



NAMI
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Wichita Synapse

March/April, 2023

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Volume 25, Issue 2

Hello NAMI Wichita. The NAMI Wichita BOD (Board of Directors) has made the decision to open all of our meetings to in-person meetings. What does this mean for everyone? Well, it means that for our regular meetings we will be meeting at 1010 N. Main St, 67203 (Also known as the Breakthrough Club and Episcopal Social Services) on the first (1st) and third (3rd) Tuesdays of each month from now on. As always, our board meetings will be held before our Education meetings on the first Tuesday. Board meetings start at 5:30 pm, and Education meetings start at 7:00 pm. The third Tuesday starts with the Ask the Doctor Hour which starts at 6:00 pm. Our Support groups (NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group & NAMI Family Support Group) will start at 7:00 pm after some brief announcements. The NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is exclusively for people 18 years of age or older who have a lived experience of mental health issues. The NAMI Family Support Group is for all family members and friends of those with a lived experience of mental health issues. The fourth Tuesday of the month is reserved for the SHARE & CARE Group which is a combined support group of both people with a lived experience of mental illness and family members and friends of people with a lived experience. This group starts at 6:30 pm and is held in the parlor of the College Hill United Methodist Church (2930 1st St N, 67214). If you have been enjoying the ZOOM meetings we have been having during the pandemic and you want to continue participating by way of ZOOM, don't worry because we are going to hold all of our meetings as Hybrid meetings. This means that we will have an in-person component to the meetings and a virtual or online component to the meetings. You can participate in whatever way you feel best doing so. Please follow the links and directions for virtual activities posted elsewhere in this publication.

First TUESDAY NAMI EDUCATION PROGRAMS OFFERED AT 7:00 PM.

Tuesday, March 7th:

We have a double feature headed your way for the March 7th Education Meeting. First, David Larson will be sharing about the Annual NAMI Walks, including all the ins, outs, wherefores, and how-to's. And alongside the NAMI Walks Presentation we will have a special guest – Stewie the Wichita Police Department's Therapy Dog (Pictured to the right). It should be both a fun time and informational time for everyone.



Tuesday, April 4th: For April's Education Meeting we are trying to encourage people to come and attend in-person so that we can play games. We will have a select number of board games for people to play and enjoy. The games are being supplied by the Sedgwick County Extension Office. So, come and enjoy, challenge a family member or friend to some healthy competition, and let the worries of life be put on a back burner.

FOR ALL HYBRID MEETINGS AND SUPPORT GROUPS LINKS BELOW: INSTRUCTIONS: If you have not participated thus far but wish to join the groups, please contact David Larson either through email (D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG) or phone (316-461-5755), at least a couple of days before the meeting so he will know you will be on-line that night. Otherwise, he may not be able to authorize your joining the meeting. If you wish to attend the Education and/or Ask the Dr & Support Groups in person, you will need to come to 1010 N. Main St, 67203 (Northeast corner of Main & 9th) on the 1st and/or 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7 pm for the education meeting and 6 pm for the Ask the Dr Hour.

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. Also, register with Zoom for a free ZOOM account. Keep a record of the username (email address) and password you selected. Contact David with questions. We send emails with sign-on information several days before each meeting.

How the ZOOM Support Group meetings work: Because these meetings are for authorized attendees only, you will need to sign in using your email address and the password you chose earlier when you installed ZOOM. You will find the dates and links for the meetings below. Please make sure you are signing into the correct meeting for the correct date. They must be typed exactly as you see them! CASE IS IMPORTANT:

7 PM, March 7, Education Meeting
<https://tinyurl.com/Ed230307>

7 pm, April 4, Education Meeting
<https://tinyurl.com/Ed230404>

6 PM, March 21, Ask the Doctor
Hour and Support Groups
<https://tinyurl.com/Support2303>

6 PM, April 18, Ask the Doctor
Hour and Support groups
<https://tinyurl.com/Support2304>

The evening of each meeting, David will convene both support group meetings at the same time for general announcements and instructions, and we'll 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, Kathy Pennell and/or Eli Hess will do the same for Connections.

SHARE AND CARE SUPPORT GROUP: The Share and Care Support Group is a combined experience for both family members and adults living with mental illness. We benefit greatly from learning to know each other better. If you are wanting to attend the Share & Care meeting in person, please come to College Hill United Methodist Church, 2930 E. 1st N., 67214 (North side of 1st street between Erie Ave & Chautauqua Ave)

6:30 PM, March 28, Share & Care
<https://tinyurl.com/SC230328>

6:30 PM, April 25, Share & Care
<https://tinyurl.com/SC230425>

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

NAMI Wichita

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Wichita, KS 67201-2435

Phone: (316) 686-1373

E-mail: info@namiwichita.org

Website: www.namiwichita.org

Facebook: facebook.com/namiwichtaks

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: Esther Granados

Treasurer: Teresa Carter

Members at Large: Nicole Cox, Dan

Smading, David Larson, Laura

Rosenbaum, Rommy Vargas and

Bernestine Williams

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Lichti, Valerie Morley and Vicki Shook

