What is the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program?

NAMI Family-to-Family Class is a free, 12-session education program for family, partners, friends and significant others of adults living with mental health condition. The course is designed to help all family members understand and support their loved one living with a mental health condition, while maintaining their own well-being. The course includes information on illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression and other mental health conditions. Problem solving skills and communication skills workshops, inside a mental health condition and a first-person account from two people sharing their journey through their mental health condition.

Thousands of families describe the program as life-changing. The program is taught by trained teachers who are also family members and know what it is like to have a loved one living with a mental health condition.

Participants Perspective
“This course overall was the single most, without a doubt, helpful and informative thing ever offered in all my years searching for answers... It has helped me to understand better and communicate more effectively with my brother.”
“The course has helped me to realize that my son is still inside the body that is often times hidden by the mental illness and that I am not alone in this.”

The program is taught by trained teachers who are also family members and know what it is like to have a loved one living with a mental health condition.

We will be offering our Family to Family 12-week education class this spring in Modesto and Turlock.

Please call Dar@(209) 656-8855 if you have any questions or would like to register for the class.
A Brilliant Madness,
Living with a Manic-Depressive Illness

I just completed reading the paperback book titled “A Brilliant Madness, Living with Manic-Depressive Illness” written by Patty Duke, the actress and advocate for mental health herself. Although this book was written in 1992 and it is now the year 2019; nearly 27 years after its writing the book depicts bipolar disorder and even uses the newest descriptive term used today (bipolar disorder) to describe manic-depressive illness and how it affected Patty Duke even as a child including all aspects of her life.

Even though this book is written as a bit of an autobiography make no mistake that it is first a go to for those who have bipolar themselves and anyone who lives with or cares about someone who is.

The book reads smoothly and is remarkably captivating, not boring; from the first page all the way through to the last page, which I hated to see come because I enjoyed reading, identifying, relating to and feeling comforted so much. Living with this disorder myself and having received the diagnosis in my 40’s, I related to Patty Duke’s struggles and feelings of helplessness as she described not knowing the “why” she behaved so crazed and unusual at times and rather normal at other times until she herself was diagnosed in her mid-30’s with having bipolar disorder.

Once she received the diagnosis she expresses in the book a genuine gratitude for the clarity and knowledge for the diagnosis of having bipolar (manic-depressive illness) and stated that now that she knows what’s been wrong with her there was also a treatment for it. From there she embraced psychological therapy combined with medication to manage the condition. Interesting enough and a valuable area within this 338-page paperback book is an area that appears to be narrated by physicians. It is phenomenal and an easy to understand read which elaborates on the “how” the medications work as well as the whys. In this area it is discussed what to expect as well as how they may or may not work well with another medication used to treat a mental health condition. I particularly enjoyed reading this area of the book because I had questions which the book answered.

The design or layout of the writing of this fantastic book is not only a very thought provoking one but is literally easy to follow and educates you as you read through her life and all of the struggles, challenges, devastating side effects of living with bipolar disorder prior to receiving a diagnosis and then once receiving the diagnosis. She lived by example from what I read and I found this to be very supportive and encouraging.

Having received the diagnosis of bipolar disorder myself last year and feeling overwhelmed with what that meant, including feeling alienated, lost and alone, not knowing what the future held for me nor what was happening to me as I waited for the prescribed medications to do their work on the disorder. I felt so comforted reading this book and still do now that I’ve completed it.

Patty Duke expressed herself clearly as she described her life and how she refused to quit on herself, her family and her self. It is written with her being down to earth and an everyday person, not the persona of a celebrity making the draw all that more alluring. I walked away after completing this book feeling better about myself, the condition that I have and better about my future. Jana Thomas
ISBN:0-553-56072-7

DID YOU KNOW?
Cupid, the naked cherub armed with arrows tipped in love potions became a popular Valentine image in the 1980’s. He was associated with the holiday because in Roman mythology he is the son of Venus, the goddess of love and beauty.

With the exception of Christmas, Americans exchange more cards on Valentine’s Day than at any other time of the year.

Allison Clark

Mental Health and Valentine’s Day

Many people think of February and Valentine’s Day as the most romantic time of the year. For someone living with a mental illness and in a relationship, Valentine’s Day is a good time to reflect on boundaries, expectations and keeping your relationship as healthy as possible. Reach out to your support system, be honest and keep the lines of communication open with your partner.

