

June–July 2015

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties
National Alliance on Mental Illness
Support • Advocacy • Education
www.namiportagewoodcounties.org



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Portage-Wood Counties

Be good to yourself—
Join a support group!

Consumer Support Groups

(for people who are themselves using
mental health services)

Stevens Point:

First & third Thursdays, 6:30 pm

ROCC Point

2040 Jefferson St.

Contact:

Jennifer Culver • 715-498-0930

Marshfield:

First Wednesday of the month, 6:15 pm

A Better Way Clubhouse

205 South Cherry Avenue

Marshfield

Contact:

Rita Johnson • 715-897-5215

Family Support Groups

(for friends or family
of consumers)

For central Wisconsin:

First Monday, 7:00 pm

ROCC Point

2040 Jefferson St.

Stevens Point

Stevens Point Contact:

Kathy Hartman • 715-341-4483

Marvin Lutz • 715-592-4522

President's Message: What's in the Words We Use?

There is a shift happening around the country about how we look at mental health conditions, what we expect and how we can decrease stigma. There are many working on reducing the stigma in our communities, which we know will take time. Meanwhile, we can work on reducing our own sense of stigma. One of the first changes is the words we use. In the past, it has been called 'mental illness' which carries a lot of negative baggage. When you use the words, how do you feel inside? For me, it has a heavy sinking feeling, like being sucked into a deep dark hole that is hopeless. It's time we stop referring to mental health conditions as 'mental illness'. Instead, they are health conditions like diabetes or heart disease, which don't get as negative a reaction when we talk about them or disclose them. Another change is to watch how we describe the experience—instead of 'suffering with' we refer to it as 'being challenged by'. This is not as negative.

Just one word like 'have' can make a big difference in how words contribute to how we feel. Check out the difference between saying "I'm schizophrenic" or "I'm bipolar" compared to saying "I have schizophrenia" or "I have bipolar disorder". When we say "I'm bipolar" we are defined by our condition. We become the condition or it becomes our life. When we say "I have ..." it's like saying "I have blue eyes" or "I love music". It's something about us but it's only a piece of us, it does not describe who we are totally. Each of us is much more than our blue eyes or our love of music. We need to figure out who we are and not be limited by our diagnoses.

There is also more discussion of 'recovery' which is a big step forward. It means there is the expectation of a positive outcome for those experiencing mental and/or substance abuse disorders. There's hope. The reality is, like any diagnosis of a chronic condition, we never go back to where we were before. It's like someone who is told they have Type 1 diabetes or they have had a heart attack. They never go back to the kind of health they had before. They recover from the acute event, the heart attack, and then they go on to learn to live with the new condition. That means, there's even something beyond 'recovery' – there's learning to manage the new condition and make the changes needed to live well.

Next issue, we'll talk more about 'recovery', what it means, how we get there and what's beyond.

—Kay Jewell, President, NAMI Portage-Wood Counties

NAMI Portage-Wood Rummage Sale a Huge Success!

A special thank you to Jane Hartman and Mike and Jean Probst for hosting the annual May 9th NAMI Portage-Wood Counties rummage sale. "Hats off" to Jacki Clancey of Clancey's Stone Lion for providing chili and a generous amount of homemade baked goods that augmented our proceeds.

Thanks also go to the dedicated volunteers who provided baked goods, helped set up and price, stocked and tidied the merchandise, managed the chili and hot dog stand, and carted the leftovers to St. Vincent DePaul's after the sale. Thank you to Trig's and Copps for their contributions to our hot dog sale. Our share of the proceeds was a record high of \$1200. Great job indeed!



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Portage-Wood Counties

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Summer Heat and What to Watch Out For

Summer heat can be more than uncomfortable; it can also be dangerous. Exercising when the outside temperature is hot can make the problem worse. Some people are more likely to have problems with summer heat because of their medical conditions, their medications and older age. Medical conditions more at risk include those with schizophrenia and other mental health conditions, cardiac and lung conditions, diabetes and hyperthyroid. Medications can also cause problems with heat. Sometimes the medication interferes with how the body reacts when it gets hot; others make the body create more heat. Some drugs interfere with fluid and salt balance in the body which can make it harder for the person to tolerate hot days.