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NAMI Wichita Phone: Michelle Madison

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NAMI Kansas Peer Leadership Council

Representatives: Brittany Brest and Darla Carra-Denton

NAMI Kansas Veterans' Council

Representative: Tony Nutz

NAMI Volunteer Coordinator: David Larson

NAMI on Campus-WSU Contact: To be determined

NAMI Basics Support Group: Laura Rosenbaum

NAMI FaithNet Contact: Eli Hess

Ending the Silence Presenters: Esther Granados, Kara Carter

KU Residents Liaison: To be determined

NAMI Wichita Synapse Newsletter: Lynn Kohr and Teresa Carter

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 and receipt of the [Advocate](#), a magazine published three times annually by NAMI. **PLEASE SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON LAST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER.**

NEWLY REVISED COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDEBOOK NOW AVAILABLE:

The 12th edition of NAMI Wichita's *Community Resource Guidebook* is now available on the website or by print copy. Check out a considerably expanded edition on our website at www.namiwichita.org. A huge "Thank You" to Nicole Cox for spearheading this revision!

Youth Mental Health Awareness Creative Writing Contest:

“In Your Own Voice” for High Schoolers in the Greater Wichita Area.

Awards: First Prize: \$100, Second Prize: \$75, Third Prize: \$50.

Entry Requirements:

1. Entry to this contest is free
2. Entrants must be current High School students in the greater Wichita area
3. Entries must be typed, no more than 500 words, single spaced
4. Photos, graphics or other images are not allowed.
5. Entries must be the entrant's own original work.
6. We can only accept one entry per person
7. All rules must be followed for your entry to be considered.

Submit entries at Contest@NAMIwichita.org by 5:00 PM on May 1st, 2023.

Purpose of the Youth Mental Health Awareness Creative Writing Contest:

The contest aims to bring attention to Mental Health Awareness Month in May and help fight mental health stigma. Your creative writing entry should express your views, feelings, understandings, or anything you would like about mental illness.

Ideas for essay topics could include:

- Break the silence and reduce the stigma about mental health
- Positive impact of friendships and relationships on mental health
- Creative ways to start a conversation about mental health
- Impact of COVID-19 on youth mental health
- Speaking up about mental health and why it is important
- Tell a story about a hero with mental health challenges

General Submission Guidelines

- Your entry should be in the form of poetry, personal testimony, short story, song, or any other creative writing format
- The closing date for entries is 5:00 PM on May 1st, 2023. We cannot accept any entries received after this date
- Entry may not include any Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in your writing. PII is information which can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity such as your name, street address, date and place of birth, etc.
- The entry will be judged on originality, creativity and how well it expresses the theme of Mental Health

Entrants should send a single email with:

- Full name
- Phone number
- School name and grade
- Creative Writing entry (as an attachment or in the body of the email)

Winning entries will be posted on the NAMI Wichita social media accounts

Walk with NAMI Kansas in 2023: The power of our mission is being felt as never before. The achievement of "Mental Health for All" has never felt this critical yet closer to being realized. It's not how far we walk at NAMIWalks Kansas on May 20 at Topeka West High School, but how far we've come to make our milestones count. With your support and high spirits, we intend to make an unprecedented impact on mental health in our community. NAMIWalks 2023 represents a powerful chance to leave a significant mark on the local mental health landscape. Register to participate as a Walker or donate to a walker or team at [2023 Kansas NAMIWalks](#). Currently there are two teams registered for NAMI Wichita (Enlightened Minds and NAMI Wichita Walkers) though more may register soon or you can register your own team. Whether you're a previous participant or a new voice waiting to be heard, we're pretty sure you'll find the festivities inspired *and* inspiring. This year, changing the world begins at Topeka West High School.

Dogs are welcome at certain NAMIWalks events. Please confirm with NAMI Kansas before bringing your furry friends out to the event.

#Together4MH

Registration for NAMIcon 2023 is now open! NAMIcon, NAMI's National Convention, will engage, challenge and include you in dynamic discussions and inspiring moments. It will introduce you to new ideas and tools you can take with you. It will connect you with people who will go from strangers to community—all in the name of mental health awareness, education and advocacy. Looking for more information? Visit our [FAQ page](#) or email us at convention@nami.org.

WHAT TO EXPECT

There's something for everyone at NAMIcon, no matter your background. Join us in Minneapolis, Minnesota (May 24-27) to attend more than 50 education sessions, meet others who are passionate about mental health, and make meaningful, lasting connections in an environment that energizes, inspires and educates. Join us for the virtual conference (June 6-8) to watch sessions you missed in Minneapolis with live Q&A — as well as exclusive online-only sessions. Both offerings curate inspiring sessions and space for anyone who may be interested in listening, learning or sharing their unique personal or professional expertise.

