

## General Meeting

100 S. San Mateo Drive  
San Mateo

Mills Health Center / Hendrickson Aud.  
Free evening parking in front

Wednesday, January 24

6:30pm Reception  
7:00-8:30pm Program

## SMC Behavioral Health & Recovery Services

David Young, PhD., Director, BHRS

Please join us in meeting **David Young**, the new BHRS Director and learn about his background, perspectives, values and ideas to enhance the County's behavioral health system.

*NAMI San Mateo County General Meetings are free and open to the public. We welcome all who support our mission to improve the quality of life for people with mental illness and their families.*

Like us on Facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/namismc/>

and

follow us on Twitter



<https://twitter.com/NAMISMC>

## Happy New Year!

*This is a combined issue—  
see you again in February!*

## 5 New Year's Resolutions for Mental Health

While you're getting organized, quitting smoking, and losing weight (the most popular New Year's resolutions in the U.S.), you may be overlooking something that would actually make a bigger difference for you and your family than those popular resolutions.



How about some New Year's resolutions for mental health?

You might find that the dissatisfaction that makes you think you need to get organized (again) can be handled better by working directly on the dissatisfaction instead of starting your year with a resolution you haven't kept in any of the previous years when you've made that resolution. New Year's resolutions for mental health might even make it easier for you to keep the other resolutions you choose to make.

Here are a few to consider:

**I will take action on my mental health.** There's enough stigma around mental health in the U.S. that many people choose not to visit a therapist even when they know that a trained, unbiased listener is exactly what they need. A therapist has tools for dealing with mental health issues effectively, and for personal growth and development, too. In fact, that regular appointment is one of the nicest things you can do for yourself.

**I will be kind to myself.** Does your self talk sound like something you would never say to the people you love? We see people on Facebook posting, "I was a big fat pig" with a photo of their holiday dinner. A friend told us he puts notes up in his house saying, "Don't smoke that cigarette, dummy!" You don't deserve that. Treat yourself with respect.

**I will set healthy boundaries.** Sometimes we give other people too much power in our lives. Letting our significant others, our kids, or our bosses make our lives more difficult can masquerade as kindness, but it's not always good for us. Define your limits at work, at home, and in other relationships. Maybe you're not willing to do personal errands for your boss, to lie for your spouse, or to accept verbal abuse from your friends. Let this be the year you say so, directly and without anger.

**I will exercise regularly.** Does that sound like a physical health resolution? In fact, there is a lot of evidence that regular movement, especially outdoors, helps  
*(Continued on page 2)*

## Membership Time!

Please renew your membership with NAMI San Mateo County - we value your support! If you haven't yet joined the 2018 membership, please use the request for membership renewal you receive in the mail, or there's a form on the back page of this newsletter. Or check our website at [www.namisanmateo.org](http://www.namisanmateo.org). By joining at this local affiliate level (preferred) you will receive the local San Mateo County monthly newsletter, the NAMI California web newsletter, and the NAMI National full-color magazine, each offering their respective level of coverage and commentary. Thank you for continuing to support NAMI SMC.



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## Stocking Stuffers & Gifts for the Holidays

### Open House

**Monday-Friday, Dec. 11–15 1:00 – 4:00pm.**

**NAMI SMC Office at 1650 Borel Place**

The beloved and well-known art cards by **NARSAD Artworks** showcasing art products by and on behalf of persons with mental illness are now available at the NAMI SMC office and website. Perfect for birthdays, holidays and all occasions. Stop by and pick up a pack - and another for a friend!



**NARSAD Artworks**  
SUNSHINE FROM DARKNESS

**NAMI Jewelry**, designed by Mike Warner, the owner and family member of Wild Bryde Jewelry, has created a beautiful hand-crafted collection of earrings, pins, pendants & bracelets and money clips that feature the NAMI signature “grass roots” symbol.



Visit [namisanmateo.org](http://namisanmateo.org) and click on our NAMI Store link and purchase a gift today. Ordering is easy, safe and secure! All proceeds support NAMI San Mateo County.

*Come join us for cookies and warm cider while selecting those holiday gifts!*



*We are grateful for donations...*

... in memory of  
**Lois Florea** from Laura Osman

NAMI San Mateo County appreciates those who send donations that honor loved ones. *Our sincere gratitude!*

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## Second Advocacy Forum

**Thursday, February 1, 2018**

**Dinner at 5:30 pm. Panel speaks 6:00pm - 7:30pm**

**Silicon Valley Community Foundation**

**1300 El Camino Real, San Mateo**



This quarter’s meeting topic is “Getting creative about supported housing business models and funding.”

