



NAMI Mercer

Families Meeting the Challenge of Mental Illness

September 2010

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Our Mission

NAMI Mercer is a nonprofit organization of individuals and families working to improve the lives of those affected by mental illness through education, advocacy and mutual support.

NAMI Mercer Calendar

For regular support meetings, see Page 8

PUBLIC EDUCATION MEETINGS AT THE NAMI CENTER

Sept. 21 (Tuesday), 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Depression

Barry Jacobs, PhD

Dr. Barry Jacobs has been at Princeton University for over three decades, where he served as director of the program in neuroscience. He is a member of the Princeton Neuroscience Institute.

Oct. 19 (Tuesday), 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Current Pharmacological Approaches to Treating Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder

Karen Marquis, PhD

Dr. Marquis is former director of InVivo Pharmacology at the Pfizer Neuroscience Psychiatry Drug Discovery Group. Now retired, Dr. Marquis participates in programs sponsored by the Neuroscience Network and other activities that connect life science professionals of the Central New Jersey research corridor.

Nov. 16 (Tuesday), 7:30 to 9 p.m.
ADHD and Related Disorders in Children and Adults.

Jagwinder Sandhu, MD,

In addition to being a general psychiatrist, Dr. Sandhu specializes in assessment and management of ADHD and related disorders for children and adults. Untreated ADHD can lead to significant academic, occupational and social dysfunction in individuals.

Harvest of Hope Conference

NAMI Mercer will host its second annual Harvest of Hope conference on Saturday, Oct. 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville. This education event is open to consumers, their families, and the general public.

Our theme this year is "Keeping Joy Alive," inspired by "Transforming Mental Health Care in America" (2004), a report of the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), that names "recovery" as the single most important goal for mental healthcare. The report identifies 10 fundamental components of recovery; we will focus on the holistic component:

Recovery encompasses an individual's whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. Recovery embraces all aspects of life, including housing, employment, education, mental health and healthcare treatment and services, complementary and naturalistic services, addictions treatment, spirituality, creativity, social networks . . .

Lizzie Simon, freelance writer, consultant, and public speaker, will deliver the opening address. Diagnosed with bipolar disorder as a young adult, she traveled across the country to interview people who had successfully managed

their bipolar disorder. Since the publication of her popular memoir "DETOUR" (Atria Books, 2002), Lizzie has spoken at more than 70 universities and conferences. She is currently finishing work on a new memoir, tentatively called "Soldier's Heart."

The conference then will offer attendees a choice of concurrent wellness workshops, with one session in the morning and another during the afternoon. The \$10 registration fee includes lunch.

Workshops will provide a variety of interactive and hands-on wellness experiences. Topics include stress management, communication, employment, nutrition, journaling, art therapy, spirituality, exercise, reiki, caregiver self-care, humor, meditation, and massage.

Michelle Zechner, MSW, LSW, CPRP, faculty member from the UMDNJ-School of Health Related Professions (SHRP) and Family-to-Family instructor, will conclude the conference with a message of hope.

NAMI Mercer will mail a conference brochure to all members shortly. For more information, call us at 609-799-8994 or see our website at www.namimercer.org.

9th Annual Night Out with NAMI 2011

January 9, 2011, at 3:00 p.m.

The Music Building, The College of New Jersey

Tickets: \$49 for concert; \$165 for concert and dinner

The Bill Charlap Trio will present the music of well-known American jazz composers affected by mental illness. Charlap, widely considered one of the world's best jazz pianists, has earned two Grammy nominations for his CDs "Somewhere" and "The Bill Charlap Trio Live at the Village Vanguard."

NAMI National Convention: a report

In early July, four representatives of NAMI Mercer went to the NAMI National Convention in Washington, DC. Tom Pyle (Board member and Family-to-Family teacher), Cara Marciano (Multicultural Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator), Erika Reading (Consumer Program Coordinator), and I attended the gathering of about 2,000 people from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Each of us chose sessions according to our individual interests; we brought home information on a wide variety of topics.

A major theme for this year's event was the implementation of healthcare reform and its potential impact on mental healthcare now and in the future. With huge policy changes coming on the heels of the new mental health parity law, NAMI National is calling on all NAMI members to be vigilant advocates. With the convention offering a perfect opportunity for advocacy, participants spent an entire day giving briefings and visiting Capitol Hill to speak with legislators.

