In November we held our first Truth and Reconciliation program. Truth and Reconciliation is about bringing two groups together to share their perspectives, find commonalities, and reconcile the differences that may exist between them. This is a very powerful and successful model. This event brought individuals living with mental illness diagnoses together with providers of services in a unique way that gave each group a chance to tell their personal stories. We wondered what we might do to create a version that includes a proactive, problem-solving focus that could be used to create transformation in the issues that arise at the event. A model of a single group talking about two sides of an issue was developed, a set of follow up brainstorming sessions are planned.

This month, we will host two evenings of Truth and Transformation. The focus for the first event will be for family members of individuals living with a mental health diagnosis sharing their truth about what does and does not work in the mental health system for their loved ones. The second event will be focused on the personal lived experience of receiving inpatient treatment for individuals living with a diagnosis.

We invite the community to join us for these evenings of powerful conversations. Whether you come to the conversation to speak or to listen, the Truth and Transformation circles are meant to be surrounded by the community. All individuals who are there to listen and support are an integral part of the program and process, please join us.

******

Dates:  Family focus T&T  Monday 3/5 5:30-8:30 at YWCA
       Follow up sessions Friday 3/9 2:00-3:30 and Thursday 3/15 6:30-8:00 both at our office

       Individual focus T&T Thursday 3/29 5:30-8:30 at YWCA
       Follow up sessions TBA (will happen in early April)

It’s back! Living Beyond: Chronic Pain Management

Begins meeting on Monday, April 2 at 1:30-3:00 PM.
This psychoeducational class for men and women meets for 12 consecutive Mondays. It covers a range of strategies and tools to help you manage your pain and get on with living a fulfilling life. You qualify for the group if you are:

- Insured by Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) through Molina Health Care of Community Health Plan of Washington
- Dealing with chronic pain
- Currently receiving mental health counseling or would like to receive mental health counseling
- Eighteen and older

Pre-registration and assessment is necessary. For further information, dates and times, call Janet at NAMI SW WA 360-984-3071.
Dear Members and Friends,

Thanks to all who participated in our Annual Benefit Luncheon held at Warehouse 23. We honored a number of people who have shown remarkable resiliency skills including Jerri and Matt Clark, Jack and Jan Bothwell, Claudia and David Engelsman, Becky Anderson, Cindy Falter, Cindi Fisher, Jan Kell, Annette Kleinfelter, Melanie Maiorino, and Kay Roberson. Each of the honorees has made unique contributions to our region because of their resiliency skills in overcoming trauma and hardship in their lives. Over 160 people attended the lunch, participated in the auction and heard messages from our two speakers, Jerri Clark and NAMI Oregon and Executive Director Chris Bouneff. A special thanks to Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle who came from another event to ours making our paddle raise a huge success.

Please check out the Community Conversation article on our cover page and the announcement on page 13 for Truth and Transformation to be held on Monday, March 5th at the Clark County YWCA on Main Street in Vancouver. Through these conversations we are listening to all of you who receive or give mental health services or are related to those who receive services. On May 5th we will be hearing from family members...what has worked for you and your loved one and what has not worked so well. Please plan to attend this event and the following meetings as we begin putting our information into a document that will be sent to decision-makers such as legislators, county and city officials, and others who can help us make changes that will benefit our four county region.

Our Behavioral Health Services is offering another Pain Management Group beginning April 2nd. If you are insured by Apple Health and receiving Medicaid you are eligible. Chronic pain afflicts people of all ages and lasts for at least 12 weeks and sometimes for months or years. This class offers many skills and tools to help people with chronic pain to better understand their pain and to possibly reduce the level of pain they feel through the use of many different techniques. If you are bothered by chronic pain, please call to sign up for this twelve week group.

Enjoy the spring, longer days, and shorter nights and the profusion of flowers that will surround us in the next few weeks.