Love is not a fairy tale. It takes effort and work to keep a romance fresh. True love involves admitting when you are wrong and being forgiving when your partner makes a mistake. You can learn something from every bond, by getting better at giving and receiving love.

Speak clearly, share what is on your mind, and always love fully.

If you don’t have a romantic partner then do something special for yourself … because you deserve it! Ship health resources, Inc. (fnr)

Community Outreach Efforts

In January, Dar Thomas and I had the opportunity to make three presentations about NAMI Stanislaus’ programs to mental health service providers in our community. We made two presentations to Kaiser’s Behavioral Health Team in Modesto. We also made a presentation to staff at the Stanislaus County Public Safety Center.

We hope that by making these presentations we can raise awareness regarding NAMI Stanislaus’ programs and build connections within our community.

Puja Mehta
Introducing NAMI California’s Represent Recovery initiative. Even in this diverse state, cultural competence and representation in mental health fall short for people of color and those in the LGBTQ+ community. Stigma is pervasive within many of our families and communities. Cultural groups are more prone to be misdiagnosed, likely due to differing cultural or religious beliefs or language barriers.

It takes courage, but we hope that peers and family members like you will step forward and show others they are not alone and that recovery is possible.

Represent Recovery is a campaign and initiative calling for a paradigm shift in the way we view mental health in diverse cultural communities. It aims to serve members of underrepresented communities while centering their voices in the overall mental health movement.

NAMI California

WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS? MENTAL ILLNESS FACTS

Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Just as diabetes is a disorder of the pancreas, mental illnesses are medical conditions that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

Serious mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and borderline personality disorder. The good news about mental illness is that recovery is possible.

Mental illnesses can affect persons of any age, race, religion, or income. Mental illnesses are not the result of personal weakness, lack of character or poor upbringing. Mental illnesses are treatable. Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan.

In addition to medication treatment, psychosocial treatment such as cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, peer support groups and other community services can also be components of a treatment plan and that assist with recovery. The availability of transportation, diet, exercise, sleep, friends and meaningful paid or volunteer activities contribute to overall health and wellness, including mental illness recovery.

NAMI California

PRESIDENT’S DAY FACT

The "Uniform Holiday's Bill", of 1968, mostly enacted for Federal Workers to have 3 day holidays, combined Presidents' George Washington and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays, which eventually became President's Day .... always celebrated on the 3rd Monday of February. 

Allison Clark
NAMI Stanislaus Household Membership dues are $60, Individual dues are $40. The monies that Nami Stanislaus Affiliate receives from each category is to pay for the training of our teachers, programs, purchases of educational material, including the brochures we give for free to the public, office supplies, and postage, as well as publication and mailing of our newsletter. We offer our Open Door dues of $5 if you have limited income. Membership is important, so please join at whatever level you can afford. If you have any questions about your membership, please call the NAMI Office at (209) 558-4555.
Checks are to be made to NAMI Stanislaus. Please mail to:
NAMI Stanislaus, P.O. Box 4120, Modesto, CA 95352-4120
Name ____________________________ __ $5 Open Door (Limited Income)
Address ____________________________ __ $40 Individual
______________________________ __ $60 Household
Home Telephone ____________________________ __ No membership, Donation
Work Telephone ____________________________ __ $____ Other
Email ________________________________ __ Newsletter only
In Memory of __________________________

Thank You For Your Contribution

Membership
Rebecca Slaughter
Tammy Reynolds
Cheryl & Dean Medek
Carol Kienitz
Heidi Arno
Julie Bernardo
Amanda Garcia
Kelli Thompson
Dorothy Griggs

Donations
Richard & Melissa Feemster
Heidi Arno
In memory of Anon Byrne
Dan Byrne
In Memory of Mikey Golden
Kelli Thompson

Together We Support Our Community
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**Modesto Connection Support Group**  
Jana Lynn Plaza  
500 N. 9th St.  
2nd and 4th Mondays  
6:30-8:00 p.m. Jana Lynn Room  
Call Dar (209) 656-8855

**Modesto Family Support Group**  
Jana Lynn Plaza  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  
2nd & 4th Mondays  
500 N. 9th St. Modesto  
Call Dar (209) 656-8855

**Turlock Connection Support Group**  
1123 Cooper Ave.  
2nd & 4th Tuesdays  
6:30-8 p.m.  
Call Dar (209) 656-8855