Do you or a loved one deal with serious mental health challenges? Do you want to have your voice heard, & help advocate for services? Then please join us for food, conversation, ideas & possible solutions!

For more info contact: Cindy Robbins-Roth at Edgewood 415-725-0755, [cynthiar@edgewood.org](mailto:cynthiar@edgewood.org); Leanna Harper at Caminar (650-393-8976, [leannah@caminar.org](mailto:leannah@caminar.org)); or Helene Zimmerman at NAMI SMC (650-638-0800, [hzimmer@namisanmateo.org](mailto:hzimmer@namisanmateo.org)).

*(5 Resolutions from page 1)*

our mental health as well as our physical health. Put a daily walk, bike ride, or swim on your calendar and stick to it no matter what. Feeling too low for a walk? Move for three minutes, and then you can head home... if you still want to.

**I will resist negative thinking.** It’s easy for us to figure that positive attitudes and happy thoughts are wishful thinking and that negative thoughts are realistic and practical. Actually, ruminating — going over and over the negative feelings and anxious thoughts that pop into our heads — is neither practical nor realistic. Distracting ourselves with work, exercise, or a puzzle is a healthier choice.

—<https://www.pca-nwa.com/new-years-resolutions-for-mental-health/>

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## Thanks and Praise for Family to Family

This year’s sixth 12-week program of NAMI’s Family to Family education program came to a close Tuesday evening, November 28.

Attendees said about their experience: “Coming into the class, I was lost and overwhelmed. I didn’t know where to go. Now, I know where to go for resources and I have the knowledge, understanding and where-with-all to advocate on behalf of my loved one.” “The class worked so well because there were so many different points of view. While we were very diverse in age, background, ethnicity and experience, we all had something in common - the mental health difficulties of a family member that brought us together.” “The exercises were also very powerful-especially the voices exercise-as now understand first-hand a little of what my child is going through.” “My fellow participants feel like extended family. I felt greatly supported.”

All of the program’s trained volunteer co-teachers are praised for their compassion and inspiration. The Family to Family programs held throughout the year would not be possible without their dedication to sharing their experiences, knowledge, insights and desire to help others understand how to navigate the challenges of the mental illness of a family member.

**Next Family to Family class: Tuesday, January 16.**  
**To be added to the Wait List, please contact the office at [education@namisanmateo.org](mailto:education@namisanmateo.org); 650-638-0800, or sign up online at [www.namisanmateo.org](http://www.namisanmateo.org)**

Check out *Wellness Matters*, the SMC BHRS newsletter <http://smchealth.org/wm>

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## NAMI SMC Board Members Needed

NAMI San Mateo County (SMC) is looking for three or four new and enthusiastic Board members who want to make a difference in the SMC mental health arena - by helping family members and individuals with a mental health diagnosis receive the support, education and advocacy they need and deserve.

In our 43+ years of operation we have grown from a very small volunteer-run agency to a much stronger organization.

The Board of Directors provides program and policy direction, raises funds to develop and support new programs and services, as well as links to the broader community. We are currently seeking individuals who have experience in finance, fundraising, marketing, and law. Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month, from 6:00–8:00 p.m. at our San Mateo office.

If you would like to be considered to serve on our board, **all** interested parties should contact Helene Zimmerman, Executive Director at [hzimmer@namisanmateo.org](mailto:hzimmer@namisanmateo.org). Thank you.

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## Scientists Zap 'Voices' from Schizophrenia Sufferers

[PARIS] Scientists have pinpointed a part of the brain where "voices" torment schizophrenia sufferers, and partially muted them with magnetic pulse treatment, a team reported recently. More than a third of sufferers treated with magnetic pulses in a patient trial experienced "significant" relief, the scientists said in a statement. "We can now say with some certainty that we have found a specific anatomical area of the brain associated with auditory verbal hallucinations in schizophrenia," the team said. "Secondly, we have shown that treatment with high frequency TMS (Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation) makes a difference to at least some sufferers."

Further research must be done to confirm the usefulness of TMS as a treatment in the longer term. The results of the trial, not yet published in a scientific journal, were presented in Paris at a conference of the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology. The trial compared 26 schizophrenic patients who received active TMS to 33 patients who received dummy or placebo treatment. The first group was given a series of magnetic pulses over two sessions a day for two days to the part of the brain's temporal lobe associated with language. Two weeks later, participants were evaluated on the voices they were hearing. Nearly 35 per cent of the TMS patients reported a "significant" improvement.

