

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 (leave a message)
Website: namicolumbusga.org
E-mail: info@namicolumbusga.org

New

Board of Directors:

Shelley Reed, Ph.D	President
Molly Jones	Vice President
Tristen Hyatt	Treasurer
Stephen Akinduro	
Doris Keene	
Sue Marlowe	
Phil Tirado	

Newsletter Editor:

Teri Owens

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

Behavioral Health Link

Special Guest:
Tiara Ward

Monthly Education Meeting

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer,
4700 Armour Road, Cols., GA 31904
April 15, 2019 -- 6:00 P.M.

Tiara Ward is the Community Relations and Education Coordinator for Behavioral Health Link (BHL).

As of January 1, 2019 BHL has been providing free mobile crisis response service for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) in our region.

Under the current contract with DBHDD, the crisis response team provides a free blended mobile crisis service to include response to mental health, substance abuse, and intellectual developmental disability crisis calls. The crisis response team responds to both adolescent and adult crisis calls.

What is Blended Mobile Crisis Response Services (BMCRS)? BMCRS provides FREE 24/7 on-site crisis intervention through assessment, de-escalation, consultation, safety planning, and referral with post-crisis follow-up to insure linkage with recommended service.

The services are dedicated to providing timely crisis intervention and linkage to the appropriate service based on the strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences of the person served at their specific point of need - and to mitigating any barriers or delays to access.

We hope you will join us on April 15 for this informative meeting to learn more about these valuable Services.

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

Upcoming Events

(Below are chances for you to get involved)

April 2019

- Apr 15 – Monthly Education Program, 6:00-7:30pm – Behavioral Health Link
- Apr 19-21 – NAMI Family to Family Teacher Training – Atlanta, GA*
- Apr 26-27 – NAMI Peer to Peer Mentor Training – Atlanta, GA*

May 2019

- May 5 – In Our Own Voice Presenter Training – Atlanta, GA*
- May 18 – NAMI Georgia Annual Meeting – Macon, GA
- May 20 – Monthly Education Program, 6:00-7:30pm – TBD

**If you are interested in attending a training session, a letter of recommendation from a member of the NAMI Columbus Board of Directors is required. Please secure this recommendation prior to submitting the application for the training.*

“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)
- Every Thursday night, 6:30-8 pm
NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group
Meets at Pierce Chapel United Methodist Church, 5122 Pierce Chapel Rd.

NAMI Georgia 2019 Annual Meeting – Saturday, May 18



For more information and to **REGISTER**, go to:

<https://namiga.org/2019leadershipandrecoverysymposium>

NAMI Georgia will be hosting a Leadership & Recovery Symposium on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at [River Edge Behavioral Health](#) in Macon, Georgia. NAMI affiliate leaders, program leaders, and members alike will benefit from a variety of breakout sessions and panels. Program tracks will include Leadership, Program, and Recovery. The day will feature the Annual Meeting of Members and Annual Awards Luncheon. Attendees will also have the opportunity to visit and tour the local affiliate, NAMI Central Georgia in Warner Robbins.

Upcoming Family-to-Family & Peer-to-Peer Classes

Family-to-Family is a free, 11-session educational program, which is for family members, friends and caregivers of people living with mental illness. The course is designed to help all family members understand and support their loved one living with mental illness, while maintaining their own well-being. **Sessions begin Sunday, August 25th.**

Peer-to-Peer is a free, 10-session educational program for adults who are looking to better understand their condition and journey toward recovery. Taught by a trained team of people who've been there, the program includes presentations, discussions and interactive exercises. Everything is confidential and NAMI never recommends a specific medical therapy or treatment approach. **Start date to be determined.**

Comprehensive free course materials will be provided for each participant.

Pre-registration is required by calling 706-320-3755 (leave a message) or by sending an e-mail to info@namicolumbusga.org.

Both courses will be held on Sundays, 2:30 p.m.-5 p.m. at Columbus Hospice Community Room, 7020 Moon Road.



