

February Meeting Information

Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 19, 7:30 pm. **Guest Speaker:** Brian Haywood, Area Agency on Aging will provide information on Senior Care Services and Domiciliary Care Services.

United Way Contributor Code is 2253.

NAMI Pittsburgh South

meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (excluding the month of August) at 7:30 p.m. at Southminster House. Southminster House is at 801 Washington Road, Mt. Lebanon, directly across the drive from the Mt. Lebanon Public Library.

Email contact:

nami.south@gmail.com

President: Gerry Dugan

Vice-President: Carol Cadonic

Treasurer: Rick Beran

Have something to add to the newsletter? Email at

nami.south@gmail.com to have your piece reviewed and added to the next newsletter.

For local support groups contact

NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania:
412-366-3788 or 1-888-264-7972

Web: www.namikeystonepa.org
Email: info@namikeystonepa.org

NAMI CONNECTION PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP

Meets 2nd & 4th Monday of every month, at the Dormont Library (upstairs), 6-7:15 pm. No need to register. For information contact NAMI Keystone PA at 412-366-3788 or info@namikeystonepa.org.

Contact us via email... Get in touch with NAMI Pittsburgh South at nami.south@gmail.com. In the case of cancellation due to bad weather, please follow the Mt. Lebanon Twp. cancellation directives announced on the media. If Mt. Lebanon cancels activities and meetings, the NAMI meeting will also be cancelled. As always, use your best judgement and be safe.

2019 Meeting Calendar

Next meeting: March 18, 7:30 pm. This meeting will be a Care and Share family support group format.

2020 Membership Dues are due. Dues can be paid online at www.nami.org or, you can print the form from the back page of this newsletter and mail it to the PO box. Lastly, please consider receiving your newsletter via email as mailing costs continue to rise.

www.namikeystonepa.org

Visit the NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania website for information for awareness events, conferences, and NAMI support group information.

<https://www.namikeystonepa.org/support/support-groups/>

<https://www.namikeystonepa.org/nami-events/>

<https://childmind.org/article/help-with-an-eating-disorder-in-college/>

How to Help Someone With an Eating Disorder in College

By Rae Jacobson

The first step to helping someone with an eating disorder is to recognize that it's a mental health problem, and not just foolish dieting. It can also have serious medical consequences.

Eating disorders can have a severe impact on physical health, with effects ranging from tooth decay to fatal heart attacks. ED sufferers are significantly more likely to attempt or commit suicide and many also engage in other self-

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

If you need assistance dealing with any type of mental illness, the following organizations are available.

National NAMI Help Line

1-800-950-NAMI/ Web: www.nami.org

SUPPORT

ALANON 412-572-5141

Allegheny Co. Peer Support Warmline

1-866-661-WARM (9276)

10 am – Midnight daily

Depression and Bipolar Support

Alliance Mood Peer Support

Contact: Ray Millsap

Phone: (412) 379-3902

Email: moodpeerspgh@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.moodpeerspgh.org/>

St. Clair Hospital has partnered with Chartiers Mental Health to facilitate a **Mental Health Support Group** in Bridgeville. Family members are welcome to attend.

1st Tuesday of each month 6:30 - 7:30 pm.
Bridgeville Library, 505 McMillen Street
Additional Information: St. Clair Hospital Psychiatry and Mental Health Services at 412.942.4850

Mental Health Support Group

Christ United Methodist Church
Bethel Park 412-942-4800

NAMI McKeesport Support Group

3rd Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm.
Penn State McKeesport Campus
Contact: AnnaLisa 412-527-6600

NAMI Borderline Personality Disorder, Family Support Group

3rd Saturday of the month, 11- 1 pm.
105 Braunlich Dr, Suite 230, Pgh PA 15237
Contact Jo at 724-776-5974

NAMI Pittsburgh East-FAMILIAS

4th Wednesday of each month, 7-9 p.m.
Beulah Presbyterian Church, Churchill
Contact Mim at 412-731-4855

VISIT www.namikeystonepa.org for more
NAMI Support Groups in Pittsburgh.

harming behaviors such as cutting and struggle with isolation, depression, and anxiety.

“People need to understand the reality of having an eating disorder,” urges a 24-year-old woman who is now in recovery. “This is not vanity. I was sick and my sickness could truly, honestly have killed me, but people still thought I could turn it off. They thought I was just doing it because I wanted to look better.”

