

December 2023 I Volume 9

Cleaninghouse Connections

Your Quarterly E-Newsletter Update From the New Jersey Self-Help Clearinghouse





The New Jersey Self-Help Clearinghouse is a program of the Mental Health Association in NJ

This quarterly newsletter will feature quarterly spotlights (of NJ support groups, programs, and organizations), information on the NJ Self -Help Clearinghouse, Upcoming trainings and workshops to support the support group facilitators throughout the state, resources for support groups throughout NJ, announcements of new support groups that have been formed, and much, much more!



Welcome to the Latest Edition of the New Jersey Self-Help Clearinghouse Newsletter!

Let us begin by wishing you a very happy and healthy holiday season filled with love, light, fun, connection, wellness and recovery!!

A Time for Mindful Navigation

'Tis the season for a myriad of holiday celebrations. Whether you celebrate Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, The Winter Solstice, Christmas, the change of season, New Year's, and/or Festivus for the Rest of Us, keep in mind that while this is time of year brings joy to many people, it can also be a very difficult and challenging time as well.

To best navigate the holiday season we offer these resources, suggestions and of course, self-help support groups!!

Support During the Holidays

Many of us use our vacation time during the holidays, and some may need to step away from groups they facilitate for family commitments or travel. For those working in peer support and self-help, where support is given to others' mental, emotional, and physical healing journeys, taking time off is essential for our own self-care wellness.

Staying connected with our supports and supporters in one of the best ways to navigate this time of year. While some organizations and programs continue with all usual programming or scheduled meetings, others are closed or not running their regular schedules.

Here we offer you a wide range of support groups that do indeed meet over the holidays or have specialized holiday programming. One that is very notable is United by Wellness.



• A virtual wellness center by The Mental Health Association in New Jersey.











- Offering 60+ groups from December 23rd to January 2nd, including special holiday events. ۰
- Groups include addiction recovery, mental and emotional health support, social wellness, ۲ and special events like Festivus for the Rest of Us and a New Year's Eve Extrava-game-za.
- To sign up for virtual support groups, <u>click here</u>.
- Click here or see below for the UBW December Calendar https://www.mhaac.info/ubwschedule.html
- For more information call 609-652-3800 or visit https://www.mhaac.info/ubw.html



Saturday December 23, 2023

11am- Doing all things with Love 2pm- Not Another Holiday Hangout 4pm- Schizophrenia Support Group 8pm- Festivus for the Rest of Us

Sunday December 24, 2023

10am- Overcoming Obstacles 1pm- Reducing Relapse 2pm- Creativity Unleashed 5pm- Christmas Eve Winter Party 7pm-Meditation 8pm-WINGS

Monday December 25, 2023

8 am- Empower Hour 9 am- Opening Our Gifts 11 am-Topics in Mental Health 2 pm- Coping Skills 4:30pm- Naughty or Nice - Rated G 7 pm- Monday Music

Tuesday December 26, 2023

10am- Big Time Fun Party 3pm- Better Together 4pm- Townhall 8pm- Relationships in Recovery

Wednesday December 27, 2023

10am- Coffee and Gratitude 11 am- Recovery Dharma **3pm-Breaking Barriers** 5pm- Unapologetically Me 8pm- Keeping Up Our Commitments

Thursday December 28, 2023

10am- Employment Wellness 10:30am- Depression/Anxiety 11 am- Staying Active 12 pm- Hanukkah This Light's for You 3pm-MARA 4pm- You Have the Floor **5pm- Navigating NYE in Recovery** 6pm- Rising Minds 7pm-Not Fearing Fear 8pm- Show Your True Colours

WWW.MHAAC.INFO/UBW

Friday December 29, 2023

HOLIDAYS

12pm- New Year, Who Will I Be? 1pm- Environmental Wellness 2pm-Light Bulb 7pm- Music to my ears

Saturday December 30, 2023

11am- Doing All Things with Love 12pm- Just Hanging Out 1pm- Gifts of Gratitude 3pm- Color Me Healthy 4pm- Schizophrenia Support Group

