

Our Mission

"to improve the quality of life for individuals with mental illness, their families and communities through mutual support, education and advocacy."

Letter from the editor: Supporting your loved one this holiday season



December is a time best known for the holidays and spending time with family. Unfortunately, for those coping with mental illnesses, the holiday season may not be as highly anticipated.

For some people with mental illness, the holiday season can bring worsened symptoms. Feelings of loneliness, missing passed loved ones, and worries about money are common. Then there's the crowds, everyone chasing the ideal of the "perfect holiday," and the reality that not every family gets along swimmingly all the time.

I know for myself, I struggle with the extreme change in routine that comes with the holidays. Also, there's a lot of stress with party planning, gift-buying, traveling, etc. Stress is a major trigger for many people with mental illness, myself included.

As a person supporting someone with a mental illness, it's important to be cognizant that your

loved one may not be enjoying themselves during the holidays as much as you wish they would.

That being said, there are some ways to help make the season of joy a little easier to cope with for a person with a mental illness.

Here are some tips for supporting your loved one with mental illness during the holidays:

- Respect your loved one's need for space and time alone- don't be upset if they have to leave a holiday event early because they are overwhelmed.
- Respect your loved one's decision to not attend parties or holiday events. If they feel "too sick" to attend, don't push them.
- Do what you can to help reduce stress during the holidays
- Don't set unrealistic expectations for your loved one
- Check in with your loved one and their feelings. Being aware of your loved one's mental state during the chaos of the holidays can help you recognize a problem before it reaches a point of being unmanageable.

Above all, keep in mind this holiday season that not everyone, especially those with mental illness, will be holly and jolly all the time. And that's okay.

Join NAMI Tennessee for a NAMI Walks rally party



NAMI Chattanooga will have a team for the 2019 NAMI Walk that will take place April 6, 2019 at World's Fair Park in Knoxville, TN. There is a rally party for the walk next week with a free dinner. Please consider attending!

Where: Rothchild Catering and Conference Center
8807 Kingston Pike Knoxville, TN

When: December 4, 2018

Time: 6:30 PM

For more information: namiwalks.org/Tennessee or jevans@namitn.org (800) 771-5491

Please RSVP for Dinner @ [NAMI Tennessee Walk Rally](#)

Upcoming support group meetings

Tuesday December 4, 2018,

11:30AM - 1:00PM

at Wally's Restaurant

6521 Ringgold Rd, East Ridge

Tuesday December 11, 2018, 6:30-

8:00PM

at Friendship House behind Hixson

United Methodist Church

5301 Old Hixson Pike, Hixson



Please note there will not be a support group meeting on January 1, 2019, due to the holiday.



NAMI Chattanooga now has a Facebook page!

Follow us here:

<https://www.facebook.com/NAMI-Chattanooga>

Join us for the annual meeting and holiday gathering- December 18th at 6:30 PM

Please join us for an annual meeting and holiday celebration the evening of December 18th, 2018 at Wally's Restaurant on Ringgold Rd. in East Ridge.

The event begins at 6:30 PM. All members are urged to attend.



Don't miss out!
Get insurance coverage
by December 15th

Sign up for a plan with parity
mental health coverage at
HealthCare.gov



Listen to NAMI Tennessee Radio Hour: Expanding Medicaid in Tennessee



Mary Falls and Sally Smallwood have been championing Medicaid Expansion in Tennessee for several years. Hear how grassroots advocates are making a difference and why hope for Medicaid expansion in our state stays alive.

[Click here to listen](#)

Join NAMI Chattanooga

As a NAMI member, your voice counts. Simply by joining, you make your concern felt and your voice heard in Chattanooga, Nashville and Washington when lawmakers debate issues related to mental illness.

Find the membership form

here: <http://www.namichattanooga.org/join.htm> or

join online at <https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Join-NAMI/>

