

With more than 1,200 affiliates, NAMI is America's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of all individuals affected by mental illness.



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NAMI Columbus

P.O. Box 8581

Columbus, GA 31908

(706) 320-3755

Email: info@NAMICols.org

www.nami.org/sites/NAMIColumbusGA



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Georgia Crisis & Access Line

Single Point of Entry to access mental health, addictive disease and crisis services
24/7

1-800-715-4225



Peer Support “Warm Line”

1-888-945-1414 (toll-free)

The Georgia Mental Health Consumer

Network operates a state-funded, consumer-directed “warm line” for

anyone struggling with mental health issues,

24 hours a day



IOOV

Monday, July 18, 2011

Education Meeting 6:00 PM

CONTACT Training Building – 1520 22nd Street

No, IOOV is not a Roman numeral. In Our Own Voice (IOOV) is a unique public education program developed by NAMI, in which two trained consumer speakers share compelling personal stories about living with mental illness and achieving recovery. In August 2010 NAMI Columbus sent two consumer members to NAMI Georgia to be trained as presenters, and in the spring of this year, two more were trained. Now they would like to share the presentation with you for this month's education program.

The program was started with a grant from Eli Lilly and Co. IOOV is an opportunity for those who have struggled with mental illness to gain confidence and to share their individual experiences of recovery and transformation. Throughout the IOOV presentation, audience members are encouraged to offer feedback and ask questions. Audience participation is an important aspect of IOOV because the more audience members become involved, the closer they come to understanding what it is like to live with a mental illness and stay in recovery.

IOOV presentations are given to consumer groups, students, law enforcement officials, educators, providers, faith community members, politicians, professionals, inmates, and interested civic groups. NAMI Georgia has now incorporated IOOV into all CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) training classes for law enforcement. All presentations are offered free of charge. NAMI Columbus has joined forces with West Central Georgia Regional Hospital to deliver an IOOV presentation for all new hospital employee trainings.

The goals of IOOV are to meet the need for consumer-run initiatives, to set a standard for quality education about mental illness from those who have been there, to offer genuine work opportunities, to encourage self-confidence and self-esteem in presenters, and to focus on recovery and the message of hope.

Anyone familiar with mental illness knows that recovery is not a singular event, but a multi-dimensional, multi-linear journey characterized more by the mindset of the one taking it than by his or her condition at any given moment along the way.

Understanding recovery as having several dimensions makes its uneven course easier to accept. Much as we don't blame the cancer patient for developing invasive tumors, we can't condemn a consumer whose symptoms overtake his or her best efforts to manage the illness.

Anyone interested in seeing a presentation may request that one be given in their area by calling the NAMI Columbus Office at (706) 320-3755. Leave a message for Stephen Akinduro, the NAMI Columbus IOOV Coordinator.



Upcoming Events

July 2011	August 2011
06-09 NAMI National Convention, Chicago 18 Monthly Education Program 19 NAMI Basics Begins Class 25-29 Columbus Police Dept. CIT	01 Mental Health Court Graduation 15 Monthly Education Program 08-12 Muscogee County Sheriff's Office CIT
September 2011	October 2011
04-10 Suicide Prevention Week 08 Stop a Suicide Today Day 06 F2F – Week 1 (Ends 11-18) 10 World Suicide Prevention Day 12-14 International CIT Conv.- Va Beach, VA 18 P2P – Week 1 (Ends 11-20) 19 Monthly Education Program	01 NAMI Georgia Walks (Atlanta & Waycross) 2-8 MIAW (MI Awareness Week) 10-14 Columbus Police Dept. CIT 17 Monthly Education Program 22 Make a Difference Day 29 NAMI Cols Semi-annual Yard Sale TBD Georgia CIT Awards Banquet
Support Groups Every Monday night, 6-7:30 pm Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups Every Saturday 1-2:30 pm NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group Meeting Locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups meets at The Bradley Center's Multipurpose Room (use 22nd Street Parking Lot) Family/Friend Support Group meets at the CONTACT Training Building, 1520 22nd Street 	

Common Myths About Mental Illness ~ by Stephen Akinduro

- ✓ **A mental illness is not a real illness, but simply an excuse to justify bad behavior.**
Research has shown this to be completely false. Mental illnesses are physiological illnesses that affect practically every aspect of the consumer's life. Mental illnesses do not justify bad behavior, but the resultant bad behavior is often symptomatic of a deeper problem.
- ✓ **A mental illness is a sign of a character flaw.**
This is like saying that a person with high blood pressure has a character flaw. Mental illnesses are not a sign of moral failure or weakness. Besides, it takes a lot of courage to seek help when you have a mental illness, especially considering the stigma surrounding such diseases.
- ✓ **You can overcome a mental illness with willpower and self-determination alone.**
This is not true; you need the support of your peers and treatment from mental health professionals to get better. Trying to get better by willpower alone usually only leads to more trouble.
- ✓ **A mental illness is a sign of a spiritual curse.**
I believed this lie for a long time and jumped through all kinds of religious hoops in an effort to get better – everything from intense prayer and fasting, to deliverance services and exorcism – only to be left frustrated and disillusioned. Mental illnesses are not curses or signs of being demon possessed; they are diseases that need to be treated. Faith and prayer can play a vital role in the healing process, but usually needs to be accompanied with help from professionals.
- ✓ **People with mental illnesses are lazy and don't want to work, so they use "mental illness" as an excuse to get disability benefits.**
This is another popular myth, but it is totally untrue. First of all, SSI or SSDI benefits are usually pale in comparison to what you would make working a full time or even part time job, and most consumers on disability have to live in subsidized housing or dangerous neighborhoods just because they can't afford to live anywhere else. Many people with a mental illness do work, while others are not employable due to the severe symptoms of their illness or side effects of the medication they take. This is why they are on disability. Many of them tried to work and got fired or had to stop because they could not handle the pressure and responsibilities of even very low skilled jobs.
- ✓ **Health care professional use the label "mental illness" just to get people on medication to make more money for the pharmaceutical industry.**
Medication is not the end all be all for treatment of mental illnesses. Some people with milder symptoms get better without medication if they have the right coping skills and support system around them. Others get better with psychotherapy alone, while others need a combination of psychotherapy and medication. The point is there is no one-size-fits all treatment regimen for mental illnesses.



