



Public Education Evening

Eating Disorders



**Dr. Julia Raudzus, Medical Director
Dr. Grant Millar, Psychiatrist**

**B.C. Provincial Tertiary Adult Eating
Disorders Program, St. Paul's Hospital**

**Wednesday, April 24, 7:30 p.m.
Lions Gate Hospital Auditorium**

What are Eating Disorders and How are They Treated?

Eating disorders are incredibly complex conditions. While their precise cause is not understood, any eating disorder has a considerable detrimental effect on a person's physical and mental health.

To provide an overview of eating disorders and how they are treated, Dr. Julia Raudzus and Dr. Grant Millar, from the Eating Disorders program at St. Paul's Hospital, will speak at our next Public Education evening, Wednesday, April 24.

Dr. Raudzus is a psychiatrist and the medical director of the Provincial Adult Tertiary Eating Disorder Program at St. Paul's. She co-chairs the B.C. network of eating disorder providers and works closely with the Provincial Health Services Authority and the Ministry of Health to ensure best-care practices for patients with eating disorders. She's also involved with research both in eating disorders and in the treatment of delirium, and works with medical students as a clinical instructor with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia.

Dr. Grant Millar has worked in the Department of Psychiatry at St. Paul's Hospital since the completion of his residency training at the University of British Columbia in 2010. He has long been interested in how psychological and physiological medicine intersect, and combines these interests in his daily work as a consultant psychiatrist with the Eating Disorders Program and Consultation Liaison Service at St. Paul's.

In addition to his clinical work, his research interests include delirium, inter-professional collaborative practice, and models of care for eating disorders patients. He provides academic and clinical training to undergraduate and postgraduate medical trainees as well as additional lectures to professionals and communities around the province.

Letter from the Outgoing President



The new president of NSSS, Cheryl Zipper, with outgoing president, Herschel Hardin

A president isn't supposed to enjoy vacating his position, but in this case, I couldn't help it; our new president, Cheryl Zipper, is such a good replacement. I have to admit that I shamelessly jumped at the chance to have her take on the role and hope I'm not embarrassing her by saying so.

"Cheryl Z.," not to be confused with "Cheryl O.," our executive director, has been on the Board for three years now, the last as vice-president. She has a son with schizophrenia, who is doing well, but it wasn't always like that. She's taken the training in the school of hard knocks and come out the stronger for it.

She's also a Family-to-Family graduate and, almost immediately after taking the course, became involved in NSSS. Her first interest was the Partnership program in the high schools and at Capilano University, which she does together with someone with an illness. She's been coordinator of the program ever since, adding innovations here and there as she's gone along, and introducing the program in the Sea to Sky which she also oversees.

In 2010, she taught Family-to-Family for the first time and now takes a turn whenever she gets the chance. We've occasionally traded stories about how rewarding teaching the course is.

When the board was looking around for a teacher trainer, she seemed a logical candidate, and was sent for a long weekend to St. Louis, where NAMI qualifies teach-

er trainers every year. Just this past January, together with longtime trainer Eileen Callanan, now living in Nanaimo, Cheryl trained a new group of Family-to-Family teachers for the Centre.

She's also been part of the embryonic Support Team, which has provided feedback for development of the support manual, and will go on to do one-on-one peer family support work in the future – unless, that is, she decides to give the extra time to advocacy instead, yet another one of her interests.

Oh, yes, I forgot, Cheryl is also a hiker, cross-country skier, and snowshoer, among other things. I even went snowshoeing with her once, along with our sons, up Hollyburn Mountain. I managed to keep up, but would hate to be in a snowshoe race with her.

I'll be staying on the board for another two years and will continue to do a lot of the work I've done in the past. I like the fact, though, there are new hands on the wheel and the organization is moving forward to where a new generation will be taking charge.

AGM Highlight — The Value of Sharing Stories on Mental Illness



Guest presenters and editors of *Hidden Lives*, Lenore Rowntree and Andrew Boden (seated), with NSSS board members Lisa Stringle, Byron Giraud, Halina Haboosheh, Susie Stevens, and Janet Blue.

Lenore Rowntree and Andrew Boden are not only writers and editors of the essay collection *Hidden Lives: Coming Out on Mental Illness*, but also family members of someone with a serious mental illness. They shared their personal stories, and how they joined forces to produce their anthology, at the NSSS Annual General Meeting, March 27, in the Lions Gate Hospital Auditorium.

Lenore knew something was wrong with her sister when the child was three years old. Her sister's diagnosis has varied over the years, given both psychotic symptoms of schizophrenia and others related to autism. As time passed, Lenore came to terms with her sister's illness in all its forms. "My own pain," she says, "is insignificant to what she's living."

