

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

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Georgia Crisis & Access Line

Single Point of Entry to access mental health, addictive disease and crisis services
24/7/365
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



Anka BHL ACT Team

706-225-2301

**Unsuccessful
Suicide Attempts –
Lessons Learned**

**Monday, September 17, 2012
Education Meeting 6:00 PM**

CONTACT Training Building – 1520 22nd Street



Regarding suicide, readily available to us are statistics and stories on many facets of this desperate act and those that attempt it. We know that for every two homicides committed in this country, there are 3 suicides, and that 18 veterans die from self-inflicted injury every day. However, very rarely do we explore anecdotes about survivors of suicide attempts. Perhaps it is through exploring the experiences of suicide attempters that we can learn not only what led them to lethal self-injury, but what they have learned as a result of their survival.

This month NAMI Columbus' guest speaker for the educational meeting on **Monday, September 17th at 6 PM**, will be Elizabeth J. Brown, a Masters in counseling student at Columbus State University. As part of the activities in commemoration of Suicide Prevention Month, she will be speaking about suicide in her presentation "Unsuccessful Suicide Attempts—Lessons Learned".

Frankly Speaking

Greeting Friends,

As the swelter of summer subsides and brings the cool breezes of fall, we are reminded that the seasons can bring welcome change into our lives. Unlike the seasons though, sometimes life brings us unwelcome and daunting challenges. Thanks to our superb team of NAMI Connection facilitators, these daunting challenges can be ironed into speed bumps along life's highway. In order to ensure the highest quality experience, I'm asking our consumer base for a small consideration. If any consumer feels that they have not received the best service or experience from our Connection support groups, please advise the Executive Board so the we can work together with our volunteers to tune up the program. We are working hard to add to our facilitator base in order to give some of them a much needed break. So if anyone would like to be considered as a facilitator, please contact myself or Sue Marlowe to be considered and registered.

While we're talking about Sue, we need to refrain from leaning so heavily on her for every issue that comes about in NAMI Columbus. Sue has asked me to thank everyone for their many years of confidence in depending on her for many aspects of keeping NAMI running smoothly. But the years have taken their toll and it's time for her to cut back her responsibilities. So for now, she is handling CIT coordinating and registration for educational classes, until we can find a suitable protégé. All other matters should be addressed to me for further consideration and processing.

We are looking forward to our NAMI Walk this year and want members to consider starting your own walk team for the NAMI Walk at Turner field on November 4th. We need a large turnout, and much financial support. I hope to see you there.

Frank Dunford, President, NAMI Columbus

Upcoming Events

September 2012	October 2012
02-08 Suicide Prevention Week 06 Stop a Suicide Today Day 08 World Suicide Prevention Day 17 Monthly Ed Pgm- Suicide, Lessons Learned 18 NAMI Basics – Begins (6 weeks) 20 Family-to-Family Class Begins (12 wks) 30 P2P – Begins (10 weeks)	03 Candlelight Walk-West Central Regional 7 pm 7 -13 MIAW (MI Awareness Week) 09 National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness 11 Depression Screening & Bipolar Awareness 15-19 Columbus Police Dept. CIT 15 Monthly Education Program 26-27 NAMI Cols Semi-annual Yard Sale 27 Make a Difference Day 29 2 nd Annual People and Pets Costume Party
November 2012	December 2012
04 NAMI GA Walks—Turner Field, Atlanta 05 Mental Health Court Graduation 11-17 Mental Health Wellness Week 17 National Survivors of Suicide Day 19 Monthly Ed Program & Board Election 26-30 Muscogee County Sheriff's Office CIT	<b style="color: red;">No Monthly Education Program 02 NAMI Cols Winter Celebration Party

NEWSFLASH – Beginning at 1:00 pm, Saturday, October 6th, in the Children and Adolescent wing of The Bradley Center, NAMI Columbus will begin holding a new NAMI Connection Support Group. The new NAMI Connection <18 Recovery Support Group will meet the first Saturday of every month. If it is as successful as we think it will be, it will convert to a weekly meeting as do our other support groups. NAMI Columbus has known for a long time that we needed to offer support and education for people younger than 18. Early intervention, via support, education and advocacy is the key for more people learning to live with their illness and to live as strong and healthy as possible.

REGISTRATION (Last Call) for the Autumn NAMI Education Classes

Family-to-Family is a free 12-week course for caregivers of individuals with severe mental illnesses that discusses the clinical treatment of these illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that caregivers need to cope more effectively. The Family-to-Family class will begin **September 20, 2012**.

Peer-to-Peer Education Course is a free ten week–2-1/2 hours per week–experiential education course on the topic of recovery for any person with a mental illness who is interested in establishing and maintaining wellness. The course uses a combination of lecture, interactive exercises and structured group processes. The diversity of experience among course participants affords for a lively dynamic that moves the course along. The Peer-to-Peer class will begin **September 30, 2012**.

NAMI Basics is a free six-week course for family caregivers of children and adolescents who have either been diagnosed with a serious mental illness / serious disturbance or who are experiencing symptoms but have not yet been diagnosed. This free course is taught by trained NAMI members. The NAMI Basics class will begin **September 18, 2012**.

To register, or to obtain more information, please call the NAMI Columbus office at (706) 320-3755 or e-mail us at info@namicols.org. To ensure we will have enough textbooks, the class location for each class will be given at time of registration. Room is limited so call or e-mail quickly.



NAMI People and Pets Costume Party Planned for October

by Georgia Allison

The second annual NAMI People and Pets Costume Party will be held on Monday, October 29 at the Contact Building from 6:00 to 7:30. It will take the place of the usual meeting for that night. This is a chance for anyone: consumers, family members, friends and pets, to dress up and come out for some fun. There will be games, refreshments, music and even prizes for the best people and pet costumes.

