



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Columbus

Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness

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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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



AmericanWork, Inc.
 Columbus ACT Team
 706-641-9663

"NAMI News and Updates"

Frank Dunford, Presenter
Monthly Education Meeting
4411 Rosemont Drive, Columbus
Monday, July 21, 2014
6:00 P.M.

Our own president, Frank Dunford, will be providing detailed updates on all that's happening in NAMI Columbus! He will also be sharing his recipe for destroying the stigma of mental illness and how consumers and families can get involved in this all-important continuing mission for our organization.

In addition, he'll be sharing his vision for the NAMI store on our website, and will be discussing the possibility of setting up a tent in Uptown Columbus on Saturday mornings during the Market Days to sell goods and raise lots of much needed funds for NAMI. He has lots of exciting news to share with our membership.

Please come out and support our dedicated and tenacious president, and get updated on all the latest happenings. We need you to stay abreast of all activities and find out how YOU can help us!

If you are able, please bring a refreshment for our goodies table!



Frankly Speaking



Greetings my family,

Summer has arrived and though the balmy air and the persistent rays of the sun are less than comfy at times, the array of greenery and flowers can easily distract the eyes from the searing bakery that Mother Nature has concocted for the earth in this season of the year. The chirping cicadas also remind us that the cycle of life is in full swing, and we know that the crescendo of their boisterous mating calls will usher in the fall before we know it. Time is definitely flying all too quickly for everyone, and in a short amount of time, many positive things can occur when you have motivated volunteers to make them happen.

Recently, Lamar Harper and Steven Morgan completed the NAMI Connection facilitator training. Please take time to thank them for their dedication and caring as they embark on their personal mission to be a part of the solution to filling the gaps in mental health education by providing valuable peer leadership.

Clay Baum and Sherri Carmack have cleared the 2 year mark of dedicated weekly service to the Muscogee County jail and the Crisis Stabilization unit at the Bradley Center as facilitators. Again, please thank these people for their amazing tenacity and dedication.

And as our own vice president, Amy Zabel, enters the Muscogee County School District to launch the newest signature programs of "Ending the Silence" and "Parents and Teachers as Allies", please let her know how much you all appreciate the sacrifices she makes to make these programs available to educate high school students, parents, teachers, and administrators about how NAMI can help them focus on their many encounters with mental illness positive ways.

Our website is once again under construction as our resident computer wizard, Surrey Streeter, is working his magic to bring an awesome work of art to life. Thanks, Surrey!

Until next time, I wish you all a wonderful summer full of fun and togetherness. Don't forget to share your good times with those less fortunate. A little love goes a long way!

Best Regards,

Frank

Upcoming Events

July 2014	August 2014
7-11 CIT Training – Columbus Government Center 19-22 SAVE THE DATES! Early Intervention in Psychosis Webinars (see nami.org for details) 21 Monthly Education Meeting	14 NAMI's Hill Day Webinar Series – NAMI's Legislative Priorities and Key Bills Pending Before Congress! 18 Monthly Educational Meeting <p style="text-align: center;">STAY COOL! THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER ARE HERE!</p>

“Open” Support Groups:

Every Monday night, 6-7:30 pm

Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups

Both meet at New Horizons CSB, 4411 Rosemont Drive

Every Saturday 1-2:30 pm

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group

Meets at The Bradley Center's Multipurpose Room

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

A NEW FAMILY-TO-FAMILY CLASS GRADUATED!

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

*Brandon Purvis, Sherry Stewart, Kathy Wood,
Katherine Andrews, Marion Howard, Ed Ray,
Mary Ray, Linda Woodall, James Woodall
(Not Pictured: Rev. William Douglas)*



Because of NAMI Programs...

By Jacki Higgins, NAMI Education Program Coordinator



The trainees from NAMI Georgia share what NAMI programs have done for them with Colleen Duewel, NAMI National Director of Education (far left).

From June 6-8, 2014, NAMI hosted its annual National Training of Trainers event in Arlington, Va. Throughout the weekend, the energy and excitement in the air was tangible. Over 160 trainees arrived in the nation's capital to become a state trainer in one of six NAMI Education's signature programs. New this year was a dual training offered for trainees wanting to be trained in both [NAMI Parents and Teachers as Allies](#) and [NAMI Ending the Silence](#). Our own Amy Zabel attended the training in these two new programs that will be affecting our public schools, and our own Sue Marlowe was trained in the "In Our Own Voice" program. Both will be state trainers and will represent NAMI Columbus around the state of Georgia.

NAMI Education's Training of Trainers event is an annual training, which allows experienced NAMI program leaders the opportunity to become a state trainer. Once certified, state trainers go back to their states and help expand the NAMI education programs by training more teachers, presenters, and support group facilitators.

