

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

Important Schedule Changes for both Monday Night Support Group Meetings

Our May 20th Monthly Education Meeting has been cancelled in order to encourage people to attend the very special NAMI Georgia event the previous weekend. See details below.

However, on May 20th we will instead have our regular Monday Connection & Family Support Group Meetings.

On Memorial Day, May 27th, both of our Monday night Support Group meetings are cancelled.



NAMI Georgia 2019 Leadership & Recovery Symposium

May 18, 2019 | 8:30am-4:45pm
River Edge Behavioral Health
175 Emery Hwy
Macon, Georgia 31217

This day of learning and networking will also include our NAMI Georgia Awards Luncheon and a chance to tour a neighboring affiliate, NAMI Central Georgia. This is a great opportunity for both long-time NAMI leaders and new!

To preview the agenda, please [click here](#). Note it is subject to change. Questions? Email affiliate@namiga.org.

Registration cost of \$20 includes symposium and luncheon. Click below to register...

[Register online for the Leadership & Recovery Symposium!*](#)

Several of our NAMI Columbus members are attending, and we hope to see you there, too!

Upcoming Events

(Below are chances for you to get involved)

May 2019

- May 18 – NAMI Georgia Annual Meeting – Macon, GA
- May 18 – Cars & Coffee Rally – Columbus to Atlanta
- May 20 - Monthly Education Program will be replaced by our regular Monday night Support Group Meetings
- May 27 - Both Monday night Support Group Meetings are cancelled for Memorial Day

June 2019

- June 17 – 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.



CHRIS HUBBARD OF THE CLEVELAND BROWNS.
PTAP AND THE BRAND ARCHITECTS PRESENTS

MAY 18TH

CARS & Coffee RALLY



for Mental Health Awareness.

7AM-10AM | \$10 Dollar Admission | PTAP 839 Veterans Parkwaay, Columbus, GA

Rally/Cruise departure for Atlanta, GA 10:30AM

Muscle Cars, Exotics, Classics and all Car Lovers Welcomed. Come see
some of Georgia's most Beautiful and Rare Cars, for a Great Cause.

100% of Proceeds will be donated to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)



CARS & Coffee Rally for Mental Health Awareness

Saturday, May 18
7:00-10:00AM
PTAP (839 Veterans Parkway
Columbus, GA 31901)

7:00 AM – Doors Open at PTAP
10:30 AM – Cars leave for Atlanta

\$10 Admission Fee

All proceeds go to NAMI



WhyCare?

Because 1 in 5 people will be affected by mental illness in their lifetime. Take the time to show you care about mental health.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. During May - Mental Health Month, NAMI and the rest of the country are raising awareness of mental health. Each year we fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for policies that support people with mental illness and their families.

WhyCare?

During Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI will launch the Why Care? awareness campaign. The [WhyCare? campaign](#) is an opportunity to share the importance of care in our relationships to others, in mental health treatment and services, and in support and education to millions of people, families, caregivers and loved ones affected by mental illness. Demonstrating how and why we care brings more to awareness by showing our actions and connections to others. Care has the power to make a life-changing impact on those affected by mental health conditions. Through our own words and actions, we can shift the social and systemic barriers that prevent people from building better lives.

Care is a simple 4-letter word, but a powerful way to change lives for people affected by mental illness. It's an action. It's a feeling. It's a gift we give to ourselves and to each other. People feel loved when someone cares. People feel heard when someone cares. People recover when someone cares. Society changes when people care. Entire systems change when people care. #NAMICares #WhyCare

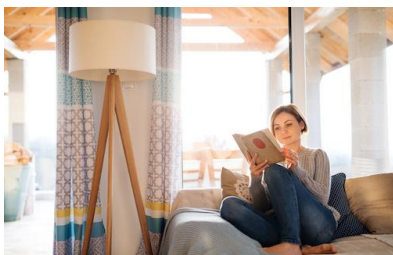
Ways to show you care....become a Georgia Mental Health Champion

- Join **NAMIWalks** and register as a walker for one of our three Walks this fall! Follow this link to get started - www.namiwalks.org. We want to see how many teams launch in May!
- We are encouraging corporations to partner with NAMI Georgia and become **Stigmafree** Companies! Through this initiative, we want to challenge, highlight, and cultivate your company's culture of caring and enhanced engagement around mental health. To learn more about this partnership and the associated benefits, please contact namiwalks@namiga.org.
- Get Creative with Us by hosting a **Painting Party with a Purpose**, raise awareness and funds by painting with a group of your choice. Email namiwalks@namiga.org to get started today.
- [Make an individual contribution](#) and become one of our May Mental Health Champions!



