



NAMI Main Line PA
 Affiliated with National Alliance on Mental Illness
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NAMI Main Line PA Newsletter – November, 2019

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President's Message

Please join us for our Interactive Workshop, [Supporting Your Loved One on the Road to Mental Health Recovery – What Helps, What Hurts](#), on Sunday, **November 10**, 2-4 p.m. at Ardmore Presbyterian Church. This interactive workshop will be facilitated by three NAMI Board Members: a clinician, a person living with mental illness, and a parent caregiver. These facilitators will share perspectives and insights from their professional experience and the support groups that they facilitate. Through interactive exercises, participants will help each other improve behavior, boundaries and communications skills with a loved one who may be deeply depressed, highly anxious, psychotic, and/or dealing with other symptoms of mental illness. Registration is not required.

We very much appreciate all of you who contributed to the success of Main Line NAMI on the Move – Stepping Up for Mental Health. Thank you!

Ingrid Waldron, President

NAMI Main Line PA Activities

Event: Main Line NAMI Workshop: “[Supporting Your Loved One on the Road to Mental Health Recovery – What Helps, What Hurts](#)”

Date: Sunday, **November 10** from 2-4 p.m.

Place: Ardmore Presbyterian Church* (5 W. Montgomery Ave. in Ardmore)

Note: This interactive workshop will be facilitated by 3 NAMI Board Members: a clinician, a person living with mental illness, and a parent caregiver. These facilitators will share perspectives and insights from their professional experience and the support groups that they facilitate. Through interactive exercises, participants will help each other improve behavior, boundaries and communications skills with a loved one who may be deeply depressed, highly anxious, psychotic, and/or dealing with other symptoms of mental illness. Registration not required.

Event: **Bryn Mawr Family Member Support Group**

Date: Typically meets on the **first Monday of every month** at 7:00 p.m.

Place: Bryn Mawr

Note: For family members of people with mental illness. For more information, including location and room number, please contact the group facilitator, Diane, at 610-247-4545.

Event: **Havertown NAMI Family Support Group**

Date: Meets on the **third Tuesday of every month** from 7-8:30 p.m.

Place: Presbyterian Church of Llanerch* (211 Lansdowne Rd. in Havertown, PA, 19083)

Note: This is a free, confidential and safe group of families helping other families who live with mental health challenges. In this support group, families join a caring group of individuals helping one another by utilizing their collective lived experiences and learned wisdom. Family members can achieve a renewed

sense of hope for their loved one living with mental health challenges. For more information, please contact Nora at nora@huntjohnson.org.

Event: **[NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group](#)**

Date: Meets **weekly on Tuesday evenings**

Place: Bryn Mawr

Note: This is a free, peer support group for adults living with mental illness, run and led by NAMI-trained facilitators. You will gain insight from hearing the challenges and successes of others in a confidential setting. By sharing your experiences, you can gain hope and you can develop relationships with a group dedicated to productive discussion. The group encourages empathy and fosters a sense of community. For more information on the location and time of our meetings, please contact Danielle Sulpizio at (484) 880-0660 or Ed Kane at (484) 744-0860.

Event: **Parent Peer Support Group**

Date: Meets weekly on **Wednesday evenings from 6:45-8:15 p.m.**

Place: Wayne Presbyterian Church*, Room 207, 125 E. Lancaster Ave, Wayne

Note: This is a free, peer-led support group for parents with a middle school through young adult child who is challenged with mental health symptoms. This non-denominational group is facilitated by Nancy Dever and Debbie Gillespie. Please contact Nancy Dever at psadfacilitator@gmail.com or text 610-574-3319 to set up a time to talk.

*Although some of our events are held at religious institutions, they are non-denominational and open to people of all beliefs.

Other Local Activities and Events

Event: QPR Training

Date: Wednesday, **November 6**, from 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Place: Upper Perkiomen Valley Library (350 Main Street in Red Hill, PA)

Note: QPR stands for question, persuade, refer: three simple steps that anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. This training prepares attendees to recognize the warning signs of suicide, ask someone about suicidal thoughts and offer and connect to help. This training is being offered in partnership with Upper Perkiomen Valley Library and the Montgomery County Suicide Prevention Taskforce. For more information about local suicide prevention efforts, contact Erin Hewitt at ehewitt@montcopa.org. Please RSVP at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/question-persuade-refer-qpr-suicide-prevention-training-tickets-68162522941>.

