

BREAKING (or OLD) NEWS!

It's a Whole New World!

We awoke in the last few months to an entirely different living design from anything we could have imagined with social distancing, face masks, stay-at-home or shelter-in-place requirements, frequent hand-washing and absolutely limited ways to keep in touch physically with family and friends. This reality has also had major impact on our NAMI Family with the need to cancel our regular meetings, classes, and community activities.

Please **SEE BELOW** for our temporary plans to address this situation. Because at this time we cannot predict our local calendar for opening existing restrictions, such as size of groups that may gather or social distancing requirements, we're announcing the following options for connecting with each other. These relate primarily to our Support Group Meetings through ZOOM contact. Follow the instructions to connect either by laptop or desktop computers or by cell phone. Access to these sessions will be limited to our membership or other approved individuals, so you must register to become involved. **Thanks to David Larson** for the technology support and coordination he has provided to plan our on-line support group meetings.

How long will this arrangement last? Until our local situation clarifies, but we're planning the arrangements below for **May and possibly June**. We can keep in touch by email, regular mail or text as plans change, so watch for updated information from our Board of Directors.

NAMI CONNECTIONS SUPPORT GROUP and FAMILY/FRIENDS SUPPORT GROUP:

In an effort to reach out to those of you who attend the NAMI Connection Support Group for individuals living with mental illness or the Family/Friends Support Group, David Larson will be hosting a support group meeting by ZOOM on your computer or smart phone on May 19th at 7:00 PM. Please contact David either through email (D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG) or phone (316.461.5755), at least a couple of days before the meeting on May 19th so that he will know you will be online that night and which support group you wish to join. Otherwise, he may not be able to authorize you to join the meeting.

Sign-in will go much more smoothly if you download ZOOM beforehand onto your computer or phone, for whichever device you are going to use to join the meeting. It can be downloaded from the app store on your phone or by going to <https://zoom.us> on your computer. Keep a record of the user name (email address) and password you selected. Contact David with questions.

How the ZOOM meetings work: Because this meeting is for authorized attendees only, you will have to sign in using your email address and the password you chose earlier when you installed ZOOM. David will provide the meeting ID and password to each person registered to participate before the session. Join The Meeting by putting in the Meeting ID. And possibly the password, if asked.

The evening of the meeting, David will convene both support group meetings at the same time for general announcements and instructions, and we will then separate into the specific Connections and Family Support sections. Vicki Shook, Valerie Morley and Gerry Lichti will facilitate the Family Support Group, while David will do the same for Connections.

For now, 1) contact David with your interest in participating and indicate the specific group with which you wish to connect; and 2) Register with ZOOM as indicated above.

We hope you join us for this new experience.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, JAMES HOOK:

Greetings NAMI Wichita,

The past couple months have presented many challenges for everyone across the globe. An increase in the self-isolation has led many to experience symptoms of anxiety, depression, and more. For some this is an eye-opening experience and a glimpse into the life that many of us lead every day. Many of us are struggling in the quarantine climate, but please remember that you have family and friends here within NAMI Wichita that care and are available when you need the help.

We are excited to launch our Virtual Support Groups this month. The affiliate meetings may be canceled, but we can still meet together over the various forms of technology. Our Zoom meeting platform should allow you to use computer, tablet, or just call in on the phone.

The NAMI Wichita Board was sad to have to cancel our spring picnic. I think one of our most important decisions we made this past meeting was to reschedule it for whenever we lift this quarantine, so do not fret. We will get to socialize again. In these trying times I just want to thank everyone that has been volunteering and working to keep NAMI Wichita running. David Larson especially has been doing a fantastic job in organizing the meetings. Stay strong NAMI Wichita and stay safe. Storms darken the sky, and the winds will blow, but eventually the clouds move on, and the sun will shine. Thank you

DID YOU KNOW ...?