"Hearing voices" can be one of the most disturbing symptoms for people with schizophrenia and those close to them.

According to the World Health Organization, schizophrenia affects more than 21 million people worldwide.

—<http://www.businesstimes.com.sg/consumer/scientists-zap-voices-from-schizophrenia-sufferers>

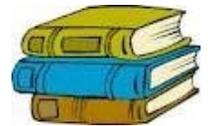
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## Accolades for NAMI's In Our Own Voice Presenters & Presentations

"I wanted to let you know about J's presentation last Monday, she was great the time you came with her, but I really wanted to let you know how wonderful of a job she did by herself, the way she carries herself and presents to our patients speaks volume, she is very professional but also very empathetic and compassionate, the way she responds to our patients, especially those who've expressed some discontent or troubling thoughts, was something I was very impressed with, it was evident her words carried weight especially with the patients whom they themselves expressed NAMI is very fortunate to have as valuable an asset as her to be part of your team.

Again, thank you for providing us with a variety of wonderful speakers, I always enjoy listening and learning myself, we're very fortunate to have NAMI as a partner to provide services to those we serve. "

—Rith Choum, CTRS  
Creative Arts and Recreation Therapist  
San Mateo Medical Center, Inpatient Unit



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## New Additions to the Library

Please visit the library at the NAMI San Mateo County office - we have books and videos available to check out! Watch for our latest additions below. If you have read a book related to Mental Health issues that you believe would benefit others, please email the office with the title and author.

***Full Catastrophe Living (Revised Edition): Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*** by John Kabat-Zinn

Stress. It can sap our energy, undermine our health if we let it, even shorten our lives. It makes us more vulnerable to anxiety and depression, disconnection and disease. Based on Jon Kabat-Zinn's renowned mindfulness-based stress reduction program, this classic, groundbreaking work—which gave rise to a whole new field in medicine and psychology—shows you how to use medically proven mind-body approaches derived from meditation and yoga to counteract stress, establish greater balance of body and mind, and stimulate well-being and healing.

*Full Catastrophe Living* is a book for the young and the old, the well and the ill, and anyone trying to live a healthier and saner life in our fast-paced world.

Social Security Benefits or  
Vocational Rehab Questions?  
Call Wendy Jordan at 650-802-6482

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## To All Our Volunteers!

~ THANK YOU ~

We couldn't do it without you!

**Newsletter Mailing:** Cheung & King Kuen  
Cheung and Cindy, Catherine Taylor

**General Meeting:** Andrew Bay, Ron Dugrenier, Grace Hand, Lisa Kenney, Susan Kuang, Esther Ludena, Kathy Stern

**Office Support:** Eveline Coffman—Accounting, Helen Greggans, Grace Hand, Audrey Kemp, Susan Kuang, Patrick McErlain, Michael Rodrigues

**Special Projects:** Christy Lloyd, Kathy Stern, Joyce Yoko

### All of our Support Group Leaders!

**Newsletter production:** A special acknowledgement to Ruan Frenette, Gregg Hardin, Kim Nobles and Pat Way



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## November "Gratitude" Meeting Review

For five out of the six General Meetings held each year, participants hear about new information, opportunities and updates within the mental health arena in San Mateo County. The final and most fun General Meeting of the year is the "Gratitude General Meeting."

This year, attendees rocked to the sound of Tehya – music guaranteed to rock your soul! With plenty of pie and whipped cream for everyone, conversations flowed, and the evening's presentations by Ian Adamson (Family Assertive Support Team) and Rocio Cornejo (Peer PALS Coordinator), rounded out the good time.

Some comments about the meeting included: "Very good Thanksgiving meeting....loved the music and good messages too." "NAMI's Thanksgiving Gratitude meeting was inspirational, motivational, fun and touching." "It was an enjoyable time for individuals and families in an atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship that doesn't always happen."

*Looking forward to seeing you at our January 24 General Meeting – see front page for details!*

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## Update on NAMI SMC's Peer PALS Program

Our Peer PALS is growing and thriving. We had our first PAL Training on November 6<sup>th</sup> where 7 PALS came and learned about the 4 Dimensions of Wellness: Community, Health, Home and Purpose. We also announced our involvement with CATS, a free ticket program that will allow our Peer PALS to attend exciting events and venues in the bay area! We are currently in the midst of signing up and hope to receive our membership very soon.

