

## On Being Mentally Ill

I am like you  
only more so.  
The gnat in your head  
is the scorpion  
in my blood.  
I love, yet feel each  
twist of love's sword.  
Each loss feels  
like an avalanche  
to me. One day  
I may not recover.

To feel so much:  
to know each nuance  
of pain as eye perceives  
each variation  
of color and shape.  
To love like a twisted  
root, with the desire  
of the leaf to become  
wind and fly.

I never know  
where the wind will take me.  
Each fall requires  
a start from scratch  
where I may never  
reach my destination,  
however hard I travel.

I go on,  
because I have to,  
because in life  
there is no moment  
to pause. In my fragile  
way I celebrate life  
as much as you. I feel  
the sun on my face  
and I am thankful.

But I am not like you.  
My inner wars make me  
pliable as clay, where  
I need something  
to fasten to my name  
to know I exist.

Every moment  
is a battle to save  
the phantom of tomorrow  
from out of the jaws  
of that dog  
time.

By Lewis Conn  
December 1992

## In-Home Services (continued)

### Who Pays for the Outreach Program?

Ideally, clients should have Maryland Medical Assistance. Some consumers in the Outreach Program have Medicare. Service to clients with Medicare must be authorized by the Core Service Agency. In addition to Medical Assistance and some Medicare, the Outreach program will take private paying clients but not private insurance. The fee for services varies according to the type and length of visits. The director of the program will talk to the client and family about costs and ways to accommodate those financial needs. An agreement is signed by all parties about the payment plan.

### HOUSE CALLS

Beth Albanze has established House Calls, a service that provides consulting, coaching, and comprehensive home support for individuals who have a life trauma or major life transition, families with a member who has a chronic mental illness and/or developmental disability, aging parents needing community resources and/or homecare. Beth has 30 years experience as a recreational and rehabilitation therapist in the mental health community.

Beth's goal is to serve those for whom the mental health system is not appropriate and wish to "take a different route." She wants to give the client back a productive life style and works to both teach the client skills and to advocate for him/her in various settings. Some of her clients have families out of town and Beth provides the local advocacy.

Sometimes Beth will ask the client if he/she had three wishes what they would be. The purpose of this question is two-fold; it allows Beth to understand the client's life goals and helps her to work with the client to adopt *realistic* life goals. In addition, Beth believes that recreation and fun are important to clients' recovery and Beth helps them connect with recreational opportunities. One of her guiding principles is that "everyone needs mastery in their life" and she "walks behind people" to support them in their recovery. Beth stressed that rehabilitation is a process, not an outcome.

Beth's approach is very flexible and is unique to each family situation. House Calls allows the client to remain and recover in the home setting. Beth's ability to connect clients with the appropriate professionals makes families feel safe and secure. She stated that families

know that with this program they will get an advocate for their loved one.

### Who Can Apply and How is House Calls Accessed?

Anyone can apply for House Calls services. A consumer or family member should call Beth or e-mail directly or complete the referral form on her web site ([www.callingonbeth.net](http://www.callingonbeth.net)). If the individual needing help is not taking their medicine, the main client might be the family first and the person with the disability would become the client later. At the first visit, Beth does an assessment and then discusses a plan for serving the client. Beth can be reached at 301-346-6732. Her e-mail is [callingonbeth@verizon.net](mailto:callingonbeth@verizon.net).

### Who Pays for the House Calls Services?

House Calls operates on a fee-for-service basis. Depending on the request, her fees range from \$90/hr and up. Beth factors in location; number of clients per visit, number of visits required, mileage and gas. This fee is usually paid by guardians, lawyers, or family members.

## INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY CENTERED SERVICES

Darlene Dockins is the Maryland State Director for the Institute For Family Centered Services (IFCS). The Institute operates in five states: Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. They employ 300 people and work with about 3600 families annually. They also work in five regions in the State of Maryland and have an office in Gaithersburg.

IFCS offers crises stabilization and psychiatric rehabilitation services. The Institute believes that the family should be strengthened and that the family as a whole unit can assume the task of learning to overcome crisis, develop new skills to replace dysfunctional dynamics and behaviors, improve self-concept and change systemic behavior patterns among themselves. The Institute aims to keep the family together.

IFCS works with children, youth, adults, and families. A licensed professional staff member performs a comprehensive assessment of the individual or family. They look at the client's relationship to their environment — to institu-

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