



The VOICE

Brought to you by MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION in Niagara County, Inc.

Spring/Summer

36 Pine Street | Lockport, NY 14094 | (716) 433-3780 | www.mhanc.com

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From the Desk of the

Executive Director

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Hello,

I hope this finds everyone healthy and well. I've been sprucing up my house by completing the projects that I'd been putting off all winter. Things like, refinishing a bathroom cabinet, sanding, staining and hanging trim, even looking for indoor wooden shutters for the kitchen—and those are just my indoor projects! Due to the wet weather recently, I haven't had much of a chance to do a lot of yard work. Thankfully my husband and I got quite a bit done before the rains hit. There is always so much to do!

How's your mental health? Lately, I've been focusing on positive activities and people while staying away from those that are negative. Because May was Mental Health Awareness month, I provided an hour-long "Brown Bag Discussion" each Tuesday at the MHA from 11:30-12:30. This activity helped me concentrate on mental wellness and positivity as that's what I geared each discussion toward. It was a lot of fun and I've been lucky to have had the opportunity of meeting new people each week. We may be doing more of our "Brown Bag Discussions" so keep checking our website for future announcements!

Mental wellness is so very important to all of our wellbeing. Evidence points towards a significant link between how you feel about yourself and your overall health and sense of wellbeing. It's been proven that feelings of inferiority have the capacity to pave the way to illness and disease. On the other hand, if you feel good about yourself, have a positive outlook and maintain an active involvement in life, you're more likely to be happy and healthy. Keep giving yourself those positive self-talks that can greatly improve your mental wellness. If you get stuck or start to struggle, don't forget that we're here for you.

Fondly,

Cheryl



Cheryl Blacklock

Our HELP Book is ONLINE!

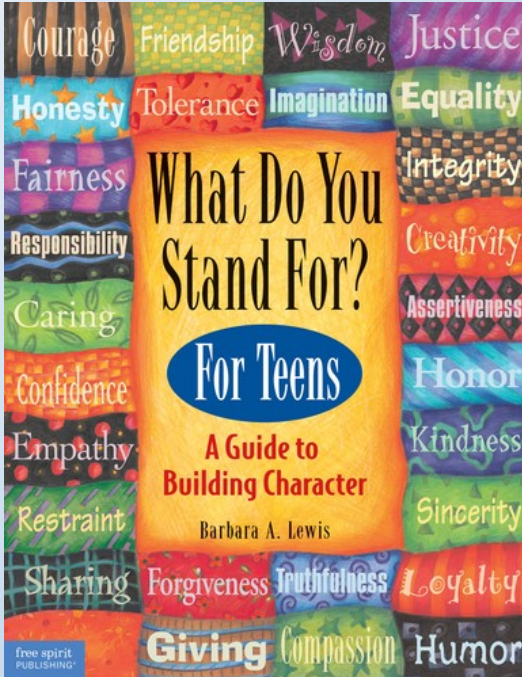
Take our HELP Book with you everywhere you go! Computer & smart phone accessible. Our HELP Book can be found at: www.helpbookniagara.wordpress.com

Become a Member

Call us for a membership form at 433-3780 or submit online at www.mhanc.com.

Book Review:***What Do You Stand For?* By Barbra A. Lewis**

Jackie Kenney, Program Assistant
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“What Do You Stand For?” by Barbara A. Lewis is subtitled “A Kid’s Guide to Building Character” but it seems that the building blocks of courage, communication, citizenship, justice and loyalty are ideas that any of us could use to help improve ourselves and our relationships with others. The book offers personal stories, and also includes character dilemmas to help in the thinking process about making choices. There are also suggestions for character building activities that range from volunteer ideas to reaching out to a friend, or starting an exercise club. You can also read useful tips such as don’t indulge in little white lies or keeping track of your mistakes so you learn from your errors. Craft ideas and role play reinforce significant character building steps and make it fun to think about more ways to improve yourself. I think this book could be useful for almost any age group.