New Jersey had about 20 attendees from the state organization and other affiliates. Several congressional representatives and their aides visited us. Reps. Rush Holt (D-NJ12) and Leonard Lance (R-NJ7) addressed the group, and we visited with the chief of staff for Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ4). We shared our concerns with our representatives. In particular, we emphasized that mental health continues to be a major focus of healthcare reform implementation plans, that inappropriate and harmful use of restraints and seclusion be reduced for children and adolescents with mental illness, that mental illness be decriminalized, and that funding for housing for people with mental illness be expanded. We also stressed the importance of federal funding for Medicaid matching for states and the expansion of the Mental Health Block Grant, especially as NJ (and all states) weather such difficult budgetary crises.

Here are some highlights of the convention:

- A three-year research project on

Family-to-Family found that the course reduces distress, depression, and the subjective burden of family members as well as improves family functioning and empowerment. The program is now recognized as an evidence-based practice.

- We were pleased that Sen. Robert Menendez received an award from NAMI National for his sponsorship of legislation for expanded funding for supportive housing for people with mental illness.

- NAMI National has worked for the past three years on Standards of Excellence for all levels of the organization, specifying minimal requirements for affiliation with NAMI.

- Representatives from the National Institute of Mental Health's RAISE Study reported on its research exploring the effectiveness of early and aggressive treatment for schizophrenia in preventing the gradual deterioration of functioning.

- Martha Silva, director of NAMI NJ en Español, won the Multicultural Outreach Award from NAMI National for her work in spreading De Familia a Familia, (Family-to-Family) in NJ and throughout the United States.

- "Ask the Doctor" sessions are favorites at all conventions. Renowned psychiatrists and psychologists provide specific answers to individual questions, while also offering descriptions of symptoms and the most inspiring information about treatments and recovery that I have ever received.

The convention closed with a pre-Fourth of July banquet attended by media and celebrity headliners. Actress and family member, Glenn Close, was honored for her work in the "Bring Change 2 Mind" campaign against mental health stigma.

Our group from NAMI Mercer was



Sally Osmer

inspired by the broad range of learning opportunities, the breadth of the NAMI organization, and the affirmation of our own affiliate here in central New Jersey. We look forward to implementing many of the ideas that we discussed in Washington as we get up and running for our exciting fall programs!

Sincerely,

Sally Osmer

Executive Director

Volunteer Voice

Without a doubt, we need to extend enormous thanks to ALL the volunteers who came out and assisted in making our 3rd NAMI Mercer Walk a wonderful success. More than 80 men, women, boys and girls supported the Walk in some manner.

In the near future, we will be looking for volunteers for two special events: our 2nd Annual "Harvest of Hope" Conference, scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 9 and "Night Out with NAMI" on Sunday, Jan. 9. Night Out always requires a large number of volunteers.

We also need committed volunteers for our regular educational and support programs. "Just Kids" leaders are looking for help with monthly activities. We are looking for new volunteers for our "Helpline," which we are planning to expand this year.

NAMI Mercer's community outreach programs are growing. We need volunteers to attend community events to make presentations and represent our organization.

As volunteers drop from the active list for a variety of reasons, we require new volunteers to assist with mailings, office filing, data input, advocacy, and other tasks. Please consider helping us to achieve our mission.

Tom Tompkins

Volunteer Coordinator
ttompkins@namimercer.org

Mediterranean diet reduces risk of depression

Unlike cardiovascular disease and other medical conditions, psychiatric disorders have few evidence-based primary prevention and treatment strategies based on dietary modification. Previous studies that have looked at a potential link between diet and depressive illness have focused on individual nutrients or food groups; they have not traditionally looked at the impact of a whole diet.

A review of close to 200 studies presents strong evidence of the protective effect of an overall Mediterranean diet

on risk of coronary heart disease (Archives of Internal Medicine, Apr. 13, 2009). This diet is characterized by vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and fish.

I'd like to review three recent epidemiological studies that found that whole diets similar to the Mediterranean diet help prevent depression and anxiety. Conversely, new research suggests that a Western diet high in refined or processed foods and saturated fats may increase the risk of depression.

