



A Community Voice on Mental Health... Empowering People Toward Recovery

1706 Brady St
Suite 200
Davenport, IA 52803
(563) 322-8870
www.namiscottcounty.org

Happy New Year NAMI Scott County!

With the recent passage of a mental health parity bill, 2009 holds much promise for mental health consumers and advocates.

NAMI Scott County wishes you all a HEALTHY and HAPPY New Year!

NAMI Scott County will be moving to a bi-monthly newsletter in 2009

Coping with Depression Around the Holidays

We are all susceptible to the holiday blues to some degree; however, for people struggling with depression, the holidays can be a particularly difficult time.

Why is depression likely to occur during the holidays?

The holiday season creates additional stress in our lives that can make it difficult to cope. For some of us, the stress is related to financial pressure. Others struggle to create a perfect family celebration that lives up to long-standing traditions, even in the face of changes that make this goal impossible to achieve. Families of divorced parents often experience a unique set of pressures and stresses relating to where children will be spending the holiday.

Are there unique stressors for people with a history of depression?

Yes, people who struggle with depression are especially vulnerable around the holidays. It's not uncommon to hope that the holidays will make our problems disappear and when this doesn't happen, the disappointment can feel overwhelming. Extended families may come together to celebrate once or twice a year, and for some people these interactions are stark reminders of family dysfunction and rivalries. Loss of self-esteem and feelings of failure are exacerbated and sometimes the result is emotional crisis. Even the blending of family traditions from families newly united can cause anxiety and stress.

Holiday Blues vs. Serious Depression :

Although the holidays cause many people to feel anxious and depressed in a general sense, for some, holiday tensions can lead to full-blown clinical depression. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, about 19 million American adults suffer from depressive illnesses every year. Unfortunately, many people with clinical depression don't seek help, even though depression is a treatable condition. To reduce heightened expectations, Hinda Dubin, M.D., clinical assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, suggests that people be honest with themselves about what they can do during the holiday season. "Set realistic goals," said Dubin, who is also a psychiatrist at the University of Maryland Medical Center. "Some people still look at mental illness as a character flaw," Dubin said. "The truth is that it is no different from any other kind of illness. If your body couldn't produce enough insulin, no one would tell you to 'get over it'. You'd need to go to the doctor and get treated for your insulin deficiency. It is the same with mental illness."

What can be done if I am (or someone in my family is) feeling especially sad or anxious about the upcoming holidays?

Talk about it. If you are feeling sad, talk about your fears and concerns with a supportive friend or family member. And sit down with your family ahead of time to try and set realistic expectations about holiday activities and gift giving. This will help to relieve the pressure and avoid the feeling that you are responsible for other people's happiness.

What if I have to be apart from my loved ones over the holiday? If you live far apart from someone you love, make a firm plan to talk over the phone on the holiday. Make plans to do a group activity if you are going to be alone on the holiday: do something that engages you in the act of giving, such as volunteering at a soup kitchen. And finally, do something for yourself on that day, whether it is a long walk in a beautiful setting or a luxurious bubble bath.

Consider celebrating without alcohol.

Many families give and receive gifts of alcohol and in some families, there is toasting with alcohol and wine served with dinner. Families can help by replacing alcoholic beverages with sparkling juices. If you are coping with alcohol addiction, it is very important to be in touch with your sponsors and to be especially active in your recovery at this time of year.

What if I find myself in acute distress?

If you are in acute distress, you can call **The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)**, a 24-hour, toll-free crisis hotline funded by the federal government that will direct callers to a nearby crisis center. The Lifeline will accept calls from non-English speakers.
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Bingo, Baskets, & Blessings—A NAMI Scott County Christmas!



Our thanks to everyone who helped to make the annual Christmas party a success! 160 turned out on a very cold night to share in the festivities!



NAMI EVENTS

NAMI Scott County Family to Family Class

Register now!

NAMI will be hosting a Spring Family to Family class in Muscatine

Classes begin Monday, February 23rd. To register, contact Vicki Walters at 563-260-7780

NAMI Scott County January Education Program

Mon, January 12, 2009

Bettendorf Library, 7pm

This month, Jerry Patterson, WRAP facilitator & NAMI SC IOOV presenter, will share the Wellness Recovery Action Plan

NAMI Scott County February Education Program

Mon, February 16, 2009

Bettendorf Library, 7pm

Complimentary & Alternative Medicine with Pat Christy

NAMI Walks

Committee Meeting

Wed, January 14, 2009

6:30pm

NAMI Scott County Office
Join us! Volunteers welcome.

