

Navigating the **SEA** of Mental Health • **S**upport—**E**ducate—**A**dvocate

The Official Newsletter of NAMI Berks County PA

Issue 17

Winter 2024

How we found NAMI

By: L.R.

I'm so happy my wife and I stumbled into the Shillington office one winters day in 2023. It became a game changer in our struggle with family mental health illness.

The story starts like this....

I was getting close to retirement and heard that Berks Encore provided guidance and help for seniors, so we drove to Shillington and arrived just in time for their "End of Winter" celebration. While there, we noticed a sign and pamphlets for NAMI. What is NAMI? We never heard of this before but with our two adult children with learning disabilities, in active substance abuse and self-medicating, we grabbed some of the pamphlets and made some phone calls to connect.

From that day we met many supportive people and received so much help to navigate through the twist and turns of mental illness. This was a journey we have made a number of times in the past, but never seemed to get anywhere. The road always ended up back where we started and hope was fading fast. My wife and I are approaching our "Golden Years" with another round of stress which leads to arguments, resentment and blame. Our mental health was again at risk. After a few discussions with Cindy, we very quickly realized that we have found an advocate that worked to make changes, that in the past others were not able to deliver on. Some of our immediate concerns were handled with the support of NAMI on our team, which lowered our stress level and gave us access to a breadth of knowledge that we never had before. Small steps led to small wins, we kept taking more steps to get us back on track and eventually gave us some successes that we never thought would come to fruition. NAMI continued to work with our family to influence positive change. We attended the 8 week Family to Family class to help my wife and I improve our mental health, our relationship and also deal with our kids and grandkids to end the stigma and become a closer family. We feel like a part of the NAMI family and are so happy to have them supporting us.

Reserve the Date

Saturday, Sept. 14th, 2024



[Click here for more information and registration.](#)

Recent and Upcoming Events

JANUARY 2024:

-WEEK OF JAN. 22ND—CIT TRAINING OF BERKS COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT-COLLABORATION WITH BERKS COUNTY CONNECTION WORKS (FORMERLY BERKS COUNTY PRETRIAL SERVICES)

FEBRUARY 2024:

-WEDNESDAY, FEB 21ST—MEMBER & COMMUNITY MEETING—HAVEN BEHAVIORIAL, AMY GROH
-TUESDAY, FEB. 27TH—FAMILY TO FAMILY EDUCATION CLASS STARTS

MARCH 2024:

-SATURDAY, MAR 2ND—REP. CEPEDA-FREYTIZ WOMANS RESOURCE FAIR
-SATURDAY, MAR 9TH—PEER TO PEER EDUCATION CLASS STARTS
-SATURDAY, MAR 30TH—RUOK 5K RUN/WALK-PENN STATE BERKS CAMPUS

MAY 2024: MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

During Mental Health Awareness Month, NAMI joins the mental health community to reaffirm our commitment to building our understanding of mental illness, increasing access to treatment and ensuring those who are struggling know they are not alone.
CHECK OUR WEBSITE OR FUTURE NEWSLETTER FOR ALL THE EVENTS WE'LL BE PART OF IN MAY 2024.

Our 2nd Annual "It's Okay to Not Be Okay" will be held on Saturday, September 14, 2024 at Grings Mill Recreation Area.

A tremendous THANK-YOU to Shuman Development Group for being our Naming Sponsor, and to Derek Evans from Forever Impactful for partnering with us again. We are looking forward to another successful event to bring awareness to Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Berks County.

www.namiberkspa.org for more in-

Please visit our website at www.namiberkspa.org for more information and registration.



You are NOT ALONE

Millions of people are affected by mental illness each year. Across the country, many people just like you work, perform, create, compete, laugh, love and inspire every day.

 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness	 1 in 20 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness	 17% of youth (6-17 years) experience a mental health disorder
---	--	--

FREE Classes and Support



NAMI Connection Is A Peer Recovery Support Group For Individuals 18 And Over Who Experience Mental Health Conditions That Offers Respect, Understanding, Encouragement, And Hope.