Sunday December 31, 2023

10am- Overcoming Obstacles 12pm- Meditation 3pm- New Years Eve Extrava-game-za 8pm-WINGS 10:30pm- Big Time Fun New Years Eve 11:30pm- New Years Count Down

Monday January 1, 2024

10am- Mental Wellbeing Check-in 11am- Topics in Mental Health 2pm- Coping Skills 2:30pm- What you Nourish Will Flourish 7pm- Monday Music

Tuesday January 2, 2024

10am- Big Time Fun Party 11am- Expressions 12pm- Relaxation Tools & Techniques 2pm-After Lunch **3pm-Better Together** 6:30pm-ASCA 7pm- Women's Wellness 7pm- Goals for a New Year 8pm- Relationships in Recovery

To join the groups become a member to receive a daily newsletter with zoom links. Click here or call 609-652-3800

UNITEDBYWELLNESS@MHANJ.ORG

Taking Care of Yourself During the Holidays

A sign of strength is knowing what you need to take care of yourself and protect your wellness and/or recovery. Even the most diligent in self-care may find themselves burdened with holiday expectations, both internal and external, which can be unreasonable and unattainable. Here are some suggestions:

- Just say "No" others "will get over it" if you skip an event.
- Create a new family tradition that suits your wellness.

UBW will provide groups as scheduled on December calendar besides the holiday schedule highlighted here...

Click here



- Attend an online support group.
- Limit your commitments.
- Do what works for you have fun!!
- Plan time with your "Family of Choice"
- Bring a friend a recovery when attending an event that serves alcohol.
- Create action plans so you know what you will do if certain events or circumstances arise.

Remember to have fun!

Remember, there's no such thing as a perfect "Hallmark Holiday". It is crucial to keep your sense of humor this time of year. In the spirit of laughter – which many believe is the best medicine – we share with you some of our favorite SNL skits:









Let's approach this season with compassion, understanding, and support for one another.

Wishing you peace, joy, and wellness during the holidays.

Eve & Kelly

Flyers Shared by our Community Partners



Holiday Support 7 days a week!

All Recovery meetings at 10am on zoom Find links at:

www.SeaChangeRCO.org/calendar Questions? email: hello@SeaChangeRCO.org call/text: (609) 241-2630

#CrushTheStigm

Click Here to Visit Their Website



Samaritan | GRIEF SUPPORT

NOVEMBER IN-PERSON SESSION

• Thursday, November 16 — 1:30 - 3:00 pm

• Monday, December 11 — 2:00 - 3:30 pm

IN-PERSON SESSIONS HELD AT 3906 CHURCH ROAD, MOUNT LAUREL, NJ

NOVEMBER ONLINE SESSIONS

- Saturday, November 18 10:00 11:30 am
- Monday, November 20 6:00 7:30 pm

DECEMBER ONLINE SESSIONS

- Tuesday, December 5 6:00 7:30 pm
- Thursday, December 14 6:00 7:30 pm
- Monday, December 18 6:00 7:30 pm

For most people, holidays are a happy, festive time of year. But, for those facing holidays after a loss of a loved one, the season can be lonely, depressing, and often difficult to handle.

Holidays or not, it is important for you to find a way to take care of yourself. You're invited to join us at this free workshop to learn tips about how to deal with holidays.

Registration is required at 856.596.8550 or CFGcounseling@SamaritanNJ.org

Samaritan

Samaritan offers a number of grief support groups at no charge thanks to the charitable support of our donors... each designed to meet different needs. Learn more at SamaritanNJ.org

Click Here to Email to Register





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NAMI BASICS PROGRAM

Free six-week educational program for parents of children/adolescents with symptoms of mental illness.

Ages up to 21

NAMI Basics Covers:

- Treatment options such as medications, support groups, and evidence-based therapies
- Managing crisis situations, problem solving, and communicating effectively
- Taking care of yourself and handling your stress in a positive way
- Advocating for your child's rights in school and health care settings
- Understanding the challenges and impact of mental illness on all family members
- Developing the confidence and stamina to support your child with compassion



Registration is OPEN!

