Save the date

February 15, 2019
At Warehouse 23

Annual Fundraising Luncheon

Additional details and invitation soon to follow

Celebrating our 40th Anniversary!

Registration opens online namiswwa.org

This is an occasion you won’t want to miss! NAMI SW WA’s Annual Luncheon is our main fund raiser for 2019 and is only six weeks away! This year’s luncheon will have things to do, wonderful surprises, and a great speaker. We look forward to this event all year long and know that this year’s affair will be fun and compelling. Won’t you consider joining us at Warehouse 23 @ 11:30 on February 15, 2019 for a delightful time and opportunity to give to a hard-working non-profit support to continue our work? We will make sure every dollar is well spent. Registration opens soon at namiswwa.org.
Dear Members and Friends,

Another year has gone and the New Year is beginning. One of the best things for me, and for many others, is the fact that the days are growing longer…it doesn’t happen quickly this early in the Winter season but each day we will have just a few more minutes of daylight for the next month, and then the change will be more apparent. I suppose this could be likened to our personal experiences as we think about and work toward our NAMI SW WA goal of mental wellness for this year. Just as the days get a bit longer, we can all work toward making out mental wellness a greater and greater part of our respective lives. Mental wellness applies to everyone…not just those with a diagnosis who may be dependent somewhat on medications to help keep moods balanced. This year we hope to work with both family members and friends, as well as all those individuals we work with...What can each of us do to improve our mental wellness?

I love the tracking charts that many of our individuals use each day. Some have printed checklists that they go to several times a day to make sure that they are doing certain things, such as: drinking enough water; getting up and moving or walking around at least once an hour; eating nutritious meals; not focusing on negative thoughts; and especially making sure that we are breathing deeply to ensure that our body, and especially our brains, are getting sufficient oxygen. Are we feeling stressed? Did we get sufficient sleep last night? If not, how can we squeeze in a short rest during our day? Are we doing activities, during the day, that are enjoyable, or are our days filled with activities that are distasteful to us? Neglecting self-care like this can lead away from mental wellness.

I, personally, am not big on New Year resolutions, however this year I, too, plan to focus on mental wellness. I encourage all associated with NAMI SW WA to do the same. Those who know me know that I am frequently reminding people to think about what they are doing to take care of themselves.

Make a list of the things you do that you know are good for you. What have you done today that made you feel good? Listen to music you love? Read a good book? Paint a picture or go outside to take some photos of things you love? Take a walk? Prepare a soup you love to eat? Call a friend? Talk to a neighbor?

Make another list of things you do that may not be so good
for you. Did you watch TV for hours? Or play video games all day or all night? Eat a box or bag of cookies? Lash out in anger at someone? Get mad at yourself for any number of reasons? Decide not to go to a scheduled therapy, medical, or dental appointment?

Look at your lists and decide what you want to work on to change and think about what you can do to make some changes. Mental wellness is a process. It comes with practice and effort. Throughout 2019 our newsletter, Facebook page, and other social media, as well as our programs, will focus on mental wellness. Our goal is that all who come to NAMI SW WA for services or social activities will have increased their mental wellness quotient by the end of the year.

Enjoy 2019...and good mental wellness to you....Peggy

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Contact Us

**Clark/Skamania**
Hours: Monday–Friday 9-5 pm
Location: 5411 E. Mill Plain, Suite 4 Vancouver, WA 98661
Tel: (360) 695-2823
Fax: (360) 823-1088

**Cowlitz/Wahkiakum**
Hours: Mon, Wed & Thurs 10 am-4 pm, Tues 1 pm-4 pm, Closed on Fridays
Location: 1128 Broadway Longview, WA 98632
Tel: (360) 703-6722
Fax: (360) 823-1088

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**NAMI SWWA Programs**

**SEE ME Coordinator**
John McDonald

**SEE ME Presenters**
Scott Brickley
Jerri Clark
Angie Corll
Deanna Davis
Ted Engelbrecht
Cindy Falter
Jo Findley
Amy Ford
Brawnywn Franklin
Judy Guzman
Zack Hanke
Eric Johnson
Jordan Kearney
Jan Kell
John LaPoint
Steve Lavoie
Lyssa Orelli
Olivia Mattus
John McDonald
Tom Myklebust
Lee Nelson
Karla Obenhaus
Kerilee Stanberry

**NAMI SWWA Programs**

**STRivE Psychoeducational Program**
Debbie Archer
Zach Hanke
LeeAnn Livingston
Olivia Mattus
John McDonald
Karla Obenhaus

