

Faith communities are often the first place that people reach out for support. NAMI FaithNet is a network of NAMI members and friends dedicated to promoting caring faith communities and promoting the role of faith in recovery for individuals and families affected by mental illness. This site is a reflection of a closer partnership between NAMI, NAMI State Organizations and NAMI Affiliate leaders.



NAMI FaithNet is a network composed of members and friends of NAMI. It was established for the purpose of

- Facilitating the development within the faith community of a non-threatening, supportive environment for those with a mental illness and their families.
- Pointing out the value of one's spirituality in the recovery process from mental illness and the need for spiritual strength for those who are caretakers.
- Educating clergy and faith communities concerning mental illness and
- Encouraging advocacy of the faith community to bring about hope and help for all who are affected by mental illness.

NAMI FaithNet is not a religious network, but rather an outreach to all religious organizations. It has had significant success in doing so because all the major religions have the basic tenets of giving care and showing compassion to those in need.

NAMI FaithNet respects all religious beliefs. It also recognizes the expression by the majority of those affected by mental illness of the importance of the role of their spirituality in their ability to cope with having one of these illnesses themselves or in caring for an ill friend or family member.

NAMI FaithNet encourages all those who are affected by a mental illness who are also members of the faith community, to talk to their clergy person about mental illness and the role their faith is playing in their lives. Sadly, at present, many shy away from speaking with their clergy person because of the effect the stigma of mental illness has had on their lives. Talking to a clergy achieves two purposes:

- By telling a clergy person their story, he or she becomes personally involved and personal involvement is the best method of education. Understanding requires not only the attention of ears and eyes, but also the heart; and
- By speaking to their clergy person, individuals have the opportunity to gain spiritual support.

To learn more about NAMI FaithNet, visit, [nami.org](http://nami.org)