Tidying For Your Mental Health

By Sarah Roethlinger |



Tidying has become a popular trend this year. If you haven't seen her series on Netflix or read her book, [Marie Kondo](#) is a Japanese consultant who helps people tidy their homes by reorganizing and only keeping things that "spark joy." In her technique, the KonMari method, there is an order to the tidying process, and it's essential to being successful. After watching the series, I began thinking about ways we can "tidy" our lives to increase self-care and improve our mental health.

Carefully Choosing Friendships

As a working mom with two young children, I don't have much time to spend with friends. And I've realized the importance of only maintaining friendships that are supportive, healthy and, of course, spark joy. Life can get busy. There may be

times of conflict with a friend or times when they need you. It’s important to feel *reciprocated* love and support. If you surround yourself only with people you love and who love you, you’ll feel better and have more time to dedicate to those individuals.

As a parent, I know that I’m modeling behaviors for my children. And I like to ask myself: What are my friendships teaching them?

Saying No To Over-Committing

The Shinto roots of the KonMari method is a way to treasure what you have and treat your things as valuables opposed to disposable objects. You can think about your commitments the same way. Do you cherish them and are they valuable to your life?

I’m a people-pleaser by nature, and one of the hardest lessons I’ve had to learn in life is to just say *no*. I can’t be everything to everyone. I can’t be everywhere. I can’t do everything that’s asked of me. It’s not beneficial to me or to anyone. When we run ourselves ragged with commitments, we damage our mental health.

Take the time to think about what matters in the big picture. Are your commitments a reflection of the things that matter to you and your family? Would you be happier and healthier if you committed to less? Keep in mind there’s not a gracious 90-day return policy on your time—once it’s given, it’s gone.

Making Time For Yourself

What are you doing in your life that’s just for you? I know how hard it is to make time for ourselves. But now that you’ve let go of some time-drains that weren’t sparking joy for you, you can do some of the things you love. We often justify the time and resources we spend giving and providing for others, but not for ourselves. I’m giving you permission to let go of that mentality because it’s self-care and not an act of selfishness.

Wherever your passion lies, whether it’s volunteering, finishing that creative art or home project, traveling, cooking, writing, training to be a bodybuilder, you should do it. Schedule it just like you would anything else in your life.

Marie Kondo says it’s important to thank the things we get rid of. So, as you let go of some of the unhealthy friendships, time commitments and habits from your life, take the time to appreciate what those things gave or taught you, mindfully thank them and let go.

Sarah Roethlinger is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapist and Supportive Housing Program Director for [Youth Focus](#), a nonprofit in Guilford County North Carolina.



How The Digital Age Has Impacted Mental Health Care

By Laura Greenstein |

Almost the entirety of my experience in seeking mental health care (apart from the actual therapy) has been online. I looked for a therapist using different “find a therapist” search engines, clicking filters that would account for my insurance and location. I’ve read blogs and personal accounts of others’ experiences with therapy to determine if I found the right therapist. I’ve sought validation and support from friends and family by posting about my anxiety on social media.



My generation, “millennials,” which now takes up about [25%](#) of the U.S. population, have been the pioneers for entering the mental health system in the digital age. No previous generation had the ability to search their symptoms online or receive virtual counseling.

The technological advances and resulting societal changes that took place during millennials’ upbringing have significantly shifted not only the way we learn about mental health, but also the way we seek care. While we’ve seen positive changes and more conveniences, there is also a lot of unsupported information to navigate nowadays. And with it, there are downsides that aren’t always addressed. Here are a few pitfalls to watch out for and things to keep in mind.

Finding Treatment Online

It seems to me that no one is really asking the question: How does the Internet impact treatment and recovery from mental illness? I constantly see research studies about how the Internet and social media impact our mental health generally. But not how it impacts mental health *care* specifically.