Whilst the program is gaining momentum, we still need Peer and PAL applicants in order to meet demands. Please consider applying as a Peer to receive the friendship and support of a PAL OR please share this with someone who could benefit from our program. To make a difference in someone's life, call today for information on how to become a PAL. Learn more about this FREE program at <http://namisanmateo.org/about-us/jobs> and/or email Rocio the Peer PALS Coordinator at [PeerPals@namisanmateo.org](mailto:PeerPals@namisanmateo.org).

**Peers:** This program helps decrease loneliness and isolation, increase comfort in social situations and self-esteem, and convey lifestyle habits that promote and maintain recovery.

**PALS:** First complete NAMI's Peer to Peer class or similar education/mentoring classes through a community service agency or college. To discuss the program, call 650-638-0800. Join us!

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## Support Group Leaders Needed

*We have openings for Support Group Leaders.* If you have attended our support groups and would like to "give back," this is your in. To learn more, please contact Helene at [hzimmer@namisanmateo.org](mailto:hzimmer@namisanmateo.org) or 650-638-0800. **In order NOT to close any support groups, we need your help! Please consider becoming a member of our Support Group Team!**

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## Peer to Peer

Graduates of the fall Peer to Peer class said: "the class was excellent and valuable." "As a result of the class, I have become a lot kinder to myself and see myself in a more positive light." "I am more relaxed, open minded and willing to help others." "The teaching team were very good. They were effective patient and positive, and gave great examples and explanations."

**The next Peer to Peer class is Thursday, January 18. Contact the office to be added to the Wait List: 650-638-0800; [education@namisanmateo.org](mailto:education@namisanmateo.org), or online at [www.namisanmateo.org](http://www.namisanmateo.org).**



**EVERY Monday of the month • 7:00-8:30pm  
NAMI office, 1650 Borel Place, #130, San Mateo**

Connection provides persons with mental health conditions a gathering of respect, understanding, encouragement and hope. The group is led by trained individuals who are experienced at living well with mental illness. **No registration is required.** Just drop by; we look forward to meeting you. Call 650-638-0800 or email at [education@namisanmateo.org](mailto:education@namisanmateo.org) with any questions.

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## Jail Chaplain

Spiritual counseling for incarcerated persons - Marty at St. Vincent de Paul Society: 650-796-0767.

## SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS (for information on NAMI Support Groups call 650-638-0800)

- **NAMI Cordilleras MHR Center Family Group**, 1st Mondays (2nd if 1st is a holiday), 6:30-8pm, 200 Edmonds Road, Redwood City, 650-367-1890. Penney Mitchell & Julie Curry, NAMI SMC co-facilitators.
- **NAMI Parents of Youth & Young Adults** (ages 6–26), 2nd Mondays, 7-8:30pm. 222 W. 39th Ave. & Edison, Board Room, San Mateo. Park in the large lot on west side of building, off 37th Ave. Enter building through the “Hospital & Clinic West Entrance,” follow the NAMI signs to the 2nd floor Board Room W-225. 638-0800. Ginny Traub & Florian Davos, facitrs.
- **NAMI Coastside Support Meeting** for family members, 2nd Mondays, 6:30-8pm. El Centro DE Libertad; 225 Cabrillo Hwy South Ste #105d (the bldg next to Coastside MH), Half Moon Bay. Info: 650-638-0800.
- **NAMI Connection** for persons working on their wellness & recovery. **Every** Monday, 7-8:30pm. 1650 Borel Place #130, San Mateo. Call NAMI SMC 650-638-0800 for information.
- **Cafe para Padres**, ultimo Martes de cada mes. Clinica Shasta 727 Shasta St. Redwood City. Para preguntas contacte a Yolanda Ramirez al 650-599-1047.

