



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

As we close out 2025, I keep coming back to one feeling above all others: gratitude for the people who make this work possible.

Our volunteers are the heartbeat of NAMI SF. They bring our mission to life by facilitating support groups, answering helpline calls seven days a week, teaching our classes, and sharing their stories in classrooms, workplaces, and faith communities. Their compassion creates spaces where people feel seen and supported. Their belief in recovery helps ensure no one has to navigate their mental health journey alone.

To our donors—thank you for standing with us. Your support keeps our programs free, expands our reach into underserved communities, and helps us meet people wherever they are in their recovery. Every gift moves this work forward.

Together, this community of volunteers and donors helps bring our vision to life: a world where all people affected by mental health conditions live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a community that cares.

As we look toward the new year, I feel hopeful about what we can continue to build together. Your steady support makes a real difference, and I am grateful to enter 2026 with such a caring and committed community by our side. Wishing you a meaningful holiday season and a steady start to the new year.

With gratitude,
Anne Fischer

UPCOMING EVENTS



Friday December 12th
6:00-7:15 pm
On Zoom

Join us for an engaging and supportive virtual event designed to help you and your loved ones navigate the holiday season with resilience. Whether you're managing mental health challenges, caring for someone with mental illness, or seeking community support, this event is for you!

What to Expect:

- **Discussion:** We will discuss common mental health challenges during the holidays, including substance abuse, loneliness, and suicide, and share practical tips for handling stress and emotional well-being.
- **Breakout Groups:** Safe spaces for peers and caregivers to share experiences and support each other.
- **Resources & Next Steps:** Information on NAMI SF programs, local support, and ways to stay connected.

This event is free and open to everyone! Let's come together to support our mental health and build community this holiday season.

REGISTER

RECURRING EVENTS

VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE

First Thursday | 6pm on Zoom *Monthly!*

Third Wednesday | 12 pm on Zoom

Meet staff and learn about
ways to get involved!



Thursday, December 4th @ 6:00 - 7:00p
Wednesday, December 17th @ 12:00 - 1:00p

Want to learn about ways to get involved and give back? Check out the Open House! Volunteers are at the heart of the NAMI SF mission and there are tons of ways to get involved. The Open House is a great space to meet staff and explore available positions. Monthly on the first Thursday (evening) and third Wednesday (noon).

[REGISTER TO ATTEND](#)

OPPORTUNITIES

Your story can inspire hope,
reduce stigma, and strengthen our
community. You are in control -
share only what feels right to you



SHARE YOUR STORY IN CANTONESE

For More Information

Email: kelly@namisf.org

Call/Text: (415) 295-2701



We are looking for volunteer presenters who can share their story of living with a mental health condition in Cantonese! Help us to bring the experience of

living with a condition “out of the textbook” and “off the page.”

Presenter stories are at the heart of educational presentations and presenters have described their experience as “cathartic” and “healing.”

Compensation: \$35/presentation

Flexible Commitment.

Must identify as a peer (experience a mental illness).

No previous experience necessary.

For more information

Email: kelly@namisf.org

Call/Text: (415) 295-2701

Hey There!  **NAMI San Francisco**
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Join NAMI SF as a speaker!

**Share your story of living with a
mental health condition**

Paid volunteer opportunity!

**Ages
18-30**

To learn more contact Emma: emma@namisf.org

Hey There! Interested in sharing your story? Sign up to be a volunteer presenter!

The NAMI SF team does a ton of presentations for high school students in San Francisco and volunteer / community member voices are at the heart of this program. Want to get involved?

Paid volunteer position, tons of flexibility, and an opportunity to memorialize your story and support student wellness!

*Must identify as someone between ages of 18-30 and living with a mental health condition / mental illness.

*Questions? Email Emma, program director: emma@namisf.org.

VOLUNTEER

MENTAL HEALTH MEDIA



MUSIC THAT JUST “GET’S IT”

Whether it's upbeat or slow, music can help cope by allowing us to process our thoughts and emotions. Even some artists make songs that make you think "Wow they understand what I am going through" - helping us to feel a little less alone. NAMI Berks County created a playlist of songs related to mental health, so take a listen and notice how it makes you feel!

[LISTEN HERE](#)

FROM THE COMMUNITY



Patty, our **Spirituality Support Group** facilitator, has been collecting stories from the group over the past year or so. She has encountered many different individuals that have joined, and this is just one story that she has shared with us:

"One evening we were just starting our meeting when I heard knocking at the door. I went to answer it and there at the door was a tall black man, asking 'Is this a spiritual support group?' I said yes and asked him 'Did you come from NAMI?' and he responded with 'What is NAMI?' I said 'The National Alliance on

Mental Illness.' He asked 'Can I come in?' and I responded, 'Yes, come in, would you like some tea and something to eat?' He said no, and followed me in.

