



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
Adults, Children & Adolescents
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



Columbus ACT Team

AmericanWork, Inc.
706-641-9663

Susan Gallagher,

from

New Horizons Behavioral Health

At Our Monthly

Education Meeting

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer,
4700 Armour Road, Col., GA 31904
March 21, 2016 – 6:00 P.M.

Susan Gallagher has been an employee of New Horizons Behavioral Health for quite awhile and is knowledgeable about all the services that are provided. She recently was named to be Development/Marketing/Community Relations Director. Many NAMI Columbus members use New Horizons as their provider and have experienced some problems. Susan will be talking about recent changes to the appointment process and new phone numbers for the organization. NAMI Columbus has always prided itself on helping people navigate the mental health system. This will be another opportunity to learn how to best utilize the services that New Horizons provides.

Come and join us to increase your knowledge and get your questions answered at our monthly meeting at 6:00 pm on March 21, 2016 at our Monday night's location, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 4700 Armour Road, Columbus, GA. We all could benefit from increased knowledge on diagnosis and medications.

If you are able, please bring an item for the refreshment table.

The NAMI Columbus Mission

We will use **Support, Education and Advocacy** to throw out lifelines of hope and help to families and consumers seeking recovery. Our vision is to create an effective and active affiliate which delivers what consumers of mental health services and families need. We work to build an area where leaders and citizens work well together to create a caring, compassionate and educated public that realizes mental illness is a biological illness and is not a character flaw or due to bad upbringing.

Since we viewed the *Inside Out* film at last month's education meeting we thought the news about how it did at The Oscars should be included in this month's newsletter/ *Inside Out* received an Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film of the Year.

In addition to an Oscar, *Inside Out* has won many other awards. See details at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2096673/awards?mode=desktop>

Upcoming Events

(Below are chances for you to get involved)

March 2016	April 2016
TBD Family-to-Family Education Class Begins	18 Monthly Education Program
14-20 Brain Awareness Week	30 NAMI Georgia Annual Meeting—Mercer University, Atlanta
21 Monthly Education Program	
11-13 NAMI Georgia Family-to-Family Teacher Training	
12-13 NAMI Georgia Connection Recovery Support Group Facilitator Training	
18-20 Peer-to-Peer Mentor Training	
21-22 Georgia CIT Conference—Go to namiga.org for more information and registration	

“Open” Support Groups:

Every Monday night, 6-7:30 pm

Family/Friend and NAMI Connection Recovery Support Groups

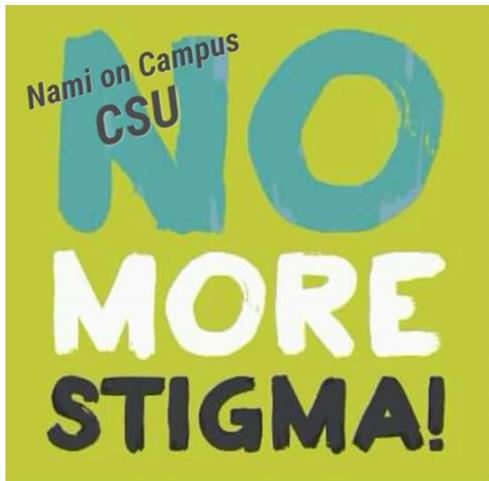
Both groups meet at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 4700 Armour Rd.

Every Saturday 1-2:30 pm

NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group

Meets at The Bradley Center’s Multipurpose Room

(Use 22nd St. Parking Lot for easier access)



NAMI on Campus at CSU monthly meetings are the first Tuesday of every month in Schuster Building, Room 130. 12:30pm to 1:30pm. There are a number of ways to contact NoC or follow their activities:

<https://columbusstate.collegiatelink.net/organization/nami>

Namicsu@gmail.com

Facebook: nami on campus csu

One conversation can change a life

Maintaining strong connections among family, friends and in your community is one of the best ways to prevent suicide. Supporting NAMI Columbus through a donation today enables you to extend your circle of support and become part of a national movement to end the stigma of mental illness and remove barriers to treatment. One person making a difference can change a life. When we all work together we can change a nation.