NEW NAMI Websites – Take a Look

NAMI Columbus


NAMI Columbus President Shelley Reed has been hard at work designing a new website for us and it's now ready! Our new address is namicolumbusga.org. The new site has an updated look and is very easy to navigate. It's full of very helpful information on the resources and programs we offer to support area individuals and families struggling with mental illness. Go out and visit our site when you can. You'll love it! THANK YOU, Shelley!

In addition to the new web site address, we also have a new email address to request and receive information from NAMI Columbus - info@namicolumbusga.org.

Please take a moment to update this information in your records.

NAMI National

The NAMI national website has undergone some changes recently, too. It still has the address - <https://nami.org>, but several things work differently now, including the login. When you go to the site and click on the Sign In link, you'll receive the following message with instructions for logging in:





National Alliance on Mental Illness

Welcome to the new NAMI login page. Use your email address as your login name.

If this is your first time using our new login page, select [Forgot your Password?](#) to reset your password.

For help, view our [online knowledge center](#) or [create a new account](#).

Email

Password

Log in

[Forgot your password?](#)

The new and updated sites for NAMI Columbus and NAMI National are important resources for our members and we want to make sure you know how to access all of the valuable information they offer!

Maintaining Healthy Friendships with Mental Illness

By Shainna Ali | Feb. 15, 2019



Quality friendships have the potential to give us feelings of [compassion](#), belonging and [happiness](#). They can help improve our sense of self-worth and help us cope. When you have a mental illness, you may think that your friendships are bound to be more complicated. You may even deem healthy relationships impossible. But it's very important to dispel the internalized stereotype that your relationships will suffer because of your mental illness. Friendships *can* flourish despite a diagnosis.

There are many reasons [why friendships fade](#), and your condition will not always be the cause. Despite what you see on social media, all relationships experience ups and downs. And there are ways to work through and navigate issues that might come up over time.

Start With Self-Awareness

It's important to know and understand your diagnosis, but also bear in mind that you are a unique person. Mental illness manifests differently based on the individual, so it can be helpful to know your specific symptoms, triggers and warning signs. Having this awareness gives you insight into how your condition can impact your friendship. For example, could your condition cause you to misinterpret social cues? Or prompt anxiety when you see your friend with another close friend?

Preventative knowledge can empower you to effectively manage your emotions. If you are aware of your triggers, you may be able to catch your reaction in the moment and evade a miscommunication or a conflict. Even if you aren't aware of your reaction when it happens, after reflection you can approach your friend to clarify, apologize or discuss how to handle similar predicaments in the future.

Communicate Your Needs

Friends may trigger your symptoms, despite their good intentions. For example, your friend may want you to meet their new friend and invite him/her to a coffee date with you without asking. If you live with an anxiety-related diagnosis, specifically social anxiety, this seemingly harmless and kind gesture by your friend may actually trigger your anxiety.

It's important in situations like these to communicate your needs with your friends. Asserting your preferences does not necessarily need to be a direct disclosure of your diagnosis. You might simply say, "I'm not the best with surprises" or "I get nervous when meeting someone new."

If you assess that your friend is trustworthy, compassionate and reliable, you may choose to openly discuss your mental illness. Also, if they know about your condition, they may be able to help you with your self-care or notice warning signs. Talking openly about your condition could help both of you establish a deeper bond as well as a new layer of support.

Support One Another

All friends need support at one time or another. Even if your friend does not have a mental illness, there will be times you can provide support as well. [Helping others](#) is shown to make people happier and can even help reduce symptoms.

If your friend does have a diagnosis of their own, this similarity could bring you closer together; you can each discuss your symptoms and try coping mechanisms together. For example, you could attend a [support group](#) together or help each other seek therapy.

If you need more support than you are receiving, step back and consider whether the level of care you need is something a friend can provide. Because you have an established connection with your friend, you may feel comfortable leaning on them. However, it is important to recognize that your friend cannot be your therapist. Question if you need more support from a friend or from a mental health professional.

Mental health and relationships can influence one another. And while friendships can be challenging when you live with mental illness, they are ultimately worth the effort. Investing in healthy friendships is a powerful way to help you along your mental health journey.

How To Have A Healthy Relationship With Social Media

By Ryann Tanap | Feb. 25, 2019



Social media has allowed society to become more connected than ever. Over [three billion people](#) around the world use social media to engage with others, access the news and share information. In the U.S. alone, [seven out of ten people](#) are active social media users.

