



Book of the Month By Barb Bartell

Crazy; a Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness
by Earley, Pete (2006) New York: Berkeley Books. *****

This book was written by one of America's most talented investigative reporters, Pete Earley, who also happens to have a brilliant but unstable son, Mike. Mike Earley suffers from bipolar illness and experiences a psychotic break after his senior year of college. I bought this book at a mental health conference that I attended last Spring but I put off reading it because I was made somewhat uncomfortable with the title of the book, "Crazy".

How could Pete Earley use the word "crazy" to describe his own son? The word "crazy" is extremely politically incorrect and stigmatizing when it is applied to a person who is suffering from a mental illness. My very wise friend, Carrie Beaver, now President of NAMI-Flagstaff, picked up "Crazy" at the NAMI office where I had laid it down, and read it. Carrie was struck by the wisdom of this book. She urged all of our NAMI members to read it. Carrie also made me promise that I would write a review of this book for the next NAMI-Flagstaff Newsletter. When I finally read the book, I quickly realized that the word "Crazy" did not apply to Pete Earley's son (or to any other person mentioned in this book who has suffered stigma and shame due to their illness).

The word "Crazy" has another meaning, one that is accurately conveyed in the subtitle of Earley's book, "**A Father's Search through America's Mental Health Madness**". The first meaning of the word "crazy", according to Webster's Dictionary, is: "full of cracks or flaws: unsound, crooked, askew..." **It is the system of mental health care delivery, not the individual suffering from an illness that is "crazy".**

Pete Earley goes on to narrate the horrifying story of how his son who refuses to take the "poison pills", offered by the Emergency Room Doctor after four hours in the waiting room, and, under the influence of his delusions, commits a felony for which he is arrested. The police immediately identify that he is not in contact with reality and take him to a treatment center. The arresting officers send the young man to the hospital for medication. The E.R. doctor could not prescribe medication because it is Mike's perfect right to choose to remain mentally ill and to refuse treatment. When Mike commits a crime, suddenly the rules change. This is a blessing in some ways, but also a curse.

From here, it goes from bad to worse. The victim of the crime, a hypersensitive and paranoid housewife, is convinced that Mike Earley is evil incarnate and she is determined that he should be convicted of a felony and punished to the maximum. Mike Earley, age 23, narrowly escapes the threat of being branded a felon for life and his father. Pete, is so disturbed by this that, he goes on to investigate the plight of mentally ill felons who are incarcerated in the Miami-Dade County Jail, one of the nation's largest holding facilities for the mentally ill who have gone afoul of the law. The mistreatment and dehumanization of the mentally ill, who have no friends or family members to advocate for them is deeply disturbing. It makes one realize just how important the advocacy work of NAMI is in preventing discrimination against those who are unable to speak up for themselves due to a mental illness.

Board of Directors:

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Inside this issue:

Book of the Month By Barb Bartell	1
Family to Family By Tasha Hagert	2
A NAMI Facilitators Story By Grace Miles	2
New Classes	2
Chronic Disease Management By Kenneth Werner	3
How You can Help	3
New Family Affairs Administrator	3

A great big

Thank You!

to everyone who

sent in a year end

gift or membership.

We were

encouraged by your

generosity.

Peer 2 Peer Class

The **Peer 2 Peer** program has been developed to provide a supportive and educational group led by mental health consumers. Education about mental illness, self-care, and relapse prevention form the basis for this program which is taught in ten weekly sessions lasting for two hours each. The classes are experiential and build upon one another so that it is important to attend all of the classes.

To register call one of the two facilitators.

Sherry Matheson (928-779-3413 or 928-699-7999)

Barb Bartell (928-606-8328 or 928-526-7044)

The **NAMI Connections Group** meets every Thursday at St. Pius Church (located at the Southwest corner of Fourth Street and Cedar Ave.) We would like to thank the staff at St. Pius Church for graciously accommodating our needs for a quiet place in which to hold our support groups and for fitting us into their busy church calendar.

Family 2 Family Education

The **NAMI Family 2 Family** Education Program is a life-changing experience. The participants learn valuable life skills and discover a greater comprehension of their loved ones' mental illness. The **Family 2 Family** class members learn that 'you can't know what no one has told you'. This 12-week program is both fun and informative. We learn about the brain, problem solving, crisis intervention, communication skills, self-care, medications, recovery and advocacy. The class will assist you as a family member through the turbulent ride when mental illness is involved. The goal of **NAMI Family 2 Family** is to empower the family member to be able to better understand what is going on with their loved one, and to have a better toolbox of things that they can do to help. As a first time facilitator myself, I can't believe all of the wonderful people I have met and all the things that I thought I already knew that I learned more about.

By Tasha Hagert

Our next Family 2 Family class will be starting March 6th at 6:30pm. Registration is required. Call 928-606-4859 Must be registered by 3rd week to participate.

Your financial support allows us to offer the Peer 2 Peer and Family 2 Family classes.

"I invited NAMI Flagstaff to have an In Our Own Voice speaker come to my graduate class in Foundations of Clinical Mental Health. Student comments on the presentation were very positive in terms of how informative the material was and how professionally the speakers presented themselves. Thank you for providing this valuable service to the community."