COME EXPLORE THE MHA LIBRARY!

We have hundreds of books on a variety of topics that you can borrow. We have some movies that you can borrow, too! Stop into our office today and see what the MHA Library has that interests you!



PROGRAM UPDATE:**Compeer Niagara**

Tara Porter, Director
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2017 is proving to be a very exciting year for both of our Compeer programs. We have had several great events so far and are looking forward to what is coming up this summer!

Our partnership with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation has been going incredibly well. They have provided us with the opportunity to strengthen our connection to the local environment by experiencing new locations and learning about our local wildlife. All of our participants leave each event with a smile and new pieces of knowledge. Who knew that learning about the local environment could make you feel so connected to your community?

Niagara County is fortunate to have many different bodies of water, from lakes, to rivers and creeks. Our partnership with the Parks Department is giving Compeer participants the opportunity to experience some of the water based activities in the area. Compeer kids and their families will enjoy Lake Ontario through our "Fun in the Sun" beach event in July. We are also looking forward to kayaking in August! The Adult Compeer program enjoyed the opportunity to have a day of fishing on Lake Ontario in May.

On June 10th, we will be holding our annual Compeer picnic. At this event, the adult and youth programs will come together to enjoy a fun afternoon full of family, friendship and food!

In July, the Adult Compeer program will be enjoying a performance by the *UkuLadies Plus One*. These talented musicians make up a 5 - piece ukulele band, performing a variety of musical styles on just 4 mighty strings. The *UkuLadies Plus One* is a ukulele band which was formed three years ago by five close friends who had a desire show the public that fantastic music can be played on the ukulele. Along with vocals, they play a variety of instruments. Their repertoire consists of music from the 1920's to current tunes. Their style includes blues, ragtime, pop, rock, love songs, holiday music and novelty tunes. Check them out on Face Book <https://www.facebook.com/ukuladiesplusone/>

As always, our need for awesome volunteers continues! We'd love to have you join Compeer Niagara- call me at 433-3780 ext. 307 to learn about volunteering. I look forward to hearing from you!



PROGRAM UPDATE:
Community Education

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Our Focus on Youth Education

Kim Kennedy, our Coordinator of Community Education, delivered over 50 presentations in the early months of 2017 to several schools and youth programs Niagara County, reaching about 500 youth. For pre-teens and teens, the topics were Building Healthy Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Understanding Grief, Bullying and an Overview of Mental Health. For early elementary students, the topics were Understanding Feelings and Expressing Anger.

New Trainings Available

- ⇒ We have created a “**Support Group Facilitator Training Part 2**” which is designed to help both new and experienced support group leaders refine their skills as a leader or co-leader of a support group. This training offers guided practice in facilitating conversations and responding appropriately to a range of situations. The cost is \$20 per person, and we are able to set up a training to any group of 8 or more.
- ⇒ We now offer a **youth version of the “Support Group Facilitator Training.”** This training can be done as a half day session or in shorter modules that work well for students who meet after school or at a youth program. These trainings are available upon request for a small fee.
- ⇒ Finally, we are getting ready to launch a “**Hearing Distressing Voices Training**” **designed specifically for Mental Health Professionals.** As before, this training offers the opportunity to experience what it is like to hear distressing voices; however, in this longer version we provide additional techniques for working with clients who are voice hearers. Please watch for updates or contact us for more in-

PROGRAM UPDATE:

Respite

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The Respite Program is thriving here at MHA! We have a new Respite Coordinator, Cathy Metlak, who was previously a Respite staff member. Our Respite program is currently serving 11 families with both in-home respite care and with group respites. We hold group respites on the first and second Thursdays of each month and we have a lot of fun! If you think your family might qualify for our Respite program, give us a call today!



PROGRAM UPDATE:
Peer Services

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Greetings everyone!

These past few months have been very exciting for us at the Mental Health Association. We are also very thankful to have Monique Irving, Peer Support Specialist, back from medical leave.