**Expressive Arts Group**
Georgia Gerrior
Zack Hanke
Linda Harbaugh
Ron Redmond

**Creative Writing for Wellness**
Chiara Caballero
Amy Ford

**Women's Support Group**
Neeshonee
Annie Jordan
Teresa Williams

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**NAMI Signature Support Groups**

**Connection Support Group**
Cindy Falter
Zack Hanke
Steve Lavoie
LeeAnn Livingston
Olivia Mattus
John McDonald
Lee Nelson
Karla Obenhaus

**Corrections H-Pod/Workcenter**
Amy Ford
John McDonald

**Family Support Group**
Debbie Archer
Heidi Bjurstrom
Jan Kell
John LaPointe
Jeannie Murray
Lyssa Orelli

*Drop-ins welcome*
Mark Kollasch, Financial Director of the Knights of Columbus Council 15730 called with the exciting information that they were donating proceeds from their annual fall fundraising to us here at NAMI SW WA. Other Contributing Members from the Knights of Columbus and their generosity include Tim Shotwell, Gordan Redewald, and Don Brunell.
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<td>David Loos, Ann Donnelly, Mariam Saner</td>
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<td>Adam Pithan, Chair</td>
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<td>Michael Inman, Rosalie Larsen</td>
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<td>Development/Marketing/Fundraising</td>
<td>Ann Donnelly, Chair Jack Bothwell Kim Schneiderman Angela Westbrooks</td>
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<td>Housing</td>
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**ADULT MOBILE CRISIS INTERVENTION**

Southwest Washington Crisis Line
1 (800) 626-8137

Since July 2, 2018
Seven days a week 10am-10pm

Call and talk with a trained phone crisis worker, they will help connect you to community resources and any needed crisis services within Clark County.

**Expressive Arts Group**

Fridays from 1:00 pm - 4 pm
Supplies Provided

**CREATIVEWRITING FOR WELLNESS**

Every Friday From 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
The Mental Wellness Routine That Will Change Your Life
If you do it!

Posted Mar 28, 2017

Everyone wants to be happy. What most people mean when they say they want happiness is that they want to feel a positive sense of mental well-being. Mental wellness however, requires some effort, in the same way physical health does. If you want good physical health, you can’t sit on the couch drinking beer and eating donuts and fried chicken; you have to do things that result in better health, such as eating right, drinking enough water, exercising, taking vitamins, and getting enough rest. If you want to experience positive mental well-being, there are things you have to do on a regular basis that result in mental wellness.

Following are five essential mental wellness activities that, if done together regularly, will result in a sense of well-being that can improve the quality of your life.

1. Mindfulness.

The importance of learning to be consciously present and aware, as opposed to on auto-pilot, cannot be overstated. Mindfulness allows you to have conscious awareness of what you are doing, so you can make choices to override automatic thinking and make positive changes in thoughts and behavior. When you are mindful, you are able to observe events in a non-judgmental way, which allows you to detach from negative emotions, as opposed to being controlled by them. As a result, the way you respond to events in your life starts to change. Your emotions are better regulated, and you stop getting so upset, angry, or fearful over things you can’t control. You are also not flooding your brain with fear and
worry about the future or resentments from the past, which has the profoundly positive effect of resetting your emotional state to calm and peaceful.

In order to experience the life-altering benefits of mindfulness, it is best to practice on a daily basis. Once a week won’t get you there, but 10 minutes a day is enough to start to feel the benefit in a matter of a few days, although you probably won’t start to notice how it is changing your behavior until you’ve been practicing daily for a couple of weeks. You should subtly start to notice you feel calmer and less stressed; things that used to upset you may not bother you so much anymore. You will feel greater clarity in your thinking and ability to focus. To add a mindfulness practice into your routine, it is best to set aside a regular time to do it every day. First thing in the morning is a great way to start your day off on a positive note; however, for some, mid-day is a time that offers a needed break, and right before bed can have a calming effect. There are innumerable books, courses, and online resources to teach you how to practice, but if you are a beginner, I suggest starting off with a guided phone app; Headspace is one that I recommend regularly to my patients.

2. Input the Positive.

What you take in from your environment matters a great deal to your emotional well-being, because it stays active in your subconscious mental space for a period of time, even after the event is long over. For example, if you’ve ever listened to a song on the radio and then heard it in your head a week later, or watched a scary movie and had a nightmare the next night, that’s because those events are still active in your mental space and influencing you emotionally. If you would like to experience positive emotional well-being, you need to take in as many positive things from your surroundings as possible, and minimize the number of negative things. Most people don’t pay attention to what they are taking in. If you watch a lot of negative news stories, chronically listen to songs about heartbreak and sadness, frequently watch crime dramas and horror movies, regularly play violent video games, or spend a lot of time listening to other people complain about their lives, that is a steady junk diet of emotional negativity that is bound to drag you down. Oftentimes, you don’t even notice these things are making you feel down, because they have become a part of your normal emotional set-point.

