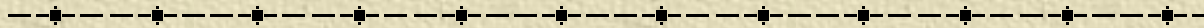
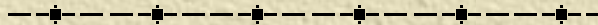



You Are Not Alone

Self-care and Support for Caregivers

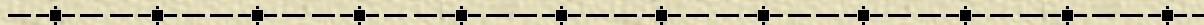


Maureen Osis
Nurse, Author, Therapist

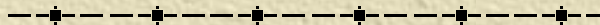




Mental Illness Awareness Week

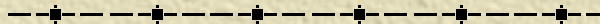


October, 2010



Acknowledgements

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Acknowledgements

✦ The author provides these materials for personal and professional use. The materials may be freely copied but not sold.


✦ Direct any inquiries to:
maureenosis@shaw.ca

Handouts

✦ All handouts and materials from this workshop are posted on my website.
www.maureenosis.com

Mental Illness Awareness Week


- ✦ Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) is an annual national public education campaign designed to help open the eyes of Canadians to the reality of mental illness. www.miaaw.ca
- ✦ The goal is to end the stigma associated with mental illness, and ensure better understanding and access to diagnosis and treatment.



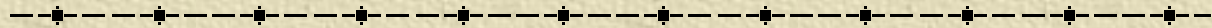
We all have a responsibility to understand and accept mental illness because we are going to come across people from all walks of life in our lifetime that have experienced it.

On the Record. Taking a look at ordinary people's tales of life with mental illness. Liz Gardiner , physician with depression.

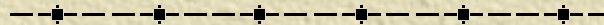
www.pavpub.com/pavpub/magazines/showMagazines.asp?Title=Mental+Health+Today



You are NOT Alike
but



You are NOT Alone



You are not "alike"

-
- ✦ You are not alike because each of you is a unique individual – age, culture, gender, experience – and you are on your personal journey with someone who has a mental illness.

You are not "alike"

-
- ✦ You are not alike because your family member is also a unique individual – with an illness that has symptoms in common with others, but personality and experiences that are different from others.

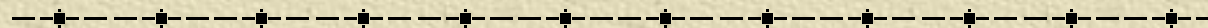
You are not “alone”

✦ You are not alone because you have shared knowledge:

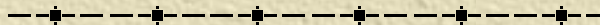
- ◆ You understand the stigma of mental illness.
- ◆ You know what it is like to seek appropriate treatment and resources.
- ◆ You appreciate the dilemmas faced by your family member related to education, employment, and relationships.



You are Not Alone



Because you are a caregiver



Mental illness – a family affair

“Mental illness is a family experience – shared together, but suffered separately.”

Marshall, A., Bell, J.M., & Moules, N.J. 2010. Beliefs, suffering, and healing: a clinical practice model for families experiencing mental illness. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 46(3); 197-208.

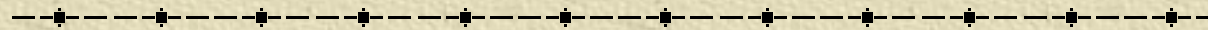
Mental illness – a family affair

- ✦ Current healthcare trends are placing increasing demands on families.
- ✦ Care “in” the community really means care “by” the community – that is, by the family or friends.

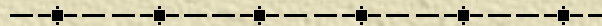
Parker, R., Leggatt, M. Crowe, J. 2010. Public interest and private concern: the role of family carers for people suffering from mental illness in the twenty first century. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 18(2), 163-166.



You are Not Alone



Because you are a caregiver



As a family or friend

✦ You know the challenges that come with having a family member who is mentally ill -

- ◆ Continual and episodic nature of the stress
- ◆ Feeling a wide range of emotions
- ◆ Effects of stigma
- ◆ Conflict in relationships
- ◆ Difficulty getting information

You might feel alone

✦ Caregivers report that they

- ◆ feel isolated (45%)
- ◆ do not get enough consistent help from family members (76%)
- ◆ get less support than needed (62%)

✦ Majority provide care for over FOUR years before seeking help!