MONDAY

- **NAMI Spanish-Speaking Support Group** 2nd Tues, 6-7:30pm, 802 Brewster, RWC. 650-573-2189.
- **NAMI Jewish Family & Children’s Services**, family and friends are welcome. 4th Tuesdays, 7:00pm. 200 Channing Ave., Palo Alto. Contact Navah Statman NAMI Facilitator (408) 253-7623.
- **NAMI San Mateo Medical Center** for family members. 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm. 222 W. 39th Ave. & Edison, San Mateo. Board Room (main entrance elevator to 2nd floor, left to the end of the hall). Carol Metzler & Judy Singer, NAMI facilitators.
- **NAMI South County Support Meeting** for family members, 2nd Tuesdays, 6-7:30pm. Mental Health Clinic, 802 Brewster, RC, 650-363-4111. Pat Way, NAMI SMC facilitator; Liz Downard RN, MSN. **Park behind building and knock loudly on door.**
- **DBSA Mood Disorder Support Group** for persons with uni- and bi-polar disorders, mania, depression, or anxiety; family members welcome. Tuesdays, 7-9pm, College Heights Church, 1150 W. Hillsdale Blvd, San Mateo. Contact at DBSASanMateo@um.att.com or 650-299-8880; leave a message.
- **Korean Support Group**, a family/consumer group. 4th Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30pm. Full Gospel Mission Church, 20920 McClellan Rd. (opp. De Anza College), Cupertino. Info: Kyo, 408-253-9733.
- **Individuals Living With Their Own Mental Illness**, Tuesdays, 1-2:30pm. Redwood City - Sequoia Counseling Services, sliding scale fees apply. Contact Deborah at 650-363-0249, x111.
- **Parent Chat**, for parent/caregivers of kids aged 14-24 with mental health challenges. 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm. Orchard Room, Los Altos Library, 13 San Antonio Rd. Info: Trudy 650-208-9116 or Donna at 650-823-0997.

TUESDAY

- **NAMI Stanford** 2nd Wednesdays for **families and friends** / 4th Wednesdays for **spouses and partners**. Both: 7-8:30pm. 401 Quarry Road #2213, Stanford Dept. of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences (parking is between Vineyard & Quarry). Info: 650-862-2886 or Pamela Polos, pamelapolos@comcast.net / Georgia Vouraki, georgiavk@gmail.com.
- **Jewish Support Group** (open to all denominations), for those with mental illness and families and friends. 2nd Wednesdays, 6:15-8:30pm. For info, call Carol Irwin 408-858-1372. Beit Kehillah, 26790 Arastradero Rd., Los Altos.

WEDNESDAY

- **NAMI North County Support Group** for family members. 2nd and 4th Thursdays, 5:45-7pm, 375 89th Street, Comm. Room, Daly City. Info: 650-301-8650. Co-facilitators: Karen Pyles LMFT and Valerie Nolan, RN.
- **Coastside Dual Diagnosis Group**, development for clients in all stages of recovery. Thursdays at 4-5pm. 225 So. Cabrillo Hwy #200A, Half Moon Bay. 726-6369 for information.
- **Body Image & Eating Disorders**, Thursdays, 6:30-8pm, 1225 Crane St, Ste 205, Menlo Park. Open to family and friends. *RSVP required:* emlycaruthersmft@gmail.com. More info: 408-356-1212 or e-mail: info@edrcsv.org.
- **Dual Diagnosis Group for Peers**, Thurs, 12 noon. 210 Industrial Rd. Bldg. 210, Room 205, San Carlos. 650-232-7426.
- **H.E.L.P. for those with a mental illness and/or in a supporting role**, Thursdays, 6:00pm optional dinner; 6:30-7:30 program, 7:30-8:30 prayer. Menlo Church, Garden Court, 950 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park. Info: Jane Clark 650-464-9033

THURSDAY

- **Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation of SF Bay Area**, 3rd Saturdays, 1:30-3:30pm, Seton Medical Center, 1900 Sullivan Ave., 2nd Fl. Conf. room near cafeteria, Daly City. For more information: 415-273-7273; www.oed-bayarea.com.

SAT

- **Chinese Language Family Support Group** Cantonese/Mandarin. Call Alice at 650-573-3571 for more information.
- **Japanese Education & Support Group**, call (415) 474-7310 for information.
- **Consumer Support Groups**, Heart and Soul, call 650-232-7426 for days & addresses, or visit www.heartandsoulinc.org.
- **Cluttering & Hoarding** Support Groups, Workshops, and Private Consultations - Groups/programs change, contact Emily Farber, MSW, 650-289-5417, efarber@avenidas.org.

OTHER

## NAMI Education Programs

To be added to the Wait List, call 650-638-0800 or email us at [education@namisanmateo.org](mailto:education@namisanmateo.org)

### PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

Sign up for the evidence-based education class that fits your need. (Support Groups on page 5) Courses are FREE, comprehensive, and popular. Gain skills and understanding in an interactive, supportive environment.

