Happy Holidays

**Announcements**

* Newsletter topic: Resiliency
  * NAMI Signature Classes are seeking participants for this spring. See p. 2 for details.
  * The Holiday Party is December 12. Please Come!
  * Room numbers at ICC North for education meetings and support group meetings may change depending on new semester evening classes. Please note room numbers on the door as you enter.
  * Next Education Meeting is February 6 and the topic is Resiliency. Next Support Group meetings are January 16.

Even if you receive the print version of the Family Forum, you will benefit from going online (namitri-countyillinois.org) and reading some or all the links to Internet sites. Links expand your understanding of the topic. The pictures are sharper also.

The NAMI Tri-County Illinois Family Forum is a quarterly publication. With common use of the Internet, members and friends can find meeting and activity information on our web site as well as on Facebook. We also send out regular email blasts regarding our activities. **Contact information:**

**Web:** namitri-countyillinois.org
(click on Contact us at this site to be added to the email blast)

**Facebook:** Nami Tri-County IL

**NAMI Dues Structure:** Effective now:
- Household: $60 (one vote)
- Individual: $40
- Open Door: $5 (available to those who could not join without a more modest fee)

Joining NAMI includes National, State, and Local organizations and all the publications and resources available from each.

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**You are invited to a Holiday Party**

**When:** Thursday, December 12
5 p.m. setup; 6 p.m. dinner

**What:** Potluck Dinner—meat and drinks provided by NAMI. Please bring a dish to share.
Plenty of Christmas cheer

**Why:**
To thank those with mental illness for being the heroes they are
To thank our support group facilitators and our class teachers
To enjoy the company of one another

**Where:** Immanuel Lutheran Church
526 E Washington St.
East Peoria, Illinois
Call 693-0541 with questions

**Directions:** Immanuel Lutheran Church is near Deiters Funeral Home; on the south side of Washington Street; the Deiters parking lot may be used for this event. A 2-step handicap accessibility is at the rear of the church.
**Educational Opportunities**

**NAMI Family to Family Class**
Please call to register for the next class—tentatively to be offered in Spring 2020
Parents, spouses, friends, or adult children of people with mental illnesses are invited to participate in the next 12-week class. There is no charge for this NAMI signature program. Participants will learn valuable information to help them understand and support an ill relative while maintaining their own wellbeing. Please call 309 693-0541 or 309 251-5830 for information or to register for the next class.

**NAMI Peer to Peer Class**
This class is currently not offered in our area.

**NAMI Basics Education Program**
Please call to register for the next class
This six-session course is for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with mental illness. Basics is taught by parents who have lived similar experiences with their own kids and have received training to teach the course. The class covers the biology of mental illness, treatment, school interventions, and the latest research as well as the trauma of brain disorders for the child and the family. In addition, it covers preparation for crisis situations and the importance of caring for yourself. If you are interested in this class, please call 309 251-5830. There is no charge for this NAMI signature program.

Also, check out www.NAMI.org “Basics” video on You Tube for further description of the course.

〜NAMI Basics is now also available online through NAMI Basics OnDemand〜

The OnDemand program is also guided by parents and family members with lived experience but is self-paced and available 24/7. OnDemand offers the flexibility of participating in the course on your schedule. Both formats provide identical information, strategies and the opportunity to connect with other parents and caregivers.

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**NAMI Members Speak Out…**

9/23-9/26—many members supported the movie Coming up for Air which dealt with mental health concerns and was shown at Willow Knolls Theater. Beth provided materials for a table each evening and members were available at the table to speak with anyone with questions. Participants were Roger, Beth & Keith, Carol & Craig, Kim B, Sonya, Pat, Lila, Mary & Dan and John.

10/14—Beth L. explained NAMI and her family’s experiences to the Crisis Intervention Team Training for area law enforcement officers.

10/20—Roger Mohn gave the Sunday message as guest speaker at Sunnyland Christian Church. He discussed faith in his experience with mental illness and provided NAMI brochures.

Damara joined him.

10/26—Roger Mohn had a book signing at I Know You Like a Book bookstore in Peoria Heights. His book, A Different Kind of Closet, is available for purchase there.

10/29—Owen J. and Beth L. did two Ending the Silence presentations for high school students at Eureka College.

**Active Member, Ken Maurer Honored**

Excerpts from Courier, 11/6/19

Honored with the 2019 Distinguished Service Award at the Germantown Hills and Metamora Annual Prayer Breakfast was Ken Maurer. This award honors an individual for extraordinary involvement in community activities, honorable moral qualities and dedication to the community. He is currently the Mayor of Metamora, was the superintendent of Metamora High School for many years, and has shown significant leadership in his church and community. Congratulations, Mr. Maurer!

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**Christmas shopping on Amazon?**

**Please choose NAMI Tri-County Illinois**
Dear Members and Friends,

NAMI has turned 40. I have enjoyed telling the story of Harriet Shetler and Beverly Young, both members of a church in Madison, Wisconsin, and both moms of children diagnosed with mental health conditions, who in 1977 started a group called an Alliance on Mental Illness. They organized a conference in 1979 that drew enough attention from all over the nation, including that of the director of the National Institute of Mental Health, that in that year AMI became NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI is our nation’s leading voice on mental health and has sent some slightly newly worded statements as shown here:

**NAMI’s Vision Statement:** NAMI envisions a world where all people affected by mental illness live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a community that cares.

