



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# nami | Southwest Iowa

NAMI Southwest Iowa is proud to announce we will be hosting a Connections class on March 9th and 10th in Council Bluffs. NAMI stands for the National Alliance on Mental Illness and is a grassroots organization that provides FREE educational classes, support groups and services at the community level. The Southwest Iowa affiliate serves 9 counties in Southwest Iowa. We train volunteers in your community to serve your community with free classes, support groups and presentations. We finalized our board in July of 2018 and I was hired as a director in August of 2018. We are currently providing free education based classes for the family or support network of those experiencing mental illness. Our next phase includes peer based support groups throughout the region to serve those with mental illness.

Connections is an evidence based program directly from NAMI at the national level, leaders are trained to facilitate support groups for peers with mental illness. The typical structure is a 90 minute session weekly, biweekly or monthly based on the needs of the community. The class is co-lead, provides insight and allows for confidential sharing of experiences with like minded individuals. Connections is a place to share stories, solve problems, confront stigma and build our coping skills.

Our ideal leader for Connections is someone living with mental illness that is currently living in recovery. We need committed people willing to serve their community for up to a year by leading groups through shared experience and example. We believe this can be life changing and many have shared their personal success videos on NAMI.ORG and Youtube (search NAMI Connections). The class is co-lead with 2 facilitators so you will not be alone and the structure provides a clear process that will not leave you in the lurch wondering what to do next. Connections is a come as you, judgement free place to share stories of stumbling and success. The first step to getting involved in Connections is signing up for the upcoming training.

Our training will be in Council Bluffs on Saturday March 9th and Sunday March 10th from 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM both days. This class is FREE to attendees and provides breakfast and lunch both days. Completion of this training will immediately prepare to lead a support group directly in your community or a community near you. Questions about the class and to sign up, please contact me at [namiswiowa@gmail.com](mailto:namiswiowa@gmail.com) or by calling (712) 542 7904 , space is limited so sign up today.