- ◆ **Basics**—For parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with mental illness.
- ◆ **Family to Family**—For relatives of an adult family member with mental illness. Class meets once a week for 12 weeks.
- ◆ **Peer to Peer**—Better living skills for people with mental health issues taught by people with mental health issues.
- ◆ **Provider**—for Mental Health and AOD professionals, para-professionals and all others serving individuals with serious mental illnesses and their families. CMEs pending approval for qualified attendees. *Please contact us to set up an in-house program for your organization.*

## BHRS Family Contacts

Suzanne Aubry  
Dir. Family Service  
650-573-2673

Claudia Saggese  
Family Liaison (habla Español)  
650-573-2189

## Peninsula Veterans Affairs Center

Are you a vet or know one who needs help, is experiencing PTSD and/or other symptoms? Call 650-617-4300 or visit 345 Middlefield Road, Bldg. 1; Floor 1, Menlo Park.

## Shopping Supports NAMI SMC

*Sign up NOW! Tell a friend!*

Together, shopping through any of these mediums makes a real difference. For more information, contact the office at 650-638-0800 or [nami@namisanmateo.org](mailto:nami@namisanmateo.org).

S.H.A.R.E.S goes escrip! Save Mart, Lucky and Foodmaxx have now partnered with **escrip**. Go to [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com), click on "sign up," follow the instructions to register your grocery cards and your existing credit/debit cards for NAMI San Mateo County. You'll earn up to 3% on qualifying purchases when you check out with your registered phone number. Go to [escrip.com/shares](http://escrip.com/shares) to register.



Always start at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. When you log onto [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) please choose NAMI San Mateo County as your charitable organization; from there your shopping purchases will be linked directly to us!

## San Mateo County Mental Health Emergency Numbers

### Police: 911

Tell the dispatcher you are calling regarding a person who has a mental illness. Request a CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) trained officer and/or someone who has experience in dealing with the mentally ill. For non-emergency situations, call your local police department.

**HELPFUL:** Tips to prepare yourself for a 911 call are available on the BHRS website. Download "Mental Health Emergency" at [www.smchealth.org/MH911](http://www.smchealth.org/MH911) or visit the blog: <http://smcbhrsblog.org/2015/03/30/mental-health-emergency-materials-aka-family-script/>.

### 24 Hour Crisis Line & Support Help: 650-579-0350 | 800-784-2433

Calling the local number will get you someone in San Mateo County. Calling the 800 number will get you the first person available. This person may not be in San Mateo County.

**Psych Emergency:** San Mateo Medical Center: 650-573-2662  
Mills Peninsula Hospital: 650-696-5915

Kaiser South San Francisco: 650-742-2511  
Kaiser Permanente SMC: 650-991-6455

### FAST: 650-368-3178 | 650-371-7416 (pager)

Family Assertive Support Team - When your loved one is in emotional distress.

For additional non-emergency numbers relating to Mental Health issues, access [www.namisanmateo.org](http://www.namisanmateo.org).

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## Personal Stories of Change & Understanding

*It's important for people living around mental illness conditions to know that they are not alone. Sharing a story about your personal experiences with mental health challenges—as an individual with a diagnosis, or as a family member or friend—can help in your own recovery as well as provide encouragement and support to others with similar experiences.*

Since a young girl I have known my share of loss & challenges. Many years later I found myself facing one that I could not overcome - that of constant pain resulting from a pelvic surgery that went terribly wrong.



Before that time, I enjoyed being an athlete: ice-dancing, hiking, Pilates, creative movement. One day, only a few weeks after my surgery I began to have difficult symptoms which made moving or sitting extremely painful and for five years I looked for answers - finding none. Eventually, through another three surgeries I learned that I had ARD (Adhesive Related Disease), which is internal scar tissue that binds organs together. At some point, my pro-active attempts to solve the problem with pain began to turn to feelings of terror, helplessness, hopelessness and dread of living another day with no way out. My therapist knew I was in trouble and suggested I go to the hospital since I was having nightmares and shaking inside myself with no where to turn except to wishing I didn't need to live at all.

I spent 10 days inpatient at a hospital and the first few days found me wandering in the hallway paralyzed with hopelessness or finding myself crying in desperation looking for the slightest shred of promise for a better day. After discharge I participated in an 8 week intensive out-patient program to learn coping skills.