**NAMI’s Mission Statement:** NAMI provides advocacy, support and public awareness so that all individuals and families affected by mental illness can build better lives.

**New Values:**
- **Hope** - We believe in the possibility of recovery, wellness and the potential in all of us.
- **Inclusion** - We embrace diverse backgrounds, cultures and perspectives.
- **Empowerment** - We promote confidence, self-efficacy and service to our mission.
- **Compassion** - We practice respect, kindness and empathy.
- **Fairness** - We fight for equity and justice.

NAMI Tri-County Illinois is a couple years younger than Nationals, started similarly and is dedicated to the same vision, mission and values.

Let me catch you up on a few happenings in our affiliate. Did you read in our last newsletter the profiles of our new board members? Brian Roskuszka was one of them; he joined us with enthusiasm but has since taken a job in Naperville with Fuji Robotics. We’ll miss Brian and hope he’ll find his way to an affiliate in that area. Also, Craig Stanford has resigned from our board. He has continued with us, organizing both our first mental illness awareness musical night at the 5th Quarter with PhanieRae and the Soul Shakers and our harder thinking Trivia Night with fine food and so many other things! Thanks to Craig, Deb and Mary and all the rest of you who worked together to make these events happen. Our Holiday Party will be at Craig’s church again this year, Immanuel Lutheran. Please plan to come.

Have you all found yourselves looking at those rapidly flipping digital billboards around town? Did you by chance catch any of them advertising our PhanieRae, Trivia or Roger’s message for Mental Illness Awareness Week? Kim and Roger worked diligently to prepare messages with a few well-chosen words for each event. I stopped my car in a couple parking lots attempting to catch them and only saw the one for PhanieRae as we were on our way that evening.

When we are speaking of someone who has a mental health condition, NAMI has asked us to make an effort to say that he or she has a bipolar disorder instead of saying that he or she is bipolar. In a church I attended in the past, we were asked to introduce our family members by telling three qualities that define them. When I spoke recently, I tried combining the two. I described my daughter Stephanie as being bright, perceptive and kind and additionally having a bipolar disorder. It worked well. Please give it a try.

Please notice our irregular schedule for the next couple months: No Education or Support Group Meetings in December, just the party on December 12; Support Groups only in January; Education and Support Group Meetings in February. I hope to see you at the party.

Beth Lawrence
Report of NAMI Education Meetings

September 5, 2019
Ed Betzelberger, LCSW, CRADC with Unity Place, Tazwood Center for Wellness, shared an excellent presentation on Marijuana: Addiction and Mental Health. The source for his presentation was The National Institute on Drug Abuse, [https://www.drugabuse.gov](https://www.drugabuse.gov). He gave uses of marijuana, the short- and long-term effects of marijuana, the biological basis of addiction and its effects on the brain, the medical model of addiction and withdrawal symptoms, and the links to marijuana of mental illnesses. He said that some studies suggest marijuana use can increase the likelihood of developing schizophrenia in vulnerable individuals, especially those who begin using marijuana in their teens. It is believed to exacerbate symptoms of anxiety, depression and the like in others. Some people “self-medicate” with marijuana to alleviate anxiety. Those who do so tend to have problems functioning without it as a result, developing an addiction to it.

This presentation came at a time when Illinois has approved legalization of marijuana and cities in our area are making decisions about the sale of the substance. He gave us much to ponder and concern for those who live with or who may have a predisposition toward mental health issues. We thank Mr. Betzelberger for helping us better understand this issue.

October 10, 2019
Our own board member, treasurer, web site manager, author, and speaker, Roger Mohn, was the featured presenter at this special meeting held in the Student Center at ICC Peoria Campus. He spoke on the topic, Dealing with Mental Illness Around Me. Roger grew up in a home with a mother who experienced severe symptoms of bipolar disorder and a father who lived with alcoholism but was functional. Roger cited numerous experiences from his childhood that could have traumatized and impeded progress for him and his siblings, but they were all resilient and became productive, hardworking, responsible adults. He recounted his personal story with humor, yet respect for his parents. Roger has written a book, A Different Kind of Closet, in which he gives more details of his life and what he has learned about dealing with mental health issues.

We appreciated Roger sharing his personal story with us.

November 7, 2019
Howard Love, LCPC, with The Antioch Group, was the speaker at our November meeting and presented on Seasonal Affective Disorder, depression that occurs at this time of year. Mr. Love is a therapist who also experiences the effects of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). He shared strategies he personally uses to control those effects. He began by giving typical symptoms of those who suffer from SAD and biological reasons for the disorder, and then ended with treatment options. Besides making sure one has enough light available—natural or from light boxes—he said that simply reducing stress can calm the body. He emphasized eating nutritious foods, keeping a stress log, keeping a thankfulness log, having and spending time with friends, laughing, exercising, and getting professional help among other stress reducers.

We appreciated Mr. Love’s time, expertise and willingness to speak to our group.

