

FAMILY SUPPORT PROJECT

N E W S L E T T E R

Editor: Peggy Spagnola

Spring 2018

A publication of Mental Health Association in Orange County, Inc.

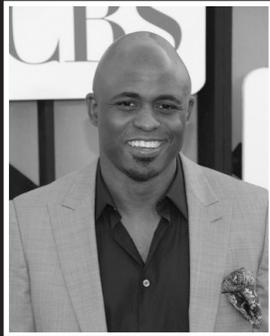
IN THIS ISSUE:

Welcome Spring	1
Cheers	1
Wayne Brady	1
GMWA in Orange County	2
GMWA Training	2
Friends Program	3
How is Mental Illness in Children Diagnosed	3
Inner Peace	4
Vote to continue Vet2Vet Program	4
Families Can Help Children Cope with Fear	5
List of Meetings	6

Wayne Brady

Compiled by Mary Dumas

www.etonline.com



Wayne Brady is an award-winning actor, singer, comedian and television personality. During 2014, the star of “Let’s Make a Deal” and “Whose Line Is It Anyway?” He experienced a breakdown on his 42nd birthday that inspired him to speak publicly for the first time about his Depression. In an interview, he detailed his secret battle and the stigma that had prevented him from speaking up sooner. Since identifying these barriers that kept him from seeking help, Wayne is using his story to inspire others to start talking about mental health.

Welcome Spring and the Warm Weather

By Peggy Spagnola

We have endured one of the snowiest winters in a long time and are all ready to be outdoors in the sunshine. Some people suffer from SAD or (seasonal affective disorder) which is a type of depression that’s related to changes in seasons — beginning and ending at about the same time every year. Most people with SAD, have their symptoms start in the fall and continue into the winter months, sapping energy and making you feel moody however, usually by the spring or early summer they are feeling much better.

Cheers to our Volunteers

Mental Health Association in Orange County Inc’s Annual Meeting will be held and will honor its many volunteers and supporters with a Reception and Recognition Ceremony on Thursday, May 17 at 4 to 6pm at Middletown Elks Lodge #1097 in Middletown, NY. MHA’s Annual meeting will precede the Community Service/Volunteer Reception Recognition Ceremony. MHA will be recognizing and honoring individuals, agencies and businesses.

The 2017 Program Volunteers of the Year are:

MHA James A. Lagarde Sr. Volunteer of the Year	Eric Silva, MD
Parents Run AMOC (Autism Move-a-Thon of Orange County)	Jamie Peck
Helpline	William Kelemen
Blue Renaissance	Ken Bento

The 2017 Community Service Award Recipients are:

Parents Run AMOC (Autism Move-a-Thon of Orange County)	Party Time Productions
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MHA’s Executive Director, Nadia Allen, spoke of all the volunteers and community services being honored. “MHA Board of Directors, staff and program participants are very grateful to all the award recipients. MHA’s mission continues to be fulfilled on a daily basis thanks to their priceless contribution to the individuals we serve. Their selfless and caring volunteerism and community service are vital to our success.”



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Visit us at: www.mhaorangeny.com



GERIATRIC MENTAL WELLNESS ALLIANCE (GMWA) IN ORANGE COUNTY, NY

GMWA is comprised of representatives from human service and county agencies, individuals who are recipients of services and the community at large. The Alliance is committed to advocating for change in mental health practice and policy to the government, social service, health and community agencies and the educational system. The goal of this advocacy is to promote improvement of current mental health services for the aging population in Orange County. To this end, GMWA strives, through their promotion and education, to foster a holistic understanding of mental health wellness that incorporates cognitive, behavioral, physical, emotional and social health.