Did you know that to honor National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month (which is July) and to help promote NAMI Wichita's Minority Mental Health Awareness Month Event (on July 9th), NAMI Wichita has created a FACEBOOK page devoted specifically to the event and its happenings? You can find the page by going to the search bar in the upper right area of your FACEBOOK home page and typing in "NAMI Wichita Minority Mental Health Awareness." Go ahead and search for it and like it. Also visit it often throughout the coming months as we will be posting news concerning our July 9th Event as well as interesting facts about mental health and the minority population.

MAINTAINING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH DURING AN EPEDEMIC: Isolation can be deadly, UNLESS we plan carefully to maintain positive attitudes during periods of time when personal contacts are risky. What to do? First, GET OUTSIDE FOR WALKS OR SIT OUTSIDE IF YOU CAN'T WALK. We can maintain safe distance and still get the benefit of nature's restoration. While you're outside, pick up one item you find beautiful/interesting/new. Second, CONTINUE TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS – through phone, email, texting, FaceTime, Facebook, etc. If this is indeed a war, we need to have a battle strategy for protecting our own wellness. Third, REMEMBER YOUR HOBBIES OR FIND A NEW ONE. Vary how you spend your time. TV watching is not bad, but inactivity may produce or enhance depression. Build a new interest: watch ACTIVE TV shows such as HDTV, Food Channel, etc., even if you're not going to renovate your home or cook an exotic dish. Fourth, MAINTAIN GOOD EATING AND SLEEPING HABITS. These experiences create exhaustion. Naps are fine if not overdone, and same goes for food!

Finally, remember that if everything piles up to the point of impossible, THE COMMUNITY CRISIS CENTER IS AVAILABLE FOR CALLING OR STOPPING IN. THEY'RE OPEN 24/7 AT 635 N MAIN OR AT 316-660-7500. Best Wishes to everyone.

NAMI WICHITA SYNAPSE

A Publication for Family and Client Support, Advocacy
Education and Research for Major Brain Disorders.
National Alliance on Mental Illness, Wichita Affiliate

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NAMI Wichita, KS, Inc. is a non-profit organization with
501 (c) 3 status, an affiliate of NAMI and NAMI Kansas

Officers and Board of Directors:

President: James Hook

Vice President: Brittany Brest

Secretary: Dan Smading

Treasurer: Teresa Carter

**Members at Large: Nicole Cox, Esther Granados, David
Larson, Laura Rosenbaum, Rommy Vargas and
Bernestine Williams**

Other Volunteer Positions:

**Family Support Group Facilitators: Gerry Lichti,
Valerie Morley and Vicki Shook**

**NAMI Connection Facilitators: David Larson, Darla
Carra-Denton, Eli Hess, and Columbine Schwanke**

NAMI Exhibit Coordinator: Treva Lichti

NAMI In Our Own Voice Coordinator: Lynn Kohr

**NAMI Wichita Phone: Nancy Ross, Jennifer Manske,
Bernestine Williams and Michelle Madison**

Community Projects Coordinator: Gerry Lichti

Program Committee: Laura Rosenbaum and Nicole Cox

**NAMI Kansas Affiliate Council Representatives: James
Hook, David Larson and Nancy Ross**

**NAMI Kansas Peer Leadership Council
Representatives: Brittany Brest and Darla
Carra-Denton**

**NAMI Kansas Veterans' Council Representative:
Tony Nutz**

NAMI on Campus-WSU Contact: To be determined

NAMI Basics Support Group: Laura Rosenbaum

NAMI FaithNet Contact: Eli Hess

KU Residents Liaison: To be determined

**NAMI Wichita Synapse Newsletter Editor: Lynn Kohr
Brainstorming Editor: Lynn Kohr**

**Website Managers: Nicole Cox, Darla Carra-Denton
and David Larson**

Views published in the [NAMI Wichita Synapse](#) are those of individual contributors and do not reflect local, state, or national NAMI positions.

