

Family or Friend living with Mental Illness? Finally, a FREE class just for you.

Family to Family

An eye opening and supportive twelve-week class for families or friends of people with a serious mental illness who want to learn about the major brain disorders, brain function, and develop coping strategies for self-care while caring for an ill loved one.

“This program made a tremendous difference in my relationship with my daughter. I can’t believe how uninformed I was about mental illness.”



Classes Offered

Thursday nights, in the Spring & Fall

480 East 13th Street, Merced (middle building, side entrance)

***To register call 209-789-NAMI (6264) or go to
www.namimerced.org***

NAMI FAMILY TO FAMILY CLASS SCHEDULE

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class One</u></p> <p>Introduction: Special features of the course; learning about the normative stages of our emotional reactions to the trauma of mental illness; our belief system and principles; your goals for your family member with mental illness; understanding symptoms as a double-edged sword.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Two</u></p> <p>Schizophrenia, Major Depression Mania, Schizoaffective Disorder: Diagnostic criteria; characteristic features of psychotic illnesses; questions and answers about getting through critical periods; keeping a Crisis File.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Three</u></p> <p>Mood Disorders, Borderline Personality Disorder, Anxiety Disorders, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Dual Diagnosis: Types and sub-types of Depression and Bipolar Disorder, Diagnostic criteria for Borderline Personality Disorder, Panic Disorder; Obsessive Compulsive Disorder; PTSD; co-occurring brain and addictive disorders; telling our stories.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Four</u></p> <p>Basics About the Brain. Functions of key brain areas; research on functional and structural brain abnormalities in the major mental illnesses; genetic revolution in biological psychiatry; genetic transmission of major mental illnesses; infectious and neurodevelopmental second hits which may cause mental illness; the biology of recovery; consumer stages of recovery from brain disorders</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Five</u></p> <p>Problem Solving Skills Workshop. How to define a problem; sharing our problem statements; solving the problem; setting limits.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Six</u></p> <p>Medication Review. How medications work; basic psychopharmacology of the mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and schizophrenia; medical side effects; key treatment issues; stages of adherence to medications, early warning signs of relapse.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Seven</u></p> <p>Inside Mental Illness. Understanding the subjective experience of coping with a brain disorder; problems in maintaining self-esteem and positive identity; gaining empathy for the psychological struggle to protect ones' integrity in mental illness.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Eight</u></p> <p>Communication Skills Workshop. How illness interferes with the capacity to communicate; learning to be clear; how to respond when the topic is loaded; talking to the person behind the symptoms of mental illness.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Nine</u></p> <p>Self-Care. Learning about family burden; sharing in relative groups; handling negative feelings of anger, entrapment, guilt and grief; how to balance our lives</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Ten</u></p> <p>The Vision and Potential of Recovery Learning about key principles of rehabilitation and model programs of community support; first-person accounts of recovery from consumer guest speakers.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Eleven</u></p> <p>Advocacy. Challenging the power of stigma in our lives; learning how to change the system; meet and hear from people advocating for change.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Class Twelve</u></p> <p>Review, Sharing, and Evaluation . . . Certificate ceremony & party</p>



“This course has helped me to realize that my son is still inside the body that is often times hidden by the mental illness and that I am not alone in this.”

Please note: Facilitators are not counselors and do not recommend health care providers, treatment programs, or medications. However, they will direct participants to mental health resources available throughout Merced County.