

2026 Speaker Introduction for Amanda

1. Our guest today is a **National Award-Winning Author and Teacher.**
2. She served **10 years** on the Board of Directors for the **National Alliance on Mental Illness, Orange County** affiliate.
3. Her critically acclaimed debut memoir, **LOSING DAD, Paranoid Schizophrenia: A Family's Search for Hope**, won an Independent Book Publishers Association (IBPA) **silver award in psychology**, was a finalist for a Readers' Favorite Award and a quarter finalist for the *Publishers Weekly BookLife* Prize.
4. According to Readers' Favorite, the book "will inspire and encourage loved ones not to give up hope even when getting help seems all but impossible."
5. Her sequel, **FINDING DAD, Paranoid Schizophrenia: An End to the Search**, was selected as a finalist for the IAN Book of the Year awards.
6. *BookLife* Reviews says it "is as much a testament to resilience as it is a **pointed critique of the American mental healthcare system.**"
7. Please join me in welcoming our guest, author **Amanda LaPera (La-Pear-uh)**