

What is NAMI?

- NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.
- NAMI advocates for access to services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raising awareness and building a community of hope for all of those in need.

Who Belongs to NAMI?

- Members of NAMI are families, friends, people living with mental illness and their supporters.
- In addition to the national organization, NAMI has approximately 1,000 NAMI State Organizations and NAMI Affiliates in communities across the country, including Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.
- Located in Jackson and Josephine Counties, NAMI of Southern Oregon is a NAMI Affiliate. Members of NAMI of Southern Oregon (NAMI-SO) are dedicated grassroots volunteers and volunteer leaders who work together to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy and support group programs for people living with mental illness and their loved ones. NAMI-SO addresses the mental illness needs of our community, replaces stigma with understanding and helps thousands of families and individuals each year.

What is Mental Illness? How Common is it?

Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood and ability to relate to others. They often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life. Serious mental illnesses include major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, major anxiety disorders (including obsessive-compulsive disorder), posttraumatic stress and borderline personality disorder.

- One in four adults—approximately 57.7 million Americans—will experience a mental health disorder in any given year.
- One in 17 adults lives with a serious mental illness, and one in 10 children have a serious mental or emotional disorder.
- **Major Depression** is a persistent illness characterized by despair and hopelessness that affects one's thoughts, feelings, behavior, mood and physical health.
- **Bipolar Disorder** is a medical illness that causes extreme shifts in mood, energy and functioning and is characterized by episodes of mania and depression, which may vary greatly over a person's life.
- **Schizophrenia** is a serious mental illness which interferes with a person's ability to think clearly, distinguish reality from fantasy, manage emotions, make decisions and relate to others.
- **Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)** is an anxiety disorder characterized by obsessions, intrusive or irrational thoughts and compulsions - repetitive rituals such as hand washing or double-checking, which are experienced for more than an hour each day, in a way that interferes with a person's life.
- **Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** is an anxiety disorder characterized by continually re-experiencing a profoundly traumatic event; avoiding individuals, thoughts or situations associated with the event; and demonstrating symptoms of excessive emotions.

What does NAMI do?

- NAMI promises to build better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.
- Because mental illness impacts the lives of at least one in four adults and one in 10 children—or 60 million Americans—NAMI will work every day to save every life.
- Thousands of members and supporters are the face and voice of the NAMI movement—families, individuals, friends and businesses—who come together to celebrate mental illness recovery, to honor those who have lost their lives to mental illness and to combat stigma, promote awareness and advocate for others.
- NAMI stays focused on educating America about mental illness. NAMI is the foundation for hundreds of NAMI State Organizations, NAMI Affiliates and volunteer leaders who work in local communities across the country to raise awareness and provide essential and free education, advocacy and support group programs for people living with mental illness and their loved ones. NAMI creates change and works tirelessly to advocate for access to treatment for those in need. NAMI focuses on support, education, research and advocacy to help individuals and families affected by mental illness.

Why Should I Join NAMI? Why Should I Volunteer?

- When you join NAMI, you don't stand alone. You become part of a network that provides invaluable information and mutual support to those in need. You join thousands of Americans in fighting for hope and recovery— people who understand the realities of mental illness and its challenges. Your membership helps ensure that life-saving information, support and education are available for the millions of Americans who need NAMI.
- Volunteers and leaders of NAMI of Southern Oregon are passionate about improving the lives of friends and family members with mental illness. We strive to offer trauma-informed education, support and advocacy to overcome the stigma of mental illness throughout Jackson and Josephine counties.
- Volunteering ensures that our support, education and advocacy programs continue to reach everyone on in our community. Contributing ensures that we can reach people in need.

NAMI of Southern Oregon Programs and Services

Quarterly Newsletter – information, resources and advocacy opportunities

NAMI Southern Oregon Resource Library

In Our Own Voice– presenters courageously share their lived-experiences with mental illness to community groups, businesses and classrooms to educate and end stigma

Family-to-Family Class– 8-week course on mental illness for friends and family members

Family Support Groups –Ashland, Medford and Grants Pass

Basics for Parent/Caregivers- 6-week course on behavioral and emotional difficulties in youth prior to age 18

Homefront– 6-session educational support program for friends and family of veterans with mental illness, also offered online

Ending the Silence– presentation for schools and community to id and support mental illness

Peer-to-Peer Course– 8-week mentor facilitated; how to live well with mental illness

Connection Group –monthly peer support

Family and Friends– trained presenters offer educational 4-hour presentations to community and social groups

Please call our Resource Library to schedule presentations or register for classes

Joining is easy!

Go to:

www.namisouthernoregon.org