



NAMI-SCC
Santa Cruz County
NEWS

Published for members and friends of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Santa Cruz County
 P.O. Box 360 Santa Cruz, CA 95061 831.427.8020 www.namisc.org

Spring 2003

Volume 23, No. 9

This newsletter is brought to you by the energy and time of your NAMI board members. This past winter we were unable to produce it due to other commitments, but we have hope that some of you may be interested in participating in NAMI this year.

"You're not alone!" has been the working motto within NAMI. And with good reason. Part of the initial reaction of many a family member to the onset of a mental illness in a loved one is a sense both of being very alone and also very needful of assistance from others. And slowly or quickly we learn that we are in fact not alone, that there are many others aching and searching as we are, and a sense of hope and assurance can begin to return.

At the moment your NAMI-SCC Board is feeling very alone. Although our paid membership has doubled in number over the past couple of years, members willing to serve on the Board have decreased in number. There is no lack of ideas for directions for NAMI-SCC to go in; there is even a momentary surfeit of funding with prospects of more; what is missing is your presence.

Please consider giving us some input. Feel invited to attend a Board meeting. We meet the second Monday of each month. Meeting times and locations change so please call NAMI at 427-8020.

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Some of the important projects that we have been working on include:

First and Last Deposit for Consumers

NAMI of Santa Cruz County has created a program to get the mentally ill off the streets and into their own apartments. We were given a gift and have decided to put it towards this fund which helps with the first and last months rent. We will be contracting

with an agency which already works with the county. As you know, it is very difficult if not virtually impossible, for people with SSI to save enough money for the first and last months rent.

We hope that you or your friends will consider contributing toward this cause too. You may make your checks payable to the NAMI Housing Fund, P.O. Box 360, Santa Cruz, CA 95061

C.I.T. (Crisis Intervention Training)

NAMI sponsors CIT training for Police officers in Santa Cruz County. The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is an innovative, highly successful approach designed to enhance interaction between individuals with mental illness, law enforcement personnel, mental health providers and relevant others. The idea behind CIT is to provide intensive training for police officers so that they can better handle situations involving individuals with mental illness who are in crisis.

NAMI-SCC is sponsoring another Crisis Intervention Training Academy scheduled for April 7th to 11th. Any family member interested in helping please call Judy Williams at 688-3385.

Family to Family Education Program

NAMI-SCC has partnered with The Mental Health Resource Center to conduct Family to Family a free education and support program for families who have relatives with brain disorders. See page 3 for more information.



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Mission

NAMI-SCC is a movement of families, friends and individuals dedicated to improving the quality of life for people affected by serious mental illness. NAMI-SCC provides support, education, advocacy and promotes research.

Breath of Fresh Air

Stranger to Everyone

Do it, do it
a devil on my left shoulder
said
Don't do it, don't do it
an angel on my right shoulder
said
This was college-junior year
textbook-accounting-too weird.
One day-voices came
full blown
So many lies
trapped
So many scary voices
about bad people
So many different odors
surrounding me.
Then suicide,
finally got help
Sanity
but so much hell, too.
Am I to take the rap?
they told me to.
Worry was on my mind
sent to relatives
In a different town.
Making friends was hard
in a town so strange.
Buses - in circles
trapped by voices
about bad friends
Stranger to everyone.

susan w. wong

A Deer

A doe, a deer, a female deer
Is what I sang, as I strummed away-
why are you running away-
please stay.
Would you prefer me to be a male deer?
I saw a baby deer once,
So cute.
I wonder, I wonder, I wonder
Would they let me pet them?
A friend took a picture once,
So still,so still, so still
They came
They came so close,
They were touchable
But, oh, so quickly they came -

they disappeared.

The sun is setting, so I should disappear,
too.