GMWA Co-Chairs

Nadia Allen, Executive Director
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24/7 HELPLINE 1-800-832-1200 For information, referrals and crisis intervention

Geriatric Mental Wellness Alliance

We have been having lectures and trainings since GMWA was founded in 2009, however below is a list of past presentations starting with March 2012:

March 20, 2012	How to Work With Individuals Who Have a Problem with Hoarding, Carmen Morano, PhD
September 19, 2012	Creating a Safe & Welcoming Environment for LGBTQ Elders, Hilary Meyers, JD
June 3, 2013	Film Screening: "Gen Silent" in partnership with CET - Cultural Equity Taskforce & Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center
September 17, 2013	Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Older Adults, Michael Friedman, LMSW
April 29, 2014	Video Presentation by Dr. James Bourgeois, Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at UC Davis: <u>"Dementia, Delirium & Depression" The Most Prevalent Mental Health Disorders in the Elderly</u> Followed by Q&A facilitated by Carlos Rueda, MD MPA Chairman & Medical Director Department of Psychiatry, Orange Regional Medical Center
May 27, 2014	Successful Aging: Psychological Dimensions of Well-Being In Old Age, Michael Friedman, LMSW
January 15, 2015	Consider the Conversation A documentary about the challenging conversations about end of life - Followed by a post-viewing discussion led by Susan Martino, Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner at St Luke's Cornwall Hospital and moderated by Elise Gold, Executive Director-Jewish Family Services
May 11, 2015	Diagnosing and Deciphering Medical Bills, Adria Goldman Gross- CEO, Medwise Insurance Advocacy
September 10, 2015	Financial Exploitation of Older Adults Jean Callahan, Director of the Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging at Hunter College and Gary Brown, New York State Attorney General's Statewide Elder Abuse Coordinator Sponsored by Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging of Hunter College
April 19, 2016	Staying Well in Retirement-Understanding the Dimensions of Wellness and Their Impact on Retirement Communities, Michael Friedman, LMSW
October 21, 2016	Health Issues as We Age - Facts and Myths, Maggie Carpenter, M.D.
June 27, 2017	Why Am I so Tired? The basics of Sleep in Geriatric Mental Health, Traci Speed, MD, Ph.D.
November 30, 2018	Trauma, Aging and the Implications for Treatment, Irit Felsen, Ph.D

The following are the training priorities established by the GMWA:

- Affordable Care Act & its impact in the aging population
- Incorporating wellness into retirement illness prevention
- Gender issues in the aging population
- Family Therapy techniques in the aging population
- Sexual Abuse
- Advance Directives

Geriatric Mental Wellness Alliance Presentation

“The Impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness in Later Life is a presentation that will be given on April 24 by the Geriatric Mental Wellness Alliance at Rehabilitation Support Services 30 Matthews St, Goshen, NY at 10 am – 12 Noon.

“The GMWA is comprised of representatives from human service and county agencies, individuals who are recipients of services and the community at large. The Alliance is committed to advocating for change in mental health practice and policy to the government, social service, health and community agencies and educational system. The goal of this advocacy is to promote improvement of current mental health services for the aging population in Orange County. To this end, GMWA strives, through their promotion and education, to foster a holistic understanding of mental health wellness that incorporates cognitive, behavioral, physical, emotional and social health”

How is Mental Illness in Children Diagnosed

www.kidsmentalhealth.org

According to the surgeon general, approximately one out of every five children has a diagnosable mental illness. Children, however, are developing mentally and physically, and their behavior may be difficult to analyze. Actions such as anxiety, anger, and shyness can be a part of developmental growth or a temporary condition rather than an illness. When troubling behaviors occur over a period of time or in a way that disrupts daily life, they are considered symptoms of a disorder. Diagnosis usually begins with a medical doctor who takes a lengthy history and examines the child to rule out physical reasons for the difficulties. Lab tests may also be done to test for side effects of medication, for allergies, or for other conditions that could produce symptoms.

If no medical reason is found for the behavior, the doctor refers the child to a psychologist or psychiatrist who treats children and adolescents. A psychologist is trained to evaluate and diagnose mental illnesses but usually treats them through counseling or behavioral therapy. A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who can diagnose mental illnesses and write prescriptions for medication. Often, the two will work together to provide a combination of counseling and medication. Other therapies, such as music or art, may be added to conventional treatments. Initial diagnosis is based on reports of behavior from parents, caregivers, and teachers in order to understand how the child functions in different situations. Often a child will have a combination of two or more behaviors, such as anxiety and bedwetting.

