community of those living with mental health issues.*

**Mark:** Why have you chosen to keep me as a patient so long?

**Dr. Liberman:** I feel it is very important to have a continuing relationship with my patients, because new obstacles and challenges arise in anyone's life, and my role and rehabilitation is to teach the skills and problem-solving capacities of the individual to meet those challenges and to achieve those goals. Goals change and problems emerge. The provision of services for any kind of a long-standing disorder, where there is always vulnerability for relapse and stress-related difficulty, requires an indefinite kind of working relationship. Also, one of the things that's very clear in memoirs of people who have made good recoveries from a serious illness, and it doesn't matter whether it is a psychiatric disorder or serious neurological or cardiac problem, that one of the key things about people who do well and go beyond illness and achieve normal lives, is that someone, some medical person or someone in a help giving role has held out hope and optimism for that person even when that individual has given up hope. It takes a relationship that has to be built up over a long haul.

**Mark:** Dr. Liberman, you are open about your own bipolar illness. How does this affliction figure into how you practice psychiatry?

**Dr. Liberman:** Well, I think certainly it enabled me to have more empathy for my patients. It has, at times, quite a few times, actually, by my pointing out to my patients that I take medications every day and that I had electroconvulsive therapy to pull me out of a deep depression. I think it motivates my patients to follow treatment and not to see it as a stigma because they see a person who is a successful

physician, who has gone through something along the lines of what are going through and I think that gives them hope that if they get the best treatment and continue with it and use their medications appropriately, collaborate with their physician, psychiatrist, therapist, then they can reach the goals they have for themselves.

**Mark:** I understand that you are prominent in your field. What are your personal qualities that you can talk about that made you successful as a psychiatrist?

**Dr. Liberman:** I have a natural curiosity. I have been curious about all manner of things in my life and a very broad interest in many areas of human life and civilization. I think that curiosity has been very helpful in my wanting to find out about the uniqueness of the individuals that I have tried to help and not to deal with the individual superficially as a person with symptoms on the surface, really that are seen, rather than underlying the full expression of my patients and their goals and how they see themselves -- what their life paths have been and where they have developed strengths and also what weaknesses they many have that need to be strengthened. So, curiosity has been one thing that has enabled me to go beyond a more superficial approach to seeing patients and knowing a patient and helping a patient.

The other is persistence. I am an extraordinarily persistent person and I truly believe persistence is the path to least failure. I have tried to convey that to patients as well as friends and relatives. I don't give up. I'm like a bull dog. I grab hold of someone's arm or grab hold of their life and try to do whatever I can to make good things happen. And, I don't get easily discouraged. So, I think those two traits, curiosity and persistence.

The other trait is trying to find answers, wanting to make things better, not just for myself or my family, but also to solve problems all of the time and when I work with my patients, I am always, not just seeing a problem, but trying to search for alternative ways of overcoming those problems and helping a person clear the pathway to success and achieving what they want from life.

**Mark:** You accept Medicare and Medi-Cal, is that right?

**Dr. Liberman:** I often treat, because of my role as an active community leader; people come to me with problems that turn out to be psychological problems. So I treat people without any payment at all because I feel that's a contribution to my community.

**Mark:** Finally, how would you describe your approach to patients with severe mental illness: your theories, the way you try to accomplish success with your patients, what you tell people with a different ideology-basically, and your theories of rehabilitation?

**Dr. Liberman:** One of the important things is to make sure that any of my patients grasp the significance of having good relations with their families. We're never alone in our lives and our family is the thread that holds our lives together from the time we're born to the time we die. Family almost always, no matter how dysfunctional it may be, how impoverished it may be, almost always has a desire to help each other. And many psychiatrists unfortunately feel that family, and this is partly a result of Freud's writings, feel the family has a negative influence so keep the family at arm's length. So I think that's one of the most important things that I have encouraged in my work and I have developed treatment programs from the time I was a resident. I just saw it so clearly-that treating a person in an isolated way, without involving the family was like trying tying one hand behind the patient's back. In terms of prospects of recovery and moving forward in their lives. The other thing that is extremely important that I've devoted myself to is the fact that person's competence and ability to communicate and solve interpersonal problems, that emerge at work, with friends and in church. ❖

*Do you know if your psychotropic medications are at a therapeutic level?*

**Monitoring Therapeutic Drugs in the Laboratory**

by Michael Baclacian, CLS (ASCP)

Doctors routinely place orders for therapeutic drug monitoring (TDM). Commonly monitored drugs include anti-epileptics, mood stabilizers and anti-depressants. This article is meant to provide an overview of TDM and define the role of TDM testing in patient care. We want to briefly discuss the methods used to monitor them and list the drugs most frequently monitored.