NAMI Scott County Marketing Committee Meeting

Thurs, January 15, 2009

12:30pm

Seeking creative minds to help us plan our 30th Anniversary Celebration!

— Reach Out —

Become a Family to Family Teacher

NAMI is looking for volunteers to help with our Family To Family Class. If you are a family caregiver of a person with a mental illness and want to reach out to others, consider NAMI's successful Family to Family Program.

Training is provided free to volunteers. Help others cope successfully with the challenges they face as they support a loved one working towards recovery.

Update

NAMI Walks 2009 Returns to Credit Island

Join the region's largest walk event and help raise mental health awareness in our community.

If you want to help plan this amazing phenomenon that brings out hundreds of folks each year, then join us at the next NAMI Walks planning meeting.

**NAMI Walks
Volunteers Meeting**
Wednesday, January 14th
6:30pm
NAMI Scott County
1706 Brady St, Suite 200
Davenport, IA

For more information email Kathy & Jay at namiwalks@namiscottcounty.org or call 563-322-8870

Did you know?

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services helped 2,146 Iowans with disabilities successfully secure employment in 2008!

QUIT SMOKING! FREE Patches & Gum *Limited Supply—Call Today!*

Quitline Iowa, the state's helpline for quitting tobacco use, is offering free a four week supply of nicotine replacement therapy Gum and Patches to those who want to quit smoking.

Iowans should call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** to receive a four-week supply of nicotine replacement therapy gum and patches.

Call today! After January 31, only two-week supplies will be available.

NAMI Scott County: 563-322-8870

NAMI Supports You!

NAMI Connection

Recovery Support Group

2pm—3:30pm Every Sun & Fri
Vera French Manor- Community Room
215 E 37th St, Davenport, IA 52806

NAMI Family Support Group

7-8pm, 4th Monday of January 2009
Unitarian Church,
3707 Eastern Ave, Davenport, IA 52807

WE ARE MOVING!

After January, NAMI SC Family Support Group will meet from 7-8 pm on the 4th Monday of the month at the NAMI office: 1706 Brady St, Suite 200, Davenport.
Please spread the word!

In Our Own Voice

NAMI consumers will provide an informational program on mental health recovery. Help reduce stigma. Invite NAMI to your next Church, rotary, PTA, class, or club meeting.

Call Alice Thiemann to schedule speakers: 563-323-7453.



REVOLUTION

By Lance Baker

Days of legacy,
Nights of action,
Take the moment,
Lead the movement,
to heal and speak,
Go and seek
to motivate...
through advocacy;
Put your voices
To the podium.

To find out how you can get involved and join our NAMI Scott County advocate team, call our office today!

563-322-8870

info@namiscottcounty.org

Reflections

Being Resolute

By Janet Darmour-Paul

Do you have a new year's resolution? I resolve to be compliant AND defiant. Of course, listening to professionals and agreeing to take meds is a part of getting well. But to heal we also need to challenge many people's assumptions, go against the crowd, and unlearn a passive helplessness.

What complicates the healing process is a layer of stigma that often leaves a scar. Those of us who live with mental illness pick up messages that we are inadequate, bad, or dangerous people. Reclaiming our dignity and owning up to our strength is a crucial step to recovery. Being resolute about our worth and our wholeness might mean defying the judgments some people send our way. It's a constant dance between yielding to the situations in which we find ourselves, taking charge of our reactions, and letting go of the outrage we carry.

We are powerful creatures. Imagination is on our side. We can choose to perceive things alternatively and insist on wellness in our body, mind, and spirit. But we have to be resolute about our intentions. God only knows how claiming our rightful place may help to heal the hurts of this world.

Scrapper's Corner

Help us document NAMI's 30 years of caring! Lend us your photos, news clippings, stories and other memorabilia that capture NAMI's work in the community. Call Caroline at 563-322-8870.

NAMI Scott County

Anne Corbi, President
Michael Freda, Vice President
Tom Englemann, Treasurer
Janet Darmour-Paul, Secretary
NAMI Coordinator, Caroline Vernon