The following disorders are common in childhood:

- Anxiety
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Eating problems
- Bathroom issues
- Feelings of sadness, or moodiness
- Disruptive behavior
- Learning disorders, such as dyslexia
- Involuntary movements, or tics
- Schizophrenia, or distorted thoughts and feelings

Some disorders begin in childhood and continue into adolescence and adulthood. Others go away or improve with age, and some begin later in life. Mental illnesses are usually caused by a combination of factors that fall into four broad categories: environmental, genetic, biological, and psychological. For instance, a child who has a genetic predisposition may develop a disorder when exposed to toxins or physical abuse.

Although many parents want to avoid medication or the stigma of a mental diagnosis, the prognosis is brighter with proper treatment. **If a child does not receive necessary care, the illness may continue into adulthood, creating high risk for issues such as substance abuse, antisocial behavior, or suicide.** When given a correct diagnosis and treatment, outlook for a healthy life as an adult is much more positive.

Vote to continue PFC Joseph P. Dwyer (Vet2Vet) Program

The PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Program, locally known as the Vet2Vet Program, is a New York State funded program aimed at addressing the suicide rate among veterans, in our community. The program currently includes 16 counties in New York State and is intended to be a model for a national program. Funding is considered and voted on an annual basis.

Orange County is home to over 23,000 veterans, many of whom are affected by PTSD, TBI, MST, Homelessness, depression and levels of high anxiety. The Vet2Vet program is a first line of response to many veterans in crisis situations, able to respond immediately, assess their needs and make referrals in real-time so their immediate needs are met.

Where getting an individual stabilized is the goal and marks the end of services for many programs, it is just the beginning for Vet2Vet. Once identified, the veteran becomes a part of our community, with regular follow-ups and daily checkups and interaction... whatever is necessary to maintain their stability and begin to address their long term needs.

While the New York State Senate recognizes the good work of the Vet2Vet program, a \$600M deficit dictates that not all programs can be maintained, in order to stay within budget. Each one must be scrutinized and assessed for its effectiveness and value on an individual basis. As a result, our veterans, who have protected us and been willing to sacrifice their very own lives for us, who often experience great difficulty making the transition back to civilian life following their service and who are more likely to end up homeless or a statistic of an extraordinarily high suicide rate, may have to succumb and make due with less than optimal services.

What becomes of the depressed Veteran who wouldn't even get out of bed if it wasn't for the Vet2Vet facilitator who visits him at home, gets him up and out the door for a walk in nature to talk and expose him to something positive in life? What becomes of the precariously housed veteran with TBI who needs the support of others to help clean, cook and transport so he can maintain his housing? What becomes of the homeless female veteran who left an abusive relationship but needs to find permanent housing before CPS will allow her visitation with her own children? What about all the activities and events which give hope and comradery to veterans and help get them through their day or week or life?

It is hard to imagine what things would be like for the many veterans we serve if it wasn't for PFC Joseph P. Dwyer and the Vet2Vet program. Yet, here we find ourselves, in the hands of a select few... those Senators who recognize the necessity versus those who are focused on the numbers which have dollar signs in front of them.

"Everyone recognizes the value of your program, but if you want to see your program continue, you're going to have to advocate for yourselves, talk to your Representatives and Senators, and promote your cause" we were told at our last annual conference. And so we did. And now, thanks to the efforts of many people, including Nadia Allen, Executive Director of MHA in Orange County, we received confirmation that on March 29th, 2018 the Resolution to Continue Funding for the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Program was ratified and approved for all 16 counties in New York State. Not only does this serve as recognition and confirmation of the work we do, but it also allows us the opportunity to breath a sigh of relief, that we may continue our great work without the threat of expired funding... at least for another year.

Larry Neumann

Program Coordinator, Vet2Vet of Orange County, NY

Families Can Help Children Cope with Fear and Anxiety

www.medicinenet.com

Whether tragic events touch your family personally or are brought into your home via newspapers and television, you can help children cope with anxiety that violence, death and disasters can cause.

Listening and talking to children about their concerns can reassure them that they will be safe. Start by encouraging them to discuss how they have been affected by what is happening around them. Even young children may have specific questions about tragedies. Children react to stress on their own developmental level.

