



NAMI

Pensacola

National Alliance on Mental Illness

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Connection Support Group to be Offered in Pensacola

NAMI Pensacola will hold a bimonthly support group for those in our community who suffer from mental illness, starting in January. This month, two facilitators will be trained in Panama City, in cooperation with NAMI Bay County and NAMI Emerald Coast. The NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group is a free, peer-led support group for adults living with mental illness. Those attending will gain insight from hearing about the challenges and successes of others, and the group will be led by NAMI-trained facilitators who've been there.

NAMI's Support Groups are unique in that they follow a structured model to ensure that those in the group have an opportunity to be heard and to get what they need. By sharing experiences in a safe and confidential setting, attendees can gain hope and develop relationships. The group encourages empathy, productive discussion and a sense of community.

Among the aims of the support group are to: See the individual first, not the illness; Recognize that mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers; Aim for better coping skills; Find strength in sharing experiences; Forgive ourselves and do not entertain guilt; Reject stigma and not tolerate discrimination; and Work for a better future in a realistic way.

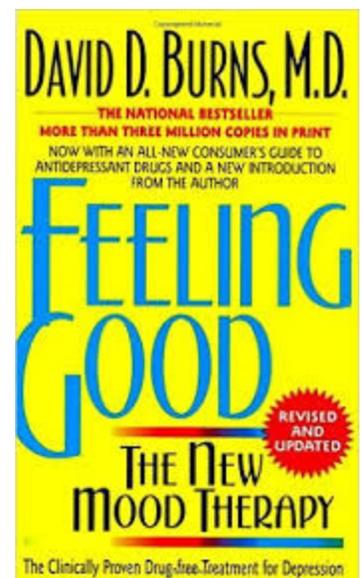
Some of those who attended have said: "NAMI Connection has enabled me to take a good look at my illness and see that I am not alone. The program has given me additional tools to not only accept my illness, but to help others along the way." "... People can solve problems [at a NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group]. It isn't just a bunch of sad stories; people are coming up with solutions and stuff to do for the next week. One of our group attendees is taking her meds and getting herself to her counselor and is just about able to go back to her career in great part due to Connection."

We'll have more details next month, and are so pleased to be able to offer this new program. At this time there is no support group in Pensacola, or even in the entire county, for those who suffer from mental illness. It is a need constantly brought to our attention through phone calls and emails from the public.

Recommended by Dr. David Josephs!

Dr. David Josephs, Clinical Director of Lakeview Center, spoke on Overcoming Depression on October 5th at The Morris L. Eaddy Activity Center at Lakeview. A diverse crowd attended, and closely followed his analysis and recommendations regarding this pervasive illness. One of the things he recommended was the book *Feeling Good*, *The New Mood Therapy*, by David D. Burns, MD.

This is the time to order this book for your loved one at Christmas! What better present than a new perspective on mental health? A depression screening tool was made available at the lecture, and can be emailed to you, upon request.



Talk to an LCSW at Our Monthly Support Meeting

NAMI Pensacola holds two meetings per month, for the membership and the public: a support meeting on the second Thursday and an educational meeting on the fourth Thursday. This month, no educational meeting is scheduled due to the holidays. At the Thursday, November 10th support meeting, a mental health professional will be present to answer questions or provide direction for those who need help with their mentally ill family member or friend. Or even for themselves at a very difficult time for them.

Ann Lewis of the office of **Adult Case Management Systems** at Lakeview will be available to talk to those attending. According to her supervisor, Ann is “a fierce and dedicated LCSW.” The abbreviation stands for **Licensed Clinical Social Worker**, which means that this individual has decided to focus on providing therapy in much the same way as an LMHC does. They are required to follow an equally rigorous process of licensure including 3000 hours of supervised training experience.

Tasa Isaak, MS., CMHP, Director of **Adult Case Management Systems** at Lakeview Center will also be available to take phone calls at **Lakeview Center** on her direct line (850) 469-3565, or at the **Case Management Office (Sarah)** at (850) 469-3805, if she is away from desk. **Dennis Goodspeed** of Lakeview Center said, “I think that greater access for information would be to give you a person that members can call at any time of day to get the information they may request.”

The Support Meeting will be held **Thursday, November 10th, 7:00-8:30pm** at Lakeview Center, Building I, 1201 N H Street (between Hernandez & Lakeview).