In Oct. 2009, the Archives of General Psychiatry published a study of 10,000 Spaniards by Dr. Martinez-Gonzalez that found the risk for depression to be about 30 percent lower in participants with higher adherence to the Mediterranean diet. The research also found that very low consumption of fish was a risk factor for depression. Fish is our major source of omega-3 fatty acids.

In Nov. 2009, the British Journal of Psychiatry described a population-based study of 3,486 civil servants in London (ages 35 to 55). Scientists found that participants who consumed a typical Western diet high in processed foods had increased odds of depression. This finding was observed after adjusting for other factors such as age, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, total energy intake, health behaviors, and health status.

The third was a cross-sectional study published by investigators at the University of Melbourne, Australia (American Journal of Psychiatry, Jan. 2010). It concluded that individuals who regularly consume a Mediterranean-like diet were more than 30 percent less likely to have major depression, dysthymia, and anxiety disorders compared with their counterparts who consume a Western diet. In addition,



Bill Hayes Jr.

the Western diet was associated with a 50 percent increased likelihood of depression.

Many nutritionists have called the "Standard American Diet" SAD. Based on epidemiological evidence, I would advise eating a Mediterranean-style diet rich in vegetables, fruits, nuts, whole grains, and fish to optimize your overall health and potentially decrease your risk of depression and cardiovascular disease.

In addition, studies have suggested a role for omega-3 fatty acids in Bipolar Disorder and Major Depression. An exciting result, published last February in The Archives of General Psychiatry, found that fish oil may prevent the transition from a subthreshold psychotic state to full-blown psychosis. The finding was based on a small randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of 81 patients (ages 13 to 25) at risk for psychosis. At the end of the 12-month study, researchers found that the cumulative conversion rates to psychotic disorder were 4.9 percent for those taking 1.2 grams of omega-3FA fish oil supplements versus 27.5 percent in the placebo group.

The study suggests that fish oil may delay, but probably not prevent, the onset of schizophrenia. Subjects did not take antipsychotic medications or mood stabilizers during the study but could take antidepressants.

This study adds to a growing body of evidence pointing to the protective qualities of fish oils in mental health. This result should be interpreted cautiously and regarded as a supplemental strategy rather than a primary treatment. My recommendation is to eat a Mediterranean-style diet for your physical and emotional health. In combination with exercise and stress management practices, this type of diet will optimize your recovery and keep you well.

William P. Hayes
M.D., F.A.A.C.A.P.

President

Bill Hayes, intern

Bill Hayes III is the son of NAMI Mercer President William Hayes Jr., a psychiatrist in practice in the Mercer County area. Bill is a graduate student, working towards the prerequisites for medical school. His bachelor's degree was earned at Philadelphia University.



Bill Hayes III

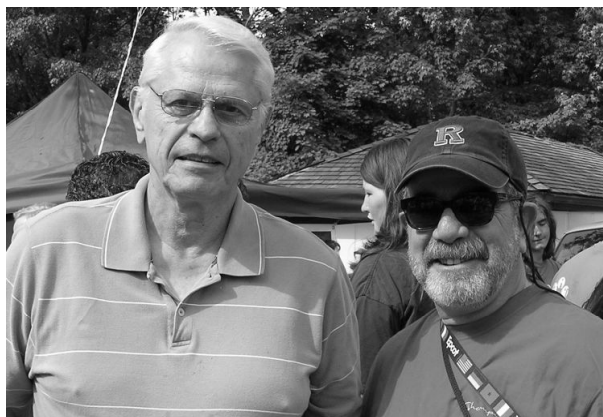
Bill's work for NAMI Mercer focuses on graphic design and communications. In the past, he worked for the John Hancock Company as a graphic designer, producing promotional materials and financial reports.

He heard about our organization from his father, started at the NAMI Center in the beginning of the 2009 spring semester, and put in eight hours a week at first. Now, he does four hours a week, mostly on graphics. Among other projects, he produced the Walk brochure, for which he downloaded some design elements from the national NAMI website. He uses Adobe's Illustrator and Photoshop software packages.

Bill's skills have been valuable to NAMI, since design and typesetting services are extremely expensive and out of reach for most small non-profits.

Bill enjoys working at the NAMI Center. "They're nice people," he said. He also values the experience of working with people who actually need help.

