



Saratoga County Citizens' Committee for Mental Health Newsletter



Spring 2009

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YOU CAN HELP!

Be Part of Our Grass Roots Effort for Mental Health

The Saratoga County Citizens Committee for Mental Health is asking for volunteers! We are looking for your help!

In an effort to be ready to implement a Grass Roots Effort for Mental Health whenever the need arises, the SCCCMH is looking for people who want to mail or e-mail letters to their legislators. The Citizen's Committee would provide some of the wording for the letters, and where to send them.

If you are interested in participating in a Grass Roots Campaign for Mental Health, contact Peggy Lounsbury by calling 583-8371 or e-mail: plounsbury@saratogacare.org. Your name will be put on a list and you will be contacted when we need your help sending a letter.

SCCCMH Grant Application Deadlines

IMPORTANT DEADLINES – May 1st and Nov 1st are the dates for submitting GRANT Requests to our committee. If your agency needs a boost to better serve your mental health clients – please contact Caroline Russell Smith at 857-9361.

Dr. Edmond Amyot Named 'Citizen of the Year'

The SCCCMH is pleased to announce that Dr. Edmond Amyot is named the 2009 Citizen of the Year. The Citizens' Committee will be honoring Dr. Amyot at our Annual Dinner and Silent Auction Fundraiser on May 6, 2009 6-9 pm at Longfellows Restaurant.

Enclosed in this issue of our newsletter is a flyer and reservation form for those who would like to attend the dinner. For more information, please contact Collette Fox at 584-0792.

CHAIRPERSON'S NOTES

By Peggy Lounsbury

The SCCCMH has been busy recruiting for our Board of Directors. Board members Jerry Nunez and Patty Nunez are in Florida and looking at new opportunities so they will no longer be on the Board of Directors. Jerry and Patty have both served the Citizen's Committee in various capacities and their contributions to the committee and to the mental health community are greatly appreciated. On behalf of the SCCCMH, I wish them well. If you are interested in a position on our board, please contact me.

The SCCCMH fiscal year is April 1st to March 31st. Therefore, we have changed our membership renewal and membership drive to the spring of every year instead of the fall.

The state of the economy is a cause for concern for the organizations and agencies that serve people with mental illness. The Saratoga community has already felt budget cuts and the trickle down impact when the Friendship Connection closed last summer.

One of the lessons learned by the Citizen's Committee is the need to be ready to "mobilize the troops" when threats to services are apparent. So, look in this issue for what you can do to be part of our "Grass Roots Effort" when we send out an alert.

Hotline for Veterans Considering Suicide

Submitted from [Military.com](http://www.military.com) - Week of March 23, 2009

<http://www.military.com/veterans-report/hotline-for-vets-considering-suicide>

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has founded a national suicide prevention hotline to ensure veterans in emotional crisis have free, 24/7 access to trained counselors. To operate the Veterans Hotline, the VA partnered with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) began operation of a national suicide prevention hotline for veterans. Veterans can call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press "1" to reach the VA hotline.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide hotline that is available to anyone experiencing a suicidal crisis. When an individual calls in, they will be able to speak with a professional who will refer the caller to the nearest crisis center and other mental health services. Call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or visit the [National Suicide Prevention](http://www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.org) website.

Your call is routed to a trained crisis call worker in your area who will be able to provide you with crisis counseling and information and referrals to local resources. If a crisis call worker is not available at the center closest to you, then your call will be routed to a crisis call worker at the next nearest center.



MEET THE AGENCY



Our rehabilitation philosophy is based on the premise that employment is seen as the cornerstone to a person's self-esteem and self worth. Gaining valuable job experience through our program helps an individual to re-enter the workforce while contributing to the community. As a result, the problems associated with unemployment or under-employment of a person with a diagnosed mental illness can be appropriately addressed.

Total Career Services is a division of Unlimited Potential, a non-profit organization, serving individuals with a mental health diagnosis. One aspect of our organization is how we individualize a person's vocational rehabilitation goals and plans to re-enter the workforce. Our services are tailored to meet the confidential concerns of the mental health consumer.

Employment and Placement Services

Our Staff will Help you to:

- Explore career interests.
- Identify your strengths.
- Develop job seeking and job keeping skills.
- Practice Interview techniques.
- Learn your new job by offering job coaching support.

Continued...

Individualized Goal Plans

Total Career Services offers you the freedom to choose the services that best meet your employment needs:

- Career Counseling
- Career Testing and Assessment
- Job Readiness Skills Training
- Resume Development
- Job Placement, and Development
- Job Coaching Support

(Must meet eligibility criteria to be able to participate in any of the programs offered)

**SCCCMH Annual
Dinner &
Silent Auction**
May 6, 2009 at Longfellows

**CONGRATULATIONS, Citizen of the Year -
Dr. Edmond Amyot!**



American Psychiatric Association,
Distinguished Fellow
American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology

Dr. Amyot currently is the Medical Director of the Saratoga Hospital Mental Health Unit. Prior to this, he served the mental health community for several years at the Saratoga County Mental Health Clinic.

