



NHLAP

NEW HAMPSHIRE



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Newsletter

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NH LCL Monthly Meeting

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL) is a monthly meeting on the **SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH** of NH lawyers, judges and law students who come together for free, confidential peer support for any issue that interferes with professional competence. Absolutely confidential.

August 13 at 6:00 p.m.

Airport Diner, 2280 Brown Ave, Manchester

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The NH Bar Association has made it possible for the bar-wide distribution of the monthly NHLAP Newsletter as of May, 2019. NHLAP is sincerely grateful for the leadership and assistance of NHBA in this endeavor.

UNDERSTANDING BIPOLAR DISORDER

Bipolar disorder is a classification of brain diseases that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity level and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks. Bipolar disorder was formally known as Manic Depression. In 1980, the DSM officially changed the classification and refined the several types and characteristics.

There are 4 types of Bipolar Disorder. All types are characterized by changes in mood which range from manic (very “up”) to hypomanic (markedly “up”) to depressed (very “down” or hopeless). These changes can cycle quickly (daily) or slowly (months at a time).

Bipolar I is characterized by a manic episode that lasts at least 7 days or manic symptoms that are so severe that they require immediate hospitalization. Usually the need for hospitalization includes hallucinations, delusions or a disconnection from reality. Because of this, Bipolar I is misdiagnosed as schizophrenia. A clear accounting of a history of depressive episodes is key to an accurate diagnosis.

Bipolar Disorder affects 5.7 million adults in the U.S. or 2.6% of the population in those age 18 or older

More than two-thirds of people with bipolar disorder have at least one close relative with it, indicating this is an inheritable disease

Self-Harm occurs in about 40% of those with bipolar disorder

Bipolar disorder is the 6th leading cause of disability in the world according to the World Health Organization.

“[My Bipolar feels] like my mind is having a party all night long and I’m the last person to arrive and now I have to clean up the mess.”

-Carrie Fisher

Bipolar II is characterized by a pattern of depressive episodes and hypomanic episodes without manic episodes. Generally, this is when an individual feels good and can be highly productive, but friends, family and colleagues recognize it as significant mood swing. This requires proper diagnosis and treatment, as many of those with Bipolar II can develop severe mania or depression.

Cyclothymic Disorder is characterized by periods of hypomanic episodes and periods of depressive symptoms lasting at least 2 years but do not meet the diagnostic criteria for Bipolar II.

Unspecified Bipolar Disorder is characterized by bipolar symptoms that do not meet the specific criteria for the other 3 types of Bipolar Disorder.



Although many famous people have thrived while living with bipolar disorder, none have done as much to advance both the understanding of this disease and its destigmatization as Carrie Fisher. She publicly embraced her illness by giving three separate interviews in 2003 to a new, fledgling online magazine, *bpHope*, a source for those living with bipolar disorder. “I am mentally ill. I can say that.” With these simple, honest words, she shattered Hollywood stigma and broke new ground for people dealing with mental illness everywhere.

To focus her message, Fisher created a hilarious and heartbreaking one woman show on Broadway in 2009, *Wishful Drinking*, which explored her fame, her relationships, her mental illness and her substance abuse.

The show was based on her 2008 bestselling memoir, *Wishful Drinking*. “*One of the most important things Carrie did is to make the point that just because a person’s symptoms are gone for a while, they are not gone for good. They will return. The public often misunderstands the chronic nature of mental illness and gets wrongly judgmental with what they misconstrue as relapse caused by an undisciplined person rather than the sheer tenacity of the disease.*”

-Stephen Fried, co-author (with Patrick J. Kennedy) of [A Common Struggle: A Personal Journey Through the Past and Future of Mental Illness and Addiction](#). (2015).

“[Carrie Fisher] took the stigma against bipolar disorder and kicked it to the curb.” -JoAnne Doan, founder, *bpHope*.

