



Dear Friends:

As we come to the holiday season; it is a time for reflection, celebration, and for those of us with mental health issues, we must have hope.

My mental illness was tied with much suffering and agony, but now I am in the hope phase. As tough as it may have been for you, or how you are currently, things can look up. Treatments, research, and science put us in a dramatically changing world. Medications are quickly improving, and if you are not happy with your situation, I must say hang in there. It can and I believe will improve.

I have much to be thankful for, supportive family, friends, and my NAMI family. I am currently on the board of my local affiliate, served many years on the state level, and have been fortunate enough to be in on, and make decisions for consumers, at the national level.

NAMI is always there for us, whether it be support, education, or information. Our signature programs are doing very well. Family-to-Family is doing excellently. Peer-to-Peer, Visions and NAMI CARE support group are all in place. And In Our Own Voice is not far away. We have also started the Provider Education Training Program.

As I write this, just coming back from the leadership conference, a large grant from a pharmaceutical is going to take the nation by storm, and we are on the verge of one of the biggest things to ever take NAMI forward.

Everyone is concerned about bringing younger members and minorities into the fold. But I think that will take care of itself if we remember who we are and what we stand for. And remember we want

our brothers and sisters to have the best possible, and we will do whatever possible to attain this goal. I must say please hang in there and don't give up.

In my travels I meet people that are much interested in mental illness. I look forward to a day when we don't have to whisper schizophrenia in a restaurant setting, where the truths are understood, and where our culture gets it. It is our responsibility to encourage this to happen. And with our huge numbers, and a growing ground swell, I trust it will happen. Perhaps someday we can all be at the mall in Washington D.C. and shout out loud, with praise and joy, who and what we are. Wouldn't it be a glorious day.

So I hope you are able to have a fine holiday season, keep your head up and see ya around.

**Steve J. Miller**  
NAMI Iowa

### Dues are now due!

**Please make your payment for dues this month so they can be sent to NAMI Iowa in a timely manner.**



**Please cut out the membership information and mail with your check.**

**We appreciate receiving all in a timely manner.**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR OUR NEXT IRIS PROJECT— YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!**



**DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 5, 2007**

**WHEN SENDING IN YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES, PLEASE INDICATE WHAT TWO-HOUR SHIFT FROM 9-3 YOU WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP.**

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

*Yes, I wish to become a member of NAMI-DUBUQUE*

Family/Individual—\$25  
Consumer—\$3

(Due yearly on or before February 1)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this with payment to: NAMI-DUBUQUE  
PO Box 3398  
Dubuque, IA 52001-3398

## Advocates Renew Push for Mental Health 'Parity' Bill

by [Julie Rovner](#), NPR [Morning Edition](#), January 8, 2007 ·

A bill has long lingered in Congress that would require health insurers to provide equal benefits for mental and physical ailments. President Bush has vowed to sign such a mental health "parity" bill on several occasions, but a Republican-controlled House repeatedly blocked it. Now with Democrats in control of Congress, mental-health advocates are quietly planning a quick campaign for the bill's passage.

### **Key Victories: Ohio and New York Pass Mental Health Parity**

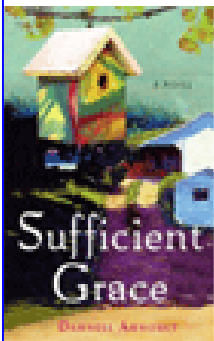
January 2, 2007

New York and Ohio have now passed Mental Health Parity laws, expanding mental health insurance coverage in both states.

In Ohio, coverage for the "diagnosis, care and treatment of biologically based mental illnesses" was written into the new state law SB 116. This law was signed on December 29, 2006 and will take effect in 90 days.

These two states bring the number of states who have some form of Parity law up to 42.

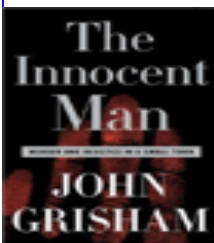
## BOOKS



### [Sufficient Grace](#), Darnell Arnoult

the author.