Fast forward to today and I find myself immersed in the activities and relationships that support recovery. NAMI has been instrumental in helping me realize that I'm not alone and that no one need be. The genuine interaction I have with my peers as well as the sharing and learning about ways to cope and thrive has been transformative. I am honored to be able to present through the In Our Own Voice program through NAMI, volunteer for the No One Dies Alone Program & offer Spiritual Care at Stanford Hospital, serve on the Advisory Council for Pain Management and walk one-to-one with those suffering through being a Stephen Minister.

I spend my time helping others, making art, enjoying friends, cooking, listening to music, watching good movies, going to my beloved church and seeing all the wonderful people I've meet there. Through my faith and community I find many things that make my life worth living to its fullest!

—Julisa Voinche

*To learn more about what writing your story might entail and how we can work with you regarding privacy issues, please contact Helene Zimmerman, Executive Director at [hzimmer@namisanmateo.org](mailto:hzimmer@namisanmateo.org) or 650-638-0800.*

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## Interesting Articles

### California Working to Intervene Earlier Before a Brain Illness Crisis

What goes through your mind as you walk by someone living in a doorway or an alley? Is it sorrow? Fear? Or does the sight not always register, because homelessness seems a problem that's too big to fix?

[http://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/article/California-working-to-intervene-earlier-12361443.php?utm\\_campaign=email-premium&utm\\_source=CMS%20Sharing%20Button&utm\\_medium=social](http://www.sfchronicle.com/opinion/article/California-working-to-intervene-earlier-12361443.php?utm_campaign=email-premium&utm_source=CMS%20Sharing%20Button&utm_medium=social)

### The Secrets of Resilience

What does it take to conquer life's adversities? Lessons from successful adults who overcame difficult childhoods.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-secrets-of-resilience-1510329202>

### How to Cope with Seasonal Affective Disorder

With just 30 days left until Christmas, stores have started to sell their festive treats and decorations. But amid the general sense of enthusiasm, many of us will experience low moods, often to a debilitating extent. Why is that, and how can we cope?

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320163.php>

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## Save the Date! - 2018

- **Jun 1-2 NAMI California Conference** in Monterey. <https://41339.thankyou4caring.org/2018-pre-super-early-bird-registration>
- **Jun 27-30 NAMI National Convention** in New Orleans. <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/NAMI-National-Convention/Convention-FAQ>



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## Car Donations Accepted!

A free, convenient service for converting that extra car, truck, or RV into a tax deductible donation benefitting NAMI San Mateo County. You can donate online (<http://www.v-dac.com/org/?id=94-2650681>) or call 877-999-8322 to make your donation. Thank You!

 NAMI San Mateo County



Vehicle Donation  
877-999-8322

Visit [www.namicalifornia.org/](http://www.namicalifornia.org/) to get the latest on legislative activity.  
*We appreciate your participation in advocacy!*

## Stocking Stuffers & Gifts Open House

December 11-15 | see page 2

## General Meeting

January 24 | see page 1

## Advocacy Forum

February 1 | see page 2

NAMI San Mateo County  
1650 Borel Place, Suite 130  
San Mateo, CA 94402

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Visit NAMI San Mateo County at

[www.namisanmateo.org](http://www.namisanmateo.org)

to stay in touch, sign up to volunteer and keep informed about developments and information within your local NAMI, the county, and the mental health arena in general.

## Please Become a Member of NAMI San Mateo County

1650 Borel Place, Suite 130, San Mateo, CA 94402

- Individual Member (\$40)\*
- Household Member (\$60)\*
- Open Door Member (\$5)\*

Additional Possible Contributions:

- Sustaining (\$100 to \$499)
- Patron (\$500 to \$999)
- Benefactor (\$1,000+)

- Renewal or  New Membership Amount Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

\*A portion of your membership is sent to NAMI National and to NAMI California

- Change Address (print new address below, please include label with old address)
- My Company has a Matching Gift Program: \_\_\_\_\_ (company name)

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How did you hear about NAMI? \_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply: I/we am/are  Family  Consumer  Friend  
 MH Professional  Business or Agency

Your membership in NAMI San Mateo County is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our Tax ID number is 94-2650681. *Thank you for your support!*

### NAMI San Mateo County

1650 Borel Place, Suite 130  
San Mateo, CA 94402  
650-638-0800 / FAX: 650-638-1475  
nami@namisanmateo.org  
www.namisanmateo.org  
Office open: 9am-3pm, M-F (or by appt.)

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