The Mental Health Association is still providing Mental Health First Aid training for groups and organizations by request. Mental Health First Aid is a public education program that introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illnesses, builds understanding of their impact, and overviews common supports. This 8-hour course uses role-playing and simulations to demonstrate how to offer initial help in a mental health crisis and connect persons to the appropriate professional, peer, social, and self-help care. The program also teaches the common risk factors and warning signs of specific types of illnesses, like anxiety, depression, substance use, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

If you or someone you know is interested in Peer Support or the Mental Health First Aid Training, please contact me either by phone or by email.

Support Groups Available!
Our support groups at HOPE House (344 Walnut St, Lockport NY) continue to thrive! For an up-to-date listing of all groups and times, please call the HOPE House at (716) 433-6543.



The Bipolar's Ballad

by Frederick Wayne Faust

I woke up this morning,
Soon I was flying around.
I was ten miles high,
But my feet never left the ground.

Got my check in the mail
And before I knew it,
All the money was gone
Because I just blew it.

Well it's three a.m.
And I'm walking down the street.
I'm wide awake
And this feeling can't be beat.

I've been going four days
Without a minute's sleep.
I've lost ten pounds,
And I wrecked my father's Jeep.

The rent was due
But I didn't have a dime
The landlord said,
"Get out, you slime!"

I lost my job
And my wife and kid.
I'm ready to sell my shirt
For the highest bid.

When I'm feeling this good
I know I don't need my pills.
Because if I take them
I won't have all these thrills.

What's that sound?
It's the siren of a cop.
He says, "What's wrong with you?
This behavior has to stop!"
He takes me to a place
Where he says I'll get some rest.
And the doctor assures me
That it's all for the best.

Now I'm back on lithium,
I'm on an even keel.
And I thank the good Lord
As I get down and kneel.



About the Author:

Frederick Wayne Faust is a member of the MHA who has written a collection of seventeen largely autobiographical poems that discuss his personal experiences with mental illness.

Faust has shared his collection titled, "On the Road to Recovery" with us in hopes that his poems can help to fight the stigma and negative notions that many people hold with regard to "all the good people who have been afflicted with this type of illness," as Faust explains in his collection's synopsis.

What to Watch:***The Many Faces of Mental Health***

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Television is a medium that can entertain but another important use is to educate, and that is our intention with the MHA show "The Many Faces of Mental Health". Our show on LCTV attempts to share stories of those who are coping with life when they have mental health issues as well as provide information to connect those in need with available services in the community.

Recent shows have highlighted our grief support program and offered the benefits of that support group with anyone who might be mourning the loss of a loved one. We have also had several shows with members of the Healthy Minds Niagara group, who try to find ways to maintain their mental health and reach out to those who need to share. The group also talked about using self-expression through art to stay well and focus on the positives in their lives. We also provided information about art and craft activities available in all of our Niagara County communities that offer encouragement for those who would like to try using the medium of art or writing to express themselves and support their mental health.

The LCTV station provides a DVD of each show that we complete and they can be viewed in our office any time during office hours. Just stop by, pour a cup of coffee and sit back to watch what our friends and staff members have to share and inform you about. Each DVD is 28 minutes long, so it's a quick way to see what we have going on at the MHA! And you can tune in to the show on Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., Wednesdays at 7:00 a.m. and Fridays at 6:30 a.m. on LCTV Channel 20, or through the LCTV website.



A behind-the-scenes look at our latest TV Show taping.

Watch *The Many Faces of
 Mental Health*
 Channel 20
 Tuesdays at 5pm and 10pm
 Wednesdays at 7am Fridays at 6:30am

All programs are produced by MHA in Niag-
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LCTV



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 MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
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LCTV

Mission Statement

The Mental Health Association in Niagara County, Inc. will offer programs and services aimed at promoting mental health while advocating for individuals with mental illnesses and working toward dispelling commonly held misunderstandings regarding mental illnesses.

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