To really experience the benefit of inputting the positive, I suggest a two-week environmental detox: Go through your daily routine and remove anything that, when you think of it, feels like it may generate a negative emotion. Turn off the news, disconnect from anyone who drags you into negative conversations, and stop watching or listening to anything sad, violent, or scary. Instead, make a very conscious effort to only give your attention to things that feel positive and uplifting. Listen to music and read books that inspire you, watch videos that make you laugh, spend time with pets and people that are happy, take more walks in nature, keep a gratitude journal, find an inspirational quote and use it as a screen saver. Once you’ve done this for two straight weeks, you should start to feel a noticeable emotional shift. You may find that your desire to engage in the activities that you gave up goes way down, and if you do start to re-engage in those activities, you might find them uncomfortable or even upsetting, as they are no longer a match to the emotional wavelength you are now on. Once you are done with your detox, to maintain your well-being, keep in mind that the formula is simple: Attention to negative things equals negative emotions; Attention to positive things equals positive emotions.
3. **Self-Compassion.**

One of the most foundational elements of emotional well-being is self-compassion. Without it, you cannot find true happiness. It is impossible to hate yourself and have a good life. Yet, surprisingly, many people try doing just that: They self-criticize and self-flagellate as a way to motivate themselves to be better; they demand perfection and set unrealistic standards for themselves, which they would never apply to anyone else, believing this is the path to becoming who they want to be. But negative self-talk really damages your self-esteem and can lead to serious conditions like anxiety and depression.

Self-compassion is about learning to be kind to yourself and to be self-forgiving of the flaws we all have and the mistakes we all make as human beings. It is the ultimate form of self-love and a prerequisite to real self-confidence. Many people are so controlled by their inner critic that they find the idea of self-compassion to be something they don’t deserve. I highly recommend the book *Self-Compassion* by Kristin Neff as a way to train yourself into a more self-loving mindset. A chapter a week will alter your view on yourself in a few short months. If the idea of being kind to yourself seems impossible, seeking out the help of a trained mental health professional may be in order. (To learn how to silence your inner critic, [click here](#). For a simple 30-day exercise that trains your attention to focus on your positive qualities, [click here](#).)

4. **Loving Others.**

When we show love and compassion to other people, it releases chemicals in the prefrontal cortex and reward center of the brain that professionals refer to as the "Helper’s High." People who help others report many positive mental and physical health benefits, including lower levels of stress, lower blood pressure, and relief from depression and physical pain. Research also shows that those who engage in altruistic behavior not only have a higher quality of life, but they also live longer.¹ Engaging in some type of regular volunteer activity on at least a monthly basis, or just spending more time doing loving, kind things for the people in your life, helps get you out of your own head, creates well-being for others, and makes you feel good about yourself.

5. **Physical Wellness.**

The body cannot be separated from the mind. As a result, it is difficult to experience mental well-being if you do not take care of yourself physically. While for a period of time professionals characterized all mental illness as brain disorders, there is growing research demonstrating that the levels of neurotransmitters in the brain involved in feelings of well-being, such as serotonin, are directly affected by other important areas of your body such as the gut microbiome (digestive track), and so nutrition is the newest frontier of treatment for psychiatric disorders. Recent research suggests that adopting The Mediterranean Diet while reducing sugar, fried food, and alcohol can significantly improve depression.²

As important as diet is, exercise is equally critical for positive emotional well-being. It has long been known that exercise releases endorphins into the body, which results in feelings of pleasure. Recent research shows that 10 minutes or more of cardiovascular exercise a day is enough to significantly improve mood functioning³ and
MONDAY  NAMI Walks & Talks     11:30-12:30
TUESDAY  STRivE First Steps      3:30-5:00pm   WEDNESDAY Women’s Support Group     10:00-11:30am
  Board of Directors’ Meeting     6:00-7:30pm  (Third Wednesday every month)
  STRivE First Steps        11:30-12:30
THURSDAY NAMI Walks & Talks     11:30-12:30   Family Support Group     3:00-4:30pm   Connection Recovery      3:00-4:30pm   Support Group      FRIDAY  Creative Writing for Wellness    12:00-1:00pm   Expressive Arts
Unforeseen circumstances may cause a group or class to be cancelled. Please call ahead to confirm.