CLINICAL CORNER

By Andrea DeGeorgio, LCSW-R

Cognitive Distortions

Why do we feel good about doing some things and not others? We feel the way we do because we *think* the way we do. Our thoughts cause our feelings. You will feel excited and challenged if you think you might succeed at something and you will stick with it even if the odds are against you. You will feel depressed and unmotivated if you think you can't succeed at something, and you may even give up. It is often not the events or people outside of us that "make" us feel happy or sad but rather the *thoughts inside us that we believe about the events and people that "make" us feel the way we do.*

Cognitive distortions or "distorted thinking" are automatic and unconscious, and the first step to changing them is recognizing them for what they are. We all tend to think in extremes, and this may be even truer if we have experienced traumatic events. Below is a list of some common cognitive distortions. If any of them are getting in your way, you may want to examine them further yourself or with the help of a counselor.

1. **All or nothing thinking:** You see things in black and white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you total see yourself as a failure.
2. **Overgeneralization:** You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.



3. **Mental Filter:** You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolors the entire beaker of water.

4. **Disqualifying the positive:** You reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for one reason or another. You maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences.

5. **Jumping to conclusions:** You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.

-**Mind reading:** You arbitrarily conclude that someone is acting negatively toward you and don't bother to check it out.

-**The Fortune Teller Error:** You anticipate that things will turn out badly and feel convinced that your prediction is an already-established fact.

6. **Magnification (catastrophic) or minimization:** You exaggerate the importance of things or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny.

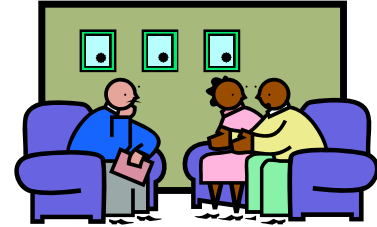
7. **Emotional reasoning:** You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are. "I feel it, therefore it must be true".

8. **Should statements:** You try to motivate yourself with shoulds and shouldn'ts, as if you had to be whipped and punished before you can be expected to do anything. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct should statements at others, you feel anger, frustration and resentment.

9. **Labeling and mislabeling:** This is an extreme form of generalization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself "I'm a loser". Mislabeling involves describing an event with language that is highly colored and emotionally loaded.

(Continued on page 5 - see "Corner")

Saratoga County Network of Mental Health Professionals and Advocates Take a Stand



The Saratoga County Network of Mental Health Professionals and Advocates (SCN-MHPA) had their spring meeting on March 4, 2009. The primary discussion of the meeting was the continuation of a discussion about the potential threat in funding to Unlimited Potential. After an e-mail discussion regarding the development of a position statement, the SCN-MHPA adopted the position statement on Sheltered Workshops and Supportive Employment. The statement is two pages long, but is the position is summarized in the following paragraph:

The Saratoga County Citizen's Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) and the Saratoga County Network of Mental Health Professionals and Advocates (SCN-MHPA) support the need for research regarding the efficacy of the current approaches to community mental health services. Additionally, *until such research is conducted and provides direction for improved programming and services*, the SCCMH and the SCN-MHPA oppose any effort to reduce or eliminate community mental health services, especially supportive employment and sheltered workshop programs, like Unlimited Potential in Saratoga Springs.

Continued.....



If your organization would like to support this position by formally signing on as a supporter, please contact Peggy Lounsbury. The SCCCMH will immediately begin distributing this Position Statement to key legislators in the county and state.

SCN-MHPA Bi-Annual Meeting notes supplied by Peggy Lounsbury who can be reached at plounsbury@saratogacare.org or call 518.583.8371 for further information.

...Corner (continued from page 4)

10. **Personalization:** you see yourself as the cause of some negative external event for which, in fact, you are not primarily responsible.

REFERENCE: "THE FEELING GOOD HANDBOOK" BY DAVID D. BURNS MD

Article submitted by Andrea Degeorgio who practices as a clinical social worker in Saratoga Springs, New York.

She has a practice with Bick Wanck MD & Associates located on 401 Geyser Road in Saratoga Springs, NY and can be reached at **518.583.3035**

Bick Wanck MD & Associates is also located on 516 Washington Avenue in Rensselaer, NY **518.432.0432**

Excerpts of "EDAR: Everyone Deserves A Roof"

By Wendy Cohen March 18, 2009 | 10:08 am EST

Combined with an article:

"For homeless, a house with a roof"

Excerpt from Marketplace.org Morning Report
3/26/09

The bad news from Southern California isn't really unique, but that doesn't make it any less tragic. Officials in Los Angeles County say homelessness has doubled since last year. Today, more than 74,000 people in the county have no place to call home. At the same time, there are only 12,000 shelter beds to go around. Enter a device called the EDAR, which stands for "everyone deserves a roof." By day, it's a heavy duty shopping cart. By night, it converts to a tent that can sleep two people.

