



# Books

**Editor's note:** Experienced, volunteer, NAMI-member readers write the book reviews in the Advocate. Reviews reflect the consensus of the readers' opinions, not necessarily explicit NAMI policy. The intent of the reviewers is to present information and help educate NAMI membership.

The books in this section can be purchased through your local bookseller or by contacting the book's publisher.

## *Catch a Falling Star: A Tale from the Iris the Dragon Series*

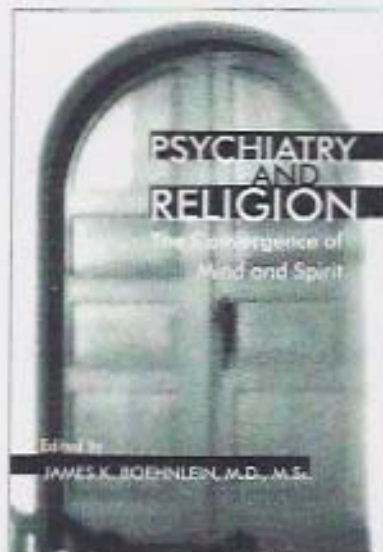
by Gayle Grass  
(Iris the Dragon, Inc., 2001.  
Paperback: \$15.95)

Review by Brenda K. Bickel, NAMI Literature Committee

*Catch a Falling Star* is beautifully written and illustrated by two women who each have a child with a mental illness. Author Gayle Grass uses the fairy tale format to disassociate the topic of mental illness from the real world and allow children to see these illnesses and their effects on people in a nonthreatening light. Throughout the story, the Iris the Dragon character reaffirms the message that mental illness exists, is increasing, and needs to be better understood.

Children ages eight or nine years and older could read this text on their own, but this book would make an excellent teaching tool for parents and children to share together. The story provides springboards to conversation, and the artist's lovely pencil and crayon drawings provide opportunities for art appreciation, as well.

U.S. orders are \$10.95 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling for up to five books. For ordering information, call 613/284-2049; fax 613/283-9507; email [iristhedragon@hotmail.com](mailto:iristhedragon@hotmail.com); or write Iris the Dragon, Inc., Otter Creek, 667 Highway 15, RR #1, Lombardy, ON, Canada, K0G 1L0.



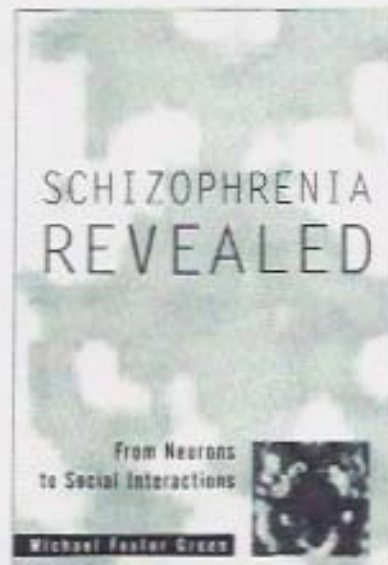
## *Psychiatry and Religion: The Convergence of Mind and Spirit*

James K. Boehnlein, M.D., editor  
(American Psychiatric Press, 2000.  
240 pages, Hardcover: \$33.50)

Review by David Seaman, NAMI Literature Committee

This collection of ten essays, written by an impressive group of psychiatrists and religious professionals, deals with the relationship between psychiatry and religion, a topic seldom addressed in scientific literature. Despite many similarities, these two humanistic disciplines operate from different assumptions and historically have remained quite separate and somewhat antagonistic. It is only in recent years that the fields have begun to converge.

*Psychiatry and Religion* includes outlines of the major religious beliefs, along with discussions of such things as shamanism, fundamentalism, cults, faith healing, and self-help groups. Different approaches to healing, and their interactions, are considered. Although written primarily by and for psychiatrists, this book is easily understood by the lay reader, who can learn some important things.



## *Schizophrenia Revealed: From Neurons to Social Interactions*

by Michael Foster Green, Ph.D.  
(W.W. Norton, 2001. 207 pages.  
Hardcover: \$32.00)

Review by William Zaccagnino, Richard Rowson, and Sondra B. Kaska, NAMI Literature Committee

In *Schizophrenia Revealed*, author Michael Foster Green thoroughly discusses the origins and genetics of schizophrenia, explores neurocognition and neuroimaging, and describes treatment and coping strategies. Although the book is written from a scientific perspective, it could nevertheless be quite helpful to consumers and caregivers, allowing them to better understand the illness and work more effectively with their treatment team to address symptoms.

Green presents extensive evidence that schizophrenia is a progressive neurodevelopmental disorder with neural disruptions that begin in the prenatal period and continue well beyond, often not manifesting themselves until adulthood. These disruptions lead to neurocognitive deficits that in turn result in functional impairment of the individual.

The reader learns that estimates of the inheritability of schizophrenia "range from 74 percent to almost 90 percent" and the origin of schizophrenia most likely lies in many genes rather than a single gene. Intriguing