Mental Health Court Graduation Aug. 1st

Almost every quarter we help the Mental Health Court professionals and participants celebrate more people who have been able to reclaim their lives and live “*happily ever after*”. Untreated or mistreated mental illness sometimes causes poor judgment where people may commit a (usually) nonviolent crime. Through entry into the Muscogee County Mental Health Court or the Veterans Mental Health Court, they’ve learned how to manage their chronic illness. Most participants have gone on to taking their place in the workplace, or enrolling in school, or simply are finding contentment in being a full member of our community. This would not have happened for them if the Mental Health Court did not exist.

We **NEED YOU** to attend the graduation to help us celebrate. We also **NEED YOU** to make a contribution to NAMI Columbus to help us purchase \$20.00 Target gift cards that we give out to all graduates. One more thing we **NEED YOU** to do is contribute to the refreshments that we serve by baking brownies or cookies, purchasing some punch or bringing a dip to serve. We **NEED YOU** to call the NAMI Columbus office at 706-320-3755 and leave a message as to what you would like to do.



Candlelight Walk

Held: Thursday, June 30, 2011, 9:00 pm

Where: West Central Georgia Regional Hospital

Why: Erase stigma
Kick off for our NAMI Georgia Walk (Oct.1)
Draw attention that our hospital is here
and stronger than ever!

If you were not able to attend our candlelight walk, we thought you would enjoy some pictures and one of the speeches that was presented during the ceremony. It was a beautiful ceremony and very meaningful. We hope to do this every year – next year we hope you can join us.



Graduate students from Troy State Univ. volunteered their time



The Rev. Thomas Peavy led us in prayer and lit the candles



The walkers were all smiles and we had a good time

It is a great honor for me to be able to speak with you this evening, and I would like to personally thank West Central Georgia Regional Hospital for the hospital to hold our candle light ceremony. I would also like to thank all the consumers that are attending this ceremony and those consumers that would have liked to attend but are unable for many different reasons.

My first experience with NAMI was through NAMI Connection, which is a weekly support meeting for those who have a mental illness. I must admit I was a little skeptical. I was wondering what could a support group do to aid me with my mental illness? I had attended all different types of support groups in the past for multiple reasons and so I had some ideas of what a support group can do for you. These support groups that I attended were lead by mental health professionals and the NAMI Connection meetings are run by consumers. I thought for a minute and asked myself, “What is another consumer going to teach me” that I don’t already know? Well it didn’t take long and I found out.

One of the most important things I learned was support and understanding. I learned how to accept support and how to be supportive of others. I like to think of support as being the glue that holds NAMI together, and it’s this support that sees us through during times of great despair. I thought I was alone on a sinking ship, but after a few Connection meetings, I realized this ship was full of people and as long as we had hope and a pail, this ship I was on was not going to sink. As time went by I became more active with NAMI. I attended Peer-to-Peer one summer which was a life changing event for me. From there I became a Peer-to-Peer Mentor because I have a story to tell . . . a remarkable story of struggle and sacrifice, filled with good and bad times, but most of all I have a story of hope. As a person with a mental illness I understand the importance of hope. Without it I would not be where I am today. Without hope we would not be at this candlelight ceremony. So tonight my hope for all those suffering in silence from mental illness, find the support you deserve in your hour of despair. I hope that you have a speedy recovery, and I hope you find the support you need from your family, friends, and others who are traveling on that long road to recovery. Most of all I hope you find the love and acceptance from those who you love early.

Thank you and God bless,

~~Timothy Vance



Columbus

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Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness

Can you help NAMI Columbus and go online to NAMI Georgia (www.namiga.org) and form or join a walk team? We depend on the annual NAMI Georgia Walks for the bulk of our yearly operating expenses. The only way we can continue to offer our education and support programs for free is if everyone participates in the Walk and helps us raise FUNDS and AWARENESS. If you write a compelling story online, you might be able to win one of the prizes that NAMI Georgia awards. The Walk will be October 1st at Grant Park in Atlanta or as an alternate in Waycross Georgia. Be there (or be square!).



I want to support NAMI Columbus and NAMI's mission.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Numbers (do not enter a number if you do not want to be listed in the Membership Directory (members only).

E-Mail (Please include so we can be green and email you our monthly newsletter.)

Please check type of membership desired:

- Individual Membership \$35 Dues
- Professional Membership \$50 Dues
(Individual and Professional Dues are for one year and are tax deductible.)
- \$3 Open Door Membership (low income)
- I am not joining at this time, but I would like to make a contribution of \$ _____. (Thank you!!!)

✂ Please Cut and Mail ✂

NAMI National, NAMI Georgia and NAMI Columbus are dedicated to eradicating stigma and improving the lives of persons with mental illnesses thereby also benefiting their friends, family and community. Catch the wave and be a part of change.

NAMI Columbus is the largest affiliate in Georgia. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible. Membership includes a subscription to our monthly newsletter, membership directory, and access to immediate news on advocacy, treatment and support issues from our national, state and local organizations.

Please make checks payable to:
NAMI Columbus
P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, Georgia 31908

You can also join safely online at www.nami.org/join (\$35.00 by credit card).