Event: Screening of ***Suicide: The Ripple Effect***

Date: Wednesday, **November 6**, from 5-7:30 p.m.

Place: Bucks County Administration Building, 1st Floor Community Rooms

Note: The Bucks County [Suicide Prevention](#) Task Force is hosting a local premiere screening of *Suicide: The Ripple Effect*, a film created to help reduce the number of suicides and suicide attempts around the world. Nick Emeigh from NAMI Bucks County will be the introductory speaker at 5 p.m., the film will be shown at 5:30 p.m., followed by a brief period of discussion and Q&A. The documentary film centers on the journey of Kevin Hines, who at age 19 attempted to take his life by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge. Sixteen years later, Kevin is a world-renowned mental health advocate, motivational speaker and author who travels the globe spreading a message of hope, recovery and wellness. The film chronicles his personal journey and the ripple effect it has had on those affected by his suicide attempt and his subsequent life's work. It also highlights stories of people and families who are utilizing their personal tragedy to bring hope and healing to others. Learn more about the film here: suicidetherippleeffect.com. There is no charge to attend this event. You can pre-register for the screening by emailing Wendy Flanigan at wflanigan@buckscounty.org.

Event: **A Discussion on Depression**

Date: Saturday, **November 9**, from 9 a.m. – noon

Place: St. Paul's Lutheran Church (415 E. Athens Avenue in Ardmore)

Note: St. Paul's Stephen Ministry is sponsoring this morning workshop on depression, featuring discussions on how to bust the stigma of mental illness, how to help family and friends who are suffering, and how to identify signs and symptoms in our youth. There will be speakers from Minding Your Mind, NAMI Main Line, Montgomery County Emergency Services, and OC87 Recovery Diaries. For more information, please contact the church office at 610-642-3211.

Event: Mental Health Partnerships' **Adult Daughters, Sons and Siblings Educational Support Group**
Date: Tuesdays, **November 19 and December 17**, from 7-9 p.m.
Place: Belmont Behavioral Hospital, Room 139
Note: This group is intended for adults who have/had a parent or sibling with a mental health disorder. The group will begin with a discussion about *A "Healthy Adult" Approach to the Holidays* in November and *Lessons Learned this Year* in December and will be followed by a support group. No fee. Registration is preferred, but not required. Contact tecinfo@mhphope.org or 267-507-3863.

Event: Mental Health Partnerships' **Morning Family & Friends Educational Support Group**
Date: Thursdays, **November 21 and December 19**, from 10 a.m.-noon
Place: 1211 Chestnut Street, 11th Floor Conference Room, Center City
Note: This group is intended for families and friends of adults with any mental health or substance use condition. The group will begin with a discussion on *Recognizing Your Boundaries Being Crossed* in November and *Lessons Learned this Year* in December, followed by a support group. No fee. Registration is preferred, but not required. Contact tecinfo@mhphope.org or 267-507-3863.

Event: Mental Health Partnerships' **Educational Support Group for Families/Friends of People with Borderline Personality Disorder & Other Personality Disorders**
Date: Tuesday, **November 26** from 7-9 p.m.
Place: Belmont Behavioral Hospital, Room 139
Note: The group will begin with presentation on avoiding holiday pitfalls and will be followed by a support group. No fee. Registration is preferred, but not required. Contact tecinfo@mhphope.org or 267-507-3863.

Event: **Alternatives to Suicide Support Group**
Date: Meets on the **2nd and 4th Monday of each month**, from 6:30-8 p.m. **beginning on December 9**
Place: NAMI Bucks County Office - 1432 Easton Road, Suite 2D, Warrington, PA 18976
Note: The opportunity to talk openly about suicide and feelings of deep emotional distress with others who have or are experiencing similar struggles can be a powerful way to support people to move through those darkest places. During groups, people share their successes and their challenges, provide support for one another and strategize and share ideas for coping with difficult life circumstances. People are encouraged to come both in times of strength and challenge. Individuals need not identify as being in 'crisis' in order to attend. This is a group for people who are thinking about dying, or are trying to support someone else who is in that place. For more info, go to www.namibuckspa.org/alternatives.