MAGNETIC, Drug In, Peer Support Group for those affected by mental health diagnoses. Call to sign up.
STRivE Support for families of military personnel whose service is still ongoing.
Women’s Support Group for friends and family of people who have a mental illness.
Psychoeducation and tools for a successful and sustained mental wellness. Drop in.
Support for friends and family of people who have a mental illness.
Peer support group for those affected by mental health diagnoses. Call to sign up.
Support for families of military personnel whose service is still ongoing.
Support for families of military personnel who are struggling with mental health issues.
Support for friends and family of people who have a mental illness.
Expressive Arts
Expressive Arts

360-695-2823
BY APPOINTMENT
W/Cindy Falter
DISABILITY/WORK INCENTIVES COUNSELING
INFORMATION LINE 9-5 Monday-Friday

CALL 360-695-2823
BY APPOINTMENT
W/Cindy Falter

DIRECTIONS:
Located on Mill Plain Blvd between Devine and MacArthur. Our entrance is on the West side.

360-695-2823
SUITE 4
5411 E. MILL PLAIN

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

360-695-2823
SUITE 4
5411 E. MILL PLAIN
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Provides support and resources for those affected by mental health challenges. 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 up. Peer support group for those affected by mental health issues. Drop in support for families of military personnel who are struggling with mental health issues. Call to sign up.

1128 Broadway
Longview, WA 98632

Call 360-695-2823

Disability/Work Incentives Counseling by Appointment

Call 360-695-2823

Information line 9-5 Monday-Friday

Provides education and tools for successful and sustained mental wellness. Drop in.

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

Support for friends and family of people who have a mental health diagnosis. Drop in.
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
The Early History of Mental Health Activism and NAMI SW WA

In the early years after founding mental health activism in SW WA, families spent time in local meetings and phone calls with other families in the region. The resources available were found by word of mouth or through the Yellow Pages of telephone books since the internet was more than a decade away. Long distance phone calls were expensive so many families resorted to telegrams to immediately provide distant family members with important news; otherwise handwritten or typed letters were mailed with a 15-cent or special air-mail stamp that cost more.

These early activists also spent time lobbying, an activity that continues today. All NAMI affiliates in WA State visit Olympia on President’s Day in February will meet with local legislative representatives and senators making decisions concerning the state laws and budget. During 1978-1979, these activist family members also met with local city councilors, the local sheriffs, and police chiefs in an effort to improve local understanding about behaviors by their loved ones that may cause an individual to “get in trouble.” Veterans from Vietnam had returned home, many with drug problems, many “just not right.” They had no place to go talk about trauma they had witnessed during the war and received little sympathy from the community. The term “PTSD” had not yet been created.

In addition, there was no such thing as a community behavioral health system available. Columbia River Mental Health Services, founded in 1942 in Vancouver, focused on “juvenile delinquents” and Columbia Wellness, founded in the Kelso/Longview area in 1953, focused on children until 1965 when the thought of community mental health services began to rise in popularity in SW WA. Trained psychiatrists or psychologists were hard to find or nonexistent in the small towns. Relatively few were located in nearby Portland and Seattle. They tended to be at colleges or universities, although a few had private practices, in cities much larger than Vancouver, Longview, and Kelso. When a loved one began showing signs of mental disturbance, the only “safe” place was the state hospital. For residents of SW WA, this was Western State near Olympia. Care at these hospitals was sadly focused on warehousing rather than humane care with a focus on recovery, a term new to the vocabulary of individuals and family members.

These early activists — the Loughs, Chambers, Altmans, and their counterparts — were active when they could be, but they often had months where their entire focus was directed toward their loved one who was struggling deeply with the debilitating effects of psychosis or uncontrolled manic behaviors. While trying to keep a somewhat normal life going for other family members, the major attention of the parents had to be directed toward their mentally ill child if they wished to keep that person at home rather than having him or her taken, usually by police, to the state hospital. Once there, families had no idea when they would be able to visit with their loved one or when that person might be able to return home, usually heavily...
medicated. Many families finally decided it would be best to leave this son or daughter at the hospital. However, that was to change soon.

During the 1970s, research had begun using new medications developed by a handful of pharmaceutical companies. Data was showing the possibility that, with proper medication and interaction with a psychologist or psychiatrist, people with even serious mental health issues could live outside the hospital setting. That was exactly what our local activists were fighting for. Universities began redesigning their psychology degree programs, offering more counseling classes, focusing more on humans, and less on research with mice, rats, and primates. The need for trained counselors became apparent. These programs, as well as medical social work programs, began to establish training for people who only provided counseling. During this time, the book *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)*, also known as the “bible” of psychiatry and psychology, was revised. The first edition of this book had been written in 1952, containing 106 descriptions of mental health conditions. The DSM II was released in 1968. It contained 182 descriptions of mental health conditions. The DSM III was published in 1981, after significant and lengthy discussions by the mental health professional community who had undergone immense changes the previous decade.