Normally, if the body gets hot, it responds by sweating which cools through the skin and making you thirsty so you drink more fluids. If the body temperature does not go down, it can cause heat exhaustion and/or heat stroke. Those taking neuroleptic medications can also develop neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS). In all these situations, the body temperature rises to dangerous levels which can be serious and life threatening. Death is known to happen in those with severe heat stroke who do not get treatment soon enough.

Medications that can increase risk of problems with heat include antipsychotics, tricyclic antidepressants, beta-adrenergic drugs, calcium channel blockers and other common drugs such as Benadryl, Flexeril and stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall.

What you can do to prevent excessive heat and dehydration:

- Drink plenty of water; if you are sweating a lot alternate water with sports drink with electrolytes such as Gatorade.
- Avoid beverages with alcohol or caffeine, like coffee, black tea, soda with caffeine like colas, Mountain Dew and specialty high energy drinks.
- Minimize heat exposure by staying in an air conditioned environment especially during the hottest part of the day.
- Minimize sun exposure by wearing protective clothing and sunscreen when spending time outdoors.
- Wear loose fitting clothes; light colors help.
- Take frequent breaks when outside.
- Stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Do not do a lot of exercise or strenuous activities in the middle of the day. If it is cool out and you want to walk/run, do it in the early morning or later in the evening when it is cooler out.
- Monitor body temperature and seek medical assistance when concerning symptoms develop.

Heat Problems

A person can have a range of heat problems, from mild to very severe.

Mild Heat Problem/Heat Cramps: A person could have swelling of the hands/feet, rash, cramps in the stomach or leg muscles, or fainting with standing up, heat rash (small pinkish pimples in areas under clothes).

Heat Exhaustion: Symptoms are heavy sweating, weakness, cool, pale, clammy skin, weak pulse, and possible nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, cramps in the stomach area or in the hands/feet, funny skin sensations around the lips or hands/feet, and/or feeling dizzy or faint with standing

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National Alliance on Mental Illness
Portage-Wood Counties

Summer Heat (con't.)

up. The body temperature is low or normal. Skin is cold, pale, 'ashen-gray', and clammy. Blood pressure could be low; heart beat is fast and breathing is fast. (If a person is on a beta-blocker like inderal or metoprolol, the heart rate may not go up much. The person may have more symptoms of fainting/dizziness with standing up.)

Heat Stroke: Symptoms are severely elevated temperature (often over 105 degrees.), vomiting, hot/dry skin and fast heart rate. In later stages, the person can develop changes in thinking (alertness, conversation, knowing where they are, confusion), drowsiness, lethargy or agitation, and ataxia (can't walk in a straight line). They may also have seizures and loss of consciousness (coma). The skin can be sweaty if the person has been doing vigorous exercise. Blood pressure could be very high or become low when the heat stroke is more severe. This is a medical emergency. The body temperature needs to be cooled to less than 104 quickly, within 30 minutes.

What to do for overheating:

For mild symptoms, get to a cool place, lie down, and drink fluids. Be sure to take in more fluids, 2 plastic water bottles is 1 liter. Try to drink 1 liter, wait 45-60 minutes and drink more if your stomach is not too full.

Cool off first: Things to try to cool off include using cold water or water soaked washcloths/towels or cold packs on the cheeks, palms of the hands, and bottoms of the feet have been found to work better than placing them on the neck, top of the head, arm pits or on the wrists. Cooling with cold paks may be enough with mild symptoms and heat exhaustion.

If a person has symptoms of heat stroke, get them to a cool place if you can do it quickly and put on cold packs/washcloths or ice then call 911.

Lithium Toxicity

Summer heat increases the risk of dehydration, which raises the level of lithium in the body and can cause lithium toxicity. When lithium levels become too high, permanent damage to the kidneys and death can result. The symptoms of lithium toxicity are tremor, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, muscle weakness, confusion, and drowsiness. If you think you might have lithium toxicity, seek medical assistance immediately.

Interested in sharing your experience and supporting others?