The NAMI Walk: May 22, Washington Crossing State Park



Top left: The “For the Love of Akira” team at the starting line. **Right:** Bob Demers with Phil Lubitz, associate director for NAMI NJ.

Middle left: NAMI Mercer founder and long-term director Chomy Garces with Executive Director Sally Osmer. **Right:** Sakiko Ono and her daughter, Keiko at the registration table. **Below right:** the littlest walkers join the crowd.

Bottom left: Carol Kivler with Bob Powers and Debbie Smyth. **Bottom right:** Vince Peloso and Maddy Monheit.

CIT initiative: keeping people with mental illness out of jail

By Madeline Monheit

More than half of all prison and jail inmates, including 56 percent of state prisoners, 45 percent of federal prisoners, and 64 percent of local jail inmates, were found to have a mental health problem, reported a press release issued on Sept. 6, 2006 by the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).

According to Philip Lubitz, associate director of NAMI New Jersey, "... prisons have replaced hospitals as the principal institutional setting for people dealing with mental illness."

For almost a year, NAMI Mercer Executive Director Sally Osmer has been teaming with Greater Trenton Behavioral Healthcare (GTBHC) and county police, prosecutors, corrections officers, mental health administrators, mental health agencies, and the Capital Health emergency psychiatric screening center to reverse this trend. The team's strategy is to provide Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for police officers, whose initial attitudes and actions are so critical when dealing with a psychiatric emergency.

NAMI Mercer will play an important role on the CIT team by training a group of family members to share personal stories of their interactions with law enforcement. "Our involvement in CIT is part of our outreach in the community and our advocacy to improve services for all who are affected by mental illness," explains Osmer.

Goals of CIT

It is estimated that 350,000 persons with serious mental illness are living in the community in our state. Since 7 to 15 percent of police responses involve someone affected by mental illness, there is an urgent need to educate first responders about interacting with this population:

- To defuse confrontational situations and limit injury to themselves, the person with mental illness, and the public;
- To change the misconception that most individuals with mental illness are dangerous. In reality, they are usually victims and not perpetrators of crime;

- To encourage police to use the services of psychiatric screening centers instead of taking the person directly to jail;
- In lieu of arrest for minor offenses, to expedite the person's access to mental health resources;
- To reduce the number of persons with mental illness in our prisons and jails.

Background on CIT in NJ

Police Chief Thomas Garrity of Collingswood, NJ has been championing CIT for the past several years. His town in Camden County, in collaboration with its local NAMI affiliate, was the first in the state to pilot CIT. Since 2007, more than half of the town's police officers have been trained to recognize mental illness, to de-escalate potentially violent situations, and to take advantage of mental health resources.

"The officers become advocates for the mentally ill," commented Garrity in a recent interview for *The Examiner*.

John Monahan, founder and CEO of GTBHC, is largely responsible for bringing the CIT initiative to Mercer County. Working on a grant to promote jail diversion, Monahan invited all county police chiefs and sheriffs departments to a luncheon last summer, at which Garrity was the speaker. As an outgrowth of that meeting, a steering committee was formed and groups of about 20 Mercer County law enforcement officers and mental health professionals attended training in January and June of this year.

Content of Training

The 40-hour CIT training for police officers consists of three modules:

- An introduction, lectures on the various forms of mental illness, treatments and medications, substance abuse and post traumatic stress disorder;
- Practical first aid and ways to de-escalate a situation;
- Visits to the county correctional center and mental health agencies, presentations by consumers, meetings with consumers about medication, question and answer session.

Mercer County CIT

Steering Committee

The Mercer County CIT Steering Committee has been meeting monthly since October 2009. Until recently, the chair was Trenton Police Director Irving Bradley Jr. Monahan is confident that Ernest Williams, Trenton's new police director as of July 2, will support the CIT mission.

"It's a great project," said Monahan. "I am concerned in case it loses steam."

In the interim, committee leadership has passed to Captain Veldon Harris and Hopewell Township Police Chief George Meyer.