In 1980, President Carter signed a bill that provided money to develop community-based mental health centers across the US. This was followed by President Reagan cutting budget costs for the federal government in the early 1980s. Consequently, many long and short-term residents were prematurely released from state mental hospitals. At this time relatively few communities had the time or ability to develop a community-based mental health plan. This was especially true in largely rural communities of SW WA. However, these actions gave some hope to our founding families. Their loved ones might be able to remain in the community and receive needed help.

Each month during 2019, we will have a short article focusing on the history of NAMI SW WA including interviews with the surviving family members of our founders. We hope you will enjoy this trip through our history.
Happy New Year Friends!

Wow, 2019 already!

"Come celebrate "Mental Wellness" with us. I invite you to stop in and learn about the services we offer those living with mental illness as well as for loved ones and family members. Our staff and facilitators are all peers with lived experience, and our office is a safe, inviting, confidential environment for all.

Our meeting room is busting at the seams with our high attendance, but we can still make room for more so invite your friends. I ask each of you a favor and make a point in your journey to share with others what NAMI SW WA means to you. You are all amazing, and we ask you to advocate for us. Just a few words here and there will also begin to break the stigma of mental illness. We're all equal, and we need to treat others with respect, that's why we're here. Please encourage others to drop in and learn about all our services provided at no charge.

NAMI SW WA is a non-profit and our only way to keep our doors open is through generous donations from you. Please make a commitment with us to donate generously and remember, all donations are tax deductible. We have to continue our very important work in Cowlitz! When you give, please make a note that the donation is for the Cowlitz Office, that way it stays in our community!

We plan on having "Peer to Peer" and "Family to Family" classes this Spring so let us know, and we will add you to the waiting lists.

See you all next month!
Jan

Mental Wellness (Continued)

sleep quality, which has been shown to help people improve their ability to regulate emotions and experience greater well-being.4,5

The reason most people find happiness to be elusive is that they don’t do the things that they need to in order to experience mental wellness. I often work with people who week after week explain to me why they can’t do these things: They are too depressed, too anxious, too busy, too stressed out, or have too many other people to take care of. What they fail to realize is that the reason they are where they are is because they are not doing the things that would bring them wellness, and are instead arguing for their limitations. If you are going to put energy into arguing for something, argue for your right to live a positive, mentally healthy life. Focus all of your energy and attention on the reasons why you can take care of yourself. Well-being doesn’t happen because you wish for it; it happens because you do the things that bring it into your life.

Dr. Jennice Vilhauer is the director of the Outpatient Psychotherapy Treatment Program at Emory Healthcare and the author of Think Forward to Thrive: How to Use the Mind’s Power of Anticipation to Transcend Your Past and Transform Your Life.

To view my 2015 TEDx talk, "Why You Don't Get What You Want," click here.
Bulletin Board

Annual Fundraising Luncheon: 40th Anniversary On Friday, February 15, NAMI SW WA is hosting our Annual Fundraising Luncheon to make sure we can continue our support and advocacy for the community. The Luncheon is at Warehouse 23, paid registration is required.

**In Longview**

**Table Top Games** Tuesdays 2-4pm, great time and place to relax and just have fun with friends! We supply the board games and you bring the FUN! Bring your favorite game. In Longview.

**Signature Classes**

Classes starting soon in Vancouver and Longview (dates and times to be determined).

**Family to Family** is a twelve-week education course for families with adult family members with a mental health diagnosis.

**Basics** is a six-week education course for parents and caregivers of children and adolescents living with mental health challenges.

**Homefront** is an 8-week education course for families and friends of service members and veterans living with mental illness.

**Family and Friends** is a 90-minute presentation that provides information, and help for family and friends of a loved one with a mental health diagnosis.

*Sign up online at namiswwa.org or call 360-695-2823 (Vancouver) or 360-703-6722 (Longview) to register. There is no charge to attend these classes.*

**NAMI Facilitator Trainings**

Have you attended and benefited from NAMI Support Groups or Education Classes? Would you like to become a NAMI Support Group or NAMI Education class facilitator? NAMI Washington is offering free training to become a NAMI Support Group facilitator or NAMI Education program leader.

*For more information please call Heidi at 360-695-2823 if you are interested in becoming a NAMI SW WA program leader.*
Help support the one in four Americans who will be affected by mental illness this year.

Thank you for being part of the team!