Thank You!
Monetary Donations
Anonymous, Network for Good
Anonymous, Abbvie Your Cause
Anonymous—Gentleman who won the 50/50 raffle at the PhanieRae concert gave half back to NAMI
Mary Cooley
Geri Haliburton
John Hession

In Tribute to Anthony Johnson
Barbara Brooks

In Tribute to Lila Gammon
Beverly Bourazak

Organizations who gave generously

The 5th Quarter Sports Bar & Pizzeria in East Peoria not only hosted PhanieRae and the Soulshakers who promoted mental health and NAMI but they also gave a $1,000 contribution to our organization. Thanks so much!

Helping Hands Resale Shoppe gave $200 after they chose our organization one month to be the recipient of their profits. Thanks so much!

Rock Valley Physical Therapy Team with offices in Peoria, Washington, Canton, and other places in Central Illinois through Quad Cities Community Foundation gave $1,015 “to support your mission in our communities.” Thank you so much.

Regarding Donations to NAMI Tri-County Illinois
We receive generous anonymous donations through Network for Good and Abbvie YourCause. These are greatly appreciated! We would like to acknowledge the donors, but since gifts are given anonymously, we can’t. Our organization does not put donors on a mailing list for future solicitations nor do we sell names to other organizations. If you donate directly to us, you will only receive the letter of thanks unless you join our organization or were previously on the mailing list. We will list you in the newsletter “Thank You” section unless you request anonymity.
PhanieRae and the Soulshakers Event at 5th Quarter Bar and Pizzeria
Submitted by Roger Mohr

PhanieRae and her band provided great music and she did an excellent job of promoting NAMI and the need for mental health advocacy several times during her sets. She had a guest singer, Lonno Rampa, who, just before he sang, told the crowd how he went through a mental health struggle and was on suicide’s door before things turned around for him. He is involved in Suicide Prevention.

We had NAMI materials available for all who were at the 5th Quarter that evening and we made several contacts with people who were interested in learning more about NAMI and the help it offers.

It was a fun evening; and, to our pleasant surprise, Laura Hurckes with the 5th Quarter made a sizeable donation to our local chapter!

Thanks to Craig, Deb, Denise, Roger, Damara, Kirsten, Beth, Keith, and Lila for working to make the evening a success. They made arrangements, organized the 50/50 raffle, did advertising, and set up and hosted a NAMI materials display.

Trivia Night

On Saturday, October 5, we had an enjoyable evening with delicious food catered by Bernardis/Mona’s and an opportunity to visit with others before the Trivia game began. We also had a long table of enticing Silent Auction items organized and tastefully displayed by Deb Shaw and Mary Cooley. The Noble Center provided a spacious area for this event.

Trivia Game Host, Anthony Walraven, tested us with some fun, interesting, and challenging questions. He did walk around the room and give occasional hints when we were stumped. He also asked some questions about NAMI so that everyone went away with a better understanding of what our organization does to help people in our communities. There was a tie among three tables for the prize; participants at all three tables agreed to give the prize money to NAMI. That was appreciated!

A big thanks to the individuals and organizations who donated items for the silent auction. They were:

- Deb Shaw
- Mary Cooley
- Debbie Fornoff Design and Draperies
- Landmark Cinemas, from Manager Zack
- Par-a-Dice Hotel and Casino, from Carly Block, Team Member Relations Manager

Thanks to Craig, Deb, Denise, John, Roger, Kirsten, Beth, Keith, Kim, Pat, and Lila for working to make the evening a success. They made arrangements, provided items for the silent auction, helped with set up and clean up, did advertising, and baked desserts.

Gratitude brings us completely into the present moment. We are thankful for things that are here right now because they are precious, because they are (as all things truly are) impermanent. Chade-Meng Tan encourages us to savor the present moment by saying, “This is precious, and I know this because…” Why are you thankful? What is precious and tender and delicate and amazing and ephemeral about this moment?

Pause and Give Thanks.

Important Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local NAMI Information</th>
<th>309 693-0541</th>
<th><a href="http://www.namitri-countyillinois.org">www.namitri-countyillinois.org</a></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAMI IL – State Headquarters</td>
<td>1-800 346-4572</td>
<td><a href="http://namiillinois.org">http://namiillinois.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>National NAMI Helpline</td>
<td>1-800 950-6264</td>
<td><a href="http://nami.org">http://nami.org</a></td>
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<td>Hult Center for Healthy Living</td>
<td>309 692-6650</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hulthealthy.org">www.hulthealthy.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Heartland Community Health Clinic</td>
<td>309 680-7600</td>
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<td>UnityPoint Health—Methodist Community Behavioral Health</td>
<td>309 672-4103</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSF Behavioral Health</td>
<td>309 308-8150</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSF Silver Cloud—digital therapy program for home use</td>
<td>833 713-7100</td>
<td>osfhealthcare.org/silvercloud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Home</td>
<td>309 685-1047</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Suicide Hotline 24-Hour Hotline</td>
<td>1-800 273-TALK</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention</td>
<td>212 363-3500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survivors of Suicide</td>
<td>309 697-3342</td>
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<tr>
<td>911</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police – all counties</td>
<td>309 208-3027</td>
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<td>Emergency Response Service:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peoria County</td>
<td>309 671-8084</td>
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<tr>
<td>Woodford &amp; Tazewell County</td>
<td>309 347-1148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Service Center</td>
<td>309 671-8000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tazwood Center for Wellness</td>
<td>309 347-5579</td>
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<tr>
<td>VA Suicide Hotline</td>
<td>1-800 273-8255</td>
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Crisis Intervention Resources