Dr. Allison Baker, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, notes that this is not an uncommon misperception. “If we could move past the idea that these are willful decisions that are made rationally rather than real illnesses that need treatment and our understanding and support, we would be in such a better place.”

Talk about it

“The majority of college age kids want to connect with their family and friends about their mental health,” says Dr. Baker. “Don’t be afraid that you’re going to make a situation worse or cause something by bringing it up. Avoiding and ignoring usually leads to things getting worse, not better.”

That said, it can be hard to open a dialogue about such a serious issue. Try to be calm and non-judgmental. Instead of focusing on her appearance, stick to how you are worried about her unhealthy behaviors and the harmful effect they are having on her. The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) recommends using “I statements” like “I am concerned” or “It makes me afraid” instead of “you statements” like “You need to stop,” which can make people feel guilty or defensive.

Also, be prepared to listen. People with eating disorders often deny that they have a problem, or have complicated feelings about getting better. It is important to take her feelings into account and make her feel heard. If you need to, revisit the conversation later. For you to be helpful you will need to be supportive and persistent.

These talks can be intense and emotional, and are best done in person. If your child is going to a college away from home, it is worth making the trip to visit her as often as you need to.

Here are some more tips for having a productive conversation. NEDA also has an online Navigator Program that helps people with eating disorders or their family and friends with individualized support and guidance about recovery.

Don’t wait

Seeking eating disorder treatment is the first step to recovery and the sooner someone gets into treatment, the better. The longer one lives with an eating disorder, the tougher it is to shake, and the more likely she is to relapse later.

Help on campus

College campuses are required by law to provide basic mental health services. College counseling services are usually included in tuition and can be very good. They can also provide referrals for more specialized care if necessary. Some schools may also have active, student-run ED support groups or other helpful programs.

**Adult Survivors of Suicide,
Bereavement Group**, Contact:
Jamey Covaleski 412-864-3346

PSAN Warm and Friendly Call Program

Some peers need a reassurance call, someone to check in and say hello. Other people might need a reminder call to notify them of an upcoming appointment. Contact 412-894-2364 Sunday through Thursday 2 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. to enroll.

Well Spouse Support Group — Meets the first Wednesday of each month in Churchill. Contact: Mim Schwartz 412-731-4855

Trichotillomania (BFRB) Support Groups

Contact: Monica Garrick Drago, MD, MSW
11676 Perry Hwy Suite 1204
Wexford, Pennsylvania 15090
Phone: (724) 799-8300
Email: bfrb.pittsburgh@gmail.com
Website: <http://bfrb.org>

**ALLEGHENY COUNTY PEER-SUPPORT/
DROP-IN CENTERS**

A Drop-In Center is a central place for self-help, advocacy, education and socialization. A Center generally provides an opportunity for socializing and networking that addresses the isolation felt by many, especially those in mental health recovery.

Chain of Hope – Pittsburgh 412-247-5018
Maverick – New Kensington 724-334-2386
New Horizons – Bellevue 412-766-8060
Olive Branch – Tarentum 412-224-1600
Peoples Oakland — Pittsburgh 412-683-7140
Wellsprings – Pittsburgh 412-263-2545.

Interested in Peer support?

Looking to use your story to inspire recovery? The Pennsylvania Peer Support Coalition offers information on statewide peer support initiatives, job openings, training opportunities and much more!

<https://papeersupportcoalition.org/>

If your child is feeling overwhelmed, you can help him—boys develop eating disorders too — by researching the treatment options at his college. Some schools may even let you make an appointment for him, although you shouldn't expect to receive any medical information from his doctor because of privacy concerns.

Online assistance

There are some great communities for people with eating disorders online. Finding a place to get support or participating in real world meet-ups can be a good way to bolster recovery. NEDA has forums that offer a great window into the world of online ED support.

Like any good thing on the internet, there are also ED sites that have a dangerous dark side. Avoid anything labeled as “pro-ana” (pro-anorexia), “pro-mia” (pro-bulimia), or “thinspo.” Far from providing assistance, these “thinspiration” sites promote eating disorders by posting things like pictures of extremely thin bodies or tips on how to starve more effectively.

