

*“Coping with chronic anxiety and panic attacks can close the door to many of life’s wonderful experiences. By coming together and supporting each other, we can help open the door to recovery and live again.”*

**JUDITH BEMIS**  
Founder of Open Door

## MISSION

NAMI-MN champions justice, dignity and respect for all people affected by mental illness. Through education, advocacy, and support, we strive to eliminate the pervasive stigma of mental illness, effect positive changes in the mental health system and increase the public and professional understanding of mental illness.



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**Support Group For  
People Living with Anxiety  
and Panic Disorders**



The NAMI Open Door support groups are peer-to-peer groups facilitated by trained volunteers who have had personal experience with an anxiety or panic disorder. They provide a safe place where people who live with an anxiety disorder can come together and support each other.

The bi-weekly confidential meetings follow a standard format where strategies are suggested that address anxiety management and lifestyle awareness issues. By following these strategies people find they are able to cope with situations that previously seemed unmanageable.

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*“Allow yourself to be who you are. Recovery comes from acceptance, from letting the panic come without fighting it.”*

Mary

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Open Door was founded to give hope to people who experience chronic anxiety.

Anxiety disorders are distinguished from everyday anxiety in that feelings are more intense, last longer and can lead to phobias. Listed below are the various anxiety disorders:

**Panic Disorder with Agoraphobia**

Fear of going places where one might experience a panic attack and where escape is difficult or embarrassing.

**Panic Disorder without Agoraphobia**

Fear of having recurrent and/or unexpected panic attacks.

**Social Anxiety Disorder**

Fear of humiliating or embarrassing oneself in a social or performance situation.

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder**

Worry about real life circumstances that are difficult to control and persist for at least six months.

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder**

Intruding thoughts and/or ideas that are accompanied by related time consuming compulsive rituals.

**PANIC ATTACKS**

Panic attacks are sudden periods of intense anxiety that strike suddenly without warning. Some of