

FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

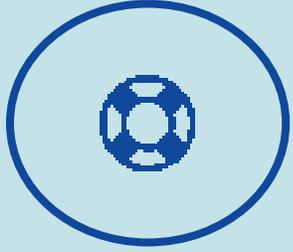
Giving Back to NAMI CI In More Ways Than One

Like many NAMI CI supporters, Todd & Angela Tharp first heard about NAMI Central Iowa's Family-to-Family class when they need to know more about mental illness after their middle son died by suicide. So many hurting parents were reaching out to them for help, and the Tharp's felt their toolbox was empty. Following the recommendation of a co-worker who had taken the Family-to-Family class six months prior, the Tharp's looked into NAMI CI and registered for a Family-to-Family course. Now, almost 4 years later, Todd and Angela are still involved with NAMI CI, but this time as volunteers for Ending the Silence Family-to-Family, joining the NAMI Central Iowa H.E.R.O.E.S. circle, Angela is now the Executive Director of NAMI Central Iowa, helping others living with mental illness and providing support to their loved ones living with mental illness.

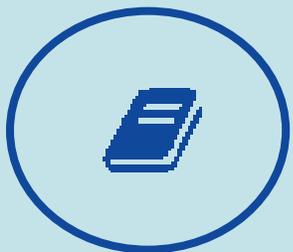
Todd and Angela shared the impact Family-to-Family made in their lives in an interview for the United Way of Story County's (UWSC) annual campaign. NAMI Central Iowa receives funding from the UWSC for programs, such as Family-to-Family. You can watch the interview at this link: [Family-to-Family: The Tharp Family](#)

You support NAMI CI as volunteers. Can you please share why it's important to you?

- Being a volunteer teacher, it was a no-brainer. As soon as we heard about the Ending the Silence program, we knew that is where we wanted to be involved. Working with the youth, right in the schools where they spend the majority of their time. We often wonder, if maybe our son had heard the information at an Ending the Silence presentation, and heard the powerful testimonies of the young adults who are succeeding despite their mental illness, maybe, just maybe he would be here today.
- Another reason we became members, donors and volunteers was due to the fact that if we reached just ONE person or ONE family with the resources of NAMI CI brings, it could help improve their journey. We are so amazed that no one offered our family a NAMI CI brochure when we were seeking help for our son. We sought help from nurses, doctors, counselors, teachers, guidance counselors, psychiatrists, police officers, and justice of the court. Not one of them said to us that our son's mental illness was only affecting him, but affecting our entire family. No one said to us, NAMI is a place where you will find other family members that will walk this journey with you and you will no longer feel alone.
- Also, the mentally ill are woefully underserved in our communities. The needs of the mental health community are neglected when it comes to government funding, medical research, public policy, community awareness – the list goes on and on. No doubt the ignorance of these needs is because of the stigma surrounding them. We understand this stigma. We faced it, we saw it and we are choosing to stand against it.



Support



Educate



Advocate

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Contact NAMI CI at
515-292-9400 or
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What motivated you to begin giving a monthly donation to NAMI CI?

- Personally, we are much better with our giving when we set up automatic withdraw monthly. If we wait to give a one time gift we either put it off, or we don't give what we truly want because we have not planned well enough in advance. Setting up monthly giving allows us to give a bigger gift because it is broken down into manageable donations which works best with our budget. Having the opportunity to give back to NAMI CI monthly means we are committed to the mission, vision and impact each volunteer each advocate, each staff person, each board member, each peer can make reducing the stigma of mental illness.
- We know the importance of community support. Once we learned NAMI Central Iowa had to generate their own funding, it became a priority to place our giving at a local level. Not only do our dollars directly support the work of NAMI CI, but they do it in a way that allows them to engage in long-term planning. NAMI CI has a strategic plan to bring programs and support services to all 11 counties. This task can only be accomplished if there is the funding and the volunteer support. And perhaps more important looking at this from a strategy standpoint, our small but steady support serves as a significant metric for local foundations and government agencies about the importance of NAMI CI's work. As these larger groups consider where to put their dollars, they have hard evidence of how much we in the community value and need this organization.