A Southern novel that explores themes of faith, family, love, and redemption. It's sensitive, at times humorous. It's also about schizophrenia, inspired by the mother of



### [The Innocent Man](#), John Grisham

John Grisham tackles nonfiction for the first time with *The Innocent Man*, a true tale about murder and injustice in a small town. *The Innocent Man* chronicles the story of a man with mental illness, Ron Williamson, how he was arrested and charged with a crime he did not commit, how his case was (mis) handled and how an innocent man was sent to death row. Grisham's first work of nonfiction is shocking, disturbing, and enthralling—a must read for fiction and nonfiction fans.

## MOVIE



### **PROOF**

In this feature film, a devoted daughter of a brilliant mathematician, whose life and work have been impacted by mental illness, must come face-to-face with her long-held fears about her own predisposition toward mental illness. *A 2006 Voice Award Winner*

*Note: When purchasing any books or movies go to Amazon.com. NAMI will receive a percentage of the sale, at no extra cost to you.*



Due to the grant money received last year from the Dubuque Racing Association, we will soon have available \$1400 of books and DVD movies relating to mental illness in the Carnegie-Stout Public Library. We are grateful to the DRA and appreciate the help of Michelle Hellmer, Library director.

## Mental Illness Screening of Teens

January 4, 2007

There has been a lot of misinformation shared around the country about Mental Health Screening and the TeenScreen program since the release of President Bush's New Freedom Commission report in 2003 that recognized the Columbia University TeenScreen program as a model program. Recently the *New England Journal of Medicine* published an article on Mental Health Screening that discusses the merits of mental health screening.

The Columbia University TeenScreen Program is a national mental health and suicide risk screening program for youth. The goal of the National TeenScreen Program is to make voluntary mental health check-ups available for all American teens. TeenScreen works by assisting communities throughout the nation with developing locally operated and sustained screening programs for youth. Screening can take place in schools, doctors' offices, clinics, youth groups, shelters, and other youth-serving organizations and settings.

The study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* is an examination of issues regarding teen mental health and suicide, written by Dr. Friedman. The article outlines a rationale for screening programs, gives a historical perspective, examines statistics, and offers the personal experiences of actual teens and their parents.

## National Anti-Stigma Campaign Launched



On Monday, December 4, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Ad Council launched the National Anti Stigma Campaign, releasing a national survey of public attitudes on stigma and unveiling free multimedia public service announcements (PSAs).

For the first time in history, the authority of the federal government is being put behind a sustained national PSA campaign to reduce stigma and encourage support of people with mental illnesses. It is also the first time that the tremendous leverage of the Ad Council--the folks who created Smokey the Bear--is being made available to the entire mental health community. These PSAs are specifically targeted to 18-25 year olds.

### SUICIDE PREVENTION

#### Learn about mental illness.

Mental health problems can affect anyone at any time. That's why everybody needs to understand how mental illnesses can affect individuals, families, and communities. It's also why we all need to learn how we can support our friends who are living with a mental illness. Caring friends can make a real difference. Are you ready to be a real friend?

**Myth:** I can't do anything for a person with mental illness.

**Fact:** You can do a lot, starting with how you act and speak. You can create an environment that builds on people's strengths and promotes understanding.

**Myth:** Children misbehave or fail in school just to get attention.

**Fact:** Behavior problems can be symptoms of emotional, behavioral, or mental disorders, rather than merely attention-seeking devices.

**Myth:** Mental illnesses don't affect me.

**Fact:** Mental illnesses are surprisingly common; they affect almost every family in America. Mental illnesses can affect anyone.

**Myth:** People with mental illnesses cannot tolerate the stress of holding down a job.

**Fact:** All jobs are stressful to some extent. Workers are productive when there's a good job match, whether or not they have mental health disorders.

**Myth:** Mental illnesses are brought on by a weakness of character.

**Fact:** Mental illnesses are a product of the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors.

**Myth:** Children don't experience mental illnesses. Their actions are just products of bad parenting.

**Fact:** A report from the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health showed that in any given year five to nine percent of children experience serious emotional disturbances.

**Myth:** People with mental illnesses are violent and unpredictable.

**Fact:** Actually, the vast majority of people with mental health conditions are no more violent than anyone else. People with mental illnesses are much more likely to be the victims of crime. You probably know someone with a mental illness and don't even realize it.