Best to you,

Peggy
A Red Seahorse by Joe

I was flying in my red plane far above the West edge of the Gulf of Mexico. 20 Miles from the Coast with the only sound of my humming plane to be heard. Only there to see, on and on to the infinite ocean before me. With a little luck, I happened to look down at that very moment to see a red sparkle in the ocean. I had heard of a tiny little red seahorse that lived specifically in that part of the Gulf. Considering my plane could land on water, I conspicuously landed about 500 feet away and jumped into my swimsuit to plop into the water. It felt tingly and odd so to make sure that I could see under water, I grabbed my goggles. Then jumped in.

“Keep your face always toward the sunshine - and shadows will fall behind you.”

– Walt Whitman
Save the date!
As the largest mental health event in the Northwest, more than 6,000 people join together to make a statement that recovery is possible; that mental health matters; and that people living with mental illness are a valuable part of our community. Whether you join us in person or online as a virtual walker, you are helping make a statement that mental health and access to care are important!

Raising funds and awareness will help us keep NAMI programs available to all who need them, at no cost to participants. You do not need to physically do the walk, all are welcome!

The walk is also the largest fundraiser for NAMI affiliates in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Seventy percent of funds raised support NAMI SW WA programs and activities. Supporting the walk is an investment in our communities. You can continue to help us make a difference.

Join us! The 2018 NAMIWalks Northwest event will be held at the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade Festival Area in Portland on Sunday, May 20, 2018. Registration begins at noon; walk begins at 1 p.m. Form your team and sign up today! Go to www.namiwalks.org/northwest

Earn Dollars for NAMI SW WA by shopping at Fred Meyer!

Here’s how it works:

• Sign up for the Community Rewards program and/or use your existing card by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card number to NAMI at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards.
• You can search for us by our name NAMI or by our nonprofit number 87058.
• Then every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, NAMI SW WA earns some change!
• You still earn Rewards Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates, just as you do today.
• If you do not have a Rewards Card, stop by the Customer Service Desk of any Fred Meyer store.
• Please renew every year. You can do that online.
Dear Doctor...

You helped me to see that many factors put me on my path in the dark woods, scary childhood, wrecked marriages, dead babies, suicide, depression, anxiety, anger, shame.

Me, guessing at turns, left or right until the known path was no longer possible, the mud and muck too deep, too wrong, too dark, too scary; retreat being my survival strategy, my solace. Then alone, going backwards, slowing away from the known, the muck and the noise. Each step away reliving haunted moments. My limited vision not allowing views of other paths less rocky, more comfortable, less fearful.

Then, I look up to see others on their paths, some different but all the same. Walking with heads up, heads down, some walking backwards straining to see where they are going, afraid, like me, to turn around. Some carry heavy burdens, some skip along, some on their knees...happy music and screaming, so much noise! Each to their path, all the same, all different.

My fears left my limbs numb, my head fuzzy, and my heart hard. My inner voice loudly insisting that I’m fat and old, that I’m bad, unworthy, stupid, ugly. Life choices ahead becoming more unclear, do I go right or left, is it okay to stay in place, what should I say, why am I crying? I needed help to clear my head, to settle my fears, to answer my questions, to understand happy and sad, good and bad. Your restorative Bench of Wisdom was on my path, a place that you made safe for me to search through my inner core.

Your counsel taught me that my resentment and grief will not soften by the passing of time, but by refocusing to what can be rather than what was; letting go rather than retreating. I am learning that back tracking is better than walking off a cliff. I am learning that I can change direction anytime that I don’t like what’s ahead. I am learning it is too simple to use careless words that can hurt. Through your kindness, I am finding my kindness; and, that I can emerge from the dark path to a better unknown where I will be in charge.

Thank You
GenevaWoods®

Behavioral Health

Our packaging options and dependable delivery are an added benefit for your clients, and our Refill Maintenance program coordinates clients, providers and insurance to offer patients streamlined prescription refills.

