It’s Time to Walk!

...To stamp out stigma and increase awareness of mental health

Save the date!

EDUCATION PROGRAM

SPEAKING OF SCIENCE 2019

Cannabis and Mental Health: What You Should Know
Anne Eden Evins, MD
Massachusetts General Hospital
TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2019 / 7-8:30 PM

Dr. Evins is the founding director of the Center for Addiction Medicine at MGH and Cox Family Professor in Addiction Medicine at the Harvard Medical School. Her research interests, currently supported by major grants from the National Institutes of Drug Abuse, include pharmacotherapy for nicotine dependence, negative symptoms of schizophrenia, co-occurring psychiatric and substance use disorders, and cognitive dysfunction in schizophrenia.

Macht Auditorium Cambridge Hospital
1493 Cambridge St., Cambridge
(Pre-paid vouchers available for garage parking)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ADVOCACY DAY
  MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2019
  State House

- NAMI WALK
  SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2019, 11 AM
  Artesani Park, Brighton
  Register for NAMI-CM Team at www.namiwalks.org/team/NAMI-CAMBRIDGE

- ART OF HEALING GALA
  Cambridge Health Alliance
  THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2019, 6 PM
  Charles Hotel
  Honoring Mary Otto, former health care/social issues reporter, Washington Post, with a focus on social equity in health care.

www.nami-cambridgemiddlesex.org

www.namiwalks.org/team/NAMI-CAMBRIDGE

Walk with us for...

RECOVERY • EDUCATION • SUPPORT • ADVOCACY

... and bring a friend!
A group from NAMI-CM met recently with Senator Sal DiDomenico and his chief of Staff, Christine Young at the State House. After listening to their personal stories and requests, he committed to making the mental health initiatives discussed a top priority in this legislative session. “I’m going to make this my mission,” he declared.

Rep reports the senator encourages NAMI members across the state to contact their senators to: • Meet with senators, ideally at the start of the legislative session. As you know, there’s a trick (and enhanced training) needed to tell ones story in a brief, focused way that’s linked to a specific “ask,” which Elizabeth, Sharon, and Jean did brilliantly. Meetings with a senator’s staff can be as effective as talking with the actual senator, as staff members have a senator’s ear. • Meet with committee chairs about bills that are highest priority to NAMI, such as the Department of Mental Health budget (House Ways and Means Committee) and(joint) dissemination bills (Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Recovery). • Collaborate with the National Association of Social Workers, Massachusetts chapter (www.naswma.org), which does effective work in areas that resonate with ours, such as the ESP-private insurance bill. • Consider supporting measures to increase state revenues, since that ultimately would help to move our agenda forward. The Senator cited in particular the fair share amendment, which he says has a lot of support now in the senate but not the house. — https://www.nhasw.org/news/2019/06/18/mississippi-tax-exemption-ny

NAMI Members Meet with Massachusetts State Senator Sal DiDomenico

FEBRUARY 6, 2019  What is mindfulness and how does it help those of us dealing with mental illness reduce stress? It is paying attention in a particular way, focusing on the present rather than the future or the past. Dr. Mark Chang explained at our February meeting. Mindfulness requires intentionality and an absence of value judgment.

Mindfulness can be a good intervention for the many causes of stress in our lives. This is because mindfulness helps build resilience. Resilience is the capability to address difficulties before they become overwhelming and traumatic. Resilience helps individuals develop the ability to explore and learn from difficulties, to find a “home base” or reorient attention. It keeps us from getting stuck in negative patterns of thought and feeling. As the saying goes, “You don’t have to believe everything you think.” Suggested books on using mindfulness to treat depression include:

- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression: A New Approach to Preventing Relapse, by Zindel V. Segal, John D. Teasdale, and Mark Williams.
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- The Mindful Way Through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness, by Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal, and Mark Williams.
- The Mindful Way Workbook: An 8-Week Program to Free Yourself from Depression and Emotional Distress, by John Teasdale, Marc Novick, and Mark Williams

Left to right: Advocacy Chairman Rae Simpson, Jean Forst, Senator Sal DiDomenico, Elizabeth Young, Sharon DeVries, and Christine Young, the senator’s chief of staff.

Find Your Legislator

http://www.whoiswhow.com/ma/MyLegislator.aspx

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Find Your Legislator
COMMUNICATING MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE MENTAL ILLNESS

COMMUNICATE ABOUT THE HARD STUFF

Delusions or Hallucinations: Don’t insist that what your loved one sees or hears isn’t “real,” it’s real to them. Instead, lead with empathy and curiosity: “Tell me more about what you saw/heard.”

Substance abuse: Express concerns close in time to when this occurs, rather than dwelling on a pattern.

Medication: Listen to the person’s concerns. Encourage communication with providers and engage in problem-solving such as “How about we take a walk together to see if we can both get more energy?”

Wish for more independence: Find the positive here. Use goal-setting to think about what steps might lead to a higher level of independence.

Demoralization: Use a personal yardstick to highlight the person’s progress. This might present an opportunity to address things that could be getting in the way, such as substance abuse or going off medication.

HANDLING A CRISIS

Try to de-escalate by staying calm; watching your body language and giving physical space; setting limits in a firm, strong voice; being decisive and calling for help if you feel unsafe.

SUMMARY

Communicating with a loved one with mental illness can be extremely stressful. That stress can lead you to thinking patterns that are not useful. Try to avoid talking things personally (for example, thinking or saying “you’re doing this to hurt me”); exaggerating (“it’s never going to get better”); and using a mental filter so you don’t see anything positive (“You only think about yourself”).

Practice new ways of spending time together and of communication; practice mindfulness and self-compassion; be patient with yourself and your loved one; and balance talking about the good things and working on things you’d like to see change.

Read more from Dr. Catherine on our website:
On the Benefits of Practicing Mindfulness and Self-Compassion (nami-cambridgemiddlesex.org)

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