Each Thursday February 8 to March 14

Via Zoom 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: Email- <u>nami1557@comcast.net</u> NAMI New Jersey-Atlantic/Cape May and Union County

Click Here to Email to Join

WINTER 2024

NEW JERSEY DISASTER RESPONSE CRISIS COUNSELOR (DRCC) Upcoming Initial Training Series

The NJ DRCC program is a volunteer, neighbor-helping-neighbor model. DRCCs provide emotional support to individuals following the immediate aftermath of a disaster. DRCCs undergo a series of trainings and a credentialing process to provide a coordinated and integrated response to disasters and traumatic events in the community.

Credentialing Process

- Complete the online application (www.njdrcc.org)
- Complete 22-hour training curriculum
- Complete fingerprinting for criminal background check
- Interview
- Review and sign Code of Ethics

Interested in becoming a DRCC? Sign up for our upcoming virtual training series



Introduction to Disaster and Trauma Counseling: Basic Training for Disaster Response Crisis Counselors (PART I of II)

Introduction to Disaster and Trauma Wednesday, January 24th Counseling: Basic Training for Disaster Response Crisis Counselors (PART II of II)

Key Concepts in Psychological First Aid Tuesday, February 6th (PART I of II) 9:00am - 12:00pm

Key Concepts in Psychological First Aid

Ethical Issues in Crisis Response

Cross Cultural Issues in Disaster

Thursday, February 22nd 9:00am - 12:00pm

Wednesday, February 21st

9:00am - 12:00pm

Wednesday, February 7th 9:00am - 12:00pm

Tuesday, January 23rd

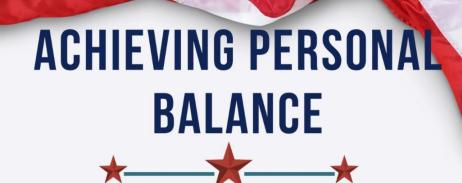
9:00am - 12:00pm

9:00am - 12:00pm

Complete your application and register for these and other upcoming trainings at www.njdrcc.org



Click Here to Email for More Information



THIS IS A <u>FREE</u> PROGRAM TO ATLANTIC COUNTY RESIDENTS. <u>ACHIEVING</u> <u>PERSONAL BALANCE (APB)</u> IS DESIGNED ESPECIALLY FOR MEN AND WOMEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE MILITARY. PARTICIPANTS WILL DEVELOP AND INCREASE HEALTHY COPING SKILLS THAT WILL HELP PROVIDE A HEALTHY BALANCE IN

THEIR LIVES. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * BEGINS: MONDAY, JANUARY 8TH AND CONTINUES ON: 1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2/26, 3/4, AND ENDING ON MONDAY, MARCH 11.

> TIME: TBD * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * You will earn up to <u>\$100</u> in Amazon E-Cift Cards for participation in

> > and completion of the program!



For more info, contact: Melissa Ortiz mortiz@atlprev.org (609) 906-4826

Provided by Atlantic Prevention Resources and the New Jersey Prevention Network (NJPN) through funding provided by the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).



Click Here to Email for More Information



February 9-10, 2024

February 9 • 1:00 - 9:00 PM February 10 • 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM

About the Training

The AFSP Adult Support Group Facilitator Training Program offers suicide prevention organizers a way to create and facilitate a community support group for suicide loss survivors in the aftermath of a suicide. This course is offered as a two-day training and includes lectures, interactive discussions, and role-playing. This training is led by experts in the field of suicide bereavement.

Attendance on both days is mandatory. This training is sponsored by AFSP New Jersey Chapter



Program Details

Suggested Participants

Mental health professionals and suicide loss survivors* interested in starting a support group or wanting to update skills.

*Must be 2 years out from loss to attend – exceptions made only to those already facilitating a group.

Location

Hilton Garden Inn, Springfield 304 Route 22 West Springfield, NJ 07081 <u>Cost</u>

Please contact AFSP NJ for more information

<u>Register</u> Scan QR Code to register!

Questions?