Why do you think people should support NMAI CI (both financially and through volunteer work)?

- If we don't, who will? Our reasons for supporting NAMI CI are personal as well as local! Supporting NAMI CI financially and by our time is a way to help our neighbors, ourselves, and someone else's son or daughter. We didn't know that NAMI was the missing link our family needed until we finally stepped foot in the door. And once we did, wow! We no longer felt alone! We found hope and help!
- We like to think of the ripple effect. If one family or one youth is positively impacted by our giving or our volunteer efforts with NAMI Central Iowa, imagine what that will do to those around them? One of our favorite holiday movies is *It's A Wonderful Life*. In that movie you can see the stark contrast how life is impacted when George Bailey decides that he THINKS everyone would be better off without him. What George is blessed to see through Clarence, his guardian angel, is that many people's lives were impacted in a negative way because he was not alive. George saw that his life mattered. That IS the ripple effect.
- At the end of the day, supporting NAMI CI is the best legacy we can leave for those living with mental illness. As we know, those living with mental illness did not ask for this, do not deserve this, and are not their mental illness. Many of those with mental illness are not in a position to advocate for themselves, but by supporting NAMI CI with our time and our money, we can do it for them.

Sharing help, sharing hope,

Todd & Angela Tharp



SEASON OF GIVING

Join NAMI Central Iowa H.E.R.O.E.S Monthly Giving Program

H = Help

E = Educate!

R = Rising

O = Over

E = Every

S = Stigma!



Support Mental Health All Year Long By Joining our Monthly Giving Program

As a NAMI Central Iowa H.E.R.O.E.S monthly donor, you can help us reduce costs and bring hope to more lives. It is an easy, affordable way for you to make your contribution go further and build a stronger community of support and acceptance for those living with mental illness.



\$5 / Month

I'm here to Educate!

At \$5 per month or \$0.17 per day you help provide two resources packets for students receiving for the Ending the Silence program.



\$15 / Month

I'm here to bring Hope!

At \$15 per month or \$0.50 per day, you help provide 125 informational brochures bringing hope to those who read them.



\$25 / Month

I'm here to Advocate!

At \$25 per month or \$0.83 cents per day, you help lead one person to self-advocacy through Peer-to-Peer or In Our Own Voice training.



\$50 / Month

I'm here to Support!

At \$50 per month or \$1.66 per day, you help provide hope through a support group meeting.



\$100 / Month

I'm here to make an Impact!

At \$100 per month or \$3.33 per day, you help support one person attending NAMI programming for a year!

Becoming a Mental Health Hero is easy, convenient and efficient!

- Your monthly donation helps form a predictable source of income we can count on to fund programs and services for people living with mental illness and their families in Central Iowa.
- Spreading your support over time is easier on your budget and gives NAMI Central Iowa a steady, reliable stream of program support. You will be making a difference in the lives of the people in the 11 counties we serve: Greene, Boone, Story, Marshall, Hardin, Hamilton, Franklin, Jasper, Warren, Madison, and Poweshiek!

Join us in erasing stigma by completing the form below and strengthening the 11 counties of NAMI Central Iowa, one donation, one family, one month at a time.

By joining this inspirational circle of impact, you will receive:

- A surprise welcome gift
- Statistics showing the impact of your donation
- Our Annual Report
- Monthly e-Newsletter
- End of the year tax letter noting total contribution
- An invitation to our HEROES Appreciation Breakfast



Yes, I want to become a part of NAMI Central Iowa H.E.R.O.E.S!

Please fill out the below information, cut on dotted line and return to
NAMI Central Iowa at 424 5th St. Ames, IA 50010

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Support NAMI Central Iowa H.E.R.O.E.S easily by automatic monthly giving.

I'll make a monthly gift of: \$100 \$50 \$25 \$15 \$5

I would like my monthly donation to be debited on the ____ of each month: 1st 15th 30th

I/we the undersigned authorize NAMI Central Iowa to debit my/our account at the financial institution indicated, for the amount indicated, on the day indicated. Under the terms and conditions agreed upon me/us with NAMI Central Iowa until such time as written notice to the contrary is given by me/us to NAMI Central Iowa

Please enclose a blank check marked "VOID" to this form.