Youth: CARES (Crisis and Referral Entry Services for Medicaid Card Coverage); 1-800 345-9049

CARES is Statewide and will assess eligibility for SASS (Screening and Assessment Referral Services)

24-hour crisis lines:

Nat'l Suicide Lifeline: 1-800 273-8255

Peoria County ERS: 309 671-8084

Tazewell & Woodford Counties: 309 347-1148

Dial 2-1-1 for a non-emergency number that connects people with essential community information and services: food, shelter, counseling, mental health, employment, elderly, children & families

How to Reach the Community Crisis Center

130 N. Richard Pryor Place, Peoria, Illinois

If the individual is at risk:

Contact the police department and ask for a crisis intervention-trained officer for an initial response. The police will contact ERS when the situation is secure.

If individual safety is not a concern:

Contact ERS at 309 671-8084 – TTY Line: 309 671-3566. You will be asked for some brief information to assist their response.

Medical Detox: 309 689-3080

You are not weak because you have a mental illness; you are a warrior, resilient in the face of havoc being wreaked on your life.
**Book Reviews**

**Roadmap to Resilience: A Guide for Military, Trauma Victims and Their Families**, by Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.

Review by Kevin Siscoe, LCPC, The Antioch Group

Out of his extensive research, Dr. Meichenbaum writes of resilience as the capacity of people to effectively cope with, adjust, or recover from stress or adversity. He says resilience reflects the ability to bounce back, beat the odds, transform one’s emotional and physical pain into something “positive,” move from being a victim to being a “survivor” and even to becoming a “thriver,” and to be “stress hardy,” that is, adapting to whatever life sends.

People with this kind of growth may develop a renewed appreciation of life and a commitment to live life to the fullest, valuing each day, improved relationships with loved ones, a search for new possibilities and enhanced personal strengths and new spiritual changes.

According to Dr. Meichenbaum, some characteristics of resilient individuals include the following: Experiencing positive emotions while managing strong negative emotions by being realistically optimistic and hopeful with the ability to laugh at oneself. He also includes promoting positive expectations about the future with a positive self-image, building on existing strengths, talents and social supports. Dr. Meichenbaum describes resilient persons as undertaking a “meaning-making mission.” Out of traumatic experiences a resilient person creates meaning and a purpose in life, having a survivor’s mission to help others, and making a “gift” of one’s experience to help others. Finally, he promotes resilience factors of keeping fit and safe by exercising, following a daily routine, and avoiding unsafe high-risk behaviors, such as substance abuse and chasing “adrenaline rush” activities.

**The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma** by Bessel van der Kolk M.D., 2015

Review from Amazon.com

Trauma is a fact of life. Veterans and their families deal with the painful aftermath of combat; one in five Americans has been molested; one in four grew up with alcoholics; one in three couples have engaged in physical violence. Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, one of the world’s foremost experts on trauma, has spent over three decades working with survivors. In The Body Keeps the Score, he uses recent scientific advances to show how trauma literallyreshapes both body and brain, compromising sufferers’ capacities for pleasure, engagement, self-control, and trust. He explores innovative treatments—from neurofeedback and meditation to sports, drama, and yoga—that offer new paths to recovery by activating the brain’s natural neuroplasticity. Based on Dr. van der Kolk’s own research and that of other leading specialists, The Body Keeps the Score exposes the tremendous power of our relationships both to hurt and to heal—and offers new hope for reclaiming lives.

**Thankful Breathing**

Jon Kabat-Zinn says that as long as you are breathing, there is far more right with you than there is wrong with you. **So, take a deep breath of gratitude.**

**Additional Resources**

- [mentalhealthtreatment.net](http://mentalhealthtreatment.net)—Mental Health Treatment articles
- [www.afsp.org](http://www.afsp.org)—American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- [samsa.gov](http://samsa.gov)—substance abuse & mental health services administration
- [psychcentral.com](http://psychcentral.com)—getting help for a variety of mental illnesses
- [Choicesinrecovery.com](http://choicesinrecovery.com)—guides for recovery strategies
- [http://mentalhealthchannel.tv/](http://mentalhealthchannel.tv/)
- [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org)—many medical issues including behavioral health
NAMI TRI-COUNTY ILLINOIS
CALENDAR OF EVENTS
December 2019, January, & February 2020

~Illinois Central College Peoria Campus, 5407 N. University, Peoria~

Education Meetings, Poplar Hall, Room 127
Support Groups, Poplar Hall: Family—Room 132 & Connections—Room 127

December
Tuesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m. Survivor’s of Suicide, The Chapel, Proctor Hospital. Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy 309 208-3027
Thursday, December 5, No Monthly Education Meeting. Please come to the Christmas party next Thursday.
Thursday, December 12, 5:00 p.m. set up; 6:00 p.m. dinner. Christmas Party—see invitation, page 1
Thursday, December 12, 6:30–8:30 p.m. Mood-Challenge meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria
Tuesday, December 17, 7:00 p.m. Survivor’s of Suicide, The Chapel, Proctor Hospital. Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy 309 208-3027
Thursday, December 19, No Monthly NAMI Support Groups; enjoy the holidays