NAMI Wichita also publishes a **Resource Guidebook** funded by an anonymous donor. We support the activities of law enforcement agencies, hospitals, COMCARE, the medical community, other non-profit organizations, families, caretakers, friends and clients of mental health services directed towards improving the lives of persons living with mental illnesses. Membership in NAMI Wichita includes persons living with mental illnesses, their family members, community friends, behavioral health professionals and students.

Newsletter Mailing List Guidelines: This newsletter is sent by email to any NAMI Wichita members/contacts for whom we have an active email address. Print copies are sent only to those members who have no email service.

Community Leaders and Behavioral Health Professionals receive complimentary newsletters and are invited to support NAMI Wichita's programs and activities by becoming members.

Dues include membership in local, state and national levels as well as quarterly receipt of the *Advocate*, a magazine published by NAMI. **PLEASE SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.**

Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming Activities in 2020

1. **Saturday, May 2, 2020: NAMI Walk DELAYED UNTIL OCTOBER 10**
2. **July 9, 2020: Minority Mental Health Awareness Week Event**
3. **July 15-18, 2020: National NAMI Convention in Atlanta, GA:**
4. **August 4, 2020 – Fall Potluck Picnic** for all members, families and friends
5. **October 4, 2020 – Mental Illness Awareness Week Candlelight Ceremony**
6. **October 10 – Annual NAMI Kansas Conference CANCELLED. Replaced by NAMI KS Walk at West Ridge Mall, Topeka**
7. **December 1, 2020 – Annual Awards Ceremony, Election of Board Members and Holiday Reception**

UPDATE ON 2020 Kansas NAMI WALK and the NAMI Kansas State Conference: Because of uncertainty related to virus regulations, the 2020 Kansas NAMI Walk has been postponed till Saturday, October 10, in Topeka, KS, at the West Ridge Mall (the location of our NAMI KS Office). The annual State Conference scheduled for that weekend has been cancelled for the year. We will continue fund raising plans for the WALK and will hope we can gather in the fall for this event.

FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH PROGRAM PLANNING: Since we don't know when we'll be able to meet physically for our affiliate programs, our Program Planning Committee indicates whenever that first Tuesday of the month arrives, we'll meet for the Potluck Dinner we missed in April. Being able to gather around great food with our friends to share our experiences during months of isolation sounds really attractive. Watch for updates as that date hopefully approaches soon.

NAMI Wichita Education Classes for Spring 2020: All classes are currently postponed until it is safe to gather in groups. We hope to be able to offer classes again in Fall 2020. Please check www.namiwichita.org and click on "Programs" for further details on each class. **ALL CLASSES ARE FREE FOR PARTICIPANTS.**

HOMEFRONT EDUCATION PROGRAM: A series of six classes helps family members, partners and significant others understand and support military service members and veterans living with mental health conditions while maintaining their own wellbeing. Some aspects of the class are managed on-line. Registration for these classes is required by calling Tony at 316-558-1888 or Eli at 316-207-5136.

Peer-to-Peer is offered for adults living with mental illness. This series of 8 weekly classes focuses on helping persons understand their illness and gain skills to help establish and maintain wellness. Classes last two hours each. Check namiwichita.org for details. You may register interest in the class at 316-686-1373 or email peer2peer@namiwichita.org.

Family-to-Family (**English** language) is offered for family members, caretakers of or support persons for adults with the lived experience of mental illness. The class is provided in two and a half hour sessions for 8 weeks. Spring Class was cancelled. Check the website for information on Fall Class.

FAMILY TO FAMILY SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASS: Class description is the same as for the class above. Class offered in Fall. For additional information, contact Rommy Vargas at 316-250-7231 or rommyvargasb@yahoo.com or Alejandra Prendes at 316-299-8728 or Tatiana_prendes@hotmail.com.

NAMI Basics is offered for parents or caregivers of children through adolescents who experience mental health and behavioral disorders. This series of 6 weekly classes is offered in a two-and-a-half-hour format. To learn more about upcoming classes, contact Laura at lauros@sbcglobal.net.