An educational guide from Siemens Healthcare states that “The science of TDM grew out of the recognition that: certain drugs have a narrow therapeutic range, in concentrations above the upper limit of the range, the drug can be toxic, in concentrations below the lower limit of the range, the drug can be ineffective, and not all patients have the same response at similar doses.”

“Indications for TDM testing include: where the drug efficacy is difficult to establish clinically, suspected toxicity, inadequate therapeutic response, compliance concerns, dosage change, change in patient’s clinical state, and change in co-medications”. Other indications for testing are the following: if the drug was given orally, did it stay down, is the patient a child with a faster metabolism or is the patient elderly with a slower metabolism.

TDM testing is not indicated when toxicity is not a concern, as is the case with Penicillin or in cases where effect of the relationship remains undefined (Antidepressants).

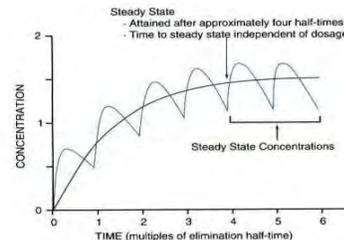
Drugs commonly monitored include: anti-epileptics, antiarrhythmics, antibiotics, antimanics, antineoplastics (cancer drugs), bronchodilators, and immunosuppressives (for organ transplants), and tricyclic anti-depressants.

Out of the drugs commonly monitored, most relevant to us are anti-epileptics (Depakote), mood stabilizers (Lithium), and atricyclic anti-depressants (amitriptyline & Imipramine) since they are used in mental health therapy. Tricyclic anti-depressants also fall under the category drugs of abuse in the laboratory and levels are measured in order to determine whether someone who is not given a prescription is abusing them for the feeling of euphoria, which is such the case in clubs and discos in this day of age.

Additionally, TDM is done in the case of anti-epileptics when the patient is seizure free and experiencing no adverse effects (determines therapeutic concentration), when questioning an overdose, to determine the cause of relapse, before and after any change in dose, and before and after introducing a drug that may interact.

Pharmacokinetics is the study of how drug levels change over time in the body. Therapeutic range is the range of drug concentrations associated with high degree of efficacy and low risk of dose-related

toxicity in the majority of patients. Major sources of pharmacokinetic variability include patient compliance - or lack thereof, age-neonates, children, and elderly, physiology-gender, pregnancy, disease-hepatic, renal, cardiovascular, respiratory, and drug-to-drug interactions. Renal dysfunction reduces clearance and may contribute to drug accumulation and increased risk of adverse drug effects. With their knowledge in pharmacokinetics and information they gather from your lab results, a doctor can prescribe you a dose that suits you the best.



Steady state represents the equilibrium between the amount of drug given and the amount eliminated over the dosing interval. In general it takes a drug four to five half-lives to reach steady state.

Sampling should occur when the drug has reached its steady state to judge efficacy and toxicity of the drug therapy. Steady state concentrations fluctuate between a maximum (peak) and minimum (trough) concentrations with each dosing interval. The peak serum concentration is the highest serum drug concentration that occurs following a single dose. Trough serum concentration is the lowest drug concentration during a dosing interval. The trough concentration generally occurs immediately before the administration of the next dose. Trough values are the least variable concentrations and are most often used to establish therapeutic ranges.

Metabolism is the conversion of a drug from circulating blood to target tissue, but due to genetics everyone metabolizes drugs differently. People who metabolize drugs faster than the rest are given higher doses, and the others who metabolize slower are given lower doses.

Elimination is the removal or transformation of a drug in circulation, usually via the kidney and liver. The elimination half-life is the time required for the amount of the drug to decrease by 50%.

In this article we have discussed the methodology used in TDM testing and looked at several important pieces of information that physicians gather from TDM lab results. We know steady state concentrations can be reached in as little time as 5 days; however, we all know from our experience that it takes much longer till the client demonstrates visible improvements in their sociability, confidence, and financial life. This highlights the importance of taking medications consistently; it takes a very long time till someone can change course to calmer seas, somewhere between 2 to 3 years from my personal experience. ❖

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**Ventura County Behavioral Health  
Adult Outpatient Service Sites**

Main Number, STAR Program: **(866) 998-2243**  
(Screening, Triage, Assessment & Referral)  
Behavioral Health Crisis Team: **(866) 998-2243**