The treatment for bipolar disorder often depends upon the type. However, common elements to successful treatment often includes medication and psychotherapy. The medication is usually a combination of mood stabilizers and antidepressants or antianxiety medication. Often, the medications associated with the successful management of manic and depressive symptoms are found to have unpleasant side effects. One of the most complained about side effects is tardive dyskinesia, a nervous system disorder that is associated with long term use of psychiatric medications characterized with difficulty controlling bodily movement, lip smacking and uncontrollable tics. There is current focus on this type of dyskinesia and new medications being developed to control it.

[Common Medications for Bipolar Disorder](#)

Lithium Treats Mania

Lamotrigine (Lamictal) Treats Depression

Haloperidol (Haldol) Stabilizes Mood

Aripiprazole (Abilify) Antipsychotic

Alprazolam (Xanax) Treats Anxiety/Insomnia

Successful treatment of bipolar symptoms is often complicated in that once an individual stops experiencing symptoms, there is often an unreasonable belief that medication is no longer necessary. Many individuals take themselves off medication because they feel healthy. This can then trigger a dangerous manic, depressive or psychotic episode starting the cycle all over again.

People with Bipolar Disorder are our family members, friends, neighbors, employers. People with Bipolar Disorder are successful, creative and vibrant. People with Bipolar Disorder are heroes and icons. Together, let’s kick the stigma against Bipolar Disorder to the curb.



FAMOUS FACES OF BIPOLAR DISORDER

Carrie Fisher



She was diagnosed with Bipolar I at the age of 24, at the height of her *Star Wars* fame, yet she never shied away from it. She wrote her first novel, [Postcards from the Edge](#), in rehab in 1987 after a near-fatal drug overdose. She famously talked to fans openly at Comic Con events about living with bipolar disorder. Iconic actress, author, mental health activist. Died at age 60 in 2016 of complications from a heart attack.

Patty Duke



She broke the silence surrounding bipolar disorder in the publishing of her autobiography [A Brilliant Madness: Living with Manic Depressive Disorder](#) in 1992. She was already an Oscar and Emmy winning actress, but she spent the rest of her life as a mental health advocate including lobbying and testifying before Congress for funding and research. She died at age 69 in 2016 of sepsis, at which time her son, Sean Astin, founded the Patty Duke Mental Health Initiative.

Mel Gibson



He first disclosed his bipolar diagnosis in the 2008 documentary, *Acting Class of 1977*, after his famous 2006 drunken run-in with police. “I’ve had some really good highs but some very low lows.” He attributes his profanity laden, anti-Semitic tirade which resulted in his arrest as “blurted out in a moment of insanity.” He is the Oscar winning director for *Braveheart*, A-List actor and Hollywood powerbroker.

Ted Turner



Founder of Turner Broadcasting and CNN, former owner of the Atlanta Braves, Atlanta Hawks and winner of the America’s Cup. His manic episodes fueled the acquisition of a global media conglomerate. Forbes estimates his current net worth at \$ 2.2 billion. He remains publicly open about his lifelong battle with bipolar disorder, suicidal thoughts and depression.

Brian Wilson



He wrote and produced nine albums and 16 hit songs for the Beach Boys during what he describes as one, long manic 3-year episode. He suffered a panic attack in 1964 and stopped touring. He used LSD to self-medicate which left him unable to compose or tour for decades.

Jane Pauley



In 2004, she released her autobiography, [Skywriting: A Life Out of the Blue](#), in which she chronicled her struggles with bipolar disorder. She had then been a co-anchor on NBC's Today Show, Dateline and a co-host for the evening news. She champions the Jane Pauley Community Health Center in Indianapolis, Indiana which opened in 2009. There are now 11 locations that serve medical, dental and mental health needs of underserved populations.

Demi Lovato



She was diagnosed in 2010 after checking herself into a mental health clinic for addiction and self-harm. Former Disney channel star, chart-topping recording artist and mental health activist. In 2013 she was honored at the National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day gala for her dedication as a mentor to teens with mental health challenges.



Mariah Carey

Diagnosed in 2001 with Bipolar II, she told People magazine in 2019 that she "lived in denial and isolation" for years. "I didn't want to carry around the stigma of a lifelong disease that would define me and potentially ruin my career. I was so terrified of losing everything." "It does not have to define you and I refuse to allow it to define me or control me." She is referred to as the "Songbird Supreme" by Guinness World Records with a [recording empire](#) worth in excess of \$520 million.