Other members include County Mental Health Administrator Michelle Madiou; Elaine Candelori of Camden County; Mary Lynn Reynolds, a former police officer; Vince Haba of the Association for Advancement of Mental Health; Jeff Robbins of Family Guidance Centers; Brian Eig, a psychiatrist at the Mercer County Correctional Center; Joe Politi of Capital Health Systems; Charles Ellis, a warden at the Mercer County Correctional Center; Detective Alexis Derlacher; Dr. Stan Malkin, also of the MC Correctional Center, and Sally Osmer, executive director of NAMI Mercer.

Monahan has not yet met with Trenton's new mayor, Tony Mack, but he is hopeful that over the next five years as many as 100 officers (out of a total force of 300) will receive training and that many other municipalities will be included.

SAVE the DATE

NAMI Mercer WALK

Saturday, May 21, 2011

***Please write it down
and plan to participate!***

Cara Marcano reaches out to the Latino community

By Liz Hagen

Cara Marcano was appointed Multicultural Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator for NAMI Mercer, a part-time paid position, in April 2010. She will focus on the Latino community, although her position covers all minority groups across Mercer County.

Cara has reported on business and economics for the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Bloomberg Magazine*, *Newsday*, *International Herald Tribune*, and for the Associated Press. She holds a master's degree in Journalism and a bachelor's degree in Latin American Studies and English from Columbia University.

Cara is actually Italian-American, born in Pennsylvania. Her husband, Kleibeel Marcano, is from Venezuela. The Marcanos are joint founders and owners of *Reporte Hispano*, a bi-weekly Spanish-language newspaper circulating in Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, Hunterdon, Union, and Ocean counties. Cara and Kleibeel have a 20-month-old daughter named Oriana.

Cara's twin brother has schizo-affective disorder. She took NAMI's Family-to-Family course about five years ago and has been volunteering for NAMI Mercer ever since, doing writing and



Cara Marcano

public relations. At this year's NAMI National conference in Washington, D.C., she was inspired by the overwhelming need to deliver NAMI's message to local Latino and African American groups.

In the inner city Trenton area, she notes, the population is 25 percent Latino and 60 to 65 percent African American. Most recent immigrants come from Guatemala and Mexico, less recent ones from Puerto Rico. The best way to approach many of these people is through their churches.

In collaboration with AAMH and the Princeton HealthCare System, Cara is working on "Sharing Hope," an informational presentation to be delivered on October 3 at the St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Hightstown.

She is also in touch with two local Latino psychiatrists and is developing "Ask the Doctor," a presentation specifically for families with members who are in treatment.

Under Cara's leadership, the NAMI Mercer Multicultural Outreach Committee meets in the NAMI Mercer

Center at 7:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. Cara hopes current NAMI Mercer members will consider joining her group to help with outreach, research, and information delivery.

"We need fresh blood," she said. Latinos have relatively slower metabolisms and a higher incidence of negative drug reactions compared with other ethnic groups, so proper information is especially crucial to both consumers and families. Cara already has translated a great deal of NAMI material into Spanish. Her committee will staff a table at a major health fair on August 14 at Trenton High School West.

If Spanish-speakers call the NAMI Helpline, they can be routed to Cara's cell phone. "We desperately need volunteers who speak Spanish and can translate. One of our goals is to offer a 12-week Family-to-Family (*De Familia a Familia*) course in Spanish," she said. NAMI Mercer co-founder and long-term director Chomy Garces, a Cuban-American, has offered to teach the course as soon as there is another trained, bi-lingual teacher to partner with her.

At the present time, we have only one Spanish-speaking In Our Own Voice presenter. Cara hopes to find others as soon as possible.

NAMI Mercer's board of directors, 2010



Front row, from left:

Robbi Alexander, Maddy Monheit, Karen Marquis, Caryl Chambers, Ivy Minely, Sally Osmer, Bill Hayes, Tom Pyle, Lauren Agoratus, Inge Eriks, Laurie Russell.

Back row: Joe Irenas, Damon

Vigiano, Jeremy Mann, Kurt Baker, Jules DeGraff, John Marsland, Carol Kivler.

Not shown: Andrew Hendry,

Elizabeth Leach, Valerie Powers Smith.

NAMI Mercer

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Madeline Monheit

Elisabeth Hagen

A Story of Service

"A Story of Service" is a compilation of 11 articles about NAMI Mercer that appeared in *The Times of Trenton* from February to December 2009. Written by Madeline Monheit and Elisabeth Hagen, the articles tell the story of our grassroots organization and the dedicated individuals who have carried out its mission for more than 25 years. The articles also are filled with courageous stories of recovery.

