

President: Natalie Hussein 321-345-6365
1st Vice-Pres: Linda Williams 321-536-0788
2nd Vice-Pres: Dana Elliott 321-427-6533

Secretary: Ellen Audelo 321-259-8854
Treasurer: Bobbi Eberwein 321-432-5500

NAMI Family Support Groups

NAMI Family Support Groups are for any adult with a loved one who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition. Gain insight from the challenges and successes

- ◆ Free of cost to participants
- ◆ Designed for adult loved ones of people with mental health conditions
- ◆ Led by family members of people with mental health conditions
- ◆ 90 minutes long and currently meeting in person three times a month in Brevard County (see below)
- ◆ No specific medical therapy or treatment is endorsed
- ◆ Confidential

Date	Location	Address	Time
1st Tuesday	Palm Point Behavioral Health	2355 Truman Scarborough Way Titusville, FL	6 - 7:30 pm
2nd Tuesday	Circles of Care ALC Follow signs from parking lot	2000 Commerce Drive Melbourne, FL	6 - 7:30 pm
3rd Tuesday	Central Brevard Library	308 Forrest Avenue Cocoa, FL	6 - 7:30 pm

NAMI Connections

NAMI Connections is a recovery Support group program that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope. NAMI Connection groups are for Peers with Mental Illness.

Peer Support Group Meets every Tuesday at 6:00 pm via Zoom
ID 814 1341 6162 Password 083458

For more Information:
Website: www.namibrevard.org Email: namibrevard@gmail.com

What is Peer Support?

Peer support is a type of encouragement, advice, and emotional help provided by someone who has experienced the problems you are currently experiencing. They have “been there, done that” and can provide a unique perspective from someone who understands what you’re going through.

The primary advantage of peer support is the deep relationships that are formed. The shared experiences serve as a common foundation on which the support relationship is formed. Many times peer supports turn into deep friendships.

How is Peer Support different from counseling or therapy?

Peer support can come from anyone who has a common experience. Peer supports could be a professional relationship, but it could also come from a member of a therapy group, a friend met via online support forums, or even an already-established friend or family member. In this way, a peer support may or may not have professional training; the important part is the honest and real shared experiences.

Peer support is about conversation, dialog, and mutual understanding. There is comfort in knowing that someone else has been through the struggles you are experiencing. It focuses on the art of connecting with others, both in our joys and in our pains.

Peer support focuses primarily on assistance in daily management, social and emotional support, bridging the gap between individuals and community resources, and extended ongoing support over time.

- 1. Offers living proof of wellness and makes recovery attractive.**
- 2. Shows faith in the ability to change; encourages and celebrates wellness achievements.**
- 3. Encourages self-advocacy and self-sufficiency**
- 4. Genuinely cares and listens, can be trusted, can identify areas for potential growth**
- 5. Tells the truth, is honest about recovery process, identifies roadblocks**
- 6. Is a role model for recovery and provides stage-appropriate wellness education**
- 7. Assists in structuring daily activities around a self-developed plan for wellness**
- 8. Helps resolve roadblocks and problems, both personal and environmental**
- 9. Is knowledgeable about help resources, community services, and professional help**
- 10. Is a companion, an advocate, a cheerleader, and an inspiration**

COMMUNICATING WITH SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

- DO** SLOW DOWN
- DO** GIVE THEM SPACE
Don't make them feel trapped
- DO** BE CALM
Express your support and concern
- DO** SPEAK SLOWLY AND SOFTLY
USE SHORT and SIMPLE SENTENCES
- DO** AVOID sudden or quick movements
- DO** BE HELPFUL. Respond to basic needs. Be very low key.
"We are all here to help."
- DO** GIVE FIRM, CLEAR DIRECTIONS;
One person should talk to the subject.
- DO** RESPOND TO DELUSIONAL THINKING or HALLUCINATIONS by talking
about the person's feelings rather than what she or he is saying
- DO** LISTEN TO THEIR STORY
- DO** EXPLAIN POLICY, especially if handcuffed
- DON'T** TAKE CONTROL if you don't have to
- DON'T** ARGUE or try to reason with mental illness symptoms
- DON'T** STARE AT THE PERSON
- DON'T** CONFUSE THE PERSON
One person should interact with the person
Others should keep their distance Ask casual observers to leave
Follow through with directions or commands
- DON'T** TOUCH THE PERSON UNLESS NECESSARY
For people experiencing a mental health crisis, it may cause fear and lead to violence
(trying to protect themselves)
- DON'T** SHOUT
- DON'T** GIVE THEM MULTIPLE CHOICES
This can increase their confusion
- DON'T** WHISPER, LAUGH, JOKE, or DECEIVE the person
Dishonesty creates fear and suspicion. The person will likely remember

How to Help a Loved One with a Mental Illness

I don't have a mental illness. Go away!

