



Web Resources for Caregivers, Family & Friends of People Living with Mental Illness

Organized by general support and by mental health condition

In a crisis: Call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline) — available 24/7 for the person in distress or for family members seeking guidance. If there is immediate danger, call 911 and ask for a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officer.

You Are Not Alone

If you are reading this, you are almost certainly dealing with a challenging situation. Perhaps you are watching someone you love struggle in ways you don't fully understand. Perhaps you are exhausted from calls to providers, from nights spent worrying, from conversations that end badly, from the quiet grief of missing the person you remember. Perhaps you feel that you should be doing more, or doing it better, or doing it differently — and that no one around you truly understands what your situation feels like. Please know this: what you are feeling is not weakness, and it is not failure. It is the honest weight of loving someone through an illness that too often goes unseen and unspoken. Millions of families are walking this same road, and many of them have found their footing. So can you.

Help Exists, and It Is Closer Than You Think

The resources gathered here were built by people who have stood exactly where you are standing — parents, spouses, siblings, and friends who once felt as lost as you may feel today, and who chose to turn that experience into a lifeline for others. There are free classes taught by fellow caregivers, support groups where you never have to explain yourself, helplines answered by people who simply understand, and organizations devoted to helping you navigate treatment, insurance, housing, and the law. Recovery is not always a straight line, and progress may look different from what you first imagined. But mental illness is treatable, people do get better, and even the hardest circumstances can change. No situation is beyond hope, and you do not have to figure any of this out by yourself. Reach out. Let someone help you carry this.

There Are No Hopeless Cases

The founder of Recovery International, the late Dr. Abraham Low, was a neuropsychiatrist in Chicago who was responsible for the treatment of many patients in state hospitals. He came to believe that there were no hopeless cases. As a pioneer in cognitive behavioral therapy, he developed Recovery International to help people learn to shape their thinking in ways that would support them getting and staying well. He taught that maintaining one's mental health must be a lifelong priority.

At Recovery International, we focus on what Dr. Low called trivialities — the things that work us up every day. As we learn to manage our responses to the situations and people in our lives, we learn self-leadership. Our peer-led self-help groups aren't designed to manage the kinds of crises that you may be dealing with right now. But there are many organizations that offer guidance and support, especially for the family members and friends of people dealing with mental health conditions. NAMI — the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill — has chapters throughout the United States.

We hope this list of resources may be helpful to you.

We also offer a caregiving group for people who would like to learn Dr. Low's 4-Step Method, and apply that to help them deal with their situation. Please call our office at 866-221-0302 or email info@recoveryinternational.org for more information.

General / Cross-Diagnosis Resources (Start Here)

NAMI — National Alliance on Mental Illness

The largest grassroots mental health organization in the U.S., founded in 1979 by families searching for answers for their loved ones.

- **Family & Caregiver hub** — central landing page for families and friends <https://www.nami.org/family-members-and-caregivers/>
- **NAMI Family Caregiver HelpLine** — free and confidential, staffed by trained volunteers who have themselves cared for someone with a serious mental illness. Call 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) and press 4, text "FAMILY" to 62640, or email. Available Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–10 p.m. ET. <https://www.nami.org/nami-helpline/family-caregiver-helpline/>
- **NAMI Family-to-Family** — free 12-week education course designed specifically for family members and caregivers <https://www.nami.org/support-education/mental-health-education/nami-family-to-family/>
- **NAMI Basics** — free six-session course for parents and caregivers of children and teens with early-onset mental health conditions, taught by other parents <https://www.nami.org/support-education/mental-health-education/nami-basics/>
- **Caregiver FAQ** — answers to the questions NAMI hears most often from families <https://www.nami.org/faq/family-members-caregivers-faq/>
- **Find a local NAMI affiliate & support group** <https://www.nami.org/findsupport/>

Other Essential National Resources

- **SAMHSA National Helpline** — free, confidential, 24/7 treatment referral and information. 1-800-662-HELP (4357) <https://www.samhsa.gov>
- **SAMHSA Treatment Locator** — search for treatment providers by location and specialty <https://findtreatment.gov>
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** — call or text 988; also available to family members seeking guidance about a loved one <https://988lifeline.org>
- **Mental Health America** — screening tools and resources for loved ones <https://mhanational.org>
- **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)** — evidence-based information on every condition <https://www.nimh.nih.gov>
- **Treatment Advocacy Center** — essential for families dealing with anosognosia (lack of insight), involuntary and assisted outpatient treatment, and civil commitment laws by state <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org>
- **Family Caregiver Alliance** — practical caregiving, legal, and self-care support <https://www.caregiver.org>

Resources by Mental Health Condition

Schizophrenia & Psychotic Disorders

- **Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance** — advocacy, education, and family support <https://sczaction.org>