Sky of Blue

My mom found new friends
one among five-follow leader
when dad died.
We cried and cried and cried
tears on the window pane
full of strength she found a way.
While me and Sylvia Plath
found pathways thru depressions.
Yesterdays were all we had
this is not real.
While I,
I shouldered the world
Through sweat and tribulations
I've come a long way
My life is here
while her time has come - sky of blue.

susan w. wong

First Friends

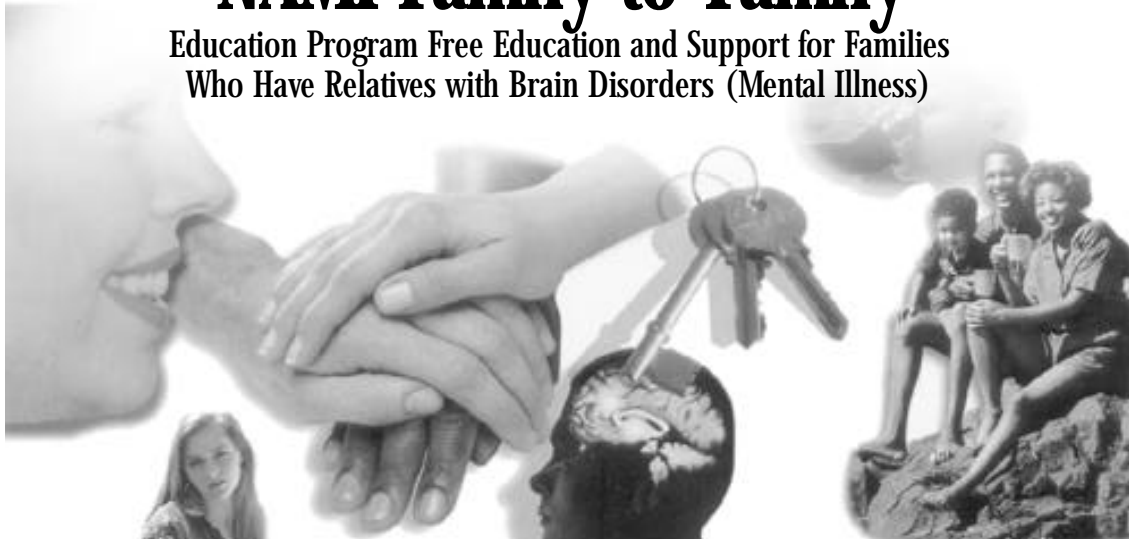
A rose, a rose, arose
Red
Like eating strawberry ice cream
Trails of yesteryear's
Like riding a dune buggy and I wonder
About the first time we met
On an ocean front property, we talked.
I introduced you to a world full of toys
It's called a rat race
But you found toys, too.
I said you made the grade
And we shared a cup of cappuccino and
a cheesecake
Like sitting on sand
Listening to a conch.

susan w. wong

There are 10
NAMI FACT
SHEETS that can
provide
disorder-specific
help for families
with children. They
are free of charge
from the NAMI
HelpLine
(1-800/950-6264),
or from the NAMI
Web site
(www.NAMI.org/)

NAMI Family-to-Family

Education Program Free Education and Support for Families
Who Have Relatives with Brain Disorders (Mental Illness)



**On-Going
Classes Fill
Up Quickly,
So Call To
Register:**



The National
Alliance for the
Mentally Ill Santa
Cruz County

427-8020

The Keys to Understanding



The NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program is a 12-week course for families of individuals with severe brain disorders (mental illnesses).

The course is taught by trained family members. All course materials are furnished at no cost to you.

The curriculum focuses on schizophrenia, bipolar disorder (manic depression), clinical depression, panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The course discusses the clinical treatment of these illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively.

The Family to Family Course Topics Include:

1. Learning about feelings, learning about facts
2. Schizophrenia, major depression, and mania: diagnosis and dealing with critical periods
3. Subtypes of depression and bipolar disorder, panic disorder and OCD; diagnosis and causes; sharing our stories
4. The biology of the brain/new research
5. Problem solving workshop.
6. Medication review
7. Empathy workshop – what it like to have a brain disorder
8. Communication skills workshop
9. Self-care and relative groups
10. Rehabilitation, services available
11. Advocacy, fighting stigma
12. Review and certification ceremony

“When Someone You Love Has a Mental Illness”

Rebecca Woolis, M.F.C.C.

Addresses short-term, daily problems of living with a person with mental illness, as well as long-term planning and care.