Among last year's activities were pumpkin bowling, spider toss, and pumpkin painting as well as eating and even a little dancing. There were several dogs which came in costume including one wearing a boa and another dressed as a baby.

"Even though the turn out was rather small last year," said Georgia Allison, one of the event's coordinators, "I think everyone had a great time. Hopefully we will have a bigger crowd this year since we are announcing it earlier."

If you would like to help with decorating, planning activities, or providing refreshments please leave a message at the NAMI Columbus Office (706.320.3755) or e-mail info@NAMICols.org and let us know. Just a little help is needed in order to make this event fun for everyone.

CIT Makes a Difference

by Georgia Allison

When people hear about the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training program they might wonder, "What does CIT really do? Does CIT make any difference in real life situations?" Well, according to one recent CIT graduate, the knowledge gained during classes can really change the outcome of a possible crisis situation.

Will Dawson, a NAMI Columbus facilitator who lives in Hurtsboro, Alabama, completed the CIT class which was held the last week of August in Columbus. "I wanted to get more education and knowledge," said Will. "I always want to learn anything I can about mental illness to help myself and others."

Just a few days after completing the course, Will was shopping in his local Dollar General

store. When he approached the checkout, the cashier mentioned her concern over a man who was causing a disturbance in front of the store. She told Will that she did not want to call the police, but the man was apparently drunk and he was causing a lot of noise and making customers feel threatened.

That was when Will's CIT training came to mind. He told the cashier that he would speak to the man.

"Now I knew what to say," explained Will. "I knew how to de-escalate the situation. I used the things we were taught like 'I statements,' listened to him and gave him a choice."

"Before CIT I would have handled it differently, maybe with force; there could have been an

altercation. But now I knew how to do it, to take time and be patient. The de-escalation skills worked."

When Will approached the man, he realized it was someone he had met in his neighborhood. "It helped that it was someone I knew," said Will, "but now I feel that I could use the skills even with someone I don't know."

Will was able to calm the man and eventually got him in the car and took him to his home. But this positive outcome was the result of CIT training, Will says. "The class made a difference in how I reacted. I had learned I could use my skills without having to put my hands on him."



Helping veterans with mental illnesses

by Stephen Akinduro

On August 17th, a number of NAMI Columbus members attended the recent "Jail Diversion Trauma Recovery (JDTR)" class taught by Katherine L. Davis (LPC) of the Carl Vision institute of Government at the University of Georgia. The class was sponsored by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (GDBHDD). The subtitle of the class was "*Understanding Trauma, responding with respect.*" The goal of the class was to educate participants on how to best help veterans in recovery from trauma related mental illnesses. Juanilda Diolosa, Tara Hamilton, Clay Baum, Elizabeth Brown, Rhonda Smith and I were the NAMI members who attended the class..

The class was very educational and enlightening, especially since it was very interactive. Following are some of the things we learned: We examined what the term "*mental health*" means; we looked at how trauma impacts lives, and how to respectfully respond to people – especially veterans – who have been negatively impacted by trauma. It is impossible to separate our physical health from our mental health because the mind, body, soul and emotions all work in unison to support our entire wellbeing. Mental illness is a physiological disorder affecting the brain and primarily having a negative effect on our thinking, our feelings and ultimately our behavior. For treatment of a mental disorder to be effective, it has to be holistic, keeping in mind the connection between the mind, body and soul. Healing has to happen within the context of a healing community because when people with a mental illness suffer, so do the people who love them.

One of the negative consequences of experiencing trauma is that the brain often over-reacts to events that remind the person of the original trauma because the brain is attempting to

save us from what it perceives to be the re-occurrence of the original threat.

One of the more powerful statements by Ms. Davis, our instructor, was when she said "when it comes to helping each other, it is easier to give than to receive because receiving help requires true courage." This is especially true in regard to asking for help for a mental illness because of the *stigma* associated with these disorders. And for our veterans, admission of a mental disorder seems to go against almost everything they've learned in military culture, which adds to the challenge of asking for help. This is why we emphasized the importance of responding to veterans with respect; respect being defined as "Meeting you where you are, while valuing myself where I am, within the framework of nonjudgmental love for both of us."

We examined some of the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: irritability and irrationality, fear, helplessness, withdrawal or detachment, difficulty concentrating, hyper-vigilance or startling very easy, substance or alcohol abuse, rage, aggression, flashbacks. Some die by suicide, with about 18 veterans dying of suicide every day. Veterans who are suffering from these need our help.

We ended the class by engaging in two group discussions of our choice. The first group I participated in was the one that talked about how the public needs to be educated about how mental illnesses affects our thought process and is not a defect of character. The second group for me was a discussion about what recovery looks like.

If you would like more information on how you can volunteer to help veterans in our community, contact NAMI members, Charles Clark or Juanilda Diolosa, who are veterans themselves and very passionate about this subject.



Columbus

P.O. Box 8581
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Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness

Support Our Support (Groups)



Many people find their way to our classes by first attending a support group. If you are a NAMI Columbus "long timer" (we don't want to call you old), please attend either of the two weekly NAMI Connection support groups or the weekly Family support group. Newcomers can use your wisdom and hard-earned experience. Sharing a message of recovery gives the hope they are searching for. Many people tell us that the NAMI motto "**You Are Not Alone**" is the initial feeling they realize at their first meeting. If you are willing to train to be a support group facilitator, let us know!

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

✂ Please Cut and Mail ✂

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!!!)

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 one of the largest affiliates 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).