Thursday, December 19, 6:30—8:30 p.m. Mood-Challenge meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria (date changed from 4th Thursday to 3rd Thursday because of the holidays)

Tuesday, December 24, No Princeton, IL, NAMI Family Support Group; enjoy the holidays

January
Thursday, January 2—No Education Meeting—enjoy the holiday week
Tuesday, January 7, 7:00 p.m. Survivors of Suicide, The Chapel, Proctor Hospital. Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy 309 208-3027
Thursday, January 9, 6:30—8:30 p.m. Mood-Challenge meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria

Family and friends of people with mental health conditions. Room 132. For further information call 309 693-0541.

Connections—individuals participating in recovery. Room 127. For further information call John 309 472-5907.

Tuesday, January 21, 7:00 p.m. Survivors of Suicide, The Chapel, Proctor Hospital. Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy 309 208-3027
Thursday, January 23, Mood-Challenge meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria

Tuesday, January 27, 6:30—8:00 p.m. Princeton, IL, NAMI Family Support Group, for Family and close friends of people with mental health conditions, Perry Memorial Hospital, 3rd floor, White Oak Classroom, 530 Park Ave. E, Princeton. For information call 309 693-0541

February
Tuesday, February 4, 7:00 p.m. Survivors of Suicide, The Chapel, Proctor Hospital. Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy 309 208-3027
Thursday, February 6, 7:00—8:30 p.m. Monthly Education Meeting, ICC Peoria Campus, Room 127, Poplar Hall. Speaker: TBA. Topic: Resilience
Thursday, February 13, 6:30—8:30 p.m. Mood-Challenge meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria

Tuesday, February 18, 7:00 p.m. Survivors of Suicide, The Chapel, Proctor Hospital. Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy 309 208-3027
Thursday, February 20, 7:00–8:30 p.m. Monthly Support Groups, ICC Peoria Campus, Poplar Hall

Family and friends of people with mental health conditions. Room 132. For further information call 309 693-0541.

Connections—individuals participating in recovery. Room 127. For further information call John 309 472-5907.

Tuesday, February 24, 6:30—8:00 p.m. Princeton, IL, NAMI Family Support Group, for Family and close friends of people with mental health conditions, Perry Memorial Hospital, 3rd floor, White Oak Classroom, 530 Park Ave. E, Princeton. For information call 309 693-0541

Thursday, February 27, Mood-Challenge meeting at Trinity Lutheran Church, 135 NE Randolph Ave., Peoria

Have a Happy Thanksgiving & a Merry Christmas

Survivors of Suicide - Peoria
Contact: Rev. Eimo Hinrichs or Mrs. Pat Hinrichs, 309 697-3342 or Sylvia Murphy, 309 208-3027
Meeting Place: Chapel at Proctor Hospital, 5409 North Knoxville Ave., Peoria, IL 61614
Meeting Day(s)/Meeting Time: 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. Facilitated by: Peer/Professional Charge: None

Brighter Days Ahead
513 NE Madison Peoria, Illinois 309 222-2012
“Brighter Days Ahead” offers a positive and uplifting environment for people 18 years of age or older who have experienced a mental illness. Its purpose is for members to have a safe place where they can socialize, receive support, and be part of fun, recovery-oriented activities while envisioning the brighter days ahead.

Hours of Operation
Monday - Saturday from 8 a.m.—4 p.m. Sunday from 12 noon—5 p.m.
If you have any additional questions, we would be happy to talk either by phone 309 222-2012 or at recoverycenter@fayettecompanies.org
Three Simple Ways to Enhance Mental Health Resilience

Abstracted from https://www.psychologytoday.com/

Submitted by Kim Blundy

There is a consensus among professionals that ‘mental health’ is a positive state where an individual is flourishing, thriving and meeting his/her full potential in life. There are many cognate terms for ‘mental health’ including subjective well-being, quality of life or simply happiness.

Another term commonly used in relation to positive mental health is “resilience.” This word is actually borrowed from engineering where it refers to the ability of a physical material to withstand external stress. A resilient material thus has hardiness, flexibility and strength.

What is Mental Health Resilience?
In psychiatry, the phrase is used similarly, referring to the ability of an individual to handle stress and adversity. It is sometimes referred to as ‘bouncing back’ and can be particularly important after people have experienced difficult circumstances such as losing a job, divorce or bereavement.

Research on resilience indicates that it is not a fixed attribute, but can change over time. Indeed, individuals can cultivate resilience, though this can require time and effort.

In fact, the road to resilience often involves pain and struggle, as does the mastery of any new life-skill. For example, learning to ride a bike often involves falls, cuts and bruises, but results in a new-found ability and autonomy. The same can be said for the resilience-enhancing strategies described below.

Skill Acquisition
Evidence suggests that the acquisition of new skills can play a key role in enhancing resilience. Skill-acquisition helps develop a sense of competency and mastery which can be deployed in the face of other challenges. This can also increase self-esteem and problem-solving ability.