- **NAMI — Schizophrenia** <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-conditions/schizophrenia/>
- **NIMH — Schizophrenia** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia>
- **Treatment Advocacy Center** — critical for families navigating treatment refusal and lack of insight <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org>
- **SARDAA / Schizophrenia Alliance** — peer-led support groups, including for family members <https://sardaa.org>
- **NIMH RAISE — Coordinated Specialty Care** — the evidence-based team model for first-episode psychosis; family involvement is built in <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/raise>

Depression

- **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)** — dedicated section and support groups for friends and family <https://www.dbsalliance.org/support/for-friends-family/>
- **Families for Depression Awareness** — built specifically for family caregivers <https://www.familyaware.org>
- **NAMI — Depression** <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-conditions/depression/>
- **NIMH — Depression** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression>
- **Postpartum Support International** — perinatal depression, with dedicated support for partners and family <https://www.postpartum.net>

Bipolar Disorder

- **Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)** — the primary national organization; strong family and friends section <https://www.dbsalliance.org>
- **International Bipolar Foundation** — caregiver-specific content and free webinars <https://ibpf.org>
- **NAMI — Bipolar Disorder** <https://www.nami.org/about-mental-illness/mental-health-conditions/bipolar-disorder/>
- **NIMH — Bipolar Disorder** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder>

PTSD & Trauma

- **National Center for PTSD (VA)** — excellent, in-depth section written for family and friends — open to everyone, not only veterans <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/family/index.asp>
- **VA Caregiver Support Program** — 1-855-260-3274 <https://www.caregiver.va.gov>
- **Military OneSource** — confidential support for service members and their families <https://www.militaryonesource.mil>
- **PTSD Foundation of America** <https://ptsdusa.org>
- **Sidran Institute** — trauma education and help for loved ones <https://www.sidran.org>
- **RAINN** — sexual assault-related trauma; guidance for friends and family. 1-800-656-HOPE <https://www.rainn.org>

Anxiety Disorders & OCD

- **Anxiety & Depression Association of America (ADAA)** <https://adaa.org>
- **International OCD Foundation** — outstanding family content, especially on how to stop accommodating compulsions <https://iocdf.org/for-family-members/>
- **NIMH — Anxiety Disorders** <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/anxiety-disorders>

Borderline Personality Disorder

- **National Education Alliance for BPD (NEABPD)** — runs Family Connections, a free 12-week evidence-based program for relatives <https://www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.org>
- **Emotions Matter** — peer support and advocacy <https://emotionsmatter.org>
- **Behavioral Tech** — DBT skills resources, including for families <https://behavioraltech.org>

Eating Disorders

- **F.E.A.S.T.** — Families Empowered and Supporting Treatment of Eating Disorders — built entirely for parents and caregivers <https://www.feast-ed.org>
- **National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA)** <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org>
- **ANAD** — free peer support groups, including groups for loved ones <https://anad.org>

Substance Use & Co-Occurring Disorders

- **Partnership to End Addiction** — free helpline and one-on-one coaching for parents and families <https://drugfree.org>
- **Al-Anon** — support for families and friends of people with alcohol use disorder <https://al-anon.org>
- **Nar-Anon** — support for families and friends affected by another's drug use <https://www.nar-anon.org>
- **SMART Recovery Family & Friends** — science-based alternative to the 12-step family model <https://smartrecovery.org/family>
- **SAMHSA National Helpline** — 1-800-662-4357 <https://www.samhsa.gov>

Children & Adolescents

- **NAMI Basics** — free course for parents and caregivers of youth <https://www.nami.org>
- **Child Mind Institute** — practical, parent-facing guides on nearly every childhood condition <https://childmind.org>
- **The Balanced Mind Parent Network (via DBSA)** — for parents of children with mood disorders <https://www.dbsalliance.org>
- **AACAP Family Resource Center** — American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry <https://www.aacap.org>

Older Adults

- **Eldercare Locator** — 1-800-677-1116 <https://eldercare.acl.gov>
- **Family Caregiver Alliance** <https://www.caregiver.org>

Caregiver Self-Care, Legal & Practical Support

- **Caregiver Action Network** <https://www.caregiveraction.org>
- **National Alliance for Caregiving** <https://www.caregiving.org>
- **Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers** <https://rosalynncarter.org>
- **Bazon Center for Mental Health Law** — rights, HIPAA, guardianship, and civil commitment <https://www.bazon.org>

A Note on HIPAA and Confidentiality

Many caregivers are blindsided when a provider will not share information about their loved one. NAMI and the Bazelon Center both offer guidance on what families can legally do — including obtaining a release of information, and how to share information with a treatment team even in situations where the team cannot share information back with you.

Phone numbers, program names, and web addresses change over time. If a link does not work, search the organization's name directly, or call the NAMI Family Caregiver HelpLine at 1-800-950-NAMI (6264), option 4, for a current referral.