Training to be a mentor for the Consumer Peer Support will be held Sept 12-13 in Portage. The main requirement is that you have a mental health condition yourself so that you are a 'peer'. Deadline to contact us and submit information is July 29.

Would you like to help us reach out to more people?

Even if you don't have the time to become a teacher or support group leader, we can still use your help. There are things that happen once in a while and take shorter amounts of time, like folding newsletters or delivering brochures and other more glamorous stuff! Call 715-254-1864.

What is NAMI?

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is a grassroots, nonprofit organization. It was started in 1979 in Madison by two women who were frustrated with the absence of support and information for the family members of people with mental illness. The organization later expanded to include consumers (people with mental illness). NAMI now has national, state, and local tiers. The basic mission is to provide support, advocacy, and education for people whose lives are affected by mental illness. At the state and national levels, NAMI also works to promote research that would benefit people with mental illness (see www.nami.org). Our local affiliate, NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, offers support groups for families and consumers, led by trained facilitators. We also hold or participate in general meetings featuring guest speakers, discussions, or videos. These programs are open to the public, and are free and open to the public. Activities are funded through grants, donations, and memberships dues.

Changes in Mental Health Services in Portage and Wood Counties

As many of you may already be aware, there are changes happening in both counties with decreasing number of psychiatrists at Marshfield and Ministry Medical which has resulted in a decreased number of inpatient beds available at Norwood hospital. They have six months to find other psychiatrists to provide services at Norwood or it will close. In addition, Wood County Health Department has limited its mental health services to existing clients and those in crisis. This will affect many of us. In the short run, our concern is that there is a smooth transition whenever possible so that medication refills happen smoothly.

We would like to say that it will be a smooth transition for people to connect with current psychiatrists for regular appointments but the reality is, there are waiting lists already and losing psychiatrists will only make it worse.

Differences in how 'urgent' needs are handled in our healthcare systems - physical vs. mental health issues

The other day, I was looking at a webpage on some health topic. There was a big ad from Marshfield Clinic about 'same day appointments'. This is not just about Marshfield Clinic, it is a goal of medical clinics everywhere to re-arrange their system so that there are same-day appointment slots or urgent slots so people don't have to use Urgent Care Clinics and especially not go to the ER to get care that is needed for medical conditions.

This is completely different from the experience in mental health. In mental health, if we notice a change and think we need to talk with the psychiatrist and possibly need an adjustment in medications, we are lucky to get a 'same-month' appointment if someone has canceled their appointment. We are referred to the ER if we need help immediately.

There is frustration with the healthcare system but it is not just the healthcare system and lack of psychiatrists that is the problem. And we are not the only ones who are frustrated. Everyone involved in mental health care is frustrated - people with the conditions, family, psychiatrists, mental health counselors, County Services, law enforcement, ERs, hospitals. Have we left anyone out?

Where do we go from here?

It's time we understand the issues better and find new ways to provide care, help people recover from acute events and find a new balance with their chronic health condition - whether it's a mental health condition, diabetes, heart disease or arthritis. And make them happen here in our community for ourselves and the ones we love.

We will address these issues in coming articles in the newsletter and other venues. If you have some thoughts you'd like to share with us, please send them in - kay@namiportagewoodcounties.org or call 715-254-1864.

Hoarding Education and Support Group

Hoarding can be a complicated and challenging practice which often affects people's health and welfare. Support groups are forming in Stevens Point, Nekoosa and Wisconsin Rapids. If you or someone you know would like education and support for hoarding issues, please plan to attend.

The first meeting is an educational session for all. Follow-up meetings will be a combination of education and support. It is open to people who identify themselves as possibly or definitely dealing with hoarding and for concerned family/friends whose family member seems to be hoarding. As the group grows, we will separate the two so we can pay more attention to the different issues and concerns and keep confidentiality. These meetings are free and open to the public.