Skills to be learned depend on individual circumstances. For some, this will mean learning cognitive and emotional skills that may help everyday functioning, e.g. active listening. For others it may involve hobbies or activities that involve the mastery of new competencies. Interestingly, skill-acquisition in a group setting may be especially effective, as this gives an added benefit of social support which also fosters resiliency.

Goal setting
Much research indicates that the setting and meeting of goals facilitates the development of resilience. This helps develop will-power as well as the ability to create and execute an action plan. Goals may vary in size, depending on individual circumstances, but often involve a series of short, achievable steps.

For one person, it may be related to physical health, for example exercising more regularly. For another, it may be related to social or emotional goals, such as visiting family and friends more frequently. Goal setting that involves skill-acquisition, for example learning a new language, will have a double benefit.

Interestingly, some research indicates that goal-setting involving a sense of purpose and meaning beyond the individual self (e.g. volunteering or religious involvement) can be particularly useful for resiliency. This may give a deeper sense of coherence and connection, valuable in times of trouble.

Controlled exposure
This involves the slow and gradual exposure to anxiety-provoking situations, thus helping individuals overcome debilitating fears. Numerous studies indicate that controlled exposure can foster resilience. Controlled exposure can offer a triple benefit when it involves skill acquisition and goal setting.

For example, public speaking is a valued skill that can help people advance in life. People who are fearful of public speaking can acquire this skill through setting small goals involving controlled exposure. They can start with an audience of one or two friends, progressively expanding their audience over time. A controlled exposure action-plan can be self-initiated, or developed with a therapist trained in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.

Conclusion
An amassed body of research suggests that resilience can be developed and cultivated over the life course through simple, though challenging, self-initiated activities. This often involves discipline, will-power and hard work, but the results will be bountiful: greater autonomy, mastery and confidence.

Emotional Resilience

Abstracted from mentalhelp.net

There are real health and wellness benefits for being resilient. It's something worth striving for if you aren't already that way. Importantly, resilience is a learnable skill. Most anyone can become more emotionally resilient if they work at it.

Growing in emotional resilience requires that you work towards greater self-knowledge. It is important, for example, that you learn to identify how you react in emotional situations. Becoming aware of how you react when stressed helps you gain better control over those reactions. A good framework to help guide you towards becoming more aware of your emotions is something called Emotional Intelligence.

The term “Emotional Intelligence” was coined by psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990. It can be defined as your ability to use your emotions intelligently and appropriately in different situations combined with your ability to use emotions to make yourself more intelligent overall. Emotionally intelligent people are able to accurately recognize and comprehend emotion, both in themselves and in others, to appropriately express emotion, and to be able to control their own emotion so as to facilitate their own emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth. In short, emotionally intelligent people intentionally use their thinking and behavior to guide their emotions rather than letting their emotions dictate their thinking and behavior. People who are highly emotionally intelligent tend to also be highly emotionally resilient.

In order to become more emotionally intelligent, it is necessary to develop the following five skill domains:

- **Self-awareness.** Self-awareness involves your ability to recognize feelings while they are happening.
- **Emotional management.** Emotional management involves your ability to control the feelings you express so that they remain appropriate to a given situation. Becoming skillful at emotional management requires that you cultivate skills such as...
as maintaining perspective, being able to calm yourself down, and being able to shake off out-of-control grumpiness, anxiety, or sadness.

- **Self-motivation.** Self-motivation involves your ability to keep your actions goal-directed even when distracted by emotions. Self-motivation necessarily includes being able to delay gratification and avoid acting in impulsive ways.

- **Empathy.** Empathy involves your ability to notice and correctly interpret the needs and wants of other people. Empathy is the characteristic that leads to altruism, which is your willingness to put the needs of others ahead of your own needs.

- **Relationship Management.** Relationship management involves your ability to anticipate, understand, and appropriately respond to the emotions of others. It is closely related to empathy.

These various skills work together to form the basis of emotionally intelligent behavior.

People come to the challenge of emotional intelligence with different strengths and weaknesses. Where some find it easy to develop self-awareness and empathy, others have a difficult time, or don't easily recognize the need. Luckily, emotional intelligence (likewise emotional resilience) is something that can be cultivated and developed. You have the ability to learn how to better work with emotions so as to improve your mental, physical, and social health.

**Resilience: Underlying Attitudes and Skills**

How people think about themselves and their relationships with others and the world forms the base on which emotion management skills sit. Negative, defeatist attitudes towards self and others make it more difficult for you to successfully manage your emotions. Positive, empowering attitudes, on the other hand, make emotional resilience seem like second nature.

Emotionally resilient people tend to display the following positive characteristics:

- Happiness
- Control
- Optimism
- Mindfulness and Flow
- Hardiness
- Communication
- Relationships
- Compassion and Empathy

**Resilience: Happiness**

Happiness is elusive for many people. The vast majority of us are raised to think that obtaining material things will make us happy. Food, clothing and shelter are not enough to satisfy. For example, once you purchase the house you’ve been saving for, you start thinking about furniture you want to buy or how the landscaping needs to change. Each desire, once satisfied, gives birth to new desires in an endless progression. The more we buy into the idea that we’ll be happy when we have enough of the right sort of possessions, the more trapped we become. We become jealous of people who have more than we do, and we risk bankruptcy to pay for things with credit we can't afford. The more stuff we desire, the less happy we are.