NEDA's site offers a range services and supports including a comprehensive guide to which colleges offer what services, as well as links to support groups nationwide, and a helpline.

Financial help

For more severe eating disorders, more comprehensive or in-patient treatment is sometimes necessary. Since residential programs can be very costly, there are also organizations that offer support. Founded by two women in recovery, Project Heal provides treatment scholarships on a case-by-case basis. They also offer a large online community that is open to anyone seeking support and advice. NEDA's site also offers treatment coverage resources, forums, and advice on accessing affordable treatment options.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/01/200127164325.htm>

Research leads to life changing improvement for some people living with depression

By Kelly Johnston | January 27, 2020

Beth MacKay knew at a young age that she saw the world differently than many of her friends and family. She thought her pessimism and cynicism were rooted in realism, a proud reminder of her Scottish roots, and not a sign of an underlying medical condition. But, that understanding of herself changed when at the age of 17, she attempted suicide.

“I was diagnosed with depression, but looking back, it started much earlier,” says MacKay, now 31. “Doctors believe it may have started when I was 10 or 11-years-old. As a child I would go through periods where I couldn't sleep, I didn't want to go to school, and I was constantly sick.”

MacKay's parents tried to find help and support for her. They thought her symptoms may have been related to a learning disorder, but no one suspected depression could be the cause.

ASSISTANCE

Physical Health Plans
Member Services Gateway
1-800-392-1147

UPMC Health Plan, Inc. /UPMC for You
1-800-286-4242

MedPlus 1-800-414-9025

PA Health Law Project 1-800-274-3258
or 1-866-236-6310 TTY.

The PennFree Program is a twelve month rental subsidy program designed to empower recovering men and women to regain their independence. Participants in PennFree are homeless, recovering, single men and women, single men and women with children and families. Please go to www.familylinks.org. Click on "Housing" for various housing programs.

Refer the Uninsured Project
The PA Health Law Project is presently asking for uninsured persons to call their Helpline at (800) 274-3258 or TTY line (866) 236-6310. All callers will be screened for any possible insurance or free health care services currently available to them.

Squirrel Hill Health Center —
For uninsured individuals, the co-pay is \$15 if the individual is above 200% of the poverty level. Hours are M-TH 9am-5pm, Fri 8 am – 4 pm. Tuesday evening and Sunday morning hours are also available. They provide primary care and have a number of specialists working with them. Please contact Rebecca LaBovick, Director of Therapeutic Homeless Services at the Community Human Services Corporation at 412-621-6513 x 101.

Community Care Behavioral Health
Member Services 1-800-553-7499

Prescribed anti-depressants and therapy, MacKay went on to university. She noticed everyone around her seemed to be functioning, but she couldn't get out of bed. She spent the next several years pretending to be okay. She would sleep most of the day, and get up-and-out only long enough to put on a front to show people she was fine. It seemed that no matter what treatment options she tried nothing made life manageable.

"Everyday felt like climbing up a mountain. Something as simple as showering, doing dishes or throwing in a load of laundry felt too difficult at times," recalls MacKay.

Always open to trying something else to improve her life, MacKay volunteered for a research study at the University of Calgary. Dr. Rajamannar Ramasubbu, MD, was investigating the effects of two different methods of deep brain stimulation (DBS), short pulse and long pulse, for treatment-resistant depression.

"It can be very difficult to find study participants for research like this," says Ramasubbu, a professor in the departments of Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, and member of The Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research & Education and the Hotchkiss Brain Institute at the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM). "The procedure is invasive, so many clinicians are reluctant to recommend it. It requires implanting an electrode into the brain that is connected to a pulse generator that is implanted under the clavicle into the chest."

Just as pacemakers deliver electrical impulses to help control abnormal heart rhythms, DBS devices deliver electrical impulses to help neurons (brain cells) within the brain communicate more efficiently with each other.

"Depression is caused by abnormalities in the neural circuit responsible for emotional regulation," says Ramasubbu. "The region of the brain we target (subcallosal cingulate) is the junction of the limbic and frontal regions. Stimulating this area helps to keep a balance between these two unique systems."

Multi-disciplinary team collaborates on DBS study

Participants are awake when the device is implanted. Dr. Zelma Kiss, MD/PhD, a neurosurgeon and co- principal investigator of the study performed the procedure at the Foothills Medical Centre (FMC).