Signature _____ Date _____

I'll Make a *single* gift of: \$_____ and have enclosed a check payable to NAMI Central Iowa

What Programs Are You Supporting when you Donate?

All of our NAMI CI programs are evidence based and follow our mission of advocating, educating, and supporting those affected by mental illness. Your donation of any size makes a difference!

Educate



A free 12-session educational program for family, significant others and friends of people living with mental illness. It is a designated evidenced-based program. NAMI-trained family members who have been there lead the course with presentations, discussion and interactive exercises. The group setting allows you to connect with others and build a community of support. Next class begins in Spring 2020. RSVP today!



A free 10-session educational program for adults with mental illness who are looking to better understand their condition and help in their journey toward recovery. Taught by a trained team of people who've been there, the program includes presentations, discussion and interactive exercises. Next class begins in Spring 2020. RSVP today!



A free six-week group education program for parents and family caregivers of children and teens who are experiencing symptoms of a mental illness or who have already been diagnosed. The course is taught by a trained team with lived experience and provides critical strategies for taking care of your child and learning the ropes of recovery. The group setting allows you to connect with others and build a community of support. Ask for online access today!



NAMI Homefront adapts the NAMI Family-to-Family curriculum to the unique needs of military and veteran communities, such as post-deployment and post-discharge transitions. This class is offered online with live facilitators guiding the class. Ask for online access today!

Advocate



NAMI In Our Own Voice presentations change attitudes, assumptions and ideas about people with mental health conditions. These free, 40 or 60 minute presentations provide a personal perspective of mental health conditions, as those with lived experience talk openly about what it's like to have a mental health condition.



NAMI Ending the Silence is an in-school presentation about mental health designed for high school students. Students can learn about mental illness directly from the family members and individuals living with mental illness themselves. Schedule a presentation at your school today!



NAMI Smarts for Advocacy is a hands-on advocacy training program that helps people living with mental illness, friends and family transform their passion and lived experience into skillful grassroots advocacy.

Support



NAMI Family Support group is a peer-led group for adult family members, caregivers and loved ones of individuals living with mental illness. Gain insight from the challenges and successes of others facing similar circumstances.

NAMI CI currently hosts monthly family support groups in Story, Hardin, and Jasper counties. Our goal is to have a support group in every county!

mental health awareness.



NAMI Connection is a free, peer-led support group for adults living with mental illness. You will gain insight from hearing the challenges and successes of others, and the groups are led by NAMI-trained facilitators who've been there. By sharing your experience in a safe and confidential setting, you gain hope and develop relationship. The group encourages empathy, productive discussion and a sense of community. We meet Monday's & Thursday's.



NAMI Central Iowa Mental Health Wellness Center

NAMI CI's Mental Health Wellness Center is a peer support drop-in center established to support individuals with mental illness by creating a safe space and positive atmosphere to gather, gain support, and build relationships. The Wellness center is a confidential space equipped with a public computer, quiet room and art room for individuals to use at their own leisure for positive skill building. **Hours of Operation– Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 12:00pm-4:00pm. Location– 424 5th St. Ames, IA 50010**

For more information on our NAMI Central Iowa Programs or to bring programs to your area contact NAMI Central Iowa at 515-292-9400 or namiofci@gmail.com

December Wellness Center activities you don't want to miss!

- **December 7th** | December Birthday Celebration with treats and games. All invited!
- **December 9th & 10th** | Ellsworth College Nursing Students will be leading Wellness Center activities. Everyone welcome!
- **December 14th** | Coffee House Hang Out at the Wellness Center. Individuals are encouraged to present art, poems, music, and other creative outlets. If you are interested in presenting please contact Wellness Center to be put on the schedule
- **December 16th** | Cookie Decorating– Edible Art! Yumm!
- **December 19th** | Mobile Crisis presentation at 12:30pm-1:30pm, Connection Support Group to follow
- **December 24th** | **Take Note: Center Open 10:00am-2:00pm**
- **December 28th** | Holiday Party! Everyone welcome!



