



Listening Ear Service

After speaking to people with MS over the last year or so it has emerged that there is a need for a listening ear type service.

The physical needs of people living with MS are very well addressed and there are lots of courses and treatments available to them.

However the cognitive and emotional needs regarding their fears, worries, frustrations etc are limited and would appear to be a huge issue for most people. Some people may need individual counselling to assist them in communicating their needs clearly without fear of causing offence. It can also help to regain their individual power and provide a sense of responsibility for their healing process. This also applies to carers as their needs are often forgotten.

Some people with MS have already availed of this service and found it was necessary and worthwhile. They feel they have benefited and gained a better understanding of their situation by expressing and confronting their fears and

frustrations in a safe and confidential environment.

The transition from health to illness has an affect on the whole family as neither party has any experience in dealing with the change and how to handle it. Often they either try to fix it or avoid it, which causes great stress and frustration for everyone. This is a common complaint for anyone (individual or family) who has suffered a loss either through death, the loss of health, or any other circumstance that requires transition and change. Many people who are living with a life changing illness have expressed their frustration and the need for people to see beyond their disability whether it is mental, physical or emotional.

The MS Society Foyle Branch are currently running a pilot programme to assess the level of need in this area and are delighted to offer this service to our members. If you feel you need to talk to someone who will listen without judgement and help you express and communicate your needs, please telephone 71360831 to arrange an appointment.



Add together a person experiencing an active MS relapse, a fear of heights and a parachute jump and you come up with the very special Naomi

O'Loughlin. Naomi & her friends undertook a sponsored parachute jump in aid of the MS Foyle Branch on Saturday, 3rd June 2006. Despite suffering a relapse on the day, as you can see, the intrepid Naomi went ahead with the jump and with her friends raised a staggering £3,456.35. A big thank you to all involved.



*The Foyle Branch wishes
all its members
a very Happy Christmas
and a Peaceful New Year*

Peter

BRANCH SERVICES

The Foyle Branch of the MS Society delivers a range of services providing help and support to people living with and affected by MS, whilst funding research for hope in the future. Information and advice is available Monday to Friday from the Foyle Branch office, 58 Strand Road - Tel 7136 0831.

The MS Society Foyle Branch provide a range of services including: Physiotherapy exercise sessions, Yoga, Tai Chi/Qi Gong, Tuesday Club, Thursday Support Group, Accessible Transport, Library, Local and National Magazines.

For information on any of our services please telephone the MS Society Foyle Branch office on 7136 0831, e-mail: msfoyle@tiscali.co.uk or visit our website at www.msfoyle.org.uk



Every year since 2001, 74 year old Tom Lean has cycled from Kerry to Derry to raise money for MS. Tom left Ireland for the United States at age 23 to find work and retired as director of human resources for Thermal King, part of the Westinghouse company at age 60 in 1992. He lives in Philadelphia with his wife, Carmel, when he's not cycling in aid of MS here or in the US.

He's pictured above below as he is met by friends and supporters on his arrival at Iona House in Spencer Road and later as he relaxes with Carmel.



Who's Who

Development Officer: Terry McNamee

Tel: (028) 7136 0831

Welfare: Moira Leitch

Tel: (028) 7126 7400

Chairperson: Peter Eakin

Tel: (028) 7133 8641

Vice-Chair: Michael Heverin

Tel: (028) 7126 1118

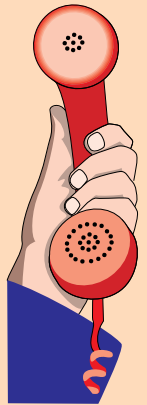
Secretary: Marie McGinn

Tel: (028) 7186 0152

Treasurer: Damien McKenna

Tel: (028) 7136 3921

(MS Society Charity No: 207 495)



MS AND YOUR FEELINGS

by Allison Shaddy
with a foreword by
Stanley Cohan



Allison Shaddy is a clinical social worker and psychotherapist with 14 years of experience counselling chronically ill patients and their families. She was diagnosed with MS in 1995. Her book deals with a much neglected topic - how to relieve the psychological trauma (psychological numbing, denial and acceptance, guilt and depression, loneliness) often experienced when diagnosed with MS. The book outlines a number of strategies for coping derived from her years of counselling. Stanley Cohan is a neurologist. In addition to the foreword he contributes to a chapter on developments relating to drugs for MS.

The book (ISBN: 089793489X) in paperback format was published by Hunter House in the US in October and has been warmly welcomed by the MS Foundation in the US. It is expected to be published in the UK in February 2007 at a list price of £11.99.

Moira's Brainteaser

Try your hand at Moira's brainteaser. An MS Society T-shirt awaits the winner. Names of those with correctly completed answers sent to the office by 20th December 2006 will be entered in the draw.

1. 24 H in a D
2. 26 L of the A
3. 7 D of the W
4. 7 W of the W
5. 12 S of the Z
6. 66 B of the B
7. 52 C in a P (W J s)
8. 13 S in the U S F
9. 18 H on a G C
10. 39 B of the O T
11. 5 T on a F
12. 90 D in a R A
13. 3 B M (S H T R)
14. 32 is the T in D F at W
15. 15 P in a R T
16. 3 W on a T

A Holistic Approach to Health and Healing

This programme is designed as a result from feedback through the Listening Ear Service, a Needs Assessment carried out by Derry Healthy Cities "Foyle Active Futures Project" and a group meeting which included people with MS and their carers which focused on the needs of the group and what could be done to address these needs.

