

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: FREE Mental Health Education Courses — Starting Saturday, March 25, 2017

DEALING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS? FREE CLASSES FOR FAMILIES AND PEERS

One in four families in the U.S. will be touched by a mental disorder each year. Mental illness can leave people suffering in silence and hopelessness, but thanks to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), help is available in Amador County through two free programs starting in March.

Both courses are free to the public, and led by state-certified instructors and mentors who have completed intensive training.

Navigating the everyday challenges of living with mental illness is the goal of NAMI Amador's Peer to Peer and Family to Family educational mental health programs. The goal of both programs is for participants to gain knowledge and to feel better able to manage their lives.

"We have seen so many people in the Family to Family and Peer to Peer classes have that 'Finally!' experience -- someone really hears what they say and answers their questions in a helpful way," said Kelly Trottier, President of NAMI Amador. "They gain support and meet others with the same concerns and feelings."

The Family to Family class is a six-week course that offers family members, close friends and caretakers the knowledge needed to live with more comfort and less stress. Classes are held, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturdays starting March 25, at Sutter Amador Hospital, 200 Mission Blvd., Jackson.

The Peer to Peer course for people living with mental illness lasts five weeks and teaches problem-solving skills and strategies, and offers practical and emotional support. Classes are held from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturdays starting April 1, at Sierra Wind Wellness and Recovery Center, 10354 Argonaut Lane, Jackson.

"Programs like Peer to Peer get people back on track to being productive in the community," Trottier said.

"They are able to go back to working, volunteering, having fewer interactions with law enforcement, reducing hospitalizations, and just having more satisfying lives. And Family to Family reduces stress and makes family members much more effective and understanding."

These programs are sponsored by NAMI Amador and Amador County Behavioral Health Department with funding from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

For more information visit [www.NamiAmador.org](http://www.NamiAmador.org). To sign up, call (209) 223-1485, X266 and leave a message of interest or email [NAMIAmador@hotmail.com](mailto:NAMIAmador@hotmail.com). NAMI Amador can also be found on Facebook.

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