Stevens Point	Nekoosa	Wisconsin Rapids
July 1 - Wed Aug 5 - Wed	June 24 - Wed July 22 - Wed Aug 26 - Wed	June 23 - Tues July 14 - Tues Aug 11 - Tues
6:30-8 pm	6:30-8 pm	6:30-8 pm
St Paul United Methodist Church 600 Wilshire Blvd, SP	Charles & Joanne Lester Public Library 100 Park St, Nekoosa	Central Wisconsin Cultural Center 240 Jefferson St Wi Rapids

Parent Education and Support Groups

Parents have asked for a chance to get together to share information and support when a child or youth is experiencing behavioral or emotional symptoms. This group is for all parents and caregivers of children who have depression, anger issues and other social and mental health related concerns. These meetings are free and open to the public.

Stevens Point	Nekoosa	Wisconsin Rapids
July 2 - Thurs Aug 12 - Wed	June 17 - Wed July 15 - Wed Aug 19 - Wed	June 4 - Thurs July - 7 - Tues Aug 4 - Tues (tentative)
6:30-8 pm	6:30-8 pm	6:30-8 pm
St Paul United Methodist Church 600 Wilshire Blvd, SP	Charles & Joanne Lester Public Library 100 Park St, Nekoosa	Central Wisconsin Cultural Center (CWCC) 240 Jefferson St, Wi Rapids

Ministry's Fourth Monday Mental Wellness Group and NAMI Social

Meeting Schedule

Held on the fourth Monday of each month at Ministry Home Care Building, 2501 Main St. Oak Room, Stevens Point, 6:00 p.m.

June 29: Jason Ruenger, Health and Wellness Specialist - "Health and Wellness in Mental Health"

July 27: Megan Grasser, Behavioral Health Specialist - "Stress Reduction and Coping Skills"

August 24: Ken Tessen, Counselor - "Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy"

September 28: Sarah Lauterbach, Counselor - Forgiving to Health (does that work)

October 26: Aaron Holt, Counselor - Creating a Good Support System

November 30: Ron Matthew, Psychologist - Abuse and Psychological Trauma

December 28: Michelle Nelson, Therapist - Setting Goals

May's Fourth Monday Meeting on Anger

A dozen NAMI members gathered for Julie Hintzman's presentation on anger. The session opened with the handout, *A Very Important Message*, which told us "No one makes us mad; no one makes us worry; no one makes us aggravated, etc." The truth is that we have our own feelings and that no one is powerful enough to make us feel a particular emotion. Taking responsibility for our own feelings helps us better manage our own mental wellness.

We learned that anger is useful when it is expressed in a way that contributes to positive change in our lives. It is dysfunctional when it is expressed abusively, held in, and when it is experienced too intensely or too long. It is necessary to believe that one can and does control his own anger in order to change unwanted anger and abusive behavior. How people deal with their own anger is a choice except perhaps in extreme cases of lack of impulse control.

Healthy anger is normal, a signal of issues that need to be dealt with, temporary, and expressed without loss of control. Healthy anger is never abusive.

Prescription Drug Abuse Presentations

Mike Slavin, therapist with Ministry Behavioral Health Treatment Center, gave a presentation on prescription drug abuse on June 18. He shared how prescription opiates and heroin have become such a serious and prevalent problem because of the highly addictive nature of these substances combined with the serious risk of overdose. Ten years ago, less than 10% of people in treatment for addiction were using heroin; currently, 40 to 50% are there for opiate/heroin addiction.

Opiate abuse often starts with use of prescription pain medications, often spiraling into addiction. When prescriptions can no longer be obtained legally or illegally, heroin use often begins. In recent years, physicians have come to prescribe more carefully to reduce the number of available opiate medications in any given community. In many areas, law enforcement officers carry Naloxone (Narcan) that can save lives of those who could overdose. Suboxone, methadone, and naltrexone are other medications that can be used to help treat this serious addiction.

It was suggested that nothing can really alleviate the problem unless the person with the addiction can take ownership of the abuse or addiction and work toward making healthier choices. Other commonly abused prescription medications include benzodiazepines, such as Xanax, Valium, and Lorazepam. Use of such medications is not advised for people with a history of addiction.

An important point made is that people living with addiction need to be treated not only medically but emotionally and psychologically as well. Those who suffer with addictions are not "bad people"; they are deserving of treatment and respect. Much education, empathy and followup services are needed to successfully manage these serious conditions.