Needs identified included the Management of Stress both for the person with MS and their Carers, Medication Management and the provision of light exercise programmes.

MS not only affects the person diagnosed with MS but also impacts greatly on the carers and the wider family connection therefore it is very important that carers are included in this programme.

Stress Management Programme

According to research 'our thoughts play a major role in how we perceive ourselves and others, and how we interact with the world around us'.

This programme will give an understanding of the basic principles of psychology and philosophy to both people with MS and their Carers.

We face many challenges in life and often as in the case of a person with MS we have no choice in what challenges life presents however we do have a choice in how we respond to and meet the challenge. This programme will address how we perceive others and ourselves either as a victim or as someone who has the power over the situation and will provide channels for positive thinking.

The programme will run for a period of 6 weeks the course content is listed below, however in order to address the needs identified above each week of the programme will include time for discussion with the course facilitators and the community pharmacist, be it in a group situation or on a 1-1 basis.

It will also allow time for movement, visualisation and meditation.

6 - Week Course:

Week 1. My relationship with Myself.

Identity - Who am I? Exploring culture, conditioning, and attachment. The power of now, living in the present moment.

Week 2. The Power of Positive Thinking, Exploring roles, attitudes, values and choices.

Week 3. Empower Yourself

Exploring labelling, language and memory.

Week 4. Emotional Intelligence and Healing Perception, communication and motivation.

Understanding emotions.

Week 5. Transforming Anger and Fear

Emotions can be destructive or an opportunity for growth and development.

MS NURSING SERVICE

**New Telephone Number
from Monday 20th November '06
BELFAST**

Tel: (028) 9063 2757

Mon-Thurs: 9.30am-4.30pm

Fri: 9.30am-3.00pm

**An MS Nurse will be available to
answer your call at the above times.**

Closed 12.30pm-2.00pm Daily

**Closed Saturday, Sunday, Bank &
Public Holidays**

**Fiona Mullan, MS Specialist Nurse at
ALTNAGELVIN is available on**

Tel: (028) 7126 9132

MS SOCIETY

GREAT GOLDEN RAFFLE

will take place on 21st April 2007

TICKETS £1 each or a Book of 6 for £5
are now available and we are looking for

volunteers to sell them. If you are
interested please contact Terry

on (028) 7136 0831

Week 6. Evaluation and Overview of the course. General discussion.

This course is designed for both people with MS and Carers and will begin early January 2006. Anyone wishing to participate should contact Terry on 71360831 as soon as possible. We intend running courses in Limavady, Claudy and Derry.

N.I. MS Society 50th AGM & Healthcare Conference comes to Derry

The Northern Ireland MS Society brought its 50th AGM & Healthcare Conference to the Tower Hotel in Derry on 13th, 14th & 15th October 2006. A highlight of the conference was an illustrated presentation on developments in the management of MS and on his expectation of what the next ten years may bring by Professor Michael Hutchinson, a neurologist working in St Vincent's University Hospital in Dublin.

A feature of the Saturday evening dinner was the presentation of Volunteer Awards to nominees from each of the branches. Included below on the right is Naomi O'Loughlin of the Foyle Branch.



Below: Nuala Griffiths, (far left) proprietor of Café Calm and a local tour guide, very kindly gave an educational tour of the walls to the visitors to our city. Included left to right are: Shauna Hutton, Barbara Harrison (Schering Health Care Ltd) Carrie Brown (Healthcare at Home), Terry McNamee, Development Officer Foyle Branch and Kieran Harris, Director MS Society NI.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

Naomi O'Loughlin is married to Sean and has two boys, Ryan and Kieran. In the middle of completing an honours degree in Biology at the University of Ulster in Coleraine, Naomi is the Foyle Branch's volunteer of 2006 for her determination and bravery in completing a parachute jump whilst undergoing a relapse of MS.



Happiest childhood memory? Sitting on a warm stone in the middle of a stream, with my cousin, trying to catch the sticklebacks that my granda pointed out, I must have been around eight or nine.

Human quality you most admire? Tolerance towards others. I have enormous admiration for people such as the Dalai Lama and Ghandi who were so influential, yet so full of humility.

Human quality you least admire? Conceit and arrogance. I am a firm believer that no-one is better than the next person, and to have respect, it must first be earned.

Favourite book? It changes frequently, but at the moment it has to be 'We need to talk about Kevin'; it's a very moving storyline. I enjoy a good horror and devour chick-lit by the dozen, although when I'm well enough, I tend to go for science writers, such as Richard Dawkins.

Favourite film? The Green Mile left me in tears, but then I'm a big softie! I'd read the book before but it was very well adapted. Also Schindlers List.

Favourite television programme? Don't watch much telly, with 2 kids I don't have much time, and most of it is terrible anyway; but I enjoy Horizon and am a closet 'Lost' fan.

Favourite food/drink? Fillet steak - medium, and a nice bottle (or two!) of red wine, with good company.

Favourite holiday destination? I would love to visit Kenya, see the Masai Mara on safari and possibly a few days on the Seychelles when I'm in that direction.

What is your greatest fear? At the moment, it's having to give up university, it's the thing that keeps me sane, the place that I'm not someone's wife or mum. Other than that, I try not to look too far ahead.

You've won the lottery, what would you do? Go on Safari first! Life would probably be much the same as it is now, except for an army of cleaners! (And a bigger wardrobe for all the new shoes and handbags!....Ah, bliss!)

How would you like to be remembered? I'd like to be remembered with a smile! As one who was game for anything, and who cared about life.