Deanna Brugger AFSP NJ Programs Manager Dbrugger@afsp.org



American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

afsp.org/newjersey

Click Here To Email For More Information









JANUARY SUPPORT GROUPS

NAMI Connection is a recovery support group for adults (18+) living with a mental health condition. Participants gain the support of peers who understand their experience and gain insight into others' challenges and successes. By sharing your experiences in a safe and confidential setting, you will gain hope and develop relationships. The group encourages empathy, productive discussion, and a sense of community.

NAMI Family Support Group is a peer led support group for family members, caregivers, and loved ones (18+) of individuals living with a mental illness. Participants gain the support of peers who understand their experience and gain insight into others' challenges and successes. You will benefit through others' experiences, discover your inner strength, and learn how to identify local resources and how to use them.

In Person Meetings

January 8 th	Somers Point, St. Joseph Church, 7:00-8:30 PM
	Family Support and Connections
January 25 th	Cape May Court House Library, CMCH 7:00-8:30PM
	Family Support Group

For more information visit namiacm.org or call 609-741-5125. All meetings are FREE and are posted on our calendar.

NAMI Atlantic/Cape May is a non-profit 501C(3) corporation.





MAMI Atlantic/Cape May

FEBRUARY SUPPORT GROUPS

NAMI Connection is a recovery support group for adults (18+) living with a mental health condition. Participants gain the support of peers who understand their experience and gain insight into others' challenges and successes. By sharing your experiences in a safe and confidential setting, you will gain hope and develop relationships. The group encourages empathy, productive discussion, and a sense of community.

NAMI Family Support Group is a peer led support group for family members, caregivers, and loved ones (18+) of individuals living with a mental illness. Participants gain the support of peers who understand their experience and gain insight into others' challenges and successes. You will benefit through others' experiences, discover your inner strength, and learn how to identify local resources and how to use them.

In Person Meetings

February 12th Somers Point, St. Joseph Church, 7:00-8:30 PM

Family Support and Connections

February 22nd Cape May Court House Library, CMCH 7:00-8:30PM

Family Support Group

For more information visit namiacm.org or call 609-741-5125. All meetings are FREE and are posted on our calendar.

NAMI Atlantic/Cape May is a non-profit 501C(3) corporation.

Click Here to Visit Their Website

Additional Resources and Support





Emotional support is available this holiday season!



Call NJ MentalHealthCares at 866-202-HELP (4357), 8-8 weekdays. For more options, scan the code or visit https://www.mhanj.org/resources/.

Traveling for the Holidays When Your Loved One Has Dementia

Traveling can be enjoyable for families impacted by dementia, but it can also bring challenges, especially during the busy holiday season.



Click Here for important considerations to help with planning.



Caregiving and the Holidays: from Stress to Success!

Click here for some suggestions that may help make the holidays more enjoyable for you and your loved ones



Dealing with Grief During the Holidays

Click here to learn how to cope with grief during the holiday season



As the festivities wind down and we step into the calm of January, let's kick off the new year with a mindfulness challenge—a journey of selfdiscovery and tranquility. Cultivate moments of peace as you ease into the post-holiday season with these simple mindfulness exercises:







Week 1: Reflective Journaling Begin the year with introspection by keeping a reflective journal. Dedicate a few minutes each day to jot down your thoughts, aspirations, or lessons learned from the previous year. Reflective journaling can be a powerful tool for gaining clarity and setting intentions for the year ahead.

Week 2: Breath of Renewal Inhale the freshness of the new year with mindful breathing exercises. Take moments throughout your day to pause, close your eyes, and take deep, intentional breaths. Inhale positivity, exhale any lingering tension. Let your breath be a source of renewal and calm.

Week 3: Sensory Reset

Engage your senses in a mindful reset. Take time to notice the subtle details of your surroundings—the textures, colors, and sounds. Whether it's the crisp winter air, the warmth of a cozy blanket, or the soothing melodies of nature, immerse yourself fully in the present moment.

Week 4: Digital Detox Day Designate a day for a digital detox to start the year with a clear mind. Disconnect from screens and savor the simplicity of unplugged moments. Use this time to enjoy analog activities, connect with loved ones, or indulge in a good book.