Connection Peer Recovery Support Group Meets

1st & 3rd Mondays 6:00—7:30 pm,
2nd and 4th Thursdays 6:00—7:30 pm,
3rd Monday 12 noon—1:30 pm—ZOOM Only
Location: 640 Walnut St-2nd Floor, Reading, PA 19601.

LGBTQ+ Connection Peer Recovery Support Group Meets

1st and 3rd Tuesdays 6:00—7:30 pm.
Location: 640 Walnut St-2nd Floor, Reading, PA 19601



NAMI Family Support Group is a support group for family members, significant others and friends of people with mental health conditions Meets 2nd & 4th Wednesday of month, 7:00—8:30pm & also the 4th Monday of month 2:00—3:30pm—ZOOM Only. In-person meetings at: 30 Liberty Street, Shillington PA 19607. Park in M&T Bank parking lot and enter door with NAMI sign.



NAMI Family to Family Class is a free 8-session course for adults age 18 and older who have a family member or loved one who experiences a chronic mental health condition. The course is designed to help friends and family members to understand and support their loved one living with mental illness, while maintaining their own well-being. Next class starts on Tuesday, February 27th. [Register Here!](#)

This project, program, or event is made possible, in whole or in part, by funds received through the Berks County Opioid Settlement Agreement.



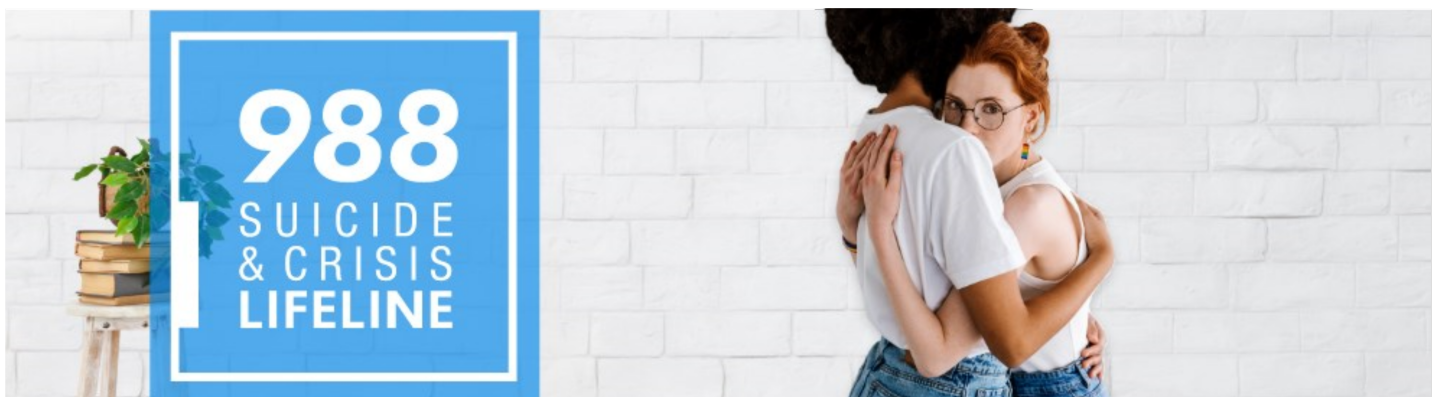
NAMI Peer-to-Peer Class is a free, 8-session course for adults living with mental health conditions. NAMI Peer-to-Peer provides an educational setting focused on recovery that offers respect, understanding, encouragement and hope. Next class starts on Saturday, March 9th.

[Register Here!](#)

This project, program, or event is made possible, in whole or in part, by funds received through the Berks County Opioid Settlement Agreement.



NAMI Homefront is a free, 6 session educational program for families, caregivers and friends of military service members and vets with mental health conditions. **Now offered online.** Register: www.nami.org/Find-Support/NAMI-Programs/NAMI-Homefront



Have you visited our social media accounts?



Click on Icon to go directly there.



Become a Member of NAMI!