“The Quiet Room”

Lori Schiller

Schiller's gripping, heart-rending and ultimately triumphant story of her journey into madness and back to reality is told through the voices of Lori and her family, friends and doctor, and captures a rare, astoundingly vivid view into the inner life of a person with schizophrenia.

“Aspergers Syndrome, A Guide for Parents and Professionals”

Tony Attwood

It is concise, easy to read, and has a short, clear index so you are able to zero in on what you want to find out. The author is honest, yet optimistic about these children's' abilities

and the strengths and weaknesses associated with this disorder. If you only buy one book regarding Asperger's Syndrome, this is the one to get.

“Surviving Schizophrenia”

E. Fuller Torrey

A person I know who has schizophrenia told me that this book was the best description of the disease he had ever seen. Certainly I found it to be the most lucid and comprehensible guide to someone who has not experienced the disease. In addition, Dr. Torrey's caustic description of our hodgepodge of policies toward the severely mentally ill should be required reading for policy-makers everywhere.

“Through the Maze”

Robin L. Goldfaden

A Guide to Health Care and Insurance Rights and Resources for Californians with Disabilities.
www.dralegal.org

**Books Now
Available at
the Santa Cruz
Public Library,
Donated by
NAMI-SCC**



A Mother's thoughts on the Need for Families to be Involved in the Mental Health System

Family participation and involvement are the missing essential part of helping a family member control his/her illness, especially if the family is already actively involved. This is a very real problem with the mental health system. Families need to be included as a crucial part of the recovery of a son/daughter. All staff in the mental health system, including Dominican, El Dorado, Community Services, Front Street Inc. and Community Connection, just to mention a few, would do well and learn a lot if they took the time to sit down and talk with the family. Most family members know their sons/daughters better than anyone does, especially if they are close. Those families who want to get involved need to be received by the mental health community with open arms.

The other important asset of recovery for the seriously mentally ill person is that the family is a great source of vital information. For an educated middle-class family it is critical to be included to help and give vital information for the benefit of the patient. If the family is a member of NAMI there are numerous books, booklets, brochures, videos and other current informative, educational tools to improve and help develop a sound, positive therapeutic approach to mental illness to be shared by all. The family is a great resource.

To open the successful door for a positive diagnosis, medication and treatment, family involvement is essential. A county coordinator to keep records of patients and parents who have written agreements for open door treatment is also needed. This does not mean to open all things personal to the patients, it means that all things relating to the mental illness can be discussed and evaluated together with family members and the mentally ill themselves or separately. It is important to include the ill member, but not always. There are some things that the family would be more comfortable in sharing without the patient present.

To have continuous improvement of the mental health system there needs to be an evaluation of staff work performance by those people receiving the service and family members/friends. People who have psychiatric disabilities have valuable knowledge and are an excellent resource for peer run

groups. These groups would run skills training on how to participate in and effectively get what they want from a treatment program.

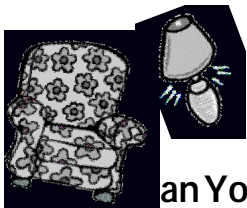
Families need training in the do's and don'ts of how to handle a severely mentally ill family member. It is obvious that most families want to help and do what is best for their ill family member. Do not think for one minute that a family wants to make things worst or do something to accentuate the situation, they want to help and may not know how!

Santa Cruz County Mental Health Hosts Rebecca Woolis, M.F.C.C.

Our county mental health professionals see the need for family involvement so much that they will be hosting an all day workshop this spring with celebrated author and teacher, Rebecca Woolis.

Rebecca is the author of *"When Someone You Love Has A Mental Illness"* a practical guide for families coping with the multitude of problems that regularly confront families.

The workshop is for County Mental Health Employees and Contractors within the system. Families and consumers will benefit greatly from this training indirectly through the increased awareness and understanding of family issues from their CMH professionals.



Can You Contribute?

Your donations of furniture or other household goods are always needed for consumers moving into housing.

Please call Community Support Services and ask for Betsy Clark at 459-0444 or Front St. Inc. at 476-1700.

Lydia Blanchard, LMFT Psychotherapist and Consultant

California Marriage and Family
Therapy License, MFC 34603



831-425-3108
406 Mission Street, Suite G
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Fax 831-425-4552*51

The Hope Team

What is it all about?