844.653.0314
genevawoods.com

There’s no place like Healthy®

Free Adherence Packaging
- Client’s name
- Date and day of week medication should be taken
- List of medications in each bubble
- Color coordination for time of day to be taken
- Easier to open peel back instead of push through
- A larger blister, perforated and portable

Additional Services
- Clozapine monitoring program
- Prior Authorizations
- Pharmacist collaboration
- Health Minder Refill Maintenance
- Web Connect
- Telephone support for client questions

Free Delivery
SAFEPARK Faith communities desire to respond to the growing reality that individuals, couples and families from our local communities are sleeping in their vehicles as the only option for housing. Over 300 family units have been identified as living in their vehicles within the first few months of 2017. As parents strive to care for their family they are faced with the problem of having a place to park their vehicle safely and legally. County code states that people cannot reside in parking lots overnight, even private parking lots. Communities are about to use their property (including parking lots) and their resources to carry out their mission. Church parking lots are one of the only places where people can park and stay overnight legally.

Go Connect is proud to offer SafePark

https://goconnect.org/safepark

Safe Parking is a unique program for the faith community.

The Solution is SafePark

SafePark Process: To access SafePark

1. Call the Housing Solution Hotline at 360-695-9677.
2. Complete an intake application and a background check for everyone in the family over 18 years of age.
3. A volunteer is present at the first arrival to provide a parking permit.
4. Guests can arrive around 7pm and depart before 8:00am.
5. Our volunteer coordinator is notified of new placements.
Once I was in an Oklahoma State hospital. I had taken an overdose of pills and got very sick. I had symptoms of depression and anxiety. I was put on a lot of heavy medicine. I kept cutting on my wrist and felt bad about myself. Then there were times I would drink alcohol.

My husband was abusive. He began to tell me how dirty and filthy I was and the house as well. That’s all I was. I ran to the state hospital and sat there not knowing how to tell anyone. I still was cutting my wrist. I blamed myself. I eventually called my brother who helped, I came to Portland, Oregon, and got my divorce. I was given my freedom.

I also came to find out, years ago as a little girl, I was sexually molested. I never felt good about myself. I always had guilty feelings and did not know how to forgive myself. I always thought it was my fault.

At the hospital, the social worker tried to work with my whole family, husband, Mom, and Dad. Dad and Mom didn’t want to listen. Nowadays, I have a mental health provider. All of my meds have been changed and they work together now. There is still a lot of depression and anxiety but, with the medication, I survive.

I take art therapy, I go to DRA so I won’t let myself drink alcohol. I don’t look down on myself so much with what happened in the past. I see my grandchildren and great grandkids. I take classes at Reach Center and NAMI SW WA. I know my triggers and what to stay away from. I am doing better, but I know to be careful. I stay around healthy people and report any abuse.

I have learned a lot of hope, to take better care of myself, and laugh more. Life is worth living.

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NEW Group – Yarn Crafts for Mindfulness

Would you like to learn to crochet a scarf or crochet a granny square afghan? Join us at 2:15-3:00 Tuesdays and Thursdays at NAMI for a “Stitch and Chat.” And as an added bonus you can come to the exercise class that meets just before at 1:15. What a day! Feel free to bring any hand work you may already be doing. Come join us. We’ll miss you if you are not there.

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GAME NIGHT!

Join us for a night of board games. Bring your favorite and spend an evening playing with new friends. Bring an appetizer or snack to share!

Friday, March 23rd
6:00 pm - 8:30 pm
5411 E. Mill Plain Blvd., Suite 4 Vancouver, WA
(360) 695-2823
namiswva.org

by Carolyn McCord
Unforeseen circumstances may cause a group or class to be cancelled. Please call ahead to confirm.