Some would argue that social media is inherently bad for our health.

Recent research explores the [negative implications](#) of social media, including sleep issues, an overall increase in stress and a rise in mental health conditions and addiction to technology. There are also concerns about cyberbullying and youth and teen safety online. Fortunately, tech companies are proactively addressing these types of concerns. For example, the recently released [Parent's Guide to Instagram](#) helps parents who are “raising the first generation of digital natives, for whom the online world is just as important as the offline world.”

On the other hand, there are many benefits to social media. Young people today consider social media as platforms for sharing their voice and finding a community of like-minded peers. And users of all generations understand that with social media, you can celebrate milestones or reconnect with old friends and relatives.

Regardless of what type of impact we believe these digital platforms can have on us, we must be intentional in how we use social media. Personally, I use social media as a tool to spread mental health awareness. Through my experience, I've learned several tips and tricks for having a healthy relationship with social media. Here are some you might find helpful.

Unfollow Unhealthy Accounts

It's important to remember that, often, the images and stories on social media aren't reflective of real life. Whether you follow friends, influencers, businesses or organizations, social media feeds are filled with carefully crafted, curated posts. Consider the following: Does your feed leave you feeling overwhelmed or less-than? Do you constantly compare your experiences with others? If yes—and you notice an overall decrease in your happiness, self-esteem and life satisfaction, it's time to make a change. Put an end to the negativity by reviewing the accounts you follow—unfollow, block or delete accounts that don't bring positivity, motivation or inspiration into your life.

Support And Connect With Others

There are many people you can connect with through social media, even if they're on the other side of the planet. And that's a good thing. However, if the interactions you're having leave you feeling isolated or upset, you should reevaluate why you use social media. Do you want to engage with others who share your interests? If so, search for digital communities of people who you have something in common with. From there, you can be more selective with who you connect and engage with.

Take Note Of What You Share

These days, it can be challenging to determine reputable sources of news and information. That's why it's important to play a conscious role before sharing something you see online with your friends or followers. Think about whether the content—be it an article or video—is helpful or harmful to others. Also consider if it truly provides knowledge worth sharing. If it doesn't contribute something positive to the digital world, it may not be worth sharing on your social media account.

Reduce Your Screen Time

Smartphones are quite everywhere these days. In any public setting, you've likely noticed others with their eyes glued to their phones. In fact, recent studies reveal that people spend an average of over [two hours](#) a day on social media. If you're concerned you may be spending too much time social media, try adopting healthier habits. Start by tracking the time you spend on social media; if you're on Facebook or Instagram, look out for the [tool](#) that helps users manage time spent on their accounts. When you [limit your screen time](#), you're creating more time for enriching, real-world experiences.

Take A Break

Completely stepping back from social media can be hard, but it's a good way to help you reconnect to reality. Log out from your accounts for a full day, a week or even a month. Have a friend change your password so you don't feel tempted to log back in to your account. Then, take notice of how you spend your time. Perhaps you rediscover an old hobby or sport. Or maybe you're able to schedule more quality time for your family or friends. Either way, it's more exciting to live life as it's happening, as opposed to “living” through a screen.

Rather than thinking of social media as something that only hurts our health, we should reevaluate when and how we use our accounts. Social media platforms *can* be used for good—it all depends on whether you *choose* to use it for good.



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

CityStateZip

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 - \$40 Dues
- ☐ Household Membership - \$60 Dues
- ☒ **\$5 Open Door Membership (financial hardship)**
(All dues are for 1 year and are tax-deductible.)

All memberships include NAMI National, NAMI Georgia, and NAMI Columbus membership.

- ☐ 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 an affiliate of NAMI Georgia, which is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. Dues and donations are tax deductible. Membership includes a subscription to our monthly newsletter and access to immediate news on advocacy, treatment and support issues from our national, state and local organizations.

Please make checks payable to:
NAMI Georgia & enter "**NAMI Columbus membership**" in the memo field.

Mail your check and membership form to:
NAMI Columbus
P.O. Box 8581
Columbus, Georgia 31908

You can also join safely online at www.nami.org/join .