Andrew's brother also has a variable diagnosis, with symptoms of schizophrenia. Fifteen years ago, his brother was in university and on track to play professional hockey when he suddenly fell ill. He had to give up school, as well as his dream of playing in the NHL.

After meeting in a poetry group, Lenore approached Andrew, who'd read a poem about his brother, about co-editing a collection of stories written by either someone with a serious mental illness or by a family member. Wanting writers with some modicum of skill, they posted on writers' forums asking for essay submissions. They had over one hundred responses.

Hidden Lives covers a broad spectrum of illnesses, including autism, despite debate over whether it should be considered an illness or a developmental disorder. The publisher encouraged them to include it, as a hot topic, and when they received a great essay on the subject, they decided to use it.

The essays range from the light-hearted to the serious. A woman with bipolar disorder working in a corporate office writes how she relied on periods of mania to finish her work. A family member writes about his brother, who, while in a psychotic state, murdered someone with a sword. Another story, co-written by a mother and a daughter with an illness, undergoes a shift in tone when the daughter suffers a psychotic break during the editing process.

The editors described some of the challenges of working with the material. Some stories were overwritten or academic and had to be changed, while others needed more details, with the editor helping to draw them out. An audience member spoke up to say that the good presentation of the writers kept her "from getting mired in hopelessness."

Overall, Andrew says he likes bringing these stories out into the community. Lenore hopes they'll help to remove stigma surrounding mental illness by making the lives of those with, and affected by, an illness seem "as normal as they can be. Life is harder for those who are afraid to talk about mental illness, but we all keep on going."

Bringing Stories of Mental Illness to the Public: Marvin Ross



Marvin Ross is forthright about his long-time career as journalist, book publisher, and documentary film producer.

“My role,” he says, “is to bring people with serious mental illness and their plight to the general public.”

Ross, based in Dundas, Ontario, has dedicated a great deal of his time doing just that - raising awareness and spreading the word on serious mental illness. His book *Schizophrenia: Medicine's Mystery, Society's Shame*, published in 2008, received praise from one of the world's leading schizophrenia researchers, Dr. E. Fuller Torrey. In the book, Ross debunks many of the false beliefs about the illness, while explaining it as clearly and comprehensively as possible for a broad audience.

His commitment to the cause stems from his own family. His son, now 35, has schizophrenia. When he was first diagnosed as a young man, Ross felt most people didn't understand the illness. This propelled him into action.

“I wanted everyone to know that schizophrenia isn't a character defect, it's an illness,” he says. “It's a real illness, and it can be treated. The treatment isn't ideal, but it's treatment and it exists.”

Years later, his son is compliant with his medication. He eventually returned to school and has worked part-time and as a volunteer.

Seeing first-hand how the illness can affect families, and knowing the many medical and systemic challenges that families and their ill relatives face, Ross then began bringing forward stories by family members and those with an illness through his publishing company, Bridgeross Communications (www.bridgeross.com).

The name might seem familiar to *Notepad* readers. Many of the deeply personal non-fiction books featured in *The Notepad* in the past few years were published by Bridgeross, including three by people living in Vancouver.

One is Susan Inman's memoir *After Her Brain Broke: Helping My Daughter Recover Her Sanity*, which describes her family's struggle to help her young daughter recover from schizoaffective disorder. Another is *My Schizophrenic Life: The Road to Recovery from Mental Illness*, by Sandra Yuen Mackay, the 2012 Courage to Come Back award winner for mental health. Last spring, in conjunction with Bridgeross, NSSS helped launch Erin Hawkes' story, *When Quietness Came: A Neuroscientist's Personal Journey with Schizophrenia*.

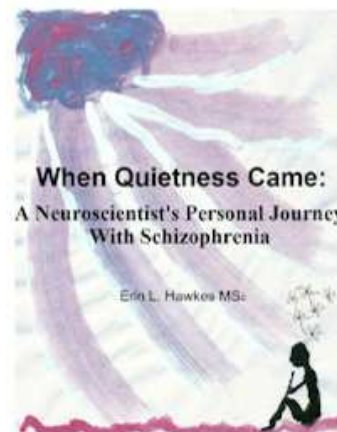
Ross has also produced films on schizophrenia and recovery, including *Schizophrenia in Focus* and *The Brush, the Pen and Recovery* (www.cuttingforstone.com). The latter describes the Cottage Studio, an arts program supported by Hamilton Program for Schizophrenia Family Association, in Ontario. Members are offered complimentary space and art supplies in a relaxed social environment, to help with recovery.