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<th>MONDAY</th>
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<td>TUESDAY</td>
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<td>Exercise for Wellness &amp; Recovery</td>
<td>1:15-2:00pm</td>
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<td>Yarn Crafts for Mindfulness</td>
<td>2:15-3:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>STRivE First Steps</td>
<td>3:30-5:00pm</td>
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<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Support Group</td>
<td>10:00-11:30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board of Directors’ Meeting</td>
<td>6:00-7:30pm</td>
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<td>(Third Wednesday monthly)</td>
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<td>THURSDAY</td>
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<td>Exercise for Wellness &amp; Recovery</td>
<td>1:15-2:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yarn Crafts for Mindfulness</td>
<td>2:15-3:00pm</td>
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<td>Family Support Group</td>
<td>3:00-4:30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connection Recovery Support Group</td>
<td>3:00-4:30pm</td>
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<td>FRIDAY</td>
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<td>Creative Writing for Wellness Expressive Arts</td>
<td>12:00-1:00pm</td>
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<td>Volunteer Orientation--4th Friday of every month</td>
<td>1:00-4:00pm</td>
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5411 E. MILL PLAIN
SUITE 4
360-695-2823

On Mill Plain Blvd between Devine and MacArthur. Our entrance is on the West side.

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**DISABILITY/WORK INCENTIVES COUNSELING**
W/ Cindy Falter
BY APPOINTMENT
CALL 360-695-2823

**INFORMATION LINE 9-5 Monday-Friday**
CALL 360-695-2823

**PROVIDES SUPPORT AND RESOURCES**

Psychoeducation and tools for a successful and sustained mental wellness. Drop in.
Support for friends and family of people who have a mental health diagnosis. Drop in
Support for families of military personnel who are struggling with mental health issues. Call to sign in.
Peer support group for those affected by mental health challenges. Drop in.
## NAMI SW WA

**March 2018**

**COWLITZ/WAHKIAKUM**

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<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>MONDAY</td>
<td>Office hours 10:00-4:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUESDAY</td>
<td>Family Support Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>Expressive Arts</td>
<td>12:00-3:00pm</td>
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<td>THURSDAY</td>
<td>STRiVE First Steps</td>
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<td>Connection Recovery Support Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>Office Closed</td>
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**1128 BROADWAY**

Longview, WA 98632
360-703-6722

Disability/Work Incentives Counseling
By Appointment
Call 360-695-2823

Information Line 9-5 Monday-Friday
Call 360-695-2823
Provides Support and Resources

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Psychoeducation and tools for a successful and sustained mental wellness. Drop in.

Support for friends and family of people who have a mental health diagnosis. Drop in.

Support for families of military personnel who are struggling with mental health issues. Call to sign in.

Peer support group for those affected by mental health challenges. Drop in.
When we live in a community, we listen to each other’s true stories.

"We remember our capacity to lean in and love each other back to wholeness."

TRUTH & TRANSFORMATION

For individuals and those with a loved one who has received inpatient mental health treatment. Take this opportunity to listen and share with the wider community the positive and challenging experiences you have had navigating the mental health system.

Plant the seeds for transformation of mental health services in our community!

For Family and Friends
Monday, March 5th
5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
YWCA of Clark County
3609 Main St, Vancouver, WA

Contact (360) 695-2823

For Individuals
Thursday, March 29th
5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
YWCA of Clark County
3609 Main St, Vancouver, WA

namiswwa.org
March is Sleep Awareness Month and March 16, 2018 marks Sleep Awareness Day. There is a fairytale about a creature that comes to you in that space of time just before you fall asleep. Sometime, after your eyes close for the last time at night and some time before you fall into a state of unconsciousness, he materializes over you. He carries with him a bag of magic sand, and he sprinkles a very small amount over your face. Some say it twinkles in the moonlight, like a thousand tiny stars just over your face as they fall. Some say the sand actually sounds like a music box, or the flitter of fairy wings. No one has ever really heard the sound however, for by the time the sand touches your face and alights about your eyelids, you’re on your way to dreaming.

