

Family to Family Education Program

What is NAMI's Family-to-Family Program?

NAMI California and its Affiliates offer the Family to Family 12 Week Education course free to family members of persons who are afflicted with serious mental illness. The course consists of 12 classes once a week (usually in the evening) that last 2-1/2 hours. Class size is limited to a maximum of 25 persons.

The course is co-taught by two individuals who also have a family member with serious mental illness that are specially trained to teach the course. The course covers the information, concepts, skills and issues needed to understand, support, manage and cope with a family member or friend with serious mental illness. The following provides a detail outline of the topics covered in each week of the course. .

- Over 115,000 family members have graduated from this national program.

What does the course include?

- Current information about schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder (manic depression), panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, and co-occurring brain disorders and addictive disorders.
- Up-to-date information about medications, side effects, and strategies for medication adherence
- Current research related to the biology of brain disorders and the evidence-based, most effective treatments to promote recovery
- Gaining empathy by understanding the subjective, lived experience of a person with mental illness.
- Learning in special workshops for problem solving, listening, and communication techniques
- Acquiring strategies for handling crises and relapse
- Focusing on care for the caregiver: coping with worry, stress, and emotional overload
- Guidance on locating appropriate supports and services within the community.
- Information on advocacy initiatives designed to improve and expand services.