Ross also writes regularly as an advocate, sometimes several times a month, for the *Huffington Post Canada* (www.huffingtonpost.ca/marvin-ross). His recent columns challenge media perceptions of mental illness and the Harper government's latest changes to the criminal code for those found not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder.

Ross says that he's grown a thick skin. He's received many mean-spirited, misguided letters, emails, and tweets from anti-psychiatry and anti-medication groups, and also from those who deny that serious mental illness exists. He's been called many names, among them, “a pro-drug pusher.”

He doesn't mind the criticism. Most people, he feels, no matter what their views on mental illness, basically want the same thing – to help those who are seriously ill.

“If they feel the need to attack me,” he says, “I must be doing the right thing.”



Above: Marvin Ross at an art exhibition at Cottage Studio, featured in his film *The Brush, the Pen and Recovery*.

Left: One of the many books published by Bridgeross Communications, by Vancouver-based neuroscientist Erin Hawkes, who has schizophrenia.

Love's All That Makes Sense: A Mother-Daughter Memoir

Reviewed by Judy Bielieki

Love's All That Makes Sense by Sakeenah and Anika Francis
Bridgeross Communications, Dundas, ON, 2013



There is a sense of hope in this inspirational book about a woman and her daughter and how they dealt with the mother getting schizophrenia. As a person with a loved one who suffers from a serious mental illness, I could relate to much of the story.

The title of the book, *Love is All that Makes Sense*, is touching because making everything good and right is not always possible. Love can't save

everybody or every relationship in the book – although it does save the author. Grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and the kindness of strangers led to the daughter feeling as though she was always loved no matter how bad things got. The message that I took away is, "I love my mother despite all we've gone through and she loves me."

The loving family members in this true story all knew about the troubles their loved ones were facing, but because of stigma they wouldn't talk about it directly. In a pattern familiar to many of us, this woman was successful

in college, got out and got married, and when she gave birth she started having episodes. She lost her calm, peacemaking, and loving husband because he didn't understand. Her family realized there was a serious mental illness so she was court-ordered to take medicine. She gained weight and hated it, but did well in society for a while. She thought she and her husband would be together, and he did pay bills and check on her occasionally, but she had another relapse and he was gone. She was no longer able to keep a job, and became homeless. She made bad choices with fellows, would get high, began to drink heavily. Eventually the daughter, after a bad foster care experience, went to live with the grandparents. This scenario is a common one, as are the relapses the mother suffered.

The inspirational part of the book is that it ends with the mother, having been in treatment for 25 years, becoming a mental health advocate and a very successful speaker in the United States. Her daughter, having found that writing letters back and forth to her mother aided in her gaining insight into herself, becomes an entrepreneur. The daughter shares her experiences with yoga, acupuncture, and meditation. She credits those activities with helping her to let more and more good things into her heart, which assists her in getting more and more bad things out of her daily life and relationships.

One quote from the book that I think will sustain me for a long time to come: "It's not what happens to you in life. It's what you do after it happens."

Family Support Centre

Personal support and information on major mental illnesses – schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, and anxiety disorders

205 - 1865 Marine Drive
West Vancouver BC V7V 1J7

Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
or by appointment

North Shore/Lower Mainland: 604-926-0856
Sea to Sky: 604-849-2252

www.northshoreschizophrenia.org
info@northshoreschizophrenia.org
Twitter: @NSSSoc

Monthly Support Meetings

Come share your questions, concerns, and experiences with family members.

Support group meetings are held each month at the Family Support Centre in West Vancouver, for family members and close friends of people who have serious mental illnesses.

To register, please call the Centre.

Families Helping Families

Thank you to our many friends and supporters. Your donations are appreciated. Tax receipts will be issued for all contributions.

Notes from the Sea to Sky



NSSF Donates Resources to Public Libraries

NSSF Sea to Sky Outreach Coordinator Christine Buttkus (second from left) joins Elizabeth Tracy, Director of the Whistler Public Library; Nadine White, Public Services Librarian; and Carol Coffey, Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Whistler, in displaying some of NSSF's contribution of new books and DVDs to the library. Thanks to a grant by the Community Foundation of Whistler, both Whistler and Pemberton libraries now have copies of books including *Hidden Lives*, *When Quietness Came*, *The Anti-Anxiety Workbook* and *The Bipolar Disorder Survival Guide*, as well as the documentary film *Unlisted: A Story of Schizophrenia*.

