

## LEARN MORE about Mental Illness



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

Mental illness is experienced by many people over their lifetimes, yet also misunderstood by a large proportion of the population. The Web sites listed will assist the user in learning some basic facts about mental illness.

There are also many organizations working to disseminate information, advocate for and assist people with mental illness and their families, and treat mental illness. If you or a family member has mental illness, there are many ways to find support.

### ***What Are the Facts:***

There are many places to find information about mental health. Some of the most accurate and concise collections are:

The National Institute for Mental Health has information about mental health on its front page: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml>

National Association for Mental Illness publishes a fact sheet: [http://www.nami.org/factsheets/mentalillness\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nami.org/factsheets/mentalillness_factsheet.pdf)

The White House Web site on mental health [mentalhealth.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.gov) also publishes a myths and facts page. <http://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/myths-facts/index.html>

### ***Organizations***

**Pathways to Promise** (Pathways2Promise.org): Pathways was founded by fourteen faith groups and mental health organizations to facilitate the faith community's work in reaching out to those with mental illnesses and their families. Pathways is a technical assistance and resource center for congregations interested in this area of ministry. The ELCA is part of the Pathways to Promise mental health network.

**Lutheran Services in America** (lutheranservices.org) allows users to search for mental health-related services.

**National Alliance on Mental Illness** (nami.org): "NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for access to

services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raise awareness and build a community for hope for all of those in need." NAMI has a Web site with many resources, including information about **advocacy** and **training**. Its many local chapters offer localized support and resources.

NAMI also organizes a network called **FaithNet** ([www.faithnet.nami.org](http://www.faithnet.nami.org)), "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."

**National Institutes of Mental Health** ([www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)) is the government agency tasked with researching mental health. "The mission of NIMH is to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure." NIMH offers information about mental illness, prevention, clinical trials, and treatment.

***Websites for faith-based resources:***

**One Mind Mental Illness Ministry**

(<http://www.onemindmentalillnessministry.com/index.html>) was founded by Bill and Bonnie Kinschner, after a family member experienced mental illness. Bonnie and Bill are members of Lutheran Church of the Nativity in Arden, North Carolina. This website offers resources, including a team of speakers, in hopes of developing caring communities.

**Mental Health Ministries** ([mentalhealthministries.net](http://mentalhealthministries.net)) produces study guides and resources regarding mental illness. Susan Gregg-Schroeder, a United Methodist minister founded Mental Health Ministries after her experience with depression revealed the reluctance of faith communities to talk about mental illness, or to minister to people with mental illness and their families.

**Elsie and Jerry Weyrauch** members of the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Marietta, Georgia for over 25 years, have devoted their lives to suicide prevention since their daughter's death. The website for the suicide prevention ministry they founded is available at [lutheransuicidepreventionministry.org](http://lutheransuicidepreventionministry.org) and includes material that can be used in presentations.

***Training is available:***

*Pathways to Promise* ([pathways2promise.org](http://pathways2promise.org)) offers three different trainings:

- 1) **Mental Health 101** This is a presentation designed to increase understanding of mental health issues, and grow capacity to support recovery and wellness.
- 2) **Companionship: A Ministry of Presence** Companionship is a way to respond to a person is struggling with a mental health issue by publically supporting an individual in moving toward becoming well and whole.
- 3) **Organizing a Mental Health Team in Your Congregation** The goal of this training is to help congregations organize a Mental Health Ministry Team to serve as center of support for individuals and families facing especially difficult and challenging mental health issues

*NAMI's FaithNet* offers three different trainings:

- 1) [Bridges of Hope](#) Bridges of Hope is used to create stronger connections and safety nets for people living with serious mental illness.
- 2) [Reaching Out to Faith Communities](#) is a four-part training curriculum provided by NAMI FaithNet to encourage and equip NAMI members to engage with and share their story and NAMI resources with local faith groups.
- 3) [Sharing Hope](#) is an outreach and education initiative, offered through NAMI's Multicultural Action Center, aiming to create partnerships in African American faith communities.