Event: **Magellan Youth Leaders Inspiring Future Empowerment (MY LIFE) Meetings**
Date: Meets on the **2nd Tuesday of the month in Delaware County**, from 6:30-8 p.m. and on the **2nd Wednesday of each month in Montgomery County**, from 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Place: Delaware County meetings are held at YMCA (2110 Garrett Rd, Lansdowne, PA 19050); Montgomery County meetings are held at Norristown Public Library (1001 Powell Street, Norristown, PA 19401)
Note: MY LIFE is made up of youth between the ages of 13 and 23 who have experience with the following issues: mental health, substance abuse, juvenile justice, and foster care. MY LIFE is helping to improve mental health, substance abuse, foster care and juvenile justice systems. It gives youth the chance to become leaders in their communities and work on improving systems dealing with issues that are meaningful to them. If you live in Delaware County, please contact Shawn Carroll for more information at SPCarroll@magellanhealth.com. If you live in Montgomery County, please contact Kim Renninger at KRenninger@MagellanHealth.com.

Helpful Resources

For information about support groups for family members and for individuals living with mental illness in [Chester](#), [Delaware](#), [Montgomery](#) and [Philadelphia](#) Counties, see [Support Groups by County in Southeastern Pennsylvania](#) page. For support groups sponsored by NAMI Main Line PA, please go to <http://namimainlinepa.org/support/support-groups/>.

For expert advice on how to help individuals with mental illness, information on specific diagnoses and conditions, and recommended web resources, please go to <https://namimainlinepa.org/info-resources/advice-coping-with-smi/>.

A warm line is a source for confidential, non-crisis support. A help line provides information about resources and help with problem-solving. Information about Southeastern Pennsylvania county warm lines and help lines can be found at <http://namipamainline.org/services-in-sepa-2/intro-to-services/help-lines-and-warm-lines/>.

Crisis Prevention and Management for the Holidays (and year round)

Notes from our 2017 workshop presented by Ellen Berman, MD and Amanda Falivene-Rocco, LPC, CPRP

The purpose of holiday ritual is to connect us to family and community, and connect our present to our past and our future. Holidays provide a break in routine and a marker of time passing. They can be stressful because there is such a demand that everyone be happy, that the day be perfect and that we live up to the families in all the ads and pictures. The truth, of course is that no holiday is perfect, that it is difficult to deal with family issues when people are together for such a short period of time, and that it is hard to be happy when a family member is ill or in pain.

The following recommendations are suggestions to make the days easier and prevent crises. Happy and sad moments will come and go. Being together is enough; it doesn't have to be perfect.

No Holiday is Perfect: Lower Your Expectations and Keep Your Hopes

Inclusion

- If someone in the house is very ill, should you have the gathering at your house? Restaurants or friend's houses are often helpful.
- If your house: Who comes and when?
- When family members do not want to speak with each other.
- Including the memory of family members after a death.

Prevention

- Talk ahead of time about what adjustments need to be made for an ill member; what are triggers and what is calming.
- Do other guests or family members know about the illness?
- Think through what rituals are really important. (Do not argue with an ill person about church or synagogue participation, sitting through a whole dinner, etc.)
- Major announcements (I'm gay, I'm changing my religion, I'm moving to Australia) should not be made during a family dinner.
- Keep alcohol out of the house as much as possible
- Keep the food, presents and decorations simple. Ask others to bring food or help out.
- Know and make clear what boundaries are.

Support

- Have someone assigned to check in on an ill loved one if necessary.
- Make space for alone time and private conversations.
- In general, people whose illness has derailed their life course feel embarrassed at family gatherings. Have an all-purpose answer ready to "how are you really" (to you), and "what are you doing next year" (to an ill young person).
- If it's at your house, assign people to help prepare and clean up beforehand.
- Expect moments of sadness in you and family members; don't demand happiness.

For those who would like to have a more concrete plan in place, the **Wellness Recovery Action Plan®** or WRAP®, is a guided, self-designed prevention and wellness process that a person with or without mental illness can use to get well, stay well and make their life the way they want it to be.

For more information about WRAP, go to <http://mentalhealthrecovery.com/wrap-is/>.

Additional resources that can help you cope with, prepare for or prevent a crisis are available at <https://namipamainline.org/resources-for-coping-with-preparing-for-and-preventing-a-crisis/>.