Come join us for these presentations every fourth Monday at 2501 Main St. at 6:00 p.m.

Express yourself in art - create a collage with us

Stevens Point: July 21 6:30-8:30pm; Nekoosa: July 25. Call for dates and times in July. Sign up to be sure we have enough supplies for everyone. 715-254-1864.

Party – Celebration of MILC's 15th Anniversary

Wednesday, July 15th from 3:00-7:00 pm, 3262 Church St, Stevens Point. Live music, bake sale, arts & crafts and face painting, service animal demonstrations and more. Come celebrate this special anniversary of Midstate Independent Living Consultants, and the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A Celebration for Marvin and Jan Lutz

At least 40 people attended the dinner and program to honor Marvin and Jan Lutz for their strong leadership with NAMI Portage-Wood since they became members in 1996. Marvin served as treasurer from 1998 to 2002 and has been president from 2003 until January 2015, at which time he gratefully passed the presidency on to Kay Jewell. He also has been a long-time support group leader and Family to Family teacher.

Jan was a huge help and supporter by serving as Marvin's Personal Secretary throughout the years. She also contributed greatly by teaching a peer course locally and later trained in Tennessee to teach others in Wisconsin to teach in their affiliates. She has also been quite instrumental in writing grants and articles on mental health conditions for various publications.

Although Marvin's presidency is over, we are thankful that he and Jan will remain active volunteers. Their tremendous leadership and generosity, kindness, dedication, and compassion are truly exemplary.

Jan Lutz had this to say after the celebration: "Marvin and I would like to thank everyone who attended the celebration in honor of his many years of service to NAMI. It was touching to see so many of you from all areas of our NAMI involvement. We thank everyone who helped plan, provided food, decorated, set up, cleaned up, or helped in any other way. All the cards and gifts and kind words are appreciated. It was an evening we will long remember with gratitude."

Mike's Run—Mental Health Awareness Walk/Run to be held in Marshfield June 20th

Marshfield Clinic and the family and friends of Mike Hackman who ended his battle with depression five years ago are hosting this walk to raise funds for mental health services and to increase awareness of mental health problems while providing a message of hope.

When: Saturday, June 20, 2015

Where: Marshfield, WI

Cost: \$20 registration fee for the run; \$15 registration fee for the walk

Registration and information: marshfieldclinic.org/mikes-ride-run
or call Rita at 715-897-5215.

Creative Corner

This is a new section—to explore and celebrate each other's creativity. Because we're starting our Poetry Group in June, we are featuring a poem.

My name is Shannon Iliadis. I have been writing poetry since I was 12 years old. I had depression when I was 26 years old, but when I turned 34 I was diagnosed with depression with psychotic features. I suffered from auditory hallucinations and that's when my writing became really interesting. I have written over a thousand poems in my life. The following poem I wrote in Boston. I knew Kerem and his suicide deeply affected me.

Kerem

it is raining inside my heart
it is raining inside my heart

in Istanbul blood spills over the broken concrete
I can hear the women in the street
screaming
even here in America, I can hear it

French is your mother tongue
Turkey is the land you come from
America is where you earned your PhD

on this ordinary overcast day
your bedroom window is where you set yourself free
like a feather
lighter than air
the weight of the world was weighing you down

yours is a fragile heart

Did you hear a siren's song? Did it help you move along?
Did you feel that in this world you did not belong?

it is raining inside my heart
it is raining inside my heart

—Shannon Iliadis

Walk for Hope, September 12: SAVE THE DATE!

The Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness Coalition of Portage County invites you to participate in the annual Walk for Hope. Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 12 in Stevens Point. More information can be found at

suicidepreventionportagecounty.org

or by calling Cathy Severin (local NAMI contact) at 715-347-1158.

Notes from the NAMI Wisconsin Conference

Five people from our affiliate were at the Annual Meeting. We've written up some comments about the sessions we attended.