The facts are: money doesn’t make people happy, except when there isn't enough of it to purchase the essentials of food, clothing and shelter. Studies examining the relationship between family income and happiness show that money is only related to happiness when there really isn't enough of it and real deprivation occurs. No relationship has been measured between money and happiness for any family living above poverty wages, suggesting that once basic needs are taken care of, further happiness cannot be bought at any price. As a result of these types of findings, researchers now consider happiness to depend less on people’s actual circumstances and more on how people choose to respond to their circumstances.

Your happiness is not dependent on whether you drive the right car, live in the right neighborhood, or wear the latest clothes. Instead, how happy you are depends on how you approach your life and the people around you. True satisfaction is not about getting what you want but rather is about wanting what you have. Learning to be content with what you have is the true path to happiness.

**Traits of Happy People**

In order to learn how to be content with our own lives, we need to understand what makes some people generally happier than others. Researchers have found four inner traits that predispose people to have positive attitudes and to be content or happy more often than not. These traits are:

- **Self-esteem.** Happy people respect their value as human beings and have confidence in themselves. When times get tough, people with a solid sense of self-worth and a firm belief in their own competence are the very people who persist until the tough times have passed.

- **Personal Control.** Happy people believe that they have control over what happens to them. They tend to believe that they are actively in charge of their own destiny rather than being a passive victim of fate.

- **Optimism.** Happy people are hopeful people. They expect they have a decent chance to succeed when they try something new. They see the proverbial glass of life as half full rather than half empty.

- **Extroversion.** Happy people tend to be outgoing and sociable. They often find it a pleasure to be around others, rather than a chore.

Even in old age, happy individuals tend to be cheerful and full of the *joie de vivre* - the 'joy of life.' People who like themselves are confident that other people will like them too. They have friends and they engage in rewarding social activities through which they experience affection and social support. Social support, in turn, reinforces happy people's sense of self esteem, in a circle of health. Social support is an important part of the foundation supporting a happy person's sense of well-being and positive outlook on life.
Becoming a Happier Person

Not everyone is born extroverted with high self-esteem and an optimistic outlook. Some people are more pessimistic by nature, prone to depression, to not think well of themselves and to find social activities to be more work than play. Can such pessimistic people become happy despite their nature? The answer is yes.

The way to cultivate greater happiness is deceptively simple. Pretend that you are self-confident and optimistic. You might think that pretending to be happier couldn't possibly work; but in fact, if you give it half a chance, it can indeed help you to become a happier person. There is a very real sense in which being happy is a habit. You can strengthen your own habit of being happy by practicing it again and again. As you become more and more comfortable acting happy, the phoniness will diminish and the happy behaviors and attitudes you have been practicing will begin to feel more natural.

The same goes for your interactions with other people. Pretend to be more outgoing than you are. Smile. Act like you like the people you meet, and you will likely find that you actually do like some of them! As a bonus, you may also find out that you are beginning to like yourself better, that you feel more confident, and that you are becoming more comfortable with other people. These changes can help you feel greater happiness in your life and more optimism for the future.

What does the Mayo Clinic Staff say about Resilience?

Source: mayoclinic.org

Tips to improve your resilience

- **Get connected.** Building strong, positive relationships with loved ones and friends can provide you with needed support and acceptance in both good times and bad. Establish other important connections by volunteering or joining a faith or spiritual community.

- **Make every day meaningful.** Do something that gives you a sense of accomplishment and purpose every day. Set goals to help you look toward the future with meaning.

- **Learn from experience.** Think of how you've coped with hardships in the past. Consider the skills and strategies that helped you through rough times. You might even write about past experiences in a journal to help you identify positive and negative behavior patterns—and guide your future behavior.

- **Remain hopeful.** You can't change the past, but you can always look toward the future. Accepting and even anticipating change makes it easier to adapt and view new challenges with less anxiety.

- **Take care of yourself.** Tend to your own needs and feelings. Participate in activities and hobbies you enjoy. Include physical activity in your daily routine. Get plenty of sleep. Eat a healthy diet. Practice stress management and relaxation techniques, such as yoga, meditation, guided imagery, deep breathing or prayer.

- **Be proactive.** Don't ignore your problems. Instead, figure out what needs to be done, make a plan, and take action. Although it can take time to recover from a major setback, traumatic event or loss, know that your situation can improve if you work at it.

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**Marco beat his drug problem to get his life back**

Marco served as a radio operator in the U.S. Air Force for more than 20 years. During his transition from the service, like many Veterans, he had difficulty translating his military skills and experience to civilian employment.

“It can be a frustrating experience for someone when you’re in the military and making a good living, and then you get out of the military and you’re working for $7 an hour,” Marco says. “I went through bouts of depression and drug use.” He turned to cocaine and marijuana to temporarily mask his challenges, but he knew that abusing drugs was not a permanent solution.

Marco’s problem with drugs put a strain on his family until his sister, a fellow Veteran, encouraged him to reach out to counselors at his local VA. “They were very helpful in helping me get my life back on track,” he says.