He sat quietly while we read our NAMI guidelines and began our discussion, and then one of our moderators explained that if he had something special he wanted to talk about, we would be open to listening. He said he'd like to listen for a while and speak later. So, a little while later, he said 'I have a question... I am just trying to figure out whether I am having a really spiritual experience, or that I am having schizophrenic psychosis.' A friend suggested that I might answer that question. So, I said, 'It could be some of both.'

I told him that I have schizophrenia and that I had an experience where I thought I heard the voices of angels all around me, giving me advice and guiding me. But I found that medicine was good for me. So now I take medicine as well as praying and reading spiritual writings, in order to balance the practical with the spiritual.

Our group continued discussion and later, he asked when our group meets, and if could he come again, and included the days we meet into his phone. Then he said he should go, he didn't want to impose any further, and he left."

No matter who, we welcome everyone with open arms. This story from Patty is just one example of how we strive to include anyone that is having a hard time with their mental health, even if they are not sure why yet.

RESOURCE READY

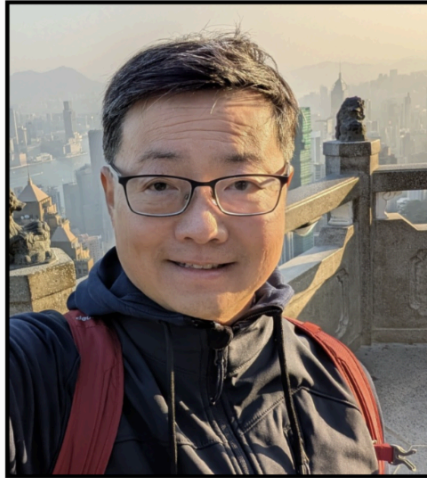


The holiday season can be hard, and finding tools to support yourself during this time is important. Read this article below to learn more about:

- How to deal with pressure from family and friends
- Tips for getting support when living with loss, grief, or loneliness
- Ways to manage holiday stress and low moods
- When to reach out to a mental health professional

[READ NOW](#)

BOARD CORNER



LEO CHAN

Hello everyone! My name is Leo Chan and this is my first year on the NAMI San Francisco board of directors. I first learned of the importance of NAMI's advocacy work and services when I began working with a Bay Area mental health services provider over fifteen years ago.

At work, although I was not a clinician, I was able to see first hand the deep impact that the availability of mental health services had on their participants. From the early intervention programs for at-risk youth and community treatment programs to inpatient services, it was very clear the tremendous benefit that these programs provided to the participants as well as to their families, friends and community. However, I also saw the obstacles that were faced in order to secure these services for participants, from getting a diagnosis to qualifying for assistance.

I believe many of these obstacles remain because of the stigma of mental illness that the participants and their families face. Although we have come a long way in talking about mental health and treatment, there is still much progress to be made to remove these obstacles which translates to outdated laws and regulations. Along with my friends and family, we have seen the importance of mental health and treatment and the consequences of untreated illness. Growing up in an Asian community, I see how mental illness still carries a level of embarrassment and shame regardless of the level of education or resources. That is where I saw NAMI's advocacy, efforts to end stigma, and education and support services that are so important and which is why I wanted to join to do what I can to help keep NAMI a part of our San Francisco community.

I had the opportunity to be a part of the community engagement committee on the board this year. We work on opportunities to 'spread the word' on what NAMI San Francisco is and can provide to San Franciscans. The board and staff at NAMI have made a wonderfully supportive environment for me as a first-year member and that is the same warmth and support I saw extended to

class participants. My hope is that we, in the NAMI San Francisco community, through advocacy and services can grow a network of support from peers to families and all the way to our lawmakers. We can all do this by taking part in classes and events and also speaking out to our friends, families and city leaders.

Leo Chan
Board Member

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Support local business that SUPPORT NAMI SF!

COMMUNITY THRIFT STORE accepts donations on behalf of our charity partners, sell the items in our store, and then disburse the proceeds. When donating with us you can select which charity should benefit from the sale of your items.

SPORTS BASEMENT is a sporting goods retailer and community center in San Francisco, that sells and rents outdoor gear and equipment. Sports Basement has multiple locations in the San Francisco Bay Area, including the Presidio and Stonestown Galleria. Sign up to become a Basmenteer and enjoy 10% off, then choose NAMI SF as your charity and 10% of profits from that purchase will go to support our mission.

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NAMI San Francisco | 3739 Balboa Street #155 N/A | San Francisco, CA 94121 US

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