**

**WINTER 2021**

*NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for access to services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raising awareness of mental health issues.*

Beaver County

**NAMI – BEAVER COUNTY** is an educational, advocacy and support group for families, consumers, and professionals dealing with serious mental health concerns or brain disorders. We support each other by educating ourselves through research, attending conferences, and sharing this information with others. NAMI Beaver County members also offer support through years of experience in dealing with these issues on a personal level.

**Meetings are held at**

**NAMI BEAVER COUNTY OFFICE- 1229 3RD ST., BEAVER, PA. 15009**

**Due to Covid-19, meetings are temporarily being held through ZOOM**

**Monthly Support Meeting, Third Thursday of every month, 7:00 p.m. via ZOOM**

**Weekly Virtual Support Group, Tuesdays, 12:00 noon via ZOOM**

**Partners of Borderline Personality Disorder, Second Monday of every month, 6:30 – on hold – check our website for updates**

**Nar-Anon, Tuesdays, 5:30 pm - check our website for updates**

**Family to Family Class will be starting in Winter 2020 – Please check Facebook and our website for upcoming dates**

**Please email** **rmattia@namibeavercounty.org** **or call 724-888-6877 to register for classes, to subscribe to our newsletter, or with any questions regarding how to access our meetings!**

 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WEBSITE:** www.namibeavercounty.org – check for notices and articles! **Our website has been updated with a link to becoming a member of NAMI and for donations to NAMI Beaver County!**

**FACEBOOK:** Over 400 Likes!!! Please make sure to share our articles and information. We want to continue to grow and provide our message to the county!!

**NAMI.ORG** – Always updating!!

***Contact Rick Mattia at (724)888-6877 or rmattia@namibeavercounty.com for questions or concerns regarding any of the events listed above.***

**Local Resources:** Please check out [www.bc-systemofcare.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cadministrator%5CDesktop%5CN%20Pay%5Cwww.bc-systemofcare.org) for more resources and information from our community partners. Taking care of your mental health can start here!

**Like us on Facebook!! Come see us on Zoom!!**

**We are here for you!!!**

**Sleep Hygiene:**

**While we know that sleep is highly important to our physical well-being, it is also important to our mental health, especially this time of year. Please check out the following article by a Robert Morris student who provided this for us to share:**

If you often find yourself starting at the ceiling in the middle of the night, you are not alone. Sleep is so important, I mean, we spend about a 1/3 of our life doing it, but too often we end up not sleeping well or not sleeping enough. So, if you are going to do something that frequently, why not do it right?

Stages of sleep. I am going to keep this part brief, but it is important to understand a little bit about sleep if you are going to perfect it. There are five stages of sleep. The first 4 stages are considered non-rem sleep and the last is rapid eye movement (REM) sleep: Stage 1 is the lightest stage of sleep that humans reach. Stage 2 typically follows stage 1 and is a deeper stage of sleep than stage 1. Stage 3 and 4 are both considered deep sleep. These stages are called slow wave sleep, during which someone is difficult to awaken. This is when tissues repair, regrow and your body strengthens its immune system. Stage 5, or REM sleep is the stage of sleep that is associated with dreaming.

Sleep is important. The amount of sleep that is recommended differs based on your age. We all know children can sleep forever, but it turns out that most of us probably aren’t getting the amount of recommended sleep. Teenagers should be getting about 8-10 hours of sleep a night while most adults are recommended to get 7-9 hours a night. Who has the time, am I right? Life can get in the way but the importance of getting the recommended amount of sleep is crucial, not only for your mental health but for your physical health as well.

Duration of sleep is important, but so is quality of sleep. Some people have difficulty falling asleep, while others have difficulty staying asleep. There are numerous reasons why your sleep could be interrupted. There has been evidence showing that even if you are sleeping for 8 hours, but it is interrupted sleep, you end up not being efficiently rested and also running into the risks that come with lack of sleep. Insufficient sleep has been linked to the development and management of a handful of health conditions including, but not limited to, depression, obesity, type II diabetes and cardiovascular disease. So here I am to tell you a little bit about how we can improve your sleep, for all you readers to stay healthy AND happy.

Good sleep hygiene: However, having a nightly routine and setting up your sleep schedule is very important to optimizing healthy sleep habits. Developing a nightly routine can take some time but once you do, you want to keep it consistent. You should try and have about 30 minutes of winding down before bedtime. This can consist of relaxation, deep breathing, meditation or mindfulness. There are even apps for your phone, such as Headspace, that can help you wind down before bed. What that 30 minutes should not consist of is screen time.

Having a comfortable mattress and pillow is important, along with blocking out noise and light. As someone who works night shifts, let me tell you that black out curtains are one of the best interventions known to man. Being able to sleep during the day, but having your body think it is nighttime is fantastic. The body also sleeps best when the temperature in the room is cool.

**Importance of Asking Questions with a Doctor:**

**The following article by another Robert Morris student is very important currently, as we navigate telehealth and want to ensure that we are taking the best care of ourselves:**

We go to a doctor’s appointment; we sit and wait in the lobby for what seems like forever. We go back to the exam room and wait, AGAIN. The provider comes in and asks a serious of questions, in what seems to be just checking things off a list. Some questions do not seem like they apply to the current issue, or do they? Who knows! Are all those questions necessary? How will it help me?