The theme of the weekend was "Because of NAMI Programs." Trainees completed an artistic collage of messages to complete the sentence "Because of NAMI programs". Here is what some people wrote:

- "Because of NAMI programs, I can change the world."
- "Because of NAMI programs, I found hope and understanding."
- "Because of NAMI programs, I am healthy and can help others."
- "Because of NAMI programs, I am going back to school in the fall."
- "Because of NAMI programs, my grandchildren have the care they need."
- "Because of NAMI programs, I found my son again."

All through the weekend, trainees learned and practiced the techniques necessary to be successful state trainers.

Those that attended the weekend came into the trainings with excitement and hope. Most of the trainees have taught and participated in multiple NAMI programs. They volunteer their time and passion to NAMI and to the education programs.

While the Training of Trainers event can be a lot to digest, the trainees leave with the confidence to pass their knowledge and skills on. The mixture of trainees is amazing – some have taught multiple classes or have been facilitators for years, while others may still be fairly new to NAMI having only taught one class or given a few presentations. But the heart is there. Program leaders are the heart of NAMI programs. As long as the heart beats, the education programs will continue to grow. There couldn't be a group of finer people.

Handling a Psychiatric Crisis: The Importance of Family and the First 24 Hours

By Hanem Ali, NAMI Project Manager

Individuals going through severe psychiatric crisis often have the experience of feeling not heard, and often feel misunderstood. At the same time, family members often don't get a chance to participate in their loved one's treatment plan at the time of the crisis. With Open Dialogue therapy, the individual's voice is valued and the family and others who care about the person in crisis are invited into the process of figuring out what would be helpful and what would not in the treatment and recovery process.

Developed in Finland by Jaakko Seikkula, Ph.D., and his colleagues, Open Dialogue is a therapy model that provides help very rapidly to people in psychiatric crisis, ideally within 24 hours, in the most supportive and non-pathologizing setting possible, ideally the person's own home. This is done by organizing a community health system made up of a team of clinicians and by working with the individuals and families within that system. A clinical team commits to helping the individual and family find whatever resources that would be helpful, including medications or hospitalization if necessary. The team also promotes a spirit of dialogue, in which each person's voice is valued, especially the voice of the person in crisis.



Open Dialogue is beginning to come to the U.S., primarily through the efforts of Dr. Mary Olson, and the [Institute for Dialogic Practice](#), which she founded and leads in Haydenville, Mass.

Dr. Christopher Gordon, a psychiatrist and the medical director at [Advocates, Inc.](#), has led a team which has completed Open Dialogue training with Dr. Olson, and which has attempted to adapt Open Dialogue to the U.S. health care environment. Dr. Gordon will be presenting at the [2014 NAMI National Convention](#) on Sept. 3. He recently spoke to NAMI about Open Dialogue therapy.

NAMI: What's involved with Open Dialogue Therapy? Can you describe a typical session?

Open Dialogue is both a system of care and a process of therapy within that system. This system provides services to people in psychiatric crisis, including immediate crisis care; outpatient services; inpatient services; and other psychosocial supports. To adapt the Open Dialogue system to the U.S., one of the first challenges is to have a mobile team that is flexible enough to see people and families as often as needed, in the home if possible. This is possible in Finland due to the comprehensive and integrated health care system there. It's much more challenging in the U.S.

Once you have the team in place, a typical meeting often begins with an explanation of how the team and process works. The process of dialogue in the meeting is a little hard to describe, because each family is different and each situation is different. However, one of the features of the Open Dialogue process is that there is always more than one clinician in the meeting, and another feature is that the clinicians speak openly and transparently to each other about their thoughts and concerns in the meeting. In this setting each person is listened to and dialogue is encouraged. There is no attempt to accomplish consensus or agreement, except about matters of safety. Out of the dialogue, the team and the network can identify what other services might be helpful – medication evaluation, individual psychotherapy, financial or other coaching, or whatever, including hospitalization—even involuntarily in extreme cases. The Open Dialogue team connects people with resources; it's not the solution in and of itself.

How does it help someone with a psychiatric crisis?

The experience in Finland – and our experience in our replication project here in the U.S., in Massachusetts – is that, especially for young people in the early stages of psychiatric crisis, Open Dialogue can lessen the hurtful and unintentionally discouraging and debilitating aspects of psychiatric care. The person at the center of concern can feel like he or she is being treated as a whole person, with dignity, and with a legitimate perspective. This in and of itself makes engagement in treatment more likely, and also improves the chances for the person to engage in living. In turn this promotes possibilities for natural resolution of crisis, and lessens the likelihood of chronicity.

Another important element of Open Dialogue as practiced in Finland, is that antipsychotic medications are used, but they are used more selectively, in lower doses and for shorter periods of time than is often the practice in the U.S., at least until fairly recently. This practice leads to less antipsychotic use, and to, I believe, a greater sense on the part of the person at the center of concern, that using medications is not forever, and that the person can use medication more as a tool for their own wellness, without feeling like they have to consent to life-long treatment.