Psychology Today

When a loved one has a psychiatric disorder, it's a challenge for the whole family—parents, siblings, friends, and relatives. The willingness to come together as a unit, accept the diagnosis, look for help, go beyond criticism, blame, and judgment will not guarantee recovery, but it makes it far more likely.

Denial and disapproval will only worsen the situation.

Family support (biological family or chosen) is vital to recovery. The support helps minimize the indignities and damage that mental illness can inflict on an individual. It also can save a loved one's life. As a mental health worker, I saw the consequences and challenges that resulted when parents, relatives, and friends refused to accept the illness or, worse, ostracised the individual who was struggling.

When I was first diagnosed with Bipolar I and psychosis, my parents' acceptance, love, and boundary-setting was pivotal. Even when I lacked the ability to accept my mood disorder, I knew in the back of my mind, my parents were a soft place to fall. When I did eventually recognize that I needed help, I knew I could turn to them. And I did. Do not think your kindness falls on deaf ears, our soul or our subconscious registers far more than we realize.

Tips for supporting a loved one with psychiatric illness:

1. Inform yourself as much as possible about the illness being faced. Get the truth, not the myths. Local mental health associations are terrific resources to help you understand the illness and the route recovery often takes. It's also an ideal place to find others going through, or who have gone through, similar experiences.

An excellent reading resource is "I Am Not Sick. I Don't Need Help!" by Dr. Xavier Amador. His book gives practical suggestions about how to help someone with mental illness who doesn't believe they're sick. Understanding a lack of insight (or more accurately: anosognosia) as a symptom of psychiatric disease and appreciating the process—from denial to acceptance and then wellness—is essential.

2. Start dialogues, not debates. If your family member doesn't agree she or he has an illness, talk about it to find out why. Listen without trying to change them or their minds. Forget the power struggle. Focus on building trust and rapport.

3. However, in cases where a loved one is in acute psychiatric distress (experiencing psychosis or feeling suicidal for instance), getting him or her into the hospital is the wisest and best choice. I speak from experience, involuntary commitment saved my life. For more on this subject, read the post 'Should Restraints in Psychiatric Care Be Illegal?'

4. Instead of guessing what helps: Ask. Even if your family member has difficulty telling you what would be helpful, asking how you could support, demonstrates you don't think you know best (even if you believe you do). It gives room for empowerment and self-awareness to take root. See if the requests are doable. Be honest with what you can take on. Once the discussion begins, keep it going. People's needs shift with the path of the illness.

5. Seek counseling for yourself. The burden of dealing with a chronic and severe illness within a family is enormous stress and the feelings that arise, conflicting. When my mother was ill with the swings of severe depression, mania, and anxiety, I was worried as well as angry. I needed someone outside the family to freely discuss my frustrations and hurt without the fear of upsetting her. A qualified therapist offers clarity, objectivity, solutions not previously seen and a place to safely deal with the emotions arising from such difficult circumstances. The healthier you are, the better equipped you become to handle demanding situations.

6. Check out support groups for family members of those experiencing mental illness. The resources listed below—as well as community mental health teams, hospitals, and your family doctor—will either offer good programs or know of some. Check your local area for specific groups.

Other important reminders for family members and loved ones:

- **Keep yourself healthy and pace yourself. Overextending yourself will only cause further problems in the long run.**
- **Avoid falling into the role of fixer and savior. No matter how much you love someone, it cannot save them.**
- **Offering objectivity, compassion, and acceptance is valuable beyond measure.**
- **Know that even if your actions and love may seem to have little impact, they are making a difference. (Trust me.)**
- **Have realistic expectations. The recovery process is not a straight line nor is it one that happens quickly.**

It bears repeating: Your love, acceptance, and patience are more effective than you will ever realize. My parents likely will never know how important, how life-saving and life-changing their support was for me, especially when I was in full resistance mode. So although you may feel helpless and see little progress at times, without those three elements any other kind of help is empty. It does get better. And please remember, treat yourself with kindness and find adequate support for yourself. A challenge like this is not easy, for anyone.

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**You Are
Never Alone**

Break Stigma



How to Break Stigma against Mental Illness

- ⇒ **Educate Yourself & Others**
- ⇒ **Be Conscious of Language**
- ⇒ **Show Compassion**
- ⇒ **Chose Empowerment over Shame**
- ⇒ **Be Honest about treatment**
- ⇒ **Don't harbor Self stigma**

***Laura Greenstein,
Communications Coordinator of NAMI***

There is an old saying, “The squeaky wheel gets the grease”.