The NAMI Wichita Board of Directors is offering scholarships to the NAMI National Convention in Minneapolis this year from May 24th to May 27th or to the Virtual NAMIcon on June 6-8. As the virtual convention is less expensive, please indicate which convention you plan to attend. These Scholarships are available for members of NAMI Wichita ONLY! But if you are not a member, you can still join by going to [NAMI.ORG](#) and clicking on the JOIN button at the top of the screen. *If you have any difficulty with this, please feel free to call David E Larson at 316.461.5755 and he will walk you through the process.*

The deadline for applying for a scholarship is MARCH 31st. You must have the application either sent by email to T.CARTER@NAMIWICHITA.ORG or sent by USPS and postmarked by MARCH 31st. ANY APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED!

A scholarship application is attached separately.

NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter: Did you know that NAMI Kansas is publishing a bi-monthly (every two months) newsletter exclusively by and for peers? Do you have a story to tell about coping skills and strategies that have worked for you? Do you want to share a story about how you rose above a difficulty in life? Do you have questions about living with mental health conditions? If you answer yes to any of those, then the NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter is for you. You can access it at <https://namikansas.org/nami-kansas-newsletters/>. You can also download it and print it out to share with a family member or a friend! An alternative link to grab archived issues of the NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter is here: <https://tinyurl.com/NAMIKSPEER>.

Also, did you know that this newsletter that you are currently reading can be accessed online at the NAMI Wichita website (<https://www.namiwichita.org/>). And you can also download it and print a copy to share with a family member or a friend! In both cases it is great reading material with lots of interesting information for one and all. If you wish to share information for the NAMI Wichita Newsletter, please email David E Larson at D.LARSON@NAMIWICHITA.ORG. If you wish to share information for the NAMI Kansas Peer Newsletter, please email Kathy Pennell at KATHYP@NAMIKANSAS.ORG.

NAMI Wichita Education Classes for 2023:

All new classes are currently offered virtually through ZOOM but may return to in-person as soon as risk decreases. Please check www.namiwichita.org and click on the various "Programs" for further details on each class and for instructions to register. **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. **For information, you may email peer2peer@namiwichita.org or call NAMI Wichita at 316-686-1373. Check namiwichita.org for details.**

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. **Check namiwichita.org for details.**

Family-to-Family Spanish Language Class: Class description is the same as for the English language class above. To express interest and 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 and 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
___ INDIVIDUAL \$40 national levels.
___ OPEN DOOR DUES* \$ 5 **Make checks payable to NAMI Wichita.**
___ GIFT/DONATION = _____ All dues and donations are tax deductible.

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

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY/STATE _____

9-DIGIT ZIPCODE _____ - _____

TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

MAIL TO:

NAMI Wichita, KS

P.O. Box 2435

Wichita, KS 67201-2435

___ New Membership ___ Renewal Membership

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

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

2023 March/April edition of Brainstorming follows



BRAINSTORMING

Volume 8, Issue 2

March/ April 2023

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. To submit articles and other material to be considered for inclusion in this e-magazine, contact Lynn Kohr at l.kohr@namiwichita.org.

8 Ways to Take Care of Your Mental Health When You're on a Budget

Taking care of your mental health can feel like a very expensive, very inaccessible thing to do. And while, yes, a big part of that is the price tag associated with not-cheap therapy (a single session in the U.S. costs \$182 on average, **per data** collected from Zencare last February), all the other ways you take care of your needs and your well-being (read: self-care) to support your mental health also typically cost money.

[...] Actually, there are a ton of ways you can take care of your mind without digging into your savings: Boundary-setting (it's free!), sliding-scale options for therapy, expert-approved self-help books, and just making the time to do the little things that make you feel happy all count. Here's how to get started.

[Read more](#)

What Actually Causes Bipolar Disorder?

When you find out that you have bipolar disorder—or any mental health condition, for that matter—it's not unreasonable to wonder, *Why is this happening to me?* A diagnosis from a professional is cool and all, but if you don't understand *why* you are the way you are, the symptoms of a mental illness might seem even harder to deal with. So, what causes bipolar disorder anyway?

[Read more](#)

Survey finds nearly two in five Kansas teenagers reporting feelings of depression

Kansas teenagers are struggling with a years-long, upward trend in mental health issues and risk of suicide, a survey of nearly 71,000 of the state's students found.

Officials administering the Kansas Communities That Care Survey shared several striking results from the annual survey, a de facto snapshot of Kansas students' well-being and safety, with the Kansas State Board of Education on Tuesday.

[Read more](#)

How to Practice STOP Mindfulness

The "STOP" acronym stands for stop, take a breath, observe, and proceed. This four-step technique can take a minute or less.

Mindfulness has a number of well-recorded benefits. There are many ways to practice mindfulness, the STOP technique being one popular method.

If you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, or anxious, the STOP mindfulness technique might help you calm down quickly. You can use it to ground yourself in times of stress and overwhelm.

[Read more](#)

Military veterans can now receive free emergency mental health care

As of Tuesday, US military veterans in an "acute suicidal crisis" can receive free treatment including inpatient care up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days.

The expanded care was [announced](#) by the Department of Veterans Affairs on Friday, and is meant to "prevent veteran suicide by guaranteeing no cost, world-class care to veterans in times of crisis." Veterans who are seeking that care can go to any VA or non-VA health care facility, the release said, and they do not have to be enrolled in the VA system to receive care.

[Read more](#)