How is this therapy different from other similar therapies?

Open Dialogue has a lot in common with other network-based and family-based approaches to treatment, although it is unique in the sense that Open Dialogue brings this orientation into psychiatry, which is uncommon in the U.S. It offers an immediate, intensive psychosocial response to the crisis, engaging all members of the network. It is also characterized by a unique style of therapeutic conversation that emphasizes attunement to all participants, especially the person at the center of concern. In contrast to older forms of family therapy, Open Dialogue does not engage the family because the family is viewed as the problem, but because the family is an essential partner in the recovery process.

Has there been an evaluation of this therapy?

There has been a substantial amount of research on outcomes in Finland, which suggest that using Open Dialogue in early episode psychosis bends the clinical curve away from chronicity, using substantially less antipsychotic medication that is usual U.S. practice. For example, in a five year follow up study of 30 individuals with schizophrenia and 45 individuals with other psychotic diagnosis (Seikkula et. al 2006), 77 percent were either working or in school, 23 percent were on disability and 79 percent were asymptomatic at five year follow up. In the same study, only 33 percent had been treated with antipsychotic medications.

Every Voice Matters, Especially in July

By Corrine Ruth, NAMI Policy Intern

In 2008, Congress declared July as [National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#) (NMMHAM) in honor of author and advocate, Bebe Moore Campbell. Her close experience with a family member living with a severe mental health condition compelled Campbell to write multiple books on the topics of mental illness, treatment and recovery within a family setting. But she did not stop there.

Campbell fervently believed that the national dialogue surrounding mental illness should acknowledge diverse communities. She became a prominent advocate for mental health education and support for minority populations. NMMHAM is inspired by Campbell's efforts to include people of all communities and backgrounds in the national conversation on mental illness and increase awareness of mental health issues that, without distinction, affect us all.



Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., NAMI California 1st Vice President; Caliph Assagai, Legislation and Public Policy Director; Jessica Cruz, NAMI California Executive Director; Assemblyman Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, chair of the Assembly Select Committee on Mental and Behavioral Health.

Minority Mental Health Is Not a Minor Issue

As Campbell emphasized, mental illness is associated with unique concerns for minority groups. Research shows that stigma towards mental illness is especially high in minority communities, making it more difficult for individuals to talk about their concerns with family members and peers and discouraging them from seeking treatment. In [Campbell's own words](#), "People of color...feel the stigma more keenly. In a race-conscious society, some don't want to be perceived as having yet another deficit". People from culturally diverse groups often face additional barriers to mental health care such as financial cost, accessibility of treatment and language difficulties.

Every person dealing with a mental health problem should have access to quality care. Every community should be aware of the importance of mental health, the signs of mental health conditions and where to find the support they need. This is why NMMHAM is an exceptional opportunity to spread the word about these issues, raise awareness and mobilize communities.

Let's Celebrate!

During the month of July, to celebrate NMMHAM and honor Campbell's legacy, NAMI State Organizations and Affiliates across the nation will be focusing on how we can better address the mental health needs of people from culturally diverse groups and increase awareness of minority mental health issues locally.

The celebration kicked off on June 26 with an exciting legislative event organized by NAMI California at the State Capitol building in Sacramento. Together with Assemblyman Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, NAMI California leaders presented a [resolution](#) proclaiming July as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month state-wide. At the event, a variety of speakers testified to the importance of recognizing minority mental health, including Senator Jim Beall, who recently led efforts to enforce mental health parity in the state budget, and individuals from diverse backgrounds who shared their experiences dealing with mental illness.

Many additional exciting and creative events are planned for this month ranging from art shows and music festivals to educational presentations and forum discussions. We encourage you to join us in celebrating mental health awareness and diversity!

Here are some suggestions for things that you can do to spread the word about the importance of minority mental health:

- Share your unique story about how you or someone you love has been affected by mental illness to let others know that they are [not alone](#). We've put together some [tips](#) about including information about your community when sharing your story for NMMHAM.
- Participate in our July 10 [NMMHAM Celebration webinar](#) on bridging the gaps in access to culturally competent mental health care and support for minority communities.
- Share information about NMMHAM on your social media profile. "Like" the [NMMHAM page](#) on Facebook and use the hashtag [#MinorityMentalHealth](#) to join the conversation on Twitter.
- Visit www.nami.org/nmmham for more resources and ideas on how to get involved

Mental illness affects people of all cultures, identities and backgrounds. Let's promote awareness and encourage understanding this July. Let's make a difference.



Columbus

P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, GA 31908
(706) 320-3755

Our Area's Voice on Mental Illness



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.

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 (financial hardship)**
- 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 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).