It may make more sense to know there are reasons why the provider will ask questions. Rest assured the provider has your health in mind. They are non-judgmental. They do care. You may be reluctant to answer questions and feel they will be critical of your answers. It could be helpful to understand how it relates to your care. Does my doctor really need to know that? The provider asks a lot of personal questions, of course, it is part of your overall well-being. There are things you may not know, and if your provider does not know it could lead to bad results. What they tell you can make a big difference even life changing. Did you know there are a list of things which can affect the levels of the medications you take, like other medications, what you eat, and even drink. For example, if you smoke, drink, at all it can increase or decrease the level of medication in your body. Just know this is your providers job to promote healthy lifestyles and give recommendations. They will recommend you cut back, quit smoking, stop using street drugs, lose weight, gain weight, exercise more, drink water……….and the list goes on.

As a provider we also know people forget to take their medications. Medication works best when taken as prescribed. Research shows nearly 50% of patients do not take their medications as prescribed. The question is why do we forget to take medications or worse, stop taking them? Simply there are times we just forget. Share this with your provider, maybe there are things they can do to help like pill reminder. Another reason is we may experience unpleasant side effects such as upset stomach, nausea, dry mouth, tired, etc., which may lead to stopping medications. Tell your provider they can help with that. It could be as simple as changing the dose or the time it is taken. Maybe the medication is too expensive, they can also help with that! But they do need to know. They may be able to change the medication or adjust the dose to make it cheaper to get. Some medications may cause sexual side effects, and this can be a sensitive topic for you. Your provider really wants to know -you will not be the first person to tell them.

Maybe a family member told you horrible stories about the medication. But let your provider know, they really can help. Another issue is getting your medication refilled. Call before you only have 2 or 3 pills left. Speak to your pharmacist they may also be able to help automatic refills or even delivery. As a provider it is hard to help if they do not know. Go ahead ask your provider questions, talk about your concerns, they want you to! When you have an appointment take a list of questions you want to ask. Always make sure you understand the directions the provider gave you. You can ask for written instructions.

**Christmas Hope:**

**This is a little Christmas story that is near and dear to my heart, as it happened to me two years ago. Enjoy and Merry Christmas!!**

A few days before Christmas, I browsed the aisles of a thrift shop, hoping to hunt down a surprise gift for my sister. This year wasn’t the same for me. The holidays hurt more than usual, and I prayed for a sign from my parents that they were with me and still supporting me. My thoughts drifted to our late father. We had lost Dad a few years ago, and Christmas always brought back memories of his generous spirit. He was a man of few words, yet he had a way of making those close to him feel so loved. In his older years, Dad had taken up crafting. He enjoyed working with his hands, especially during the holidays. Homemade gifts were his hallmark. He became well known in the community for his pinecone wreaths and trees. Each was unique.

One of my favorites was the wreath he made for my agency to enter a charity auction. It was specially made, as once I requested it, nothing made him happier than to use his God-given skills to create something truly amazing. The oversized, animal-filled wreath was crafted with love and grace with aged hands that were well beyond the ability he still had in them. The wreath won first place and raised a lot of money for a good cause. It was auctioned off to someone beaming with pride to add it to their Christmas collection.

After finding some trinkets for the family and a cute Boyd’s bear for my sister’s collection, I reached the back of the store. Something caught my eye high atop a shelf in the very corner of the store. Could it be? I walked closer to check. Missing pinecones and a few animals had scurried elsewhere, but this was my father’s prize-winning wreath. Although I was done with my decorating that year, you can bet that the wreath found a special place in my home and I had received the message of love from my parents that I longed to receive.

**Thank you for reading our Winter newsletter. Please take a look at some ways to stay (or become) less stressed during the winter season.**

**Be Safe – use strategies to protect yourself and vulnerable people**

**Create calm – recognize when you need to take breaks or do something calming or enjoyable**

**Build a Can-Do Spirit – Establish a daily routine of activities that empower you to stay strong**

**Maintain Hope – Even though winter and, specifically, this winter can be difficult, we are in this together. Reach out to others and don’t be afraid to ask for help!**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM 2021**

*A Word from the Executive Director, Rick Mattia*

There are several benefits to becoming a member of NAMI. As a member of NAMI, you can help us to continue providing NAMI affiliated support with NAMI Connection, Family to Family, and Peer to Peer programs, as well as our other endeavors throughout the year. In addition, NAMI has also partnered with local agencies and community members to bring new programming to the Beaver County area with PRISM, in support of LGBTQ youth, a Borderline Personality Disorder support group, and NAR-ANON, which provides support in recovery from addiction. NAMI in Beaver County is always moving forward with innovative plans for how to help the community with these types of supportive and beneficial programs. Being a member allows

for our continued efforts, as well as allowing members to provide personal feedback and ideas regarding the community needs of Beaver County. You will also receive our quarterly newsletter and some other NAMI goodies when you become a member. Thank you for your support!

**Please note that all meetings at this time are being held virtually. We thank you for your support and would love for you to join us on Tuesdays at noon or every third Thursday at 7 pm for our meetings. These are more than support groups; they are inclusive environments in which everyone can feel safe and relevant**.

***It is now possible to become a member at our website****:* [*www.namibeavercounty.org*](http://www.namibeavercounty.org)*. We will still accept checks, but the online method is preferred at this time. Any questions or concerns please direct them to Rick Mattia 724-888-6877 or* *rmattia@namibeavercounty.org**. All NAMI – Beaver County memberships include subscriptions to all four newsletters.*

*\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check for $60.00 for a family membership*

*\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check for $40.00 for an individual membership*

*\_\_\_\_ I am on a fixed income. Dues are $5.00 for full membership*

*\_\_\_\_ I wish to make a tax deductible donation of $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to NAMI Beaver County*

*NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

 *Please check one: family member consumer mental health professional*

*Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Telephone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

Make checks payable to: ***NAMI – Beaver County***

 **1229 3rd Street -- Beaver, PA 15009**

**NAMI – THE NATION’S VOICE ON MENTAL ILLNESS**

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