Important Note– Wellness Center hours may be affected by weather during the Winter months. NAMI CI reflects local school closures and delays, and will post on NAMI Central Iowa's Facebook page when the Wellness Center will be closed.

NAMI Central Iowa will host it's monthly Board Meeting on December 10th at 5:30pm.

My Life Changing Experience With NAMI's Family-To-Family

During the holiday season, you sometimes receive an unexpected gift from an unlikely source. This year I did, but it was not wrapped in bright paper or found under a tree. It was provided by NAMI and given freely from one family to my family. My gift was the NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program, and the life changing impact it had on my family.

Over the course of my son's mental illness, I had spent countless hours and thousands of dollars trying to find help with little success. The Family-to-Family Education Program, however, is different from anything I had experienced. The program's presenters were trained by NAMI and each have life experience of loving and caring for a family member with a mental illness. The free 12-week course, for me, were the insights into the experience of mental illness, and the skills that are taught to help manage its impact. This is where the program is strongest. This is the information that has the power to change lives and circumstances. These are the things you cannot know unless someone who has lived the experience tells you.

On the first night, we learned that there are three stages of emotional responses we experience when struggling to cope with serious mental illness in our families and the emotional and practical needs we have at each stage. It was like a road map of where I had been, and where I was going. These stages are so relevant that after a few classes, I was able to recognize my own and others stages .

We were presented with information about mental illness as a brain disorder in which symptoms are expressed as complex behaviors. The concept of a "double-edged sword" illustrates how unfamiliar, unwanted behaviors are expressed and many healthy, resourceful characteristics are lost when mental illness strikes; the husband who was always able to deal with minor problems is now unpredictable and overacts to everything; the daughter who was always responsible now acts in bizarre, inappropriate ways. Understanding the "double-edged sword" helps us to separate the person from the illness.

Workshops focused on issues that are frequent challenges and offered practical, applicable skills and tools for me to put to use. In the problem-solving workshop, we practiced breaking down problems into manageable parts for focused effort. The empathy workshop helped me understand that my family member's frequent refusal to take medication and rejection of family support and community programs are driven by a need to salvage self-esteem.

Thought disorders interfere with normal communication, and in the communication workshop we practiced essential communication basics. Keep communication content simple by using short, clear direct sentences. Manage the "stimulation level" when communicating. Communications are our "boundaries" when dealing with others; boundaries must be clear and strong.

The members of the class included mothers, fathers, a sister, a brother, a wife, and a husband. Different backgrounds, educational levels, cultural groups, and ages were represented. Their family members struggled with a range of mental illnesses and were in different places in their recovery. Everyone was different, but, as I looked around the room, I saw a group of loving family members who were united in the battle against mental illness which was attempting to deprive their loved one of independence, relationships, hope and a future. They were all fighters. I was in good company.

-Dawn

Source *nami.org

NAMI Central Iowa Supporter Spotlight!

Thank you to Theisen's More For Your Community Grant Program. NAMI Central Iowa received grant money to continue providing the free NAMI Ending the Silence presentation in our 11 counties (Story, Boone, Marshall, Greene, Hardin, Hamilton, Franklin, Madison, Warren, Poweshiek, and Jasper)



NAMI CI's Mental Health Wellness Center would like to thank the Ellsworth College Nursing students for volunteering their time to lead activities at the Wellness Center. Everyone had a great time playing games and decorating cookies. We look forward to them leading more activities in December.



NAMI Iowa Annual Conference 2019

On November 15th, NAMI Central Iowa gathered with other NAMI affiliates and mental health organizations for the NAMI Iowa Annual Conference. NAMI Iowa hosted many speakers on various topics including Suzanne Robinson, Assistant Director of NAMI National Education Programs, speaking on how to avoid burn out and remain effective, Dr. Amy Shriver, Pediatrician Unity Point Health, who spoke on future ACES and Trauma-Informed Care in primary care, and Lyndsey Fennelly (featured in the photo on the right), who shared her mental health journey.