Avoiding Holiday Stressors: Tips for a Stress-Free Season

By Jessica Maharaj | Cross-posted from <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/December-2018/>

The "most wonderful time of the year" can quickly turn into the most stressful time of the year for many. When compounded by a mental illness, common holiday pressures can create a perfect storm of exacerbated stressors, symptoms and setbacks if not proactively addressed.

The reality is that potential hazards exist at every turn during the holidays. These situations can trigger

heightened difficulties for people suffering from depression, anxiety, PTSD and other mental illnesses. The holidays can also introduce additional stressors such as complicated relationship dynamics at family gatherings, grief over losing a loved one or simply trying to live up to the unattainable expectations of the “perfect holiday.”

While it’s important that all people consider the impact of the holidays on emotional well-being, it is crucial that those with mental illness consider tactics for avoiding pitfalls. Of all the things on your holiday preparation to-do list, the most critical one is maintaining your mental health and practicing self-care.

Major Depressive Disorder with a Seasonal Pattern

Major Depressive Disorder with a [Seasonal Pattern](#) (formerly known as seasonal affective disorder, or SAD), is a form of depression that often accompanies changes in seasons. This disorder results from chemical changes in the brain and body and is best controlled with the help of a mental health professional who understands the nuances of treating this condition. Whether through online, remote care options such as telepsychiatry or in-person treatments, seeking professional support is truly beneficial in proactively managing this condition leading up to, during and following the holiday season.

Symptoms of SAD can become more pronounced as the holidays approach. These tips can help you manage your symptoms during the holidays.

- **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of water and herbal teas, and don’t forget to hydrate your skin with lotions and lip balms. Hydration nourishes the brain and its physical effects can improve your overall mood.
- **Find time to exercise.** The holiday season is a great time to ice skate, ski or hike. If you don’t have access to these outdoor activities, any form of exercise will release endorphins, which can lessen the symptoms of depression.
- **Spend time with loved ones.** This offers an opportunity for social interaction, which can help lessen the feelings of loneliness that may come around this time of year.
- **Pamper yourself.** Taking a bath, having a warm drink or getting a massage can create a sense of calm and happiness, especially during the stress of the holidays.
- **Indulge without overconsuming.** Treating yourself can make you happy, but over-indulging in unhealthy food around the holidays can negatively impact symptoms.

Grief Over the Holidays

One of the greatest holiday stresses is the absence of a loved one who passed away. The empty seat where they would have sat can fill families with a sense of grief, loss and emptiness, as well as worsen symptoms for individuals with mental illness. The following recommendations can help you and your family cope:

- **It’s not all sad.** Know that some parts of the holiday will be wonderful, and some parts will be sad. The anticipation of sadness may be stressful, but the holidays provide an opportunity for healing. You can still take joy in the relatives that are present and remember fond memories of holidays past.
- **It is okay to feel the way you feel.** It is healthy to acknowledge your feelings and work through them, rather than suppressing them.
- **Take care of yourself.** Find healthy ways to cope, such as exercising. Organizing family walks is a great way to get fresh air and enjoy the company of others. Don’t search for solace in unhealthy foods or alcohol. If alcohol is present, drink responsibly.
- **Don’t feel pressured to uphold family traditions.** While they might be a comforting way to remember a loved one, sometimes family traditions are too painful to bear. Your family will find new ways to celebrate, and your traditions will adjust with time.

Keep in mind that the loved ones you lost would want you to remember them fondly, to enjoy the holiday season, and to find comfort in having the family come together.

Managing Holiday Expectations

The holiday season only comes once a year, and while it’s understandable to aspire for perfection, it’s important to set realistic, attainable goals. The following are a few key tips for avoiding the stress of perfection.

- **Make a budget.** While the average American household [spent nearly \\$1,000 on holiday gifts](#) in 2017, it’s important not to go overboard. Do your best to stick to a budget while still leaving a small amount extra for wiggle room; the holidays tend to bring out the generosity in us.
- **Come up with a plan.** Spread out your errands, so you don’t become overwhelmed with too many tasks at once, and don’t forget to schedule some relaxation time!
- **Find the best time to shop.** Malls are less crowded on weekdays and weeknights. If you can manage, try to go during the day and park farther away from the stores. Your time in the sunlight walking to or from your car can boost your serotonin levels. Practicing mindful activities while you wait in line can also help you stay calm among the holiday shopping chaos.