Unfortunately for a number of people, the Sandman passes them by and sleep doesn’t come or comes infrequently. Research shows there is a link to physical problems such as a weakened immune system, but also to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. A good night’s sleep is a time when our bodies repair themselves and our brains consolidate our memories and process information. The National Sleep Foundation offers some sleep tips to help us get a good night’s sleep. Use the following as a check list to help you identify what might be helpful for you:

- Stick to a sleep schedule of the same bedtime and wake up time, even on the weekends. This helps to regulate your body’s clock and could help you fall asleep and stay asleep for the night.
- Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual. A relaxing, routine activity before bedtime conducted away from bright lights helps separate your sleep time from activities that can cause excitement, stress or anxiety making it more difficult to fall asleep.
- If you have trouble sleeping, avoid naps, especially in the afternoon. Power napping may help you get through the day, but if you find that you can’t fall asleep at bedtime, eliminating even short catnaps may help.
- Exercise daily. Vigorous exercise is best, but even light exercise is better than no activity. Exercise at any time of day, but not at the expense of your sleep.
- Evaluate your room. Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep. Your bedroom should be between 60 to 67 degrees, free from any noise and free from any light. Consider using blackout curtains, eye shades, ear plugs, “white noise” machines, humidifiers, fans and other devices.
- Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows. Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supportive. Have comfortable pillows and make the room attractive and inviting for sleep but also free of allergens that might affect you and objects that might cause you to slip or fall if you have to get up during the night.
- Use bright light to help manage your circadian rhythms. Avoid bright light in the evening and expose yourself to sunlight in the morning. This will keep your circadian rhythms in check.
- Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and heavy meals in the evening. Alcohol, cigarettes and caffeine can disrupt sleep. Eating big or spicy meals can cause discomfort. Avoid eating large meals for two to three hours before bedtime. Try a light snack 45 minutes before bed if you’re still hungry.
- Wind down. Your body needs time to shift into sleep mode. Spend the last hour before bed doing a calming activity such as reading. Avoid electronics before bed or in the middle of the night.
- If you can’t sleep, go into another room and do something relaxing until you feel tired. Keep work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment. Use your bed only for sleep and sex to strengthen the association between bed and sleep.

If the Sandman is still passing you by, don’t hesitate to speak with your doctor, counselor, or a sleep professional. Sweet dreams.
Volunteer Spotlight

Lee Nelson

Before mental health became an issue in Lee Nelson’s life, he was a Data Network Engineer for a phone company in Montana. He went to college twice, the first time at Moscow State Institute of International Relations in Moscow, Russia.

Lee volunteers at the Cowlitz and Vancouver offices. Lee had several rough years and an acquaintance suggested he go to NAMI SW WA. Lee facilitates the Connection and Peer-to-Peer groups, he works at the front desk, and various other things. “[I] occasionally test Jan and Debbie’s patience.”

Lee believes, “For the first time in a long time, I felt safe and was surrounded by people who understood me.” Lee’s interests include languages, history, photography, electronics, programming, traveling, and “telling bad jokes,” he concludes. What does Lee do to maintain mental wellness? He uses humor, therapy, education, and sharing his experiences to slow down his life to focus on recovery and, last but not least, NAMI SW WA.

“Stars should not be seen alone. That’s why there are so many. Two people should stand together and look at them. One person alone will surely miss the good ones.”

— Augusten Burroughs, Dry
Hello Friends! Welcome to the “Cowlitz Corner”! We embrace all those living with mental health challenges and those that love them. Our staff and volunteers are all peers with lived experience. Our office is a safe, inviting, confidential space for all and services are offered at no charge.

Have you had a difficult time advocating for your child or teen in school? “Basics” is for parents and caregivers of children under the age of 18 living with mental health challenges and looking for support and education. Some items covered in the 6 week class (beginning Saturday April 14th - May 19th from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm) are: Managing crisis and solving problems; Self-care and stress management; Supporting your child with compassion; Advocating for your child’s rights; Education on current treatments; Gaining an overview of the public mental health care, school, and juvenile justice systems and supporting resources to help you navigate these systems and; Understanding the challenges and impact of mental health conditions on your entire family.

We will also be offering a class for families and caretakers who have a loved one over 18 that is living with mental health challenges. This class is “Family to Family” and it covers topics such as; Problem solving and crisis management; Self-care and stress management; Developing the confidence to provide support with compassion; Finding and using local resources; Information on mental health conditions and how they affect the brain; Current treatments, including evidence based therapies, medications, and side effects and; The impact of mental illness on the entire family. Date to be determined.