Breathe Easy with NAMI Air

NAMI Air is a safe, anonymous app to share and air your experiences.

(For [Android](#) or [iPhone](#))



16 People Describe What It's Like to Experience Psychosis

By Sarah Schuster, Jan 28, 2016

Psychosis is a break from reality — a truly impossible phenomenon to imagine unless you've experienced it yourself. According to the NAMI, approximately 3 in 100 people will experience an episode of psychosis during their lives.

But experiencing psychosis doesn't make someone "psychotic," "crazy" or even dangerous. It's a symptom of a mental illness, and should be treated like one.

To get a better understanding of psychosis, we asked people in our community on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/MentalHealthOnTheMighty/posts/1700265260242185>) to describe what it's like.

This is what they had to say:

1. "For me, it felt like I was watching a movie that was my life. I knew bad things were happening and I couldn't stop it."
2. "It feels like a complete loss of control."
3. "I was driven by fear...voices...hallucinations. I felt chaotic."
4. "Out of body experience. Excruciating sensations amplified by 1,000 at the tip of every sensor in my body."
5. "Simply the most troubling loss of self you can experience."
6. "For me, it's like an overwhelming feeling of fear and dread combined with an uncontrollable obsession on one thing. My mind is stuck on that one thing and it races nonstop."
7. "It's overwhelming, and yet super realistic. It's so convincing that you completely go along for the ride."
8. "Drowning in a cesspool of confusion and chaos."
9. "You're sitting there, in that place you should be able to recognize. You don't. Everything is unfamiliar, foreign. You're grasping, desperately, for a comfortable place you aren't in the moment able to identify. You're missing yourself. Missing from yourself. Everything is fast — images and echoes. Somehow you feel slow and still. As though you're out of your body but you can't quite see yourself. Hurt. You hurt. You know you're hurting."

10. "Your mind tells you something is true and your body reacts with animal instinct. You have to fight in your brain — to argue that what you're believing instinctively is wrong."

11. "It's like being your worst enemy and the enemy is inside your head. Psychosis isn't fun because your mind plays tricks on you, and this can be terrifying for the person."

12. "It feels like you are outside of your brain, like there isn't a problem."

13. "It feels like you're stung by a wasp in your brain."

14. "I felt like I was in control, but now I'm sure I wasn't."

15. "Every sense is heightened and colors are especially bright. The world is on a giant flat screen TV. Everything seems more crystal clear than you ever knew, but then it all becomes confused and muddled. You make your own realities, constantly decoding messages that seem extremely important, but are ultimately meaningless. They further the storyline in your head that seems so real."

16. "Like a cataract of the mind."

We face disabilities and diseases together. Join us on The Mighty

<http://themighty.com/2016/01/16-people-describe-what-its-like-to-experience-psychosis/>



GCAL is the 24/7 hotline for accessing mental health services no matter where you live in Georgia. The Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) provides treatment and support services to people with mental illnesses and addictive diseases, and support to people with mental retardation and related developmental disabilities. The division also funds evidenced-based prevention services aimed at reducing substance abuse and related problems. For more information, go to the Georgia DBHDD website.

Erasing the stigma of mental health issues at work

By Wendy Killeen BOSTON GLOBE CORRESPONDENT FEBRUARY 03, 2016

Heightened stress on the job, a dip in productivity, absenteeism — all can indicate an employee is dealing with emotional issues.

“We can’t legally ask if [employees] have a mental illness,” said Barbara Wilson. “But if people are showing a pattern, we can encourage the dialogue and say ‘What can we help you with?’ ”

Wilson is chief executive of Family Continuity, a private, nonprofit mental health and social service agency whose mission is to support strong families and communities.

It serves Eastern and Central Massachusetts at six sites, including locations in Peabody and Lawrence, and has 250 employees.