- **Be kind to yourself.** All you can do is your best and your best is good enough. It's impossible to please everyone, but we are often our own harshest critics.

The holidays bring joy and happiness as well as frustration and stress. This holiday season, you may have many things to take care of, but the most important one is yourself.

Save the Date for NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania's Annual Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference

NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania's annual Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference, one of the only events in the region specializing in youth mental health, will be in Pittsburgh on Friday, February 28, 2020. Participants from all over the country attend this highly-focused event to learn about the newest research and best practices to assist and advance the mental health needs of young children, adolescents, and young adults.

The conference is geared toward parents and caregivers, mental health professionals, educators, and students. Highlights will include workshop sessions, exhibitor hall, continuing education credits and Act 48 credits, continental breakfast and lunch included in registration. For more information, please go to <https://www.namikeystonepa.org/education/conferences/camhcon2020/>. Registration will open in December.

Thank You for Making our Walk a Success!

Thank you so much for supporting [Main Line NAMI on the Move - Stepping Up for Mental Health](#) on October 19th. The event was a great success, raising just over \$50,000! These funds directly support and strengthen our local education programs, services, and advocacy efforts, all of which are provided at no charge.

We enjoyed hearing from uplifting speakers, including FOX 29 News Medical Correspondent, Dr. Mike Cirigliano, and OC87 Recovery Diaries Editor-in-Chief, Gabriel Nathan.

We are grateful to Independence Blue Cross, our presenting sponsor, a company that for more than 80 years has been serving communities throughout the region and making sure that people get the quality care they need and deserve to support their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

We are also deeply grateful to all of the other organizations and individuals who sponsored the event, everyone who made charitable or in-kind donations, all of the people who turned out to walk or to volunteer and to our mental health resources providers. We couldn't have done it without you!

Please share your thoughts about our walk with us by completing a short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SDHQRDN>. Your opinion matters and will help us make improvements for next year.

Thank you to our generous 2019 sponsors!

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We thank the following businesses for contributing to our prize raffle and refreshments:

Bryn Mawr Film Institute, Bryn Mawr Running Company, Coco Thai Bistro, Giant, JNR Institute of Culinary Arts, Kilwins Ardmore, Marlyn Schiff Jewelry, Millenium Hair and Day Spa, Movement RX, Princess Nails and Spa, Pucci Manuli, Oath Pizza, Sabrina's Café, Saxby's Coffee, Trader Joe's and Tribe and Treasure.

We thank the following community partners who participated in our Mental Health Resources Fair:

[Belmont Behavioral Health](#)
[NAMI Main Line](#)
[Suburban Research Associates](#)

[Lower Merion Police Department](#)
[The Greystone Program at Friends Hospital](#)

[Minding Your Mind](#)
[The Haven at College](#)

Thank You to Our Generous Donors

If you would like to make a contribution to our affiliate, please go to <http://namipamainline.org/donate-here/> or use the included form. A contribution is a good way to mark anniversaries, weddings and other special occasions, to show appreciation, or to express sympathy for the loss of a loved one. In addition to donating directly to our affiliate, we welcome donations through your workplace United Way campaign (code 214).

We are grateful to the following donors who made contributions in September and October, 2019.

General Contributions:

Anonymous (1)
Debra Copit
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In Memory of Phillip H. Duffy

Richard and Diane Biborosch
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Ingrid Waldron

In Honor of Wayne and Anita Roberts:

Judy Green

To join, renew your membership, and/or make a donation, please fill out this form and send it with your credit card information or check made payable to NAMI PA, Main Line, 320 Woodley Road, Merion Station, PA 19066-1413 or go to <http://namipamainline.org/sign-up/>.

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Dues _____ \$60 Household _____ \$40 Individual _____ \$5-\$39 For those with limited income

Donation _____ Additional donation will be appreciated – Thank you! \$ _____

We acknowledge donations in our newsletters and on our website. If you prefer your donation to be anonymous, please check here. _____

If you want any additional donation ___ in *honor* of or ___ in *memory* of someone special, let us know his/her name: _____

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Dues and donations are income tax deductible.