Between the Iris

Special Edition from NAMI Wisconsin
March 2020

Alone we are strong, together we are stronger!

Conference & Other Events Rescheduled

Helpful information about taxes, federal stimulus package, coping skills, and more
Please don’t social distance yourself or socially isolate. I am not encouraging you to disobey the CDC or health recommendations, I am requesting a name change. How about “physical distance yourself”? Let’s physically keep 6 feet from each other. Let’s not expose our germs to those at high risk by being too close to them or touching communal items like doors or counters. I just want to encourage socializing. I have seen such fun ways people are connecting. Porch visits with grandma while on the driveway. Window waving while grandpa is inside, and grandkids are outside. Sitting at each end of a long table to enjoying a dinner with a friend. My daughter has had FaceTime (Skype) dinner dates with friends. My niece said her young daughters’ teachers have done “wave-byes” where teachers drive by their students houses and wave from their car to let them know they care. While walking my puppy I have seen so many more people on the walking trails enjoying the outdoors with their loved ones and social connecting. With all the youth sports, church services, events, and movies to capture our attention canceled, we have an opportunity to socially connect.

For people living with a mental illness, and quite honestly many who do not identify as living with a mental illness, this can be a very stressful time. Social isolation and separation can be confusing and anxiety provoking. Let’s not socially isolate ourselves, let’s reinvent social interaction to include a 6-foot physical distance policy. Whether it’s technology we use to connect through phone calls or zoom, or an old fashion letter sent in the mail, or a drive by shout and wave, please don’t socially isolate, but physically distance yourself to remain safe. We encourage you to reach out to your local affiliate which you can find on our website, www.namiwisconsin.org, or call our state office 608-268-6000, to find online support groups, warm lines, and other options to help you through this stressful time. Text “hopeline” 741741 to connect with someone or SAMHSA is also offering a Disaster helpline 1-800-985-5990 or Text TalkWithUS at 66746.

Let’s use this time to focus on connecting, socializing, doing those things we said we didn’t have time to do. Let’s socialize, just at a “physical distance”.

NAMI Wisconsin Annual (online) Meeting

The NAMI Wisconsin Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, April 18th at 12 pm, using a digital format. We will review the NAMI Wisconsin 2019 Annual Report, announce voting results, and offer members the opportunity to ask the Board of Directors questions. Find information about the candidate, bylaw changes, and a ballot in the March/April Iris Newsletter or on our website – namiwisconsin.org/iris-newsletters. There are 2 ways to vote: (1) By mail: using the ballot in the newsletter or (2.) Online: electronic voting closes at 10:30 am on April 18th at www.surveymonkey.com/r/PYSGCMV

Please join us on April 18th either by computer via Zoom or by phone:
To join by computer: https://zoom.us/j/6046282533
To join by phone call: 1 (312) 626-6799 Meeting ID: 604 628 2533
Rescheduled Events

NAMI Wisconsin’s Annual Conference 2020

SEPTEMBER 29 & 30
THE Osthoff Resort | Elkhart Lake, WI

With the utmost caution for the health and safety of our conference attendees, we have elected to reschedule our NAMI Wisconsin Annual Conference 2020. We are hoping to make this transition as easy as possible for our NAMI Wisconsin Community and would like to give everyone the following options:

1. If you have already registered and would like to attend the conference this fall, you do not need to take any action. Your registration will automatically be transferred to the new dates.
2. If you have registered and are unable to attend, please contact us directly at (608) 268-6000 by April 30th and we will issue a full refund.
3. If you have not yet registered, but would like to attend the conference this September, you can register on our website: namiwisconsin.org/annual-conference

We thank you for your patience and understanding, as we try to balance the severity of the situation with the needs of our community and families. We look forward to seeing you on the new dates: September 29 & 30, 2020.

ACTION on the SQUARE online

May 7th Virtual Meeting | May 4 - 8 Social Media Campaign

Due to the recent safer at home order, we have decided to move Action on the Square to an online format. There is no cost, but please register to receive additional information, reminders, and to help us keep track of who has participated. We hope you join us in taking action online for mental health! Register at namiwisconsin.org/action-on-the-square

NAMI Wisconsin’s Program Trainings

Due to the utmost caution for the health and safety of our members, some programs, trainings, and classes will have to be canceled or postponed. Please visit our website for a frequently updated list of program dates and deadlines.
Key Messages from Wisconsin Department of Health Services

- You are safer at home. Staying at home will help us flatten the curve and protect the capacity of the health care system.
- The COVID-19 pandemic could trigger a mental health crisis. Do not hesitate to ask for help by calling the SAMHSA Disaster Distress Hotline at 800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUS to 66747.
- While you may not be able to be in the same room with your support system, you can still call or video chat with them.
- Anyone can contract COVID-19. So it’s important for everyone, including young and healthy people, to practice social distancing.
- Together we can make a difference in the fight against COVID-19.
- Stay home if you can and especially if you are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Practice social distancing. Please keep six feet between people and avoid direct physical contact.
- If you have questions or immediate needs related to COVID-19, you can:
  - Text COVID19 to 211-211
  - Visit 211Wisconsin.org
  - Call 211.
- If you are experiencing signs and symptoms of COVID-19, please call your health care provider.