There is no charge for either class and if you have questions please give me a call and I’ll be happy to talk with you. We are needing more participants in each class so please sign up by going to our website at namiswwa.org or contacting me at 360.703.6722.

Until next month, take care of yourselves ~

Jan

Support NAMI SW WA through AMAZON Smile when you shop!

Go to: https://smile.amazon.com

Log-in with the same username and password you use for your Amazon account.

• Type in NAMI Southwest Washington as the charity you want to support and select!
• Shop and save the link for the next time you shop your Amazon account.
• .05% of all of your purchases will be credited as a donation.
• Please sign-up today
Upcoming Events & Support Groups

Truth and Transformation - We are holding two more community conversations! Take the opportunity to listen and share the positive and negative experiences you have had navigating inpatient and crisis treatment for your loved one or individual with a mental health diagnosis. This is the first step to other workshops for change. Join us at the YWCA of Clark County, 3609 Main St, Vancouver, WA on Monday, March 5th 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm for family members and for Individuals on Thursday, March 29th, 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm. Questions? Call 360-695-2823.

Game Night - Bring your favorite game and join us for a fun evening of community (and strategy). Join us Friday, March 23rd, 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm at our Vancouver Office 5411 E. Mill Plain Blvd, Suite 4, Vancouver, WA.

New! Living Beyond: Chronic Pain Management Group – It’s back! It begins meeting on Monday, April 2 at 1:30-3:00 PM. This psycho-educational class for men and women meets for 12 consecutive Mondays.

New! Yarn Crafts for Wellness – Learn to crochet or just bring a project to work on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:15 to 3:00 PM.

Womens’ Support Group – Gather with other women overcoming mental health challenges in Vancouver: Wednesdays, 10:00 am–11:30 am. Drop-ins welcome.

STRivE First Steps to Recovery – Ten sessions providing education and tools for first steps toward a successful and sustained recovery from mental and emotional challenges. Tuesdays, 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm, 5411 E. Mill Plain Blvd. Suite 4, Vancouver or Mondays and Thursdays, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, 1128 Broadway, Longview. Confidential and Drop-ins welcome at any time.

Peer to Peer – An educational program for adults who wish to establish and maintain wellness in response to mental health challenges. Monday, March 5th, 2018 3:30-5:30 PM.

NAMI Walks Northwest – 5K – Save the date for Saturday, May 20th! Walk or run your way to supporting NAMI SW WA. Create your teams by registering on namiwalks.org/northwest

Upcoming 2018 Education Classes

NAMI Signature Programs – NAMI SW WA is scheduling Spring Signature Classes. Now is the time to sign-up at namiswwa.org for Basics, Family to Family, Familia a Familia, Homefront, and Peer to Peer. Pre-register for Vancouver and Longview classes by going to namiswwa.org or by calling 360-695-2823. We will notify you before the next set of classes begin.
Help support the one in four Americans who will be affected by mental illness this year.

*Thank you for being part of the team!*

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**Membership Form—fees changed July 1st, 2017**

There are three types of memberships:

- **Individual Membership Fee**
- **Household Membership Fee** (new)
  - $60 ($40 fee plus $20 donation)
  - $100 ($40 fee plus $60 donation)
  - $40 individual membership fee
- **Open-Door Membership (limited income)**
  - $5 membership fee

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☐ I prefer to receive the newsletter via email

NAMI Membership Includes:
- NAMI National Advocate Magazine, quarterly
- NAMI Washington Newsletter, monthly
- NAMI SW WA Website, access to resources
- At Annual Meeting, vote for NAMI SW WA Board of Directors and the budget

Please return your payment and completed form to:

5411 E Mill Plain Blvd, Suite 4, Vancouver, WA 98661

To use a credit or debit card visit www.namiswwa.org and click on Join NAMI.