Become a NAMI member at all three levels of the organization—national, state and local—with one payment. There are amazing resources available on the www.NAMI.org website—check them out!

There are three membership rates to choose from:

- \$60 per year - Household membership (includes all members of household living at the same address)
- \$40 per year - Regular membership which is an individual membership for one person
- \$5 per year - Open Door membership for an individual member with limited financial resources

Go to <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Join> or call 610-685-3000 to join NAMI Berks County PA.

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER! PLEASE JOIN WITH US!

DID WE SAY FREE? HOW IS IT POSSIBLE?

NAMI Berks County PA is grateful for the financial grant support we receive from Berks County as well as monies from donors and memorial donations in the name of a loved one. However, without the active volunteer support of our membership we would cease to exist. Thank you to everyone for helping to end the stigma associated with mental illness. **IT IS YOU** who enables us to provide the free support, education, and advocacy for the needs of those living with mental illness.

Executive Director: Cindy Quinter

NAMI Berks County PA is the local affiliate of NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania
www.namiberkspa.org NAMI Berks County PA Phone: **610-685-3000**

NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania is our state organization

www.namikeystonepa.org NAMI Keystone Helpline: **888-264-7972**

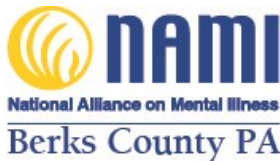
President: Linda Dapcic-Angst

Vice-President: Fred Indenbaum

Treasurer: Denise Zimmerman

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness

www.nami.org NAMI Helpline: **800-950-NAMI** or text "NAMI" to 741741



NAMI Berks County PA
Main Office/Mailing Address
Group Room & Education Center
640 Walnut St-2nd Floor
Reading, PA 19601
610-685-3000

NAMI Berks County PA
Annex
Group Room
30 Liberty St.
Shillington, PA 19607

PROUD MEMBERS OF:



Mission Statement: *Recognizing that people affected by mental illness often serve as vital components of society in a wide variety of ways. NAMI Berks County PA is a grassroots mental health organization of families and individuals whose lives have been affected by mental illness. We are an Affiliate of National Alliance on Mental Illness and of NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania. We advocate for lives of quality and respect, without discrimination and stigma, for all of our constituents. We provide leadership in mental health advocacy, education and support throughout Berks County.*

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
** 640 Walnut St 2nd Floor	!! 30 Liberty St Shillington, PA			1	2	3
4	5 Connection 6-7:30	6 LGBTQ+ Connection 6-7:30	7	8 Connection 6-7:30	9	10
11	12	13	14 Family Support Group 7-8:30	15	16	17
18	19 Connection Zoom 12-1:30pm Connection 6-7:30	20 LGBTQ+ Connection 6-7:30	21	22 Connection 6-7:30	23	24
25	26 Family Support Group-Zoom 2-3:30pm	27 Family to Family Class 1 6:30-9pm	28 Family Support Group 7-8:30	29		

March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
** 640 Walnut St 2nd Floor Reading, PA 19601	!! 30 Liberty St Shillington, PA 19607				1	2
3	4 Connection 6-7:30	5 LGBTQ+ Connection 6 7:30 Family to Family Class 2 6:30-9pm	6	7	8	9 Peer to Peer Class 1 10am-Noon
10	11	12 Family to Family Class 3 6:30-9pm	13 Family Support Group 7-8:30	14 Connection 6-7:30	15	16 Peer to Peer Class 2 10am-Noon
17	18 Connection Zoom 12-1:30pm Connection 6-7:30	19 LGBTQ+ Connection 6-7:30 Family to Family Class 4 6:30-9pm	20	21	22	23 Peer to Peer Class 3 10am-Noon
24	25 Family Support Group-Zoom 2-3:30pm	26 Family to Family Class 5 6:30-9pm	27 Family Support Group 7-8:30	28 Connection 6-7:30	29	30 Peer to Peer Class 4 10am-Noon

[Check the website calendar for more NAMI Berks activities.](#)