The Federal Center for Mental Health Services offers these additional pointers for parents and other caregivers:

- Encourage children to ask questions. Listen to what they say. Provide comfort and assurance that address their specific fears. It is okay to admit that you cannot answer all of their questions.
- Talk of their level. Communicate with your children in a way they can understand. Do not get too technical or complicated.
- Be honest. Tell them exactly what happened. For example, do not say that someone who has died has “gone to sleep.” Children may become afraid of going to bed. Find out what else frightens them. Encourage your children to talk about other fears they may have. They may worry that someone will harm them at school or that someone will try to hurt you.
- Focus on the positive. Reinforce the fact that most people are kind and caring. Remind your child of the heroic actions taken by ordinary people to help victims of tragedy.
- Pay attention. Your children’s play and drawings may give you a glimpse into their questions or concerns. Ask them to tell you what is going on in the game or the picture. It is an opportunity to clarify any misconceptions, answers questions and give reassurance.
- Develop a plan. Establish a family emergency plan for the future such as a meeting place where everyone should gather if something unexpected happens in your neighborhood. It can help you and your child feel safer.

If you are concerned about your child’s reaction to stress or trauma, call your physician or a community mental health center.

INNER PEACE

Reuters

The greatest obstacle to finding inner peace is the belief that there is something wrong with what we are experiencing right now or with the way our life is.

That is pretty obvious, isn't it!

As long as we are rejecting our current experience and looking for a different one, we will never be content in this moment.

If only this were different... if only that would change ...then I could experience more peace.

Finding inner peace involves giving up searching and choosing to be content, just as you are.



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Friends Program

Friends Program is a social group for youth ages 9-17 who have social, emotional or behavioral challenges. The goal of the Friends Program is to provide a guided, nurturing environment in which social skills can be developed and practiced through interaction with peers. Friends consists of six modules composed of six weeks of group meetings that run throughout the year in various locations throughout Orange County. The younger group is for ages 9 -13 years old and the older group is for ages 14-17. The Friends Program assists youth in developing confidence in group settings, develop friendships and build social skills necessary to not only make and maintain friendships but to have fun. For more information, call 845-342-2400 Ext.1306.

MEETINGS

May 2018

May 9	7:00-9:00 PM	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
May 14	6:30-8:30 PM	NAMI-Orange Meeting	DMH
May 17	7:00-9:00 PM	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA
May 30	6:30-8:00 PM	Family & Friends Plus Music Group	MHA

June 2018

June 11	6:30-8:30 PM	NAMI-Orange Meeting	DMH
June 13	7:00-8:30 PM	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
June 21	7:00-9:00 PM	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA
June 27	6:30-8:00 PM	Family & Friends Plus Music Group	MHA

July 2018

July 9		NAMI-Orange Annual Picnic	TBD
July 11	7:00-8:30	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
July 19	7:00-9:00	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA
July 25	6:30-8:00 PM	Family & Friends Plus Music Group	MHA

August 2018

August 8	7:00-8:30	Family Ties Support Group	MHA
August 13	6:30-8:30 PM	NAMI-Orange Meeting	DMH
August 16	7:00-9:00	Family & Friends Together for Families of Adults with Mental Illness	MHA
August 29	6:30-8:00 PM	Family & Friends Plus Music Group	MHA

All meetings are held at Mental Health Association unless otherwise indicated. Please call to confirm the day and time of the meetings. Dates and times may change due to weather, holidays, etc. For information call Peggy at 845-342-2400 Ext. 1238 or Mary at Ext. 1246.

Vet2Vet Support Groups Meet Weekly

Monday	6:00 PM	Thrall Library, 11-19 Depot Street, Middletown Board Room – 1st Floor
Tuesday*	2:30 PM	Hudson House, 245 Broadway, Newburgh *Meetings are held bi-weekly at Hudson House
Thursday	6:00 PM	Cornerstone Residence, 111 Broadway, Newburgh

Please call Larry at 342-2400 Ext. 1237 for further information or special accommodations.