Call **609-799-8994**
to request a copy.

Will I Ever Be the Same Again?

By Madeline Monheit

NAMI Mercer congratulates Carol Kivler on the recent publication of her second book, "Will I Ever Be the Same Again? Transforming the Face of ECT (Shock Therapy)." Carol will generously donate 15 percent of the proceeds from the sale of her book to our organization.

Carol is a long-time member of the Executive Board and inspiring motivational speaker in the NAMI Mercer In Our Own Voice (IOOV) program. Like her presentations, Kivler's book is a story of hope and a celebration of life. She does an outstanding job of demystifying and destigmatizing ECT, which succeeded for her when medication failed. "Will I Ever Be the Same Again?" inspires us to believe that recovery from depression is achievable for ourselves and our loved ones.

Carol opens her book with these words: "It is my heartfelt desire that you, my reader will be encouraged and enlightened by my personal journey . . . I pray that if you are a consumer you will choose to rebuild your life, no matter how many times you get knocked down."

NAMI Mercer Executive Director Sally T. Osmer thanks Carol "for opening our eyes to the transformation of her life from illness to recovery with the healing power of ECT."



Carol Kivler

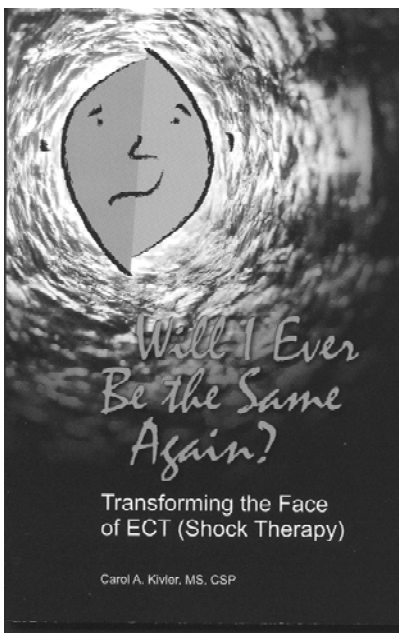
Osmer continues, "I look forward to hearing of the many people whose lives will also be transformed through reading this book."

In her professional life, Carol is the president of Kivler Communications, a company that provides customized corporate training, development, and executive coaching. Carol later founded Courageous Recovery "to raise awareness and remove the stigma of mental illness and to instill hope in those who live with it." She often addresses medical and other professionals, some of whom have never met a person in recovery.

Carol has a master's degree from Fordham University and a bachelor's degree from The College of New Jersey. She is a member of the National Speaker's Association, where she serves as president of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter.

"Blessings: My Journal of Gratitude," published in 2003, was Carol's first book. It teaches readers to preserve their recollections, remember their blessings, and move more deeply into self-reflection with inspiring words, captivating watercolors, and different textures.

To learn more about Carol's new book or to place an order, go to <http://courageousrecovery.com/books/html>.



HOW TO REACH US

THE NAMI CENTER

of Mercer County

Lawrence Commons

3371 Brunswick Pike

Suite 124

Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

(609) 799-8994

fax (609) 799-8996

home@namimercer.org

www.namimercer.org

Directions: From southbound Rte. 1, pass Province Line Road and make a right at the Office Depot sign. Lawrence Commons is a white building, second on your left. Drive to the rear of the building. The NAMI Center is in Suite 124 on the ground floor.

NAMI Mercer Support Groups

NAMI Connection

For adult consumers, run by consumers
1st through 4th Mondays, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
No registration required.
NAMI Center of Mercer County.

WRAP

A wellness/recovery action program for consumers
2nd Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Registration required. NAMI Center.

Weight Management

For adult consumers and families
4th Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m.
Visitors welcome.
NAMI Center.

IFSS/NAMI

For families of adults with mental illness
Mondays, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Lawrence Road Presbyterian Church *and*
biweekly Tuesdays, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
NAMI Center.
(Contact NAMI at 609-799-8994 for Tuesday dates.)

BOOK GROUP

3rd Thursdays at 12:00 noon (bring lunch).
Call 799-8994 for book selection. NAMI Center.

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