There are many positives of having the Internet as a tool to seek care. Information is more accessible. I found it very helpful in my search for a therapist to be able to read their bios, review their ratings and see what they listed as their main therapeutic methods. You can learn about treatment methods and see other people’s recommendations. You can even receive mental health care online.

However, there is a lot of mental health information out there. Too much, in fact. And it’s not all accurate. As there is no quality control over what people post online, there is potential for harmful content. For example, someone could post that “mental illness isn’t treatable” or there could be scam websites providing unprofessional therapy. The onus is on the individual to scrutinize this information and determine what’s credible and what isn’t. This can be difficult especially when you’re just starting out.

With that said, keep in mind:

- For credible mental health information check out: [NIMH](#), [Psychology Today](#), [NAMI](#), or the [APA](#).
- Talk to a professional before making any treatment-based decisions (such as [medication](#)).
- If you're unsure how to find treatment or support, you can contact the [NAMI HelpLine](#) for resources.

The Push For Self-Care

A recent change that has significantly impacted millennials is the rise of the self-care industry. While there are positive benefits to self-care, it's also very unsettling that a \$10 billion industry is telling people that they can take care of themselves rather than seek treatment.

For example, there are many mental health and therapy apps that claim they are as good as seeing a therapist. This is easy to buy in to when you're paying \$5 to download an app versus \$100 a week to see a counselor. This is problematic because while possibly helpful, an app cannot replace therapy and treatment for someone with mental illness.

A big reason why the self-care industry is so successful is that the mental health system is expensive and challenging to navigate. Self-care is promoted to young people as a supplement to the treatment they cannot afford with the message, "you can help yourself."

The concept of self-care delayed me in seeking treatment. I was a complete subscriber to self-care. I belonged to a yoga studio, downloaded mindfulness apps and regularly read articles about ways to improve my anxiety and mental health.

I didn't want to pay for therapy, so I tried to manage my anxiety myself. This made my symptoms significantly worse. I started shutting down other parts of my life to focus on self-care. And without a mental health professional to guide me, there wasn't anyone who could point out that my approach to self-care was actually causing me more anxiety. I just became more and more anxious, especially because the time and effort I was putting in wasn't helping me. Eventually, I realized this wasn't sustainable, and I needed treatment beyond what I could do for myself.

With that said, keep in mind:

- If you are struggling, you don't need to handle it on your own. Seek care!
- There are ways to make mental health care more affordable. Look for mental health professionals with lower-cost options (such as sliding scale).
- Self-care can be a helpful *addition* to treatment. You can, and should, discuss your self-care practices with your mental health professional.

Getting Support From Social Media

The majority of millennials, myself included, use social media. And not only do we use social media, but it is ingrained into our daily lives. So much so, that it has become a space for people to talk about their mental illness.

For example, celebrity Pete Davidson posted on Instagram about not wanting to be here anymore. Luckily, he was able to get the help he needed, but in that moment, he used social media to be heard. People post these kinds of messages regularly looking for someone to hear them, to care about them and to support them. And the problem with social media is that they may, or may not, get the support and encouragement they need.

I've found that using any social media platform is a constant balance of taking the good with the bad. I've had experiences of posting on social media about anxiety and feeling incredibly validated and supported. I shared my own [personal story](#) with my following and felt encouraged to continue posting about anxiety. I've also commented on other people's posts and encouraged them to seek professional care.

At the same time, there are a lot of people who post triggering, stigmatizing and damaging comments on social media. I've had to take months at a time off from engaging on social media after seeing harmful posts. Social media has a big impact on how we feel, and some may feel discouraged to seek help based on what someone else says.

With that said, keep in mind:

- If you feel triggered by something you see online, text 741741 to the crisis text line or call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-9255.
- If social media is negatively impacting your symptoms, take some time away from it or consult your mental health professional about how to handle it.
- Don't make any decisions about whether or not to seek care based on what others post. Only you know how you're doing and what you need.

We may assume the extra convenience of being able to find endless information online and connect with others anywhere, anytime would only bring positive change. But it's important to recognize some of the pitfalls that have come with the digital age and ensure people know how to seek help in this new climate. Despite what the Internet tells you, how many self-care apps you have or what your social media following suggests—there isn't any replacement for professional mental health treatment.

Laura Greenstein is communications manager at NAMI.



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 .