The Hope Team is comprised of seven coordinators, a psychiatrist, a supervisor, and a manager. It is the newest of the nine Adult SOC Teams serving persons with serious and persistent mental illness.

The Hope Team is the fourth teams to have the smaller Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) ratio of 1 staff person per 10-15 consumers. This smaller ratio increases the time, intensity and support the staff are able to provide. Other Adult ACT teams include Most, Puentes, and the Transition Team. While the Recovery Model philosophy has been adopted across the Adult System of Care, the practice is best demonstrated in the four ACT Teams. Our goal, as resources permit, is to expand the practice of the Recovery Model with ACT Teams across the entire Adult System of Care.

The Recovery Model with ACT Teams has an established track record of significantly reducing psychiatric hospitalization and incarceration while increasing stable housing in the community, employment, and consumer satisfaction. This evidenced-based best practice approach is key to achieving the mission "to support and teach adults with psychiatric disabilities to recognize their strengths and power to successfully live, socialize, learn and work in the community."

After months of study and planning, the Hope Team was started in September 2002 with 42 adult consumers. In January 2003 the team had over 50 people, and a capacity for up to 80 individuals.

The Hope Team, like all the adult teams, provides most services in the community. And, while the team is based in North County at the Encinal site, it has the capacity to serve consumers anywhere in the County.

The Hope Team was created for two primary reasons. Not only is the Recovery Model with ACT Teams the evidenced-based best practice for adults, but it also has had demonstrated success in addressing our major challenge in the Santa Cruz County Adult System of Care—rising utilization and costs for psychiatric hospital and institutional care. Psychiatric hospital utilization had increased on average nearly 50% in the past

two years compared with the average utilization in the previous six years. (7.5 beds per day in the last two years compared to 5 beds per day in the previous six years). Institutional care, like at Seventh Avenue, had also increased significantly. The Hope Team was created because it is a best practice model with demonstrated outcomes and because it specifically helps us address the major challenges we face in the Adult System of Care.

Reductions in state and local funding for mental health necessitated creating the Hope Team by redirecting existing resources rather than adding new resources. County Crisis workers formerly stationed at Dominican's Behavioral Health Unit were redirected from Dominican into the Adult Treatment resources, enabling the formation of the Hope Team. How's it going so far? From July through December 2002 we have seen significant drops in the utilization of acute hospital, institutional care (like Seventh Ave.), and in State Hospital. This remarkable progress is attributable to the efforts of the entire Adult System of Care—County and Contract providers as well as to the evaluation and other administrative staff supporting this effort.

The Village Came to Santa Cruz

The Santa Cruz County Mental Health System hosted Dr. Mark Ragins and his assistants to present a brief summary of what the Village is all about. County Mental Health Staff, families, contractors, and clients as well as NAMI members attended an all day presentation of the Village Concept at the Simpkins Swim Center.

The Village Concept is a philosophy of treatment that considers the whole person unlike the current prevailing medical model treatment system that focuses on symptoms and medications.

“to support and teach adults with psychiatric disabilities to recognize their strengths and power to successfully live, socialize, learn and work in the community.”



Can You Help?

Our phone tree service could make good use of an additional caller. It requires just a few minutes of your time once a month or less and can provide our members with opportunities for contacts that can turn out to be extraordinarily helpful. If you would like to learn more about this service please contact Debbie Smith at 423-0845. If you would like to help with this newsletter call Judy at 688-3385.

Ask Louise

Is a new column for the NAMI-SCC Newsletter.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Bipolar Illness

Patients with a diagnosis of Bipolar I Disorder, currently receiving treatment from a psychiatrist, and taking a mood stabilizing medication may be eligible for a clinical trial evaluating the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral group therapy for individuals with Bipolar Disorder. The group is held at Pacific Graduate School of Psychology at 935 East Meadow Dr. Palo Alto, CA.