Since January, I have had many heartbreaking conversations with family members regarding calling 9-1-1 for mental health crisis, questions and confusion about the Baker Act, and immense frustration with lack of facilities for loved ones needing proper supportive care during treatment and for continuing treatment. The rusty wheel of our mental health care system is squeaking very loudly; especially in Brevard County.

In 2020, 9-8-8 the universal, 3-digit national number for mental health crisis, suicide prevention, and veteran’s crisis line was signed into law. It will be routed through the existing National Suicide Prevention Hotline. While 9-8-8 will go live nationwide in July 2022, it is up to our state to ensure there are crisis services available like crisis call centers, mobile crisis teams, and crisis stabilization programs to actually help the people who need services.

The design of a 9-8-8 system will be complex and require careful planning across multiple state agencies and rely upon several funding streams.

Legislation will create bringing together all stakeholders, data, and budget information to provide a smooth rollout and ongoing operation of an effective 9-8-8 system.

Having a strong crisis response system available when people dial 9-8-8 will impact our entire community. It will reduce demand on law enforcement so they are freed up to address their primary responsibility to protect public safety. It will also help Florida reduce what it spends on more expensive and less effective methods of responding to mental health crisis, namely arrest and incarceration, emergency room visits, and reoccurring psychiatric hospitalizations. Most importantly, it will help avoid tragic outcomes and allow people in mental health crisis get the help they need.

Please contact your elected officials that represent our county listed in this newsletter and let them know how many of us are affected by mental illness. I doubt they know how many of us there are affected by the lack of services. Just a few lines will do. If you would like to add a story about your experience with 9-1-1, keep it concise and not too many words. You can call, email, or send letters. Encourage your friends, neighbors and family members to do the same.

***How to
advocate for
Mental
Illness
by
contacting
your
representative***

If you are now at this portion of our newsletter,
I am asking you to email me at

namibrevard@gmail.com

I will put your name in a contest to win a **\$20.00**
gift certificate of your choosing 30 days from the
distribution of this newsletter.

Natalie Hussein

Contact Your Legislative Representatives

flsenate.gov or MYflorida.gov

SENATOR Debbie Mayfield

900 E. Strawbridge Ave.
Melbourne, FL 32901

REPRESENTATIVE Renee Plasencia 50

Suite 1C Brevard County
Government Center North 400 South Street
Titusville, FL 32780

SENATOR Tom a. Wright

404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

REPRESENTATIVE Tyler I. Sirois 51

Suite 206
260 North Tropical Trail
Merritt Island, FL 32953

REPRESENTATIVE Randy Fine 53

2539 Palm Bay Road NE, Suite 5
Palm Bay, FL 32905

REPRESENTATIVE Thad Altman 52

1895 South Patrick Drive
Indian Harbor Beach, FL 32937



Just a reminder to have a little fun!!!

Mental Health Awareness

S	E	I	B	B	O	H	T	H	E	R	A	P	Y
I	O	S	E	E	S	I	C	R	E	X	E	S	A
A	C	R	D	E	P	R	E	S	S	I	O	N	N
E	C	E	C	N	E	L	O	I	V	E	M	O	R
O	G	L	S	S	S	L	E	E	P	I	I	I	E
X	R	A	U	R	E	I	A	U	N	T	W	S	S
L	I	X	C	O	E	I	A	D	A	E	W	S	P
Y	E	I	O	U	S	N	F	L	C	S	N	E	E
O	F	N	F	T	X	U	O	P	N	N	I	R	C
G	O	G	I	I	L	S	C	O	P	I	N	G	T
A	S	H	E	N	I	A	G	T	T	N	S	A	I
C	E	T	E	E	E	B	A	L	A	N	C	E	D
E	Y	S	R	S	L	A	O	G	T	E	S	R	S
S	S	N	E	W	I	T	H	D	R	A	W	A	L

- YOGA
- FOCUS
- THERAPY
- COPING
- AGRESSION
- VIOLENCE
- MINDFULNESS
- RESPECT
- GRIEF
- SET GOALS
- EXERCISE
- WITHDRAWAL
- DEPRESSION
- BALANCE
- ROUTINE
- ANXIETY
- ISOLATION
- HOBBIES
- SLEEP
- RELAXING

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1949984/>

NAMI Brevard
1770 Cedar Street
Rockledge, FL 32955



Membership Form

You can Join NAMI by going online to www.nami.org and click on JOIN or you may fill out the form below and write a check or money order made out to NAMI Brevard County and send to our treasurer: Elizabeth Eberwein PO Box 477 Capre Canaveral, FL 32920 You will receive a monthly newsletter from NAMI Brevard County along with NAMI.org benefits and as a member attend our special events designated for Members.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIPCODE _____

EMAIL _____

Household \$60 _____ Regular \$40 _____ Open Door \$5 _____