Tax Day Extended

The IRS announced that the federal income tax filing due date is automatically extended from April 15, 2020, to July 15, 2020. Taxpayers do not need to file any additional forms or call the IRS to qualify for this automatic federal tax filing and payment relief. The IRS says they will continue to monitor issues related to the COVID-19 virus, and updated information will be posted on a special coronavirus page on IRS.gov.

Learn more:
www.irs.gov/coronavirus

Federal Stimulus Package

The Federal Government enacted a Stimulus Package that would provide funds to residence of the United States up to $1200 for those making less than $75,000 per year if you are single ($150,000 married couple). Payments will decrease for those that make more and will phase out for those making over $99,000 or married more than $198,000. The payments will NOT count against the Substantial Gainful Activity income limit or for purposes of Medicaid and SNAP. If you filed a 2018 or 2019 form 1040 tax return, you will receive the payment which will be considered a Tax Rebate. If you did not submit a 2018 or 2019 tax return, you will be eligible we encourage you to file a 2019 tax return now. Those who recieve SSDI and SSI, and a family that filed a Special Needs Trust for a family member on SSI will also be eligible for this payment. More information on this process will be available soon.

If you have any questions don’t hesitate to contact our office 608-268-6000.
positive ways to cope

In these uncertain and unprecedented times, it is natural to experience stress and anxiety. However, an awareness of these stressors better positions us to address them. And there are many tools and coping strategies available to combat the strains on our mental health.

Be Mindful Of Your News Consumption
The news can be helpful by encouraging precautions and prevention, but compulsively and obsessively reading and watching about the outbreak can be detrimental to mental health. Here are a few suggestions that may help you follow the news while protecting your mental health.
- Limit your sources to one or two reliable sources
- Accept that the news will not address all your worries
- Only check for updates one or two times a day
- Distinguish between global and local news

Ask someone for help
If you feel you need separation from the news, have a friend or loved one filter the news for you, and give you updates based on a reasonable assessment of what’s relevant to you. This will allow you to reduce direct news consumption.

Stay Connected
Stay connected with friends and family by Skype, FaceTime, email, messenger and text, especially those who may be isolated. Social connectedness is critically important to warding off loneliness and resulting depression.
Wisconsin warmlines include:
- Monarch House (715) 505-5641
- Solstice House (608) 244-5077
- Iris House (920) 815-3217

Take Care Of Yourself
It’s essential to make your health a priority during this time. The critical self-care activities are sleep, physical exercise and a healthy diet. Find ways to address forms of stress, such as journaling, going for walks or calling a loved one. Maintaining a sense of normality and routine can also reduce stress.

Find Things To Do/Distractions
Activities that distract you from current events can be helpful. Keep busy with household chores, free online university courses, movies that should be in theaters are now online, virtual religious meetings, yoga or meditation videos (can be found at doyogawithme.com or calm.com), and so much more!
Help NAMI Wisconsin bring vital education programs to people affected by mental illness.

Yes, I'd like to join NAMI:  □ $5 Open Door Membership □ $40 Regular Membership □ $60 Household Membership
Yes, I'd like to renew my membership:  □ $5 Open Door Membership □ $40 Regular Membership □ $60 Household Membership
Yes, I want to support NAMI Wisconsin with the following gift:
□ $250  □ $100  □ $50  □ $25  □ Other $ ________

Name _____________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________
City __________________________ State __________ Zip __________
Phone: Home __________________________ Cell __________________________ Email __________________________
Please charge $ ___________ to my: □ Visa □ MasterCard
Act # __________________________ Exp. Date ____________
Name on Card __________________________ Signature __________________________
Is your donation being made in memory or in honor of someone special? If so, please complete the following:
□ In memory of: __________________________
□ In honor of: __________________________
Address to which we should send recognition of honoree:
__________________________________________
Donors may be publicly acknowledged. □ Please check here if you prefer your gift to remain anonymous.

Be part of the movement that helps families find help and find hope. 88 cents of every dollar you give to NAMI Wisconsin goes directly to program expenses that support Wisconsin residents. Please consider making a gift to NAMI Wisconsin. Your support is tax-deductable and touches the lives of hundreds of families throughout Wisconsin.

Please consider making a generous gift today.