Dr. Gene Moan Professor of Educational Psychology at NAU

A NAMI Facilitator's Journey

My name is Grace Miles and I am living with type two Bipolar Affective Disorder. The experience of becoming trained as a NAMI Connections support group facilitator has helped me in that I have learned that I can reach out and talk to others in a meaningful way. It has helped me to break out of my isolation and to share my experiences with others who have the same problem. I have learned a lot from the other members of my support group: they have helped me when I needed support just as I have helped and supported them in working through their struggles to overcome mental illness and societal stigma. Just because I have a mental illness does not mean that I have to stay at home and mope around. I can be a fully functioning person and take a leadership role as a group facilitator.

I have learned that I have good skills in helping others to reframe their problems in a more positive light. One of my trainers in Phoenix told me that I have natural skills in reflective listening and giving positive feedback. It has been a long journey from helplessness and hopelessness to where I am now. I am now thinking of returning to college to pursue a degree in mental health counseling; I love the challenge of helping others to see their problems as temporary obstacles rather than permanent roadblocks.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

I recently completed the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) a workshop that was two and a half hours, once a week, for six weeks at TGC (The Guidance Center). This program is for people with different chronic health problems including behavioral health. Workshops are facilitated by two trained leaders, one or both of whom are non-health professionals (peer specialists) with chronic diseases themselves. Subjects covered include: (1) techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain and social isolation; (2) appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility, and endurance; (3) appropriate use of medications; (4) communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; (5) wellness and nutrition; and (6) how to evaluate new holistic treatments. The CDSMP program will not conflict with existing programs or treatment. It is designed to enhance regular treatment and disease-specific education such as Better Breathers, cardiac rehabilitation, or diabetes instruction. In addition, many people have more than one chronic condition. The program is especially helpful for these people, as it gives them the skills to coordinate all the things they need to manage their health, and to help them stay active in their lives. The program is enjoyable, relaxing and a chance to discuss health concerns with your peers. I encourage members to call their provider agency for the dates and times to enroll in the next CDSMP class.

By Kenneth Werner

Each participant in the .workshop receives a copy of the companion book, Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions, 3rd Edition and a certificate of completion.

New Family Affairs Administrator

NARBHA has a new Administrator for the Office of Individual & Family Affairs (OIFA)! Cynthia Henry Fullen has replaced Ken Werner in that capacity since October 2011. Cynthia is a native of Maricopa County and spent the last 4 years working in the DBHS OIFA. She is building an email listserv in order to have direct communication with members and family members across northern Arizona. She has been emailing information about NARBHA, provider and community activities, interesting articles related to behavioral health, resources, and announcements about member/family opportunities to help transform the system to one that is recovery-oriented, trauma informed and brings member/family voice to the table. If you want to stay in touch about what's happening, send Cynthia your contact information and let her know if you are a member or a peer. Her email is cynthia.henry-fullen@narbha.org and her phone number is 928-214-2287. Feel free to contact Cynthia at anytime— she would love to hear from you!

If you would like to submit an article for our next newsletter (April 2012), Please send your article to admin@nami-flagstaff.org attention Newsletter, by 3/12/12.

How You Can Help

We continually strive for excellence in our support groups, educational programs, and advocacy throughout the year in an effort to break down the barriers that continue to prevent the mentally ill and their family members from getting the care that they need. This all takes generous contributions of volunteer time and money to support our programs. We hope that **you** will find it in your heart to remember those forgotten ones who suffer from brain disorders through your contributions and continued NAMI Membership.

To renew your NAMI Membership and support our efforts please check your contribution box below and mail your tax-deductible contribution to:

_____ \$35.00 Individual/Family (One Vote)

_____ \$60.00 Family (Two Votes)

_____ \$3.00 Mental Health Consumer

_____ Contributions in excess of the Membership Fee

**NAMI Flagstaff
P.O Box 30673
Flagstaff, AZ 86003-0673**



Northern Arizona's Voice on Mental Illness

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PO Box 30673
Flagstaff, AZ 86003**

**Save The Date:
October 6th- Buffalo Park- "Overcoming Obstacles"- NAMI Fundraiser**

February	March	April
Monday- Friday 10am-4pm Azpire Recovery House	Monday-Friday 10am-4pm Azpire Recovery House	Monday-Friday 10am-4pm Azpire Recovery House
Wednesday 1st & 15th 6:30-8:30pm Family Support Group	Wednesday 1st & 15th 6:30-8:30pm Family Support Group	Wednesday 1st & 15th 6:30-8:30pm Family Support Group
Every Thursday 5:30-7:00pm 2nd-9th-16th & 23rd NAMI Connect-Peer Support	Every Thursday 5:30-7:00pm 2nd-9th-16th & 23rd NAMI Connect- Peer Support	Every Thursday 5:30-7:00pm 5th-12th-19th and 26th NAMI Connect- Peer Support
At Azpire we welcome the opportunity to assist those willing to participate in their recovery. Come by and see the wide variety of programs we offer. Where fun and seriousness are available to all!	Peer 2 Peer Classes 6th-13th-20th- & 27th at 5:30pm Registration Required Call for details 928-606-8328	Peer 2 Peer Classes 3rd-10th-17th- & 24th at 5:30pm Registration Required Call for details 928-606-8328
2201 N. Vickey Street "Old Channel 2 Building" 928-213-0742	Family 2 Family Classes Meets for 12 Weeks Every Tuesday Night 6:30-9:00pm Registration Required Call for details 928-606-4859	Family 2 Family Classes Must be registered by 3rd week to participate