Emotional CPR – Recovery through Dialogues with Individuals, Families and Community—reported by Sherry Lieber

One of the keynote speakers was Daniel Fisher, MD, PhD. He talked about his experience throughout his life before and after he developed schizophrenia. He reaffirms the idea that people recover from severe mental health issues and trauma but notes that there is not an understanding of what the best ways are to implement recovery principles. He believes that dialogue is a crucial neglected early step in recovery. He developed a system called Emotional CPR. Emotional CPR stands for C=Connecting, P=emPowering, and R=Revitalizing.

Emotional CPR—Intentions

1. I will use my eyes, my ears and my heart to feel your presence in my being (Connecting)
2. I will share my emotional response in being with you and I will stay with you (Connecting)
3. I will not fix you or judge you but be with you (em-Powering)
4. I am not sure what is best for you but together we will uncover your power. (emPowering)
5. We are creating life together in the present moment (Revitalizing)

The Fit Life—reported by Martin Lieber

Mental illness is best treated if it is approached on all possible fronts (medicine, private therapy, group support, etc). Exercise and lots of physical activity is another approach that works. It's free. You don't have to join an exercise club or the YMCA. All it might cost you is a strong commitment on your part. Some days you will have to force yourself to do it, but it could have a great impact on reducing depression and building up your emotional state.

Other benefits of exercise: You will get lots of fresh air for your

lungs and oxygen for your brain to help think more clearly and rationally. You will have the opportunity to reflect on the created world around you. You have time to meditate and reflect on your goals and aims and how you can make them happen. Plus, it will raise your endorphins for better physical and emotional health.

The Mind-Body Connection: Therapeutic Massage and Mental Health—reported by Sherry Lieber

While many benefits of massage are still disconcertingly uncertain and hotly debated (by some), there are two proven ones. Massage researcher and psychologist Dr. Christopher explains that the only truly confirmed benefits of massage are its effects on mood and sleep.

Massage reduces depression, anxiety and blood pressure and improves sleep while increasing serotonin, dopamine and oxytocin (the trust hormone).

NAMI Education Programs Set for Fall

Family to Family starts September 3rd

NAMI Family to Family is a twelve week course for family members, caregivers and friends of individuals living with a mental health condition. The class is designed to increase your knowledge about mental illness, improve your coping and problem-solving skills, and reduce your own anxiety about mental illness. The course is free.

When: Thursdays, beginning September 3, 2015, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Where: St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 600 Wilshire Blvd., Stevens Point

Information/Registration: Call Kathy Hartman 715-341-4483 or email at kathyahartman@me.com

Peer to Peer to be held in Point and Rapids

The NAMI Peer to Peer course meets for ten weeks and is a unique, experiential and free learning program for people with a mental health condition who are interested in establishing and maintaining their wellness and recovery.

When: Sept. 8th (Stevens Point) and Sept. 10th (Rapids) 6:30–8:30 pm

Where: St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 600 Wilshire Blvd., Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids TBA

Information/Registration: Call 715-254-1864



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Portage-Wood Counties

NAMI Portage-Wood Counties
P.O. Box 990
Stevens Point, WI 54481

FIRST CLASS MAIL

June–July 2015

REGISTER TODAY!
NAMI Family to Family Class and
NAMI Peer to Peer Classes begin in September
DETAILS ON PAGE 7

Your Membership Helps Support NAMI Portage-Wood Counties

Full Membership, Annual: Full members receive regular mailings from NAMI Portage-Wood Counties, NAMI Wisconsin, and NAMI National. Donations and membership fees are tax deductible.

Make checks payable to NAMI Portage-Wood Counties. Mail with this form to:
Jan Way, Treasurer, 1203 Wilshire Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54482 715-572-5802

Name: _____ Organization, if applicable _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Telephone Number: (_____) _____ *E-mail Address: _____

**The NAMI Portage-Wood Counties newsletter is sent by e-mail.*

If you would like a hard copy, check here and please add \$7 to your membership below.

Please select your type of membership:

Individual \$35 Open Door \$3* Please accept my \$ _____ donation in addition to my membership.

The following levels of support include standard membership. The amount in excess of \$35 will be designated as an unrestricted donation and is tax-deductible as provided by law.

\$50 Family/Friend \$75 Mental Health Professional \$100 Corporate Community Partner
 \$250 Mental Health Advocate \$500 Champion