**Engaging in therapy led to newfound confidence,** and that confidence led to securing a fulfilling job. Now, Marco is living a sober, happy life.

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**An IED blast couldn’t keep this Marine down**

Adjusting to life after a physical injury can be challenging. You may have to adapt to chronic pain or changes in your appearance. You may have to give up hobbies or sports, or learn to do them in different ways. These challenges can affect you emotionally, too.

Chad was serving in the Marines overseas when he was injured by an IED. The blast, “equivalent to about a 500-pound bomb,” ripped through his unit’s tank. “I was knocked unconscious for what seemed like a second,” he says, “but I was told it was a few minutes.”

Chad eventually needed a double amputation to address the injuries he suffered. On top of the physical toll, he felt a sense of guilt for having to leave his fellow Marines behind.

“They set me up with a psychologist who I pretty much right away got along with,” says Chad. “He was no-holds-barred, he didn’t take any crap, and he didn’t let me have a pity party. We started with exposure therapy.”

What’s exposure therapy? It exposes Veterans to situations and sensations that remind them of traumatic events. After learning effective coping skills, Veterans discover ways to positively deal with their reactions. For Chad, the experience helped him persevere.

“I can’t believe how much it helped me,” says Chad.

Now, this Marine doesn’t let his physical limitations affect his outlook on life—or his ability to do the things he enjoys. He lives life to the fullest, and even spends his free time snowboarding and riding motorcycles. As Chad puts it: “The only person that can stop you is you.”
‘Resiliency happens when you make the choice to bet on yourself’: Tera’s story

By Jennifer Paliaoac, January 29, 2019

http://health.sunnybrook.ca/resilient

Mental illness has impacted Tera’s life since she was a young child. She was diagnosed with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), anxiety and Tourette’s Syndrome in Grade 3. The obsessions and compulsions associated with the disorders consumed much of her time, even at such a young age. As she got older, Tera’s symptoms would come and go in waves, and she managed with therapy. However, in grade 12, Tera experienced a severe manic episode despite not having any family history of bipolar disorder. She was not eating or sleeping for a week, and her mind was racing “like a non-stop caffeine buzz.” Realizing she was not safe to be by herself, Tera called 911, and was admitted to a psychiatry ward for one month for intensive treatment.

While in the hospital, Tera wrote a letter to herself as a reminder of her self-worth and acknowledged, “You are a fighter. Part of being a fighter is accepting the help and love you deserve.” Tera has become a dedicated mental health advocate and feels that sharing her experiences gives her a greater understanding of her own journey. She also hopes it can empower others, and help reduce the stigma around bipolar disorder.

What does resilience mean to you?

I believe that resiliency is embodied by the quote, “Not every day is a good day, but there is good in every day.” Resiliency happens when you make the choice to bet on yourself, be kind to yourself, and just take things day by day. Even when you’re at your lowest, being resilient means always moving forward, even if you’re taking tiny steps. I find it difficult to be motivated if I don’t have any goals, and achieving these goals gives me a sense of accomplishment. Creating small, manageable tasks and finding the energy to complete them is an important strategy when dealing with a low mood.

What are dark days like for you and how do you find strength and resilience in these moments?

When I am struggling, I really lose all sense of perspective and my mind is taken over by negative thoughts. I lose all faith in my abilities and my relationships with friends and family. I unintentionally isolate myself, and I convince myself that this episode is worse than anything I’ve experienced before. It can be hard to blindly believe that things will get better, so it is important to look at past challenges and triumphs as proof that you can overcome anything.

It is also important to check in with yourself and to have the strength to reach out to others whenever needed. I have taken the time to learn warning signs that I exhibit when I am struggling, which include withdrawing from friends and family. When I notice this happening, I fight the urge to push people away, and tell my loved ones how I’m feeling instead.

What is in your “tool-kit”? What are the things that help you find strength and resilience?

Journaling is really important to help keep my mood and overall well-being in check day to day. It allows me to take a few minutes to recognize and appreciate the highlights of my day. Journaling gives me the opportunity to assess if anything is bothering me, or if I am experiencing any hypomanic or depressive symptoms. My OCD often causes me to have irrational fears that if I ignore a negative thought, this could somehow cause it to come true. However, when I actually see them written down on paper, I am released from the bonds of this intrusive thinking. Writing things down helps me acknowledge what I am struggling with, allows me to let things go, and helps me gain perspective. Ensuring that I eat, sleep, and exercise properly is also essential. Getting enough sleep can be difficult socially in university, but it is essential to my well-being.

How do you feel about the future?

At times, it can feel daunting that I don’t have control over when, or if, another manic or depressive episode happens. However, over time and through my experiences, I have developed the tools to be able to handle moments when everything seems to go wrong. The more things I overcome, the more proof I have that I can conquer anything.

I am really proud of my accomplishments over these last few years, and they have given me the confidence and belief that I can tackle whatever comes next. I don’t feel like my disorders give me any limitations. I know I am well equipped for my next chapter, and I am grateful to feel optimistic about the future.
We provide education, support groups, and advocacy for families, friends, and individuals with mental illness in Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties.

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