For more information, contact:
Healthcare Initiative for Clients with Bipolar Illness
Shilpa Ready, M.S., Project Coordinator
Pacific Graduate School of Psychology
650-843-3515
sreddy@pgsp.edu

Dear Louise,

My adult son, who has schizophrenia, often tells me that he wants to die or that he wants to kill himself. What do I say to him? How can I tell if he really means it? Ruth

Dear Ruth,

I'm glad that you are taking your son's wishes to die seriously. About 10% of all those with schizophrenia commit suicide and even more attempt it. Young men in their teens, 20's and 30's are most at risk. The best way to address the possibility of suicide is to talk about it. It has so much stigma and elicits such strong feelings of shame and terror that if a loved one says something like, "I want to kill myself?" we are stopped cold. "How have I failed this person?" we ask ourselves. On the other hand, if we bring this forbidden subject out in the open, it can become a problem to solve rather than proof of failure.

Suicide may possibly be prevented if these steps are followed:

- Ask your son if he has a plan for killing himself. If he says no, he may simply be overwhelmed with his illness and need more professional help in dealing with it.
- If he says that he does have a plan, such as he will run in front of a truck, he is serious about suicide and needs help. If he says that he will run in front of a truck where First Avenue crosses May Street, he is even more serious and needs help immediately.
- Tell his psychiatrist of his plan and ask if his medications might need adjusting. Voices often demand suicide, and

medications may be able to make voices softer. If not, he may need to talk to his psychiatrist about ways of dealing with them. In time he may come to believe that the voices are unreasonable, cruel and wrong. Encourage him to talk back to them and demand that they leave him alone.

- Arrange for counseling with a professional who understands schizophrenia. Sometimes seemingly small things, such as a friend who suddenly turns hostile, can be so painful that suicide seems the only solution.
- Get an agreement from him, preferably in writing, that if he is thinking about killing himself, he will call you immediately or if you are not available, he will call 911.
- Continue to nurture an open relationship with you so that he feels safe in talking to you about his feelings. Nurture yourself as well---as often as possible.

Louise is the mother of an adult son who has schizophrenia and an adult daughter who has severe depression and is addicted to drugs. She is not a psychiatrist and encourages families to seek professional help whenever possible. Please send any questions she might be able to answer in the newsletter to: NAMI-SCC P.O. Box 360 Santa Cruz CA 95061 or email to: louise@cruzio.com

Family and Consumer On-Going Support Groups

Mondays

On-going Smoking Cessation Groups (education class)
300 Harvey West Blvd., Santa Cruz Connection
12-12:45 PM 425-8132 or 1-800-NO-BUTTS

The "No Name" Coed Support Group *with Martha*
1051 Cayuga, Santa Cruz, MHCAN
12:00-1:00 PM 469-0462

Tuesdays

Schizophrenia Support Group *with Hugh*
1051 Cayuga, Santa Cruz, MHCAN
1:30-2:30 PM 469-0462 or 476-8474

Women's Support Group *Peer facilitators: Martha and Wandis*
1051 Cayuga, Santa Cruz, MHCAN
12:00-1:00 PM 469-0462

Wednesdays

MHCAN, Drop in Center is closed

Mood Matters Support Group
1051 Cayuga, Santa Cruz, MHCAN
7:00-9:00 AM 469-0462

Thursdays

NAMI SCC Coping Group
(Support for family members)
300 Harvey West Blvd. Community Connection
7-8:30 PM 427-8020

Parents of Teenage Alcoholics
(Support group-ALANON) 4951 Soquel Drive, Soquel
Congregational Church of Soquel
7:30 PM 462-1818

Obsessive Compulsive Disorders Anonymous
A support group for OCD sufferers, their family and friends.
1215 Mission Street, Santa Cruz
Not meeting currently but you can call for support 438-1043

Anxiety Disorders Support Group
On going support for clients with anxiety, social fobia, panic disorder or O.C.D. Family members are invited.
Twin Lakes Church, Rm M-23, Library, Cabrillo College Dr., Aptos
7:30 PM to 9 PM

Weekdays

Mental Health Client Action Network (MHCAN)
Coffee, resources, peer support, safety 1051 Cayuga, Santa Cruz,
MHCAN Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 9-3 PM, Saturday
12-3 PM. Closed on Wednesdays, 469-0462.