JOIN NAMI TODAY

The NAMI Wichita mission is to provide education and support for persons living with mental illness and their families; to provide support for research on brain disorders; and to provide public education and advocacy to promote mental health systems change with the hope that persons with mental illness may achieve the highest possible quality of life.

___ HOUSEHOLD	\$60	Annual dues include membership at the local, state and national levels. Make checks payable to NAMI Wichita. All dues and donations are tax deductible.
___ INDIVIDUAL	\$40	
___ OPEN DOOR DUES*	\$ 5	
___ GIFT/DONATION =	_____	

(Please complete **ALL** requested information.)

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY/STATE _____

9-DIGIT ZIPCODE _____ - _____

TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

___ New Membership ___ Renewal Membership

___ I have served in the military. ___ An immediate family member has served in the military.

MAIL TO:

NAMI Wichita, KS

P.O. Box 2435

Wichita, KS 67201-2435

****No one will be denied membership for their inability to pay the full fee. The minimum payment is \$5.***



BRAINSTORMING

Volume 5, Issue 3

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Brainstorming is an on-line publication of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Wichita Affiliate. It is made up of articles encompassing the topic of mental illness. Information provided in this e-magazine is for informational purposes only, has not been researched or independently verified and is not intended as medical advice. Views published in Brainstorming are those of the individual authors and contributors and do not reflect and are not endorsed as local, state or national NAMI positions. To read the full articles, click on the "Read more" link following the introduction to each article and open the hyperlink. To submit articles and other material to be considered for inclusion in this e-magazine, contact Lynn Kohr at lkohr@cox.net.

Mental health experts offer counsel on staying calm during coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic is becoming a brutal psychological test. This is a dreadful moment with a potentially deadly pathogen on the loose. This public health crisis can take a mental toll on people, especially those struggling with anxiety, depression and other conditions.

[Read more](#)

Psychiatrists turn to Teletherapy amid Stay-at-Home order

Fears and worries are running high; more so for some people who can't make it to therapy sessions or interact with case managers out in public. But area psychiatrists want people to know help is still available. Mental health facilities are now resorting to teletherapy.

[Read more](#)

Lithium Monitor Could Improve Drug Treatment for Bipolar Disorder

In a laboratory proof of concept study — pilot research that shows a drug or project is likely to succeed — investigators have created a wearable device that can detect an individual's lithium drug level.

[Read more](#)

5 Things to Teach Your Child to Avoid Impulsivity & Behavioral Issues

Parenting a child with impulsivity and behavioral issues is one tough task, and in some cases when parents visit me and ask for help, they believe it is impossible to teach their kid to avoid these behaviors. Well, in this article I will be walking you through the things to teach your child in order to avoid impulsivity and bad behaviors.

[Read more](#)

Sugar & Mood: The Bittersweet Struggle

When we feel low and want a quick pick-me-up, indulging a sugar craving is tempting. To stabilize our mood, we can learn to kick our sweet tooth to the curb.

It was a predictable pattern. When her bipolar depression returned, Lori would gravitate to her teacher's lounge, where she nibbled on desserts shared by her colleagues.

At home, she would find herself in the kitchen, baking all sorts of cookies and treats seemingly for her young daughters. In reality, though, it was Lori who would eat most of the baked goods.

“Sugar was a crutch,” recalls Lori, who lives in Illinois. “I thought it made me happy, but it didn't. It just placated me for a few minutes until I had to eat another cookie.”

[Read more](#)

Study of Loneliness in a Senior Housing Community Points to Risk and Potential Protective Factors

At a moment when protective measures such as “shelter-in-place” and “self-quarantine” have become commonplace in many of the world's major cities, a newly published study on loneliness sheds light on a phenomenon that many millions of people experience even in the absence of the enforced isolation imposed by a public health crisis like the COVID-19 viral pandemic.

[Read more](#)