The idea for EDAR came to Hollywood producer Peter Samuelson on a bike ride last year. He noticed there were more homeless people than usual, and one of them gave him a tour of her make-shift home. He was appalled by what he saw and how her makeshift home was made out of cardboard that had become soggy. This inspired Samuelson to sponsor a competition to invent an alternative, and the winner came up with the EDAR.

"If you had to define the value of a civilization, it's not how many SUVs you've got," Samuelson said. "To me, I think it's how well do we take care of our children, our homeless people, our mentally ill, those less fortunate."

Our friends at **EDAR.org** (Everyone Deserves A Roof) provide unique mobile shelters to people living on the streets. An alternative to cardboard boxes, alleys and underpasses, each EDAR is a four-wheeled mobile unit that resembles a reinforced shopping cart. It can carry belongings and facilitate recycling during the day and it unfolds into a special, framed tent-like

Continued.....

sleeping enclosure with a bed at night. They are waterproof, very durable, and have much better wheels than the standard shopping cart which allows for increased mobility and an easier time recycling.

TakePart.org had a chance to meet Peter Samuelson, the founder of EDAR, last Fall. Since Peter's visit to their offices, EDAR has been gaining national attention.

While Peter fully recognizes the importance of more permanent living solutions for the homeless, there is a growing need to find a solution on how to serve more than the 70,000 in Los Angeles County alone. This is a growing concern for other parts of the country as well.

In fact, EDAR units are often being used as a "first step" into the homeless shelters for those that are typically reluctant to enter a traditional shelter system.

EDAR's are given free of charge-when funds permit- to homeless people directly and through EDAR's shelter partners. And they track the progress of the EDAR units through each of these partners.

Donations are possible to Sponsor wheels: \$50, sponsor a frame: \$75, sponsor a mattress: \$125, sponsor a roof: \$250, sponsor one EDAR unit: \$500 For more information please check out takepart.com or edar.org. Corporate sponsorship opportunities are available. Please [email us](mailto:info@takepart.com) for more information. And be sure to text EDAR to ACTION (228466) for updates. Take part and learn how you can contribute to [Everyone Deserves a Roof](http://www.edar.org) via PayPal, mail, or fax at their website, takepart.com.

IN THE NEWS...

Dr. Phil Helps Lifeline Prevent Suicide on YouTube

February 11, 2009

<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

The Lifeline grant is funded by:

United States Department of Health and Human Services
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
"A Life in the Community For Everyone"

Dr. Phil encourages people to call 1-800-273-TALK in a new video posted on the Lifeline YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/800273TALK. He talks about why people should reach out if they are in suicidal crisis or emotional distress and how there is not shame in asking for help. The clip was taken from a Dr. Phil Show about suicidal behaviors, which featured guest Dr. Thomas Joiner, a Lifeline Steering Committee Member.

Continued....

Alongside the video there are helpful insights that alert someone if he or she receives a message from a friend who may post a video, comment or posts a text on their YouTube channel that indicates that person is thinking of committing suicide. Check it out and help prevent another tragedy that tears at the social fabric of our families.



Four Winds
HOSPITALS

*This publication was prepared
with the assistance of Four Winds
-Saratoga
www.fourwindshospital.com*

***Become a part of the Voice of Saratoga
County Mental Health Community.***

***2009-2010 Membership Renewal & New
Member Drive is Going On Right Now.***

Join SCCCMH Today!

*Look for the envelope to join is included in this
Newsletter. Don't be left out!*

*Or, contact Peggy Lounsbury for more
information.*

SCCCMH Newsletter is the official publication of the Saratoga County Citizens' Committee for Mental Health, P.O. Box 820, Saratoga Springs, New York.

The views expressed in this newsletter represent the opinions of the authors and do not represent the official position or opinions of the SCCCMH unless specifically stated.

The SCCCMH Board of Trustees reserves the right to decide the content of the newsletter, and reserves the right to review, revise, shorten or deny articles for publication. Articles submitted for publication consideration should not be longer than 250 words unless the author is specifically invited to do so. Also, submitting the copy as a Microsoft Word document, or typed within the body of an e-mail message is preferred. Send articles to the Newsletter Editors e-mail address. Articles not submitted electronically can be mailed to the address above.

SARATOGA COUNTY



CITIZENS COMMITTEE
FOR MENTAL HEALTH

*For more information
about the SCCCMH,
contact Peggy Lounsbury,
Chairperson,
at 518-583-8371*

*The Saratoga County Citizens' Committee for Mental Health (SCCCMH) is a non-profit, charitable organization that **distributes grant money** to agencies and programs in Saratoga County so they can enrich existing programs or expand services for people with mental illness. The SCCCMH also provides affordable **educational opportunities** for professionals and consumers, **advocates** for improved mental health care and services; and is committed to **increasing public awareness** of the needs of people with mental illness.*

**Saratoga County Citizens
Committee for Mental Health**

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