Jimi Hendrix



Arguably the most gifted rock guitarist of all time, he wrote the song "Manic Depression" in 1967 in which described his trouble with extreme mood swings. He had been expelled from school, was arrested for theft and was discharged after one year from the US Army. His mainstream recording career only lasted 4 years, but he remains one of the most celebrated musicians of the 20th Century. He died at age 27 of an overdose of sleeping pills in 1970.

Sir Winston Churchill



Despite fighting his "black dog" -what he termed his depression, suicidal thoughts and insomnia, he was the iconic and beloved British Prime Minister who led the Allies through the horrors of WWII, the author of 43 books and the 1953 winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. He died at age 90 in 1965.

Catherine Zeta-Jones



Diagnosed in 2000 with Bipolar II after an episode of depression related to her husband's battle with cancer. She is an Academy Award and Tony winning actress. She continues to speak regularly about her diagnosis, her vigilance in taking care of herself and her role in destigmatizing mental illness.

MONTHLY RESOURCE



FREE ON-LINE PEER SUPPORT

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance

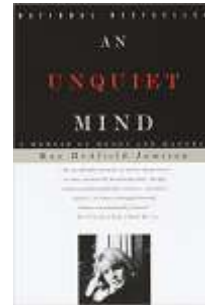
(DBSA), is a free, online support group providing people living with depression and bipolar disorder a place to share experiences, discuss coping skills and offer hope to one another. DBSA support groups are peer led, meaning they are facilitated by someone living with a mood disorder. Currently, there are groups for peers, young adults, and friends and family members. Info at www.dbsalliance.org or 800-826-3632.



SPOTLIGHT

BOOK PICK:

An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness by Kay Redfield Jamison, A.A. Knoff (1995)



"Jamison's memoir, is, without a doubt, the most brilliant and brutally honest book I've ever read about bipolar disorder. I've read nothing else that has better captured the torment and elation of this strange illness. ... Jamison has studied and written extensively on her scientific findings, but what makes [this] such a great read has nothing to do with research and everything to do with [her] ability to relay her distinctive and singular perspective in human terms." Melody Moezzi, NPR Book Review, April 13, 2009.

PODCAST PICK:

That B Word: Bipolar/Borderline/Beautiful

"Dealing with mental illness can be a b****. Luckily, we don't have to do it alone. Join your Beautiful Bipolar host, Becky, as she shares her own experiences and those of her guests."



Available with subscription on iTunes, Stitcher, Android, TuneIn or Google Podcasts



WHAT IS NHLAP?

We are a confidential, independent 501(c)(3) non-profit to assist NH lawyers, judges and law students with any issue that may impact or impair the ability to practice law. Many lawyers think we only help with substance misuse. Although that is a very important part of NHLAP, it is not the sole focus of our work. We help with anything that has become problematic. Some examples are depression, anxiety and other mental health issues; grief; cognitive limitations resulting from aging; eating disorders; professional dissatisfaction and burn-out; work-life imbalance and time management strategies.

We are here to help before consequences of these issues become problematic, public or both. We are not part of the NH court system nor the NH Bar. Because we are solely funded by a per attorney mandatory assessment, we are akin to an additional lawyer insurance policy- we can help individuals or legal employers understand the risks in ignoring these very real issues and point to concrete solutions.

We are your resource. We are here to help make your legal practice something you enjoy, not something you endure.

1-877-224-6060

Add NHLAP to your social media accounts to receive wellness updates and links to wellness articles as they relate to the law. We are on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. Just click on the links on the first page to see how we are harnessing the power of social media to keep you better informed.



QUICK TIP

WELLNESS QUICK TIP

BE ALARMED

Set a timer on your phone or computer at 60-minute intervals while working at your desk. Use this reminder to stand, take 3 slow, deep breaths, squeeze your shoulders blades together then relax your shoulders. This reduces stress and corrects your posture. Sitting for long periods without a break slows metabolism, increases risk for depression and spinal injuries.

Small, simple, doable.