<b>If You Live In:</b>	<b>Your Outpatient Clinic:</b>
Ojai or Ventura (excluding 93004)	4258 Telegraph Rd Ventura, CA 93003
Fillmore, Piru or Ventura 93004	333 W. Harvard Blvd. Santa Paula, CA 93060
Oxnard, Port Hueneme or El Rio	1911 Williams Dr., Ste 110 Oxnard, CA 93036
Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, and Ventura County areas of Agoura, Westlake, Bell Canyon	125 W. Thousand Oaks Bl. Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
Simi Valley or Moorpark	1227 E. Los Angeles Ave Simi Valley, CA 93065

**Acute Care Psychiatric Hospitals**

**Hillmont Psychiatric Center**  
(805) 652-6729  
200 N. Hillmont Avenue, Ventura, CA 93003

**Aurora Vista del Mar Hospital**  
(805) 653-6434  
801 Seneca Street, Ventura, CA 93001

**NAMI Ventura County  
Contact Information**

**Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1613, Camarillo, CA 93011**  
Office: 1355 Del Norte Road, Camarillo, CA 93010  
Phone: (805) 641-2426  
Helpline: (805) 500-6264  
Fax: (805) 275-2188  
e-mail: namiventura@gmail.com  
Website: www.namiventura.org

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Program Coordinator: Chris Novak  
Program Coordinator: Joan Wiggins

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**NAMI Ventura County  
Membership Application**

Please fill out the form completely, and mail with check payable to:  
NAMI Ventura County, P.O. Box 1613, Camarillo, CA 93011-1613

**Check One:** \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Level, one year (check one):**

\_\_\_\_\_ General (\$35)\* \_\_\_\_\_ Silver (\$50)\* \_\_\_\_\_ Gold (\$100)\* \_\_\_\_\_ Open Door\*\* (\$3)

Membership Dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*\*A portion of your membership dues (\$20) is sent to NAMI National and NAMI California.*

*\*\* An open door membership is available to anyone who cannot afford to pay full membership.  
Dues and donations to NAMI Ventura County are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.*

NAMI Ventura County needs your help. Please mark the activities in which you can volunteer:

- |   |  |   |                                      |
|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NAMI Office Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Support Groups  | <input type="checkbox"/> Family-to-Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach         | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislation     | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership       | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity        | <input type="checkbox"/> Speakers Bureau | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other       |

## NAMI FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS

Please note – These NAMI groups are for family members. Consumer/client support groups are listed separately.

Support group attendees and other family members are urged to come back so as to help others! Drop in – no need to call ahead!

To check the date of the next meeting, go to [www.namiventura.org](http://www.namiventura.org) and select "Calendar" from the top menu bar. Or call NAMI at (805) 500-NAMI.

**Camarillo** – Meets at 5:30 p.m., the second Tuesday at Vineyard Community Church, 1320 Flynn Rd, Camarillo.

**Thousand Oaks** – Meets at 7:00 p.m. the first and third Monday of each month at Hacienda de Feliz Community Room, 2084 Los Feliz Drive, Thousand Oaks.

### Ventura – NOW MEETS ON TUESDAYS!!

The meeting on Wednesday January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013 still stands. After that: Meets at 6:30 pm, the first and third Tuesdays at Bible Fellowship Church, 6950 Ralston St (use entrance from Johnson Drive), Building 300, Room 302, Ventura.

### SPOUSE SUPPORT GROUP

For spouses and partners of people living with a mental illness  
(New schedule will be announced in January 2013)

### GRUPO DE APOYO

For Spanish-speaking family members

**Oxnard** – Meets at 6:30 pm, the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at the Turning Point Clubhouse, 426 W. 5th Street, Oxnard. For information in Spanish, call: Lisa (805) 984-2839 or Pablo (805) 794-6316 ❖

## NAMI Ventura County Help Line (805) 500-NAMI

Volunteers and staff can provide information about a variety of resources, including mental health services, housing, legal assistance, support groups, classes for families and clients and more. Open Mon to Fri 9 am to 5 pm.

If you have a mental health emergency, call the Ventura County Behavioral Health Crisis Team at (866) 998-2243. Or call police at 911 and ask for a CIT trained officer.

## NAMI CONNECTION

### New Support Group Starts January 2013

NAMI Ventura County is pleased to announce the launch of a **NAMI Connection** group.

**NAMI Connection** is a recovery support group program, for adults living with mental illness, which is expanding in communities all across the country. These groups provide a place that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope.

**NAMI Connection** groups offer a casual and relaxed approach to sharing the challenges and successes of coping with mental illness.

Each group meets weekly for 90 minutes, is offered free of charge and follows a flexible structure without an educational format.

**WHEN:** First and third Wednesday of each month, beginning January 4, 2013, 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm

**WHERE:** NAMI Ventura County Office  
1355 Del Norte Rd, Camarillo, CA 93010

## PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

Please note – These groups are for consumers/clients. Family member support groups are listed separately.

### Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance

**Ventura:** DBSA Support Group meets every Tuesday, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, Bible Fellowship Church, 6950 Ralston Street (& Johnson Drive), Building 300, Room 301, Ventura. Park in the lot off Johnson Drive. No registration required. For more information, call (805) 253-3289.

See [www.DBSAlliance.org](http://www.DBSAlliance.org) or [www.facebook.com/DBSA.Ventura](http://www.facebook.com/DBSA.Ventura)

**Ventura:** DBSA Support Group meets 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the Adult Wellness and Recovery Center, Turning Point Foundation, 1065 E. Main Street, Ventura. For more information, call (805) 671-5038

**Oak Park:** DBSA Conejo Valley Depression Support Group meets Mondays at 7:00 p.m. at Church of the Epiphany, Mitchel Hall, Room 6, 5450 Churchwood Dr. (Kanan & Churchwood) Oak Park. No registration required. For more information, call Rachel at: 818-601-7767 or email [dbsaconejovalley@gmail.com](mailto:dbsaconejovalley@gmail.com)  
See [www.dbsalliance.org/conejovalley](http://www.dbsalliance.org/conejovalley) ❖

## OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR CLIENTS

### THE WELLNESS CENTER (TWC)

Turning Point Foundation operates an Adult Wellness Center (TWC) five days a week in Oxnard and part-time in Ventura. The TWC is open to all clients and is staffed by Peer Support Specialists. Many activities and classes scheduled daily.

Their mission is to provide a positive healing environment for adults with mental health challenges and to build on their strengths, develop new skills, connect to the community, and receive support from peers on their journey to recovery.

Oxnard TWC, 2697 Saviers Rd., Oxnard CA 93033  
Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm  
and Thursday 2:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Ventura TWC, 1065 E. Main St., Ventura, CA 93001  
Open Thursday, 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm, Saturday 10:00 am to 4:45 pm

For more information, call (805) 653-5045

### TAY TUNNEL

Run by Pacific Clinics, this drop-in center is aimed at helping Transitional Age Youth (TAY), age 18-25, and connecting them with services. Many activities daily. Open to all TAY clients.

TAY Tunnel, 141 W. 5th Street, Suite D, Oxnard, Tel: (805) 240-2538  
Open Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:30 pm

### WRAP CLASSES & more

VCBH contracts with Recovery Innovations of California, Inc. (RICA) to run a WRAP program for clients – "Wellness Recovery Action Plan".

This is a 16-hour mental health wellness and recovery course that will help one regain control of their life. This course focuses on: one's strengths, identifying triggers, warning signs, when things are breaking down, and the development of a crisis plan.

RICA's mission is to create opportunities and environments that empower people to recover, to succeed in accomplishing their goals and to reconnect to themselves, others, and to meaning and purpose in life.

RICA offers other class for clients, including:  
Wellness and Empowerment in Life and Living (WELL)  
Medication for Success  
and more.

For class schedules, contact RICA at (805) 981-5439. ❖



**NAMI Ventura County**  
**P.O. Box 1613**  
**Camarillo, CA 93011-1613**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

<p><b>Non-Profit Org</b>  <b>US Postage</b>  <b>PAID</b>  <b>Oxnard, CA</b>  <b>Permit No. 00280</b></p>
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**NEW CLASSES STARTING**

**No charge ▪ Registration required ▪ Call or email for information**

(805) 641-2426 namiventura@gmail.com

**NAMI FAMILY-TO-FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program is a series of twelve weekly classes for family caregivers of individuals with mental illness. The trained co-teachers are family members themselves and know what it's like to have a loved one struggling with one of these brain disorders.

For family members, partners and friends of individuals with: Major Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder, Borderline Personality Disorder, Panic Disorder and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Co-occurring Brain Disorders and Addictive Disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

*Enrollment is restricted to attendees who have a family member or friend with a mental illness.*

**VENTURA**

**Class begins: January 31, 2013**

*(note changed date)*

12 Thursdays, 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm

ARC Ventura County

295 S. Arcade Drive, Ventura

**MOORPARK**

**Class begins: March 18, 2013**

12 Mondays, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Clinicas del Camino Real

4279 Tierra Rejada Rd., Moorpark

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE**

**Class begins: January 17, 2013**

12 Thursdays, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Calvary Community Church

5495 Via Rocas, Westlake Village

*(Class is full – waiting list only)*

**FAMILIA A FAMILIA**

**(for Spanish-speaking attendees)**

**Class begins: February 7, 2013**

12 Thursdays, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Clinicas del Camino Real

200 South Wells Rd., Ventura