

WHY I SUPPORT NAMI

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For me, mental illness is not an abstract idea. It was and is very real for me and my family. When my son was a student in high school I received a call from the school psychologist insisting that I come and pick up my child immediately.

They said that he was suicidal.

I was scared – petrified really – and had NO idea what to do next. While I considered myself a parent that could deal with the unexpected, this was not something I was in any way prepared for. To put it mildly, I did not have the tools to deal with this sudden news and cope with this new reality.

IMAGINE for a moment how scared and helpless I felt.
IMAGINE how grateful I was to find NAMI.

I was introduced to NAMI through a friend of a friend. She had heard about the many ways NAMI helps families dealing with just the kind of situation I was facing. I was encouraged to take the Family to Family program. That program not only helped me better understand mental illness but gave me the incredibly important support of people who truly understood what my family was going through. I began to learn about the many ways NAMI helps families through educational meetings and a monthly rap group. You can't imagine how valuable these resources are when your world has turned upside down. And they help you build resilience for the long haul.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you know someone – friend or family – who is living with mental illness?
- Do you want to educate a family member or friend about resources and get them information about mental illness?
- Do you want to help fight the stigma of mental illness and improve the lives of all persons affected by mental illness?

NAMI is there when people need help most – with FREE programs including a confidential help line.

Consider becoming a NAMI member -- there is strength in numbers. And tell at least one person about NAMI in the next 24 hours, they can visit the website at www.nami.org.