Ending the Silence Presents at Gilbert Mental Health Night



On November 19th, NAMI Central Iowa's Ending the Silence Program presented at Gilbert's Mental Health Night hosted at the Gilbert High School. Our young adult presenters did an amazing job sharing their stories and answering questions throughout the night.

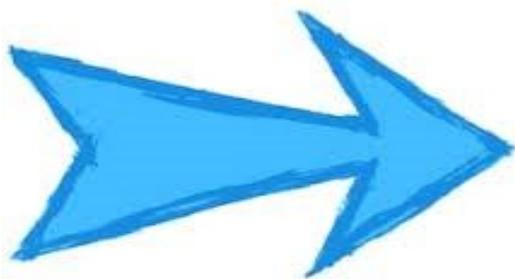
Tips for Managing the Holiday Blues

Many people can experience feelings of anxiety or depression during the holiday season. People who already live with a mental health condition should take extra care to tend to their overall health and wellness during this time.

Extra stress, unrealistic expectations or even sentimental memories that accompany the season can be a catalyst for the holiday blues. Some can be at risk for feelings of loneliness, sadness, fatigue, tension and a sense of loss.

A lot of seasonal factors can trigger the holiday blues such as, less sunlight, changes in your diet or routine, alcohol at parties, over-commercialization or the inability to be with friends or family. These are all factors that can seriously affect your mood.

However, there are certain things you can do to help avoid the holiday blues.



For more frequent updates on NAMI Central Iowa follow us on social media



Instagram:
namicentraliowa



Facebook:
NAMI Central Iowa

WHAT ARE THE HOLIDAY BLUES?

In a survey on the Holiday Blues

64% say they are affected
and 24% say the holidays affect them a lot.

So, what are they?

The Holiday Blues are temporary feelings of anxiety or depression during the holidays that can be associated with extra stress, unrealistic expectations or even memories that accompany the season.

This might include:	Fatigue	Loneliness or isolation
	Tension	Sadness
	Frustration	A sense of loss

The difference between the holiday blues and clinical anxiety or depression is that the feelings are temporary. However, short-term problems must still be taken seriously because they can lead to long-term mental health conditions.

Tips for avoiding the Holiday Blues

- Stick to normal routines as much as possible.
- Get enough sleep.
- Take time for yourself, but don't isolate yourself. Spend time with supportive, caring people.
- Eat and drink in moderation. Don't drink alcohol if you are feeling down.
- Get exercise—even if it's only taking a short walk.
- Make a to-do list. Keep things simple.
- Set reasonable expectations and goals for holiday activities such as shopping, cooking, entertaining, attending parties or sending holiday cards.
- Set a budget for holiday activities. Don't overextend yourself financially in buying presents.
- Listen to music or find other ways to relax.

Remember

The holiday blues are short-term. Be patient. Take things week by week or day by day.

Learn more at <http://www.nami.org/holidayblues>

NAMI CENTRAL IOWA

The NAMI-CI Newsletter is e-published monthly printed as requested by NAMI Central Iowa. NAMI-CI is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. Our mission is to provide them with support, education, and advocacy.

NAMICI is a United Way partner agency and is an affiliate of NAMI Iowa and NAMI, National.

To make changes to your contact information, to receive your newsletter by email/mail, or if you no longer wish to receive the NAMI-CI newsletter, email or phone the NAMI-CI office at namiofci@gmail.com or 515-292-9400.

- NAMI Central Iowa is a charity registered with Amazon Smile.
- NAMI Central Iowa has an Educational Endowment set up with the Story County Community Foundation.



Becoming a member of NAMI-CI is easy. Just complete this form and mail with appropriate dues to:

NAMI CI 424 5th St. Ames, IA 50010

Or register online at nami.org by clicking "join".

Membership Dues

_____ Household	\$60.00
_____ Regular/Individual	\$40.00
_____ Limited Income	\$5.00
_____ Extra Donation	

Member Information

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Check here to receive newsletter by email.



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