NSSF Awarded Municipal Grant

For the first time, NSSF has been awarded a municipal grant from the Resort Municipality of Whistler. As part of the application process, NSSF Sea to Sky Coordinator Christine Buttkus appeared before council and made a five-minute presentation on our work in the north corridor. The presentation was a great opportunity to raise our profile in that community.

Sea to Sky Mental Health Partnership Table Talks

NSSF continues to take a lead role at the monthly Sea to Sky Mental Health Partnership Table, facilitating discussions among systems and service providers in the corridor on many topics. Over the past few months, NSSF has explored innovative practices around care, housing, and other services, with a view to strengthen services for individuals with and affected by mental illness. The partners have

submitted an application for funding to the Vancouver Foundation to assist in the work of the Table and broaden the dialogue.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Working Group Prepares for Next Training

NSSF continues to facilitate the Sea to Sky Suicide Awareness and Prevention Working Group on behalf of seven partners, which started in Spring 2011. Squamish stakeholders asked to become part of the initiative and joined in December 2012. To date, eight presentations have been made in the northern end of the corridor, with support from the Community Foundation of Whistler, and two presentations have been made in Squamish. NSSF is pleased to report that Squamish Rotary has generously agreed to support our next training phase, aimed at building capacity of group leaders, with 15 individuals from Squamish joining the working group. Rotary members will also offer their time in support of this important initiative. Judy Davies-North of End Suicide will be in Squamish to work with our group in April.

Partnership Panel Presentations on Mental Illness Scheduled for High School Classes

NSSF is scheduling Partnership Presentations for Grade 10 classes in Whistler (May 23) and Pemberton (May 7th). School Liaison meetings take place regularly at Pemberton Secondary School and on an as-needed basis in Whistler. These meetings allow for collaborative approaches to learning about mental illness and responding to it in schools. NSSF also responds to requests from individual teachers for other forms of presentations. Classroom visit requests are also being filled in Whistler. NSSF is grateful to the Community Foundation of Whistler for their support of this work.

Promoting Mental Health as a Community

Filling in the Blanks Between Mental Health and Mental Illness: What Does It Mean to Us as a Community? wrapped up on March 7, in Whistler. The series brought panel members and participants together to discuss how mental health services can be improved in the Sea to Sky. Thanks to Pemberton Secondary School, Squamish Public Library, and Whistler Secondary School for providing space. Special thanks to the Community Foundation of Whistler for their financial support of the series.

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Province of British Columbia; City of North Vancouver; District of North Vancouver; District of West Vancouver; Lynn Valley, Ambleside Tiddlycove, Mt. Seymour, and Capilano Lions Clubs; Soroptimist International of North and West Vancouver; North Shore Rotary Clubs; Canada Post Foundation for Mental Illness and Mental Health; West Vancouver Community Foundation; Community Foundation of Whistler; Lynn Valley Legion; Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP; North Shore Credit Union; Seymour Golf & Country Club; and our many other generous donors.



No Longer Struggling

*A sense of purpose came back into the light
No longer struggling through endless nights*

*The fog has lifted and the seas began to part
Replenishing all of the goodness in my heart*

*Blackness has lifted its heavy veil
Lighting life's often burdensome trail*

*Hope held out it's hand to me
Opened the cage and set me free*

*I have come in from the biting cold
To learn my lessons before I am too old*

*Standing on shore to see my ship come in
Allowing a new chapter in my life to begin*

*The stars light up the northern sky
They did not let my wishes go by*

*Gone are the days of hurt and pain
I hope they will not return again*

Gary Edward Allen, 2013

Research Briefs

Shared genetic similarities among several mental illnesses: The largest genetic study of mental illnesses to date, by the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium, a research collaboration in 19 countries, has found that schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depressive disorder, as well as autism and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), share genetic similarities. Researchers analyzed the genomes of over 61,000 people, some with an illness and some without. Four regions of the genetic code were linked to all five disorders. Because each disorder is thought to be caused by a complex mix of genetic and environmental risk factors, the new research doesn't offer immediate benefit to families, but it does offer researchers a lead in improving psychiatric treatments.

Source: *The Lancet*, February 2013

Siblings of those with schizophrenia at higher risk for depressive symptoms: New research from Rivierduinen Mental Health, Netherlands, indicates that siblings of people with schizophrenia are at a greater risk for depressive episodes and other mood difficulties than those with no family or personal history of mental illness. Researchers studied 822 individuals with schizophrenia, 813 siblings, and a control group of 527 participants with no family or personal history of mental illness. People with schizophrenia had the highest levels of lifetime depressive episodes. Researchers also found a direct relationship between the frequency and length of depressed symptoms and negative psychotic symptoms, both clinical and subclinical. Siblings showed an increased risk of depression that was statistically significant enough to suggest they should be monitored by their doctors for depressed mood.

