

NAMI Connections

NAMI Connection is a recovery support group program for adults living with mental illness that is expanding in communities throughout the country. These groups provide a place that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope.



NAMI Connection groups offer a casual and relaxed approach to sharing the challenges and successes of coping with mental illness. Each group:

- Meets weekly for 90 minutes
- Is offered free of charge
- Follows a flexible structure without an educational format
- Does not recommend or endorse any medications or other medical therapies

All groups are **confidential** - participants can share as much or as little personal information as they wish.

Support groups are open to all adults with mental illness, regardless of diagnosis. Participants should feel welcome to drop by and share feelings, difficulties, or successes. Everyone is a valued participant

Meetings will be guided by NAMI Connection's **Principles of Support**

Principles of Support

- We will see the individual first, not the illness.
- We recognize that mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers.
- We understand that mental illnesses are traumatic events.
- We aim for better coping skills.
- We find strength in sharing experiences.
- We reject stigma and do not tolerate discrimination.
- We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own.
- We forgive ourselves and reject guilt.
- We embrace humor as healthy.

- We accept we cannot solve all problems.
- We expect a better future in a realistic way.
- We will never give up hope

“Support” is not only a cornerstone of the NAMI mission; it is also a critical component of recovery for the nearly 58 million Americans who experience a mental illness each year. Today, what began as a vision for a support group available to anyone living with a mental illness has become the NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group program, now one year old and growing strong.

Facilitated by trained individuals living with mental illness who are at a point in their own recovery where they want to “give back” to others, NAMI Connection offers a place each week where, for 90 minutes, individuals have access to encouragement and support. Offered free to anyone with a mental illness, the groups are confidential and, for many, provide an option that is both welcoming and flexible. NAMI Connection, currently offered in 27 states, will be available in 30 states by the end of July and in all states by 2010.

The following comments are among the many received already from facilitators around the country in praise of the program:

“I am so proud to be a NAMI Connection Facilitator. It’s like a blessing from the sky. It’s nice to be able to talk to people who share some of the same problems that you have; it makes you feel good to know that you are not alone anymore. What a difference it makes.”

“I just want to let you know how impressed I am with the program. Everyone in the group noted that they felt significantly better in the week that they went to the Connection meeting. The support and guidance offered were much more than you’d ever get in any therapy session.”

For information on this program or when and where it is offered, please contact:

NAMI at (850) 671-4445 or www.namifl.org