Week 5: Mindful Eating Habits Revitalize your relationship with food through mindful eating. Pay attention to the flavors, textures, and nourishment each meal provides. Chew slowly, savoring each bite. Mindful eating not only enhances your dining experience but fosters gratitude for the sustenance your body receives.

Week 6: Gratitude Walk Embark on a gratitude walk to celebrate the beginning of a new year. As you stroll, express gratitude for the opportunities ahead and the lessons behind. Observe the world around you—the changing seasons, the possibilities that lie ahead, and the beauty of the present moment.

Embrace these mindfulness challenges as you transition into the post-holiday season and welcome the new year with a sense of tranquility. May these exercises guide you toward moments of mindfulness, self-discovery, and renewed energy in the weeks to come.









THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS AN OPPORTUNE TIME FOR SUPPORT GROUPS TO COME TOGETHER, FOSTERING A SENSE OF CONNECTION AND SHARED JOY. HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR HOLIDAY-THEMED ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT GROUPS CAN ENJOY TOGETHER

Holiday Gratitude Circle:

Begin your support group meeting with a holidaythemed gratitude circle. Each member can share something they are grateful for during the holiday season. This sets a positive and reflective tone for the meeting.

ÐJY Ornament Crafting:

Organize a virtual or in-person ornament-making session. Provide simple craft supplies, and encourage members to create holiday ornaments that hold personal significance. This activity allows for creative expression and the sharing of meaningful stories behind each ornament.



<u>Recipe Exchange and Vintual Potluck:</u>

Coordinate a recipe exchange among support group members. Each member can share a favorite holiday recipe along with the story behind it. Consider organizing a virtual potluck where participants showcase their culinary creations and enjoy a shared meal together.

Festive Book Club:

select a holiday-themed book for the group to read and discuss. This can be a novel, a collection of short stories, or even a non-fiction book related to the spirit of the season. Discussing the book provides a shared experience and sparks meaningful conversations.

<u>Secret Gift Exchange:</u>

Facilitate a Secret gift exchange within the group. Set a budget to ensure inclusivity, and encourage members to select or create thoughtful gifts for their assigned Secret Santa. The reveal can be done during a special virtual meeting or in person.

Holiday Movie Night:

Host a virtual or in-person holiday movie night where members can collectively watch a seasonal film. Consider selecting movies with themes of resilience, hope, and friendship. After the screening, engage in a discussion about the movie's message and how it resonates with the group.

Storytelling and Traditions Sharing:

Dedicate a meeting to storytelling and sharing holiday traditions. Members can talk about their favorite holiday memories, traditions, or rituals. This activity not only builds a sense of community but also allows for the celebration of diverse backgrounds and customs.

Collaborative Ant Project:

Initiate a collaborative art project that reflects the spirit of the season. This could be a virtual mural, a digital collage, or a physical artwork created by assembling contributions from each member. The final piece serves as a symbol of unity and shared creativity.



Holiday Wellbeing Workshop:

Invite a guest speaker or expert to conduct a holiday wellbeing workshop. Topics could include stress management tips, mindfulness practices for the season, or strategies for maintaining mental health during the holidays.

Charitable Initiatives:

Organize a group effort to give back to the community. This could involve volunteering at a local charity, organizing a donation drive, or participating in a community service project. Coming together for a shared cause reinforces the support group's commitment to making a positive impact.

Stories of Inclusive Celebrations:

Share anecdotes from other support groups that have celebrated the holidays in inclusive ways. Highlight instances where groups embraced diverse traditions, ensured accessibility for all members, and created an environment where everyone felt valued and included.

These holiday support group activities aim to enhance the sense of community, promote shared experiences, and bring joy to the members during the festive season.







The NEW JERSEY SELF-HELP CLEARINGHOUSE was started in 1981 as the first statewide operation of its kind in the country. The mission of the Clearinghouse is to help people find and form all types of self-help support groups in order to provide hope, strength and experience to those in need in order to not feel alone.

WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- Information on Self-Help Support Groups
- Assistance with Starting New Support Groups
- Trainings and Workshops
- Support Provided via the MHANJ Call Center to those in need of immediate support

Looking to start a support group? The NEW JERSEY SELF-HELP CLEARINGHOUSE staff can help!

Step 1: Attend a Quarterly "How to Start a Support Group" Webinar.

Step 2: Schedule a meeting with one of the NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse staff to discuss what was learned in the webinar and how to put what was learned into action. Step 3: Keep in touch with the Clearinghouse for any troubleshooting once the group is up and running and update on any group detail changes to be reflected in the Clearinghouse Database.

Step 4: Attend regular webinars offered by the NJ Self Help Group Clearinghouse to enhance your support group!

Click Here to Add or Update your Support Group Information in our Database

*TXTXXXXXXX

Upcoming Clearinghouse Happenings

NJ Self-Help Group Clearinghouse Overview

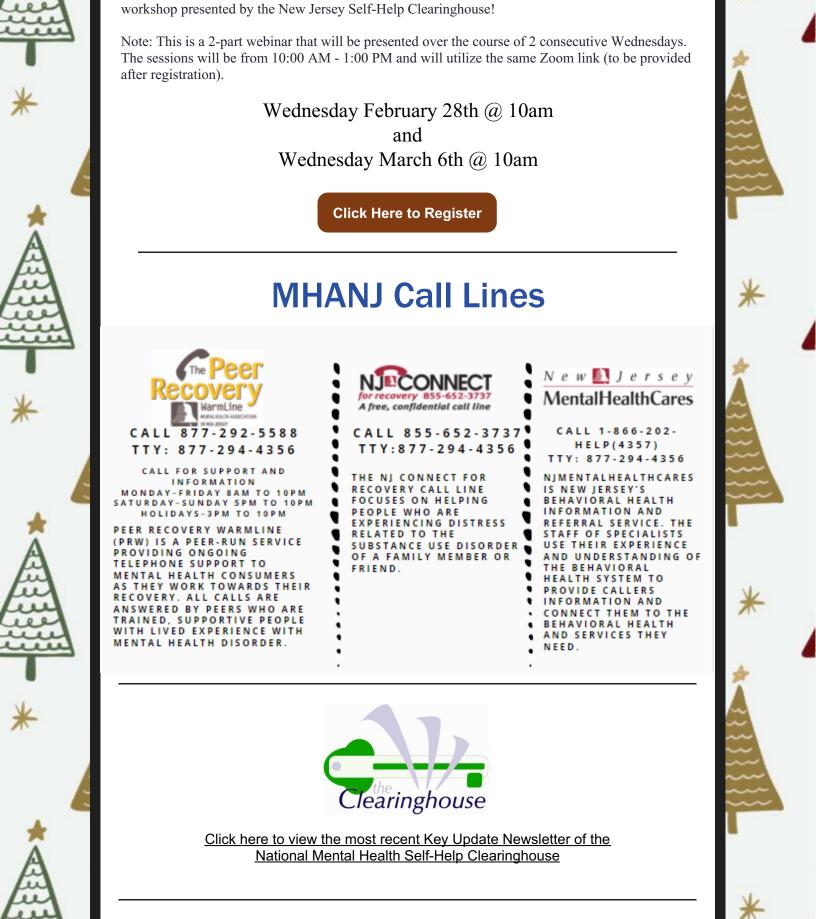
Meet the NJ Self-Help Group Clearinghouse staff and learn about this invaluable program!

Wednesday January 31st @ 10am

Click Here to Register

Group Facilitation

Peer Specialists often find that in addition to using their lived experience to provide hope and support to individuals pursuing recovery, one of the most common job duties is group facilitation. While peers often enter the job armed with strong experience both participating in and facilitating groups, honing these skills is a common request of peer specialists. Join us for this exciting



Join our Mailing List!

Follow us on Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/NJSelfHelpGroupClearinghouse

NJ Self-Help Clearinghouse | 25 S. Shore Dr., Toms River, NJ 08753

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