Source: *Psychological Medicine*, March 2013

Similar perception difficulties in those with bipolar, schizophrenia: People with bipolar disorder share many of the same cognitive difficulties as those with schizophrenia, although less severe, including problems identifying facial expressions and gender. A Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System study looked at 30 people with schizophrenia, 57 with bipolar disorder (half of whom were taking antipsychotic medication), and 30 with no history of mental illness. Participants looked at two sets of pictures, one with faces displaying various emotions and ones with neutral facial expressions, and were asked to identify the emotion on the first set and the gender on the second. Those with schizophrenia had the hardest time correctly identifying facial expressions. Those with bipolar disorder had higher accuracy rates but took longer to answer, and had much lower scores than the control group. Both schizophrenia and bipolar groups had similar difficulty recognizing facial gender. This further reveals the challenges those with serious mental illness can face in social settings due to delays and impairments in cognitive processing.

Source: *Psychological Medicine*, February 2013

Upcoming Events

APRIL

8th Annual Family Conference

Saturday, April 27, 2013, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Vancouver General Hospital, 899 West 12th Avenue
Paetzold Theatre (registration is required)

This year's keynote speakers are UBC professor and psychologist Mahesh Menon, on the biomedical and psychological intervention in psychosis, and mental health blogger Natasha Tracy, on living with bipolar disorder.

Participants can also take workshops on concurrent disorders, care for the caregiver, best and emerging practices, further educational practices, and family perspectives.

JUNE

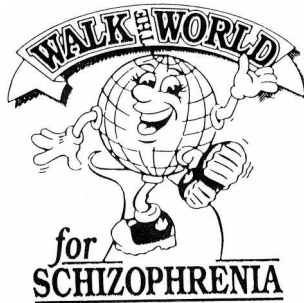
22nd Annual Walk the World for Schizophrenia

Sunday, June 23, 2013,
10 a.m. (assembly time:
9:30-9:45 a.m.)
John Lawson Park, at the foot
of 17th Street

Walk the Seawalk to
Dundarave Pier and back!

Join us for Walk the World for Schizophrenia, one of our most important awareness events of the year. With your help, we can make this the biggest and best walk ever. Lace up your walking shoes and bring the entire family, even your pets (dogs on leash, please), and get ready to celebrate.

If you aren't able to participate in the walk, you can still help with set up and registration. Together, we can raise awareness and work to defeat harmful myths about serious mental illness.



MAY

5th Annual NSSS Circle of Strength Fundraiser Luncheon

Saturday, May 25, 2013,
noon – 1 p.m.
Hollyburn Country Club
950 Crosscreek Road,
West Vancouver

In just one hour, the luncheon provides a forum to broaden awareness about serious mental illness, while at the same time raising funds for the operation of the Family Support Centre.

Meet friends new and old, enjoy lunch, and learn more about the work NSSS does.

This year's Master of Ceremonies is Herschel Hardin, former NSSS president and long-time Family-to-Family teacher. Herschel has had a long and varied career as author, playwright, radio broadcaster, and much else - and has been an active supporter of the Society and its Family Support Centre. He has a son with schizophrenia.

Seating for this event is limited and pre-registration is required.

JUNE

West Vancouver Community Day Parade

Saturday, June 1, 2013

We're excited the parade is back this year! It follows a new route - starting at 13th and Marine, continuing along Marine to 17th, then moving down to Bellevue, and looping back to 13th.

Join NSSS in spreading the word on serious mental illness and enjoy a number of food vendors and information booths by community groups, non-profits, and businesses.



Please call the Family Support Centre at 604-926-0856 for more information on any of these events!

JULY

Cancelled: North Shore Canada Day Parade

As of this printing, the century-old North Shore Canada Day parade has been cancelled. This event has always provided NSSS members and friends with an occasion to get together and celebrate our national holiday while also raising awareness. We are disappointed to lose this opportunity for public outreach, and hope the parade will return in 2014.

SEPTEMBER

Family-to-Family Education Course



Registration has already started for the next Family-to-Family education course on the North Shore, tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 17, at the Family Support Centre. For those in the Sea to Sky area, the course will begin February 2014.

It's never too early to reserve your spot for this free, 12-week program, on all aspects of serious mental illness, taught by trained family peer instructors. To qualify, you must have a close family member with a serious mental illness.