Family Caregiving Association, 2002

About YOU

We are here to share your collective wisdom and experiences so that you can make decisions and take actions to promote your own mental health and well-being.

We want you to avoid caregiver fatigue and burnout!

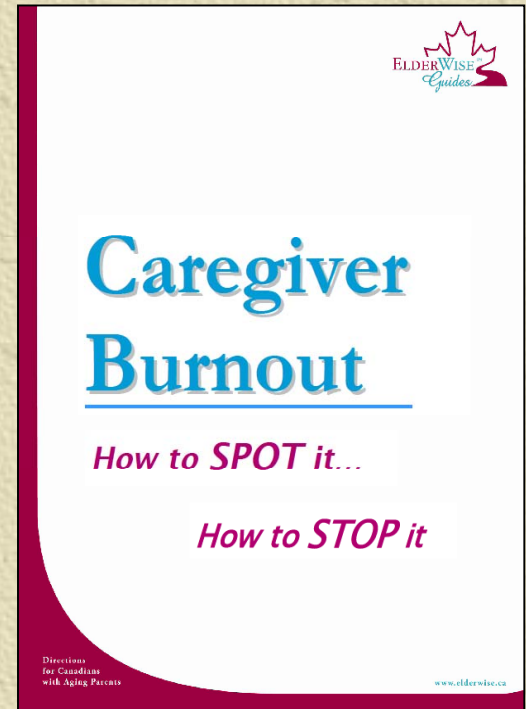
Burnout

✦ We want you to know

- ◆ How to spot it
- ◆ How to stop it

✦ If you burnout-then what?

✦ If you give too much
= resentment?



www.elderwise.ca

Personal strengths

Before we look at the challenges that you face, let's acknowledge the strengths that you have used as a family living with mental illness.

(See Handout p. 2)

Mental illness

✦ Mental illness can be the robber of dignity and dreams.

OR

✦ The catalyst for resilience and courage.

Personal strengths

- ✦ You understand the symptoms of the mental illness – know about triggers of symptoms, such as too much stress.
 - ◆ You know that you cannot correct the problem through reasoning.
 - ◆ You know that signs/symptoms are part of the disorder – you have learned that you must not take it personally.

Personal strengths

- ✦ You have developed specific strategies to help you handle difficult moments – ranging from learning about the diagnosis, to finding treatment, to managing family conflicts.
- ✦ You know how to create safety – for yourself and what to do about risks for self-harm.

Personal strengths

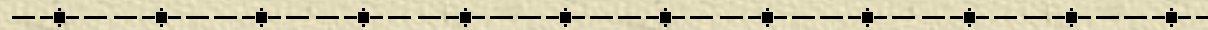
- ✦ You have learned to adapt to the changing needs of your family member – how to be helpful without being intrusive.
- ✦ You have learned about boundaries; how to promote self-reliance and set clear limits and expectations.

Personal strengths

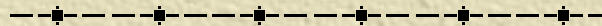
- ✦ You have learned to deal with various care systems – how to develop alliances with healthcare providers.
 - ◆ You know it is OK to ask for a second opinion.
 - ◆ You have learned that relationships are easier with some professionals.
 - ◆ You forgive yourself and others for a bad day.



You are not alone



Mental illness is a common
health problem



Facts about mental illness

Mental illness is increasingly recognized as a serious and growing problem. It is estimated that 1 in 5 Canadians, close to six million, will develop a mental illness at some time in their lives. Many more individuals such as family, friends and colleagues are also affected.

Canadian Mental Health Association

Facts about mental illness

We can say for sure that at least one percent of a population is likely to have a serious and persistent mental illness at any given time. This is equal to about 300,000 Canadians.

Canadian Mental Health Association

Facts about mental illness

There is also a link between physical and mental health. As many as 25% of people with serious physical health conditions will develop a major depressive disorder along with their condition. These other health conditions include diabetes, heart attack, cancer and stroke.