Participants were randomized into two groups, one group received short pulse stimulation, the other long pulse width stimulation. After six months, treatment switched for those who did not respond in the first six months. Researchers used the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale to measure change in symptoms.

"Both methods of stimulation were equally safe and effective in reducing depressive symptoms," says Ramasubbu. "50 per cent of the participants responded to the stimulation with 50 per cent reduction in symptoms. Of which 30 per cent experienced complete improvement in their symptoms, especially those who received long pulse width stimulation."

MacKay says she's experienced a massive change. "Basically I was nearly dead and now I'm mostly alive. I'm still figuring out what life feels like,

COMPASS is a website that allows individuals and community-based organizations access to screen for, apply for, and renew a broad range of social programs. It is a single access point for:

- Health Care Coverage
- Food Stamp Benefits
 - Cash Assistance
 - Long Term Care
- Home and Community Based Services for individuals with mental retardation
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
- Free or Reduced Price School Meals
- SelectPlan for Women
- Child Care Works

COMPASS also provides screening for the programs above, which allows a user to provide basic information to determine if they potentially qualify for a service. For more information, visit <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/compass.web/cmhom.aspx>

RESOURCES

Allegheny County MH Emergency Line
412-350-4457 (24 Hour Service)

Allegheny County Jail Forensic Service
412-350-4273

Allegheny County Ombudsman
1-877-787-2424

re:solve Crisis Network
1-888-796-8226. Call before a crisis becomes a crisis.

Depression & Anxiety
1-800-888-9383

Research Into the Causes of Schizophrenia 412-624-0823

Research Brain Tissue Donation Information 412-624-0331

NAMI Veterans Resource Center

NAMI launched this online portal to mental health resources for American veterans, active duty service members and their families. To check out this resource visit www.nami.org

Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh Hotline

412-687-8005

because it feels so different and so much better than before the implant.”

Ramasubbu adds more research is needed to determine which patients with treatment resistant depression will benefit from DBS. Study participants ranged in age from 20 to 70, with younger participants showing better improvement than older participants.

<https://www.namikeystonepa.org/education/conferences/camhcon2020/>



RESILIENT YOUTH
strategies to overcome adversity



Friday, February 28, 2020
Pittsburgh Airport Marriott Hotel

NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania's fourth annual Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference will take place on Friday, February 28, 2020, at the Pittsburgh Airport Marriott. The conference, "Resilient Youth: Strategies to Overcome Diversity," is one of the only events in the region specializing in youth mental health. Participants from all over the country attend to learn about the newest research and best practices to assist and advance the mental health needs of young children, adolescents, and young adults

The conference is geared toward parents and caregivers, mental health professionals, educators, and students.

Conference includes 3 keynote presenters, 12 workshop presentations, Continuing Education Credits, and over 40 exhibitors from across the country. Registration fee also includes breakfast and lunch.

<https://www.namikeystonepa.org/education/conferences/camhcon2020/>

Featured Presenters:



"Building Resiliency: The Role Attachment-Based Family Therapy Can Play in Treating Youth Suicide and Depression"

Suzanne A. Levy, PhD, Director, Attachment-Based Family Therapy (ABFT), Training Program, Drexel University's College of Nursing and Health Professions

"When Youth Feel Helpless and Out of Control: What You Can Do to Build Emotional Resilience During Adolescence"

Kate Fitzsimons, International Youth Speaker, Student Resilience Specialist, Certified Life Coach



"Creating a Movement: Why Young Voices Matter"

Elle Snyder, Founding Member, Upper St. Clair Student Wellness Steering Committee

NAMI South Hills Chapter
PO BOX 14884
Pittsburgh, PA 15234

First Class

NAMI Pittsburgh South Membership Form 2020

Make checks payable to: NAMI Pittsburgh South and mail to NAMI South Hills Chapter,
PO Box 14884, Pittsburgh PA 15234.

Our United Way Contributor Code is 2253.

____ Enclosed is my check for \$5 for an Open Door/Limited Income membership
____ Enclosed is my check for \$40 for an Individual membership
____ Enclosed is my check for \$60 for a Household membership

____ Enclosed is my check for a donation of \$____. I am interested in helping with the work
of your organization.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Newsletters will be sent electronically. ___