

What is NAMI?

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. NAMI has over 1,100 affiliates in communities across the country who engage in advocacy, research, support and education. Members of NAMI are families, friends and people living with mental illnesses such as major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and borderline personality disorder.

Many NAMI affiliates offer an array of support and education programs for families and individuals. For information about what is available in your community, contact your local affiliate directly, or call the NAMI HelpLine at 1 (800) 950-NAMI (6264), or visit www.nami.org.

What is NAMI FaithNet?

NAMI FaithNet is an information resource for NAMI members, clergy and congregations of all faith traditions working together to create welcoming and supportive faith communities for individuals and families living with mental illness.

NAMI FaithNet provides a wide variety of resources, including an e-newsletter, articles, referrals, handouts and other Web pages at www.nami.org/faithnet.

Local Information:



An Information Resource for Faith Communities, NAMI Members and Community Partners



National Alliance on Mental Illness
2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201
(800) 950-NAMI (6264)
www.nami.org



A Unique Opportunity for Faith Communities



What are Mental Illnesses?

Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Mental illness often results in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

Mental illness can affect persons of any age, race, religion, or socioeconomic status and affects over 58 million Americans each year.

“NAMI members in NAMI FaithNet have been my teachers, key allies and a critical resource in helping my own faith community grow in service to those with mental illness and their families.”

————— *Craig Rennebohm, Chaplain
Mental Health Chaplaincy, Seattle, Washington*

Faith and spirituality are essential elements of healing and recovery from any serious medical illness, including mental illness.

Sixty percent of people in emotional distress turn first to their clergy for help and counseling. Yet many clergy feel ill-equipped to provide appropriate support and referrals to persons living with mental illness.

At the same time, social prejudice and shame associated with mental illness often prevent others from reaching out to their faith leaders and worship community.

Education about mental illness is the key to replacing ignorance and fear with compassion and understanding. Through education, congregations can offer caring, understanding and support that promote healing and recovery.

How Your Faith Community Can Help:

- Use NAMI and NAMI FaithNet resources to help you provide educational materials about mental illness.
- Invite local NAMI members and others to share their stories.
- Train persons in your congregations to provide caring support to persons with a mental illness and their families through prayer, hospital and home visits, support groups and inclusion in worship and other social activities.
- Work with your local NAMI affiliate to learn what treatment and recovery services, programs and supports are available in your community.

Go to NAMI.org/faithnet to learn more.

“NAMI FaithNet has provided the healing bridge between my faith journey and my son's mental illness recovery. It has been a redeeming agent in helping me find ways and resources to help others.”

————— *Carole Wills, Faith Communities Education Project,
NAMI Indianapolis, Indiana*