Wilson, of Salisbury, recently joined CEOs Against Stigma, a statewide campaign created by the National Alliance on Mental Illness — Massachusetts to promote healthy work environments.

“To advocate for the people we support and not for our own staff would be hypocritical and unethical,” she said.

The initiative is aimed at erasing misconceptions about mental illness so workers can talk freely about conditions that affect them, co-workers, or family members.

Wilson has pledged to encourage dialogue and provide educational information to managers and employees, including through the alliance’s In Our Own Voice presentations.

She said mental health issues affect one in five adults. More than half of adults, she said, have a family member with psychological concerns.

Conditions encountered in the workplace, she continued, can range from anxiety and depression to schizophrenia.

Wilson said people often hesitate to open up or come forward be-

cause of fear of being ostracized or even fired.

“Not all employers are sensitive [to mental illness],” she said.

And different cultures have their own prejudices.

“Ultimately, it’s important for all businesses and employers to be aware of this and take the pledge,” she said. The goal of CEOs Against Stigma is to sign 250 executives to the campaign and reach half a million employees.

Wilson, who is in her 60s and has been a licensed clinical social worker and administrator for more than 35 years, said she feels she’s in a good position to help promote change.

“We are purveyors of hope that recovery from mental illness is real,” she said. “I’m very excited, and hope I can make a difference before I retire.”



The following two services were created to work with young people for whom a face-to-face encounter might be too intimidating.

Crisis Text Line was created for younger people whose inclination is to text rather than talk or email. Counselors are trained to text, understand abbreviations and respond to any sort of crisis. Anyone in crisis can text **741741** to text with a trained counselor. Anywhere, anytime. If your cell phone plan is with AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint or Verizon, the texts are free. Charges may apply with other carriers. For more information, visit www.crisistextline.org

There is a similar service on a website: **OK2TALK.ORG** Say anything. It’s time we talked about mental health. Share what’s on your mind.



Groundbreaking Study Moves Us Closer to Finding Schizophrenia's Cause

By Ken Duckworth, NAMI Medical Director | Jan. 29, 2016

In the scientific journal *Nature*, researchers from the Broad Institute, Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital, among other sites, found a hypothesis that could be a key cause of schizophrenia. The researchers noted that people who had schizophrenia were more likely to have a certain type of a gene that promotes neural "pruning."

Pruning is the process of the removal of neurons. In 2014, when I attended the Broad Institute's announcement of the \$650 million gift from Ted Stanley and panel discussion on a study that identified 108 genes associated with schizophrenia, I congratulated Dr. Steve McCarroll on this development. He told me that the papers on Broad's work connecting genes and mental illness would only get more interesting as we moved forward. This new paper shows he was right.

First, let's take a look at the hypothesis that the research supports. It has been a point of discussion for years that over or mis-directed pruning may be connected with the occurrence of schizophrenia. Pruning is part of normal brain development during childhood, and especially during adolescence. After pruning takes place, new neurons are produced with more efficient functions. In other words, pruning helps the brain develop more superhighways and fewer back roads. Clinically, this hypothesis is also compelling, as the onset of symptoms often occurs in adolescence. However, we haven't had biological facts that back this idea up—that is, until this study.

The need to understand neural networks—how neurons relate and communicate—has also gained traction in informing our thinking about schizophrenia. Pruning also fits the idea that the network of neurons could be impacted by changes in neuronal architecture. This way of thinking about the relationship of neurons in networks is one reason that we don't use the term "chemical imbalance" anymore to explain how schizophrenia develops—that is likely far too simple a model.