Ongoing

Interfaith Compeer - Erasing the Stigma of Mental Illness
Call Nancy at 459-6817 for more info.

Erasing the Stigma of Mental Illness



A series hosted by Twin Lakes Church will begin on Wednesday evening, April 30, 2003. It will be part of their Spring Christian Education Series. The class goes from 6:50 to 7:50 (no charge). Each class consists of factual material and handouts, a relevant video and a guest speaker who has experience with the illness or topic of discussion. Classes are scheduled as follows:

April 30 – Depression

May 7 – Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depressive Disorder)

May 14 – Schizophrenia

May 21 – OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder)

Classes will be held at the Twin Lakes Church 2701 Cabrillo College Dr. in Aptos. To register, call 475-5284.

Another series is planned at St. Joseph's Catholic Church from 10:00 AM to noon starting on Saturday, May 30, 2003. The format is the same as for the one above. Classes are scheduled as follows:

May 31 – Bipolar Disorder (Manic Depressive Disorder)

June 7 – Depression

June 14 – Schizophrenia

June 21 – Adult ADD

June 28 – Recovery

The church is at 354 Monterey St. in Capitola. No fee and no registration required.

Compeer Needs Used Books

Please call the Compeer office (459-6817) if you have used books to donate. We sell them at the Safeway store in Felton and last year we earned over \$1,200 there. We can use both hard cover and paperbacks.

Books that don't sell include condensed books (Readers' Digest, etc.), magazines, textbooks, encyclopedias, discarded books from libraries and technical books. Most any other subject will sell. Any books that don't sell will be donated to Good Will or the Ben Lomond community library.

Someone from the Compeer office will arrange to pick up your books or arrange a time to meet you at our office to receive them. You can donate books at any time, when you do your Spring cleaning, Fall cleaning, or any other cleaning, keep us in mind.



NAMI-SCC
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Psychiatric Emergency Phone Numbers:

Adult Day (8-5; Mon.-Fri.)(831)462-7644*
 24 hour1-800-952-2335*

(during the day the 800# would get access team)

Youth North County (24 hr.)(831)425-0771
 South County (24 hr.)(831)728-2226
 Children's Day (8-5; Mon-Fri)(831)454-4900
 After hours call(831)462-7644*

**Dominican Hospital; adult 24 hour 800# goes to Dominican after hours)*

Suicide Prevention Service

24 Hour(831)458-5300
 24 Hour Toll Free(877)663-5433

Patients Rights Advocacy Program

Santa Cruz (8-5; Mon-Fri)(831)429-1913

Legal Services

Calif. Rural Legal Assistance (under 55 yrs.)458-2089
 Sr. Citizens Legal Services (over 55 yrs.)426-8824

"Listening, not talking, is the gifted and great role, and the imaginative role. And the true listener is much more beloved, magnetic than the talker, and he is more effective, and learns more and does more good. So try listening. Listen to your wife, your husband, your father, your mother, your children, your friends; to those who love you and those who don't, to those who bore you, to your enemies. It will work a small miracle. And perhaps a great one.

Brenda Ueland "Strength to Your Sword Arm"

NAMI-SCC Board of Directors:

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douville@hotmail.com

Louise Loots, Vice President

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jujubees@cruzio.com

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Sharron Cohen-Barry,

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mhrc@santacruzcommunityconnection.com

Nancy Karges, Interfaith Compeer

nancy@interfaithcompeer.org

NAMI-SCC Board Meetings:

2nd Monday of the Month. Time can vary.

Open to anyone interested. Please join us.

Meetings are held at the

Community Foundation of Santa Cruz

County, 4:30 PM, 2425 Porter Street,

Soquel, California



Yes, I would like to join NAMI-SCC!

Make check payable to NAMI-SCC, PO Box 360, Santa Cruz, CA 95061. Your NAMI-SCC dues and donations pay for the NAMI California Connection, NAMI Advocate, NAMI-SCC Newsletter and help support NAMI-SCC.

- Family \$45 Individual \$35 Client (free)
 - Patron \$50 Life Member \$500 Benefactor \$100
- Donation\$ _____

Dues and donations to NAMI-SCC are tax deductible.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip, Phone _____

Call 427-8020 for more information.