Canadian Mental Health Association

Facts about mental illness

- ✦ “There is no health without mental health!”
- ✦ Persons with dementia and those who have suffered brain injury may also experience psychiatric symptoms including depression, delusions, and hallucinations.

Facts about mental illness

✦ Approximately 16% of Albertans visited a physician for mental health services in a single year.

- ◆ Anxiety
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Substance abuse
- ◆ Adjustment disorder

Alberta Health Services

<http://www.amhb.ab.ca/Initiatives/statistics/Pages/StatisticsandQuickFacts.aspx>



Family Issues & Concerns

Handling “Difficult Moments”

Stigma

✦ Stigma

- ✦ Negative effect of a label (of disgrace) that sets a person apart from others.

Zartaloudi & Madianos. Stigma related to help-seeking from a mental health professional. 2010 Health Science Quarterly, 4(2), 77-83.

Stigmatization

- ✦ “The double misfortune of the mentally ill.”
- ✦ Throughout history people with mental illness have been stigmatized.

Corrigan, P. & Watson, A. (2002). The paradox of self-stigma and mental illness. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 9(1), 33-35.

Stigmatization

- ✦ Includes social disapproval and devaluation.
- ✦ Internal and external
 - ◆ How does your own view of those with mental illness affect you?
 - ◆ How does society's view of those with mental illness affect you?

Emotions

✦ Grief

✦ Sadness

✦ Anger

✦ Frustration

✦ Shame

✦ Guilt

✦ Confusion

✦ Suffering

Suffering

✦ “We have learned from families that it is often not the family member with the illness who is suffering the most, but rather, other family members.”

Marshall, A., Bell, J.M., & Moules, N.J. 2010. Beliefs, suffering, and healing: a clinical practice model for families experiencing mental illness. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 46(3); 197-208.

Guilt

-
- ✦ About decision-making
 - ✦ About treatment
 - ✦ About taking time for yourself

For the partner

- ✦ Was it something I said?
- ✦ I wish I could make it better.
- ✦ It's lonely.
- ✦ I'm carrying a big load.
- ✦ What do I tell people?
- ✦ How can I help my partner?
- ✦ Who can help me?

For the parent

- ✦ Psychiatric hospitalization of a young adult can result in:
 - ◆ relief with the diagnosis,
 - ◆ shock and disbelief associated with diagnosis,
 - ◆ isolation associated with stigma,
 - ◆ feeling excluded during care planning, and discharge.

For the parent

✦ Psychiatric hospitalization of a young adult can result in:

- ✦ Grieving for the immediate loss and for an altered future.

Clarke, D., & Winsor, J. 2010. Perceptions and needs of parents during a young adult's first psychiatric hospitalization: "We're all on this little island and we're going to drown real soon." *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 31(4), 242-247.

For the sibling

When my brother was diagnosed with schizophrenia, I felt a great sense of loss – like a bereavement – because while he looked the same, he acted very differently from the brother I knew.

Leanne Bowman. Schizophrenia: A sibling's tale
Mental Health Practice, September 2009, 13(1), 18-22.

For the sibling

- ✦ I felt two losses: loss of the person I knew and loss of the hopes I had for him.
- ✦ I also felt “survivor guilt” – that I had escaped the suffering of being mentally ill.

Leanne Bowman. Schizophrenia: A sibling's tale
Mental Health Practice, September 2009, 13(1), 18-22.

Discussion

- ✦ Discuss a typical day in your journey supporting a family member with a mental illness.
- ✦ What do you wish you had known about this illness – when it was first diagnosed?
- ✦ What have you learned – and where did you learn it?
- ✦ How have you learned to handle “difficult moments?”

You are Not Alone

Workshop for family caregivers
Mental Illness Awareness Week 2010.

- ✦ Part I: You are not alone
- ✦ Part II: Self-care for caregivers
- ✦ Part III: Achieving balance

All materials are available at www.maureenosis.com