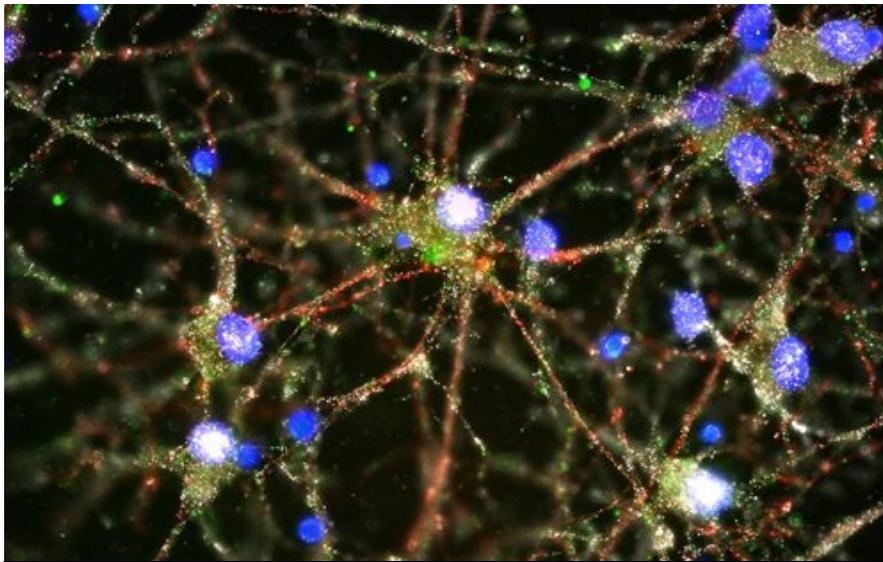
At my clinic when patients, or their parents, ask me what caused their schizophrenia, I have to tell them that unfortunately we don't know. I tell them that we think it's a complex interaction of genes and environment that promote risk at critical stages in brain development, and that it's pretty theoretical. This paper will most assuredly help improve my answer to this question. **Over time I hope that we can understand the mechanism of the treatments we use, and why certain environmen-**

environmental acts like sleep deprivation or the use of stimulants and marijuana can raise the risk for psychosis in vulnerable people.

As I read it, the study does not prove that the pruning hypothesis is correct, but it does add a very compelling point to support it. Since I am a clinician, not a geneticist, my explanation of what was discovered will be rather simple, but what the researchers found is a spot on chromosome 6, called C4, which is a gene that promotes pruning. Subtypes (called alleles) of this chromosome are found in overabundance in association with schizophrenia.

The researchers in the study drew upon a number of biological ideas and pulled them together to make this observation. For example, they found that alleles of C4 have been found to promote neuronal pruning in mice after they are born, and that they are also involved in the development of neuronal networks.

How gene structure connects to brain development will be an ongoing and compelling area of inquiry. This paper also represents a new level of cooperation among many types of researchers, which bodes well for our



Imaging studies showed C4 (in green) located at the synapses of primary human neurons.

speed of future understanding.

I recall the fear and anxiety that existed when I was on the first AIDS unit in New England as a medical intern in the 1980s. We didn't know what caused the condition, and that added to our fear, hopelessness and pessimism. It seemed overwhelming and unrealistic to contemplate a biologic solution to this devastating condition. Now, of course, we know the details of the virus and transformative treatments have followed. HIV has gone from a lethal diagnosis to one that can be lived with, and that change started with science on the underlying biological cause.

The brain and our understanding of the causes of schizophrenia will be much more challenging to master than even this complex virus. Making sense of the underlying biological properties that lead to schizophrenia will make a difference in our understanding of the development of the condition. That is the vision that the late Ted Stanley supported when he made a huge donation to the Broad Institute. As our understanding continues to grow, we will find better treatments. This study is another big step in a very long journey.

Ken Duckworth, M.D., serves as medical director for NAMI. He is double board certified in adult and child and adolescent psychiatry. He has also completed a forensic psychiatry fellowship.

See more at: <https://www.nami.org/Blogs/NAMI-Blog/January-2016/Groundbreaking-Study-Moves-Us-Closer-to-Finding-Sc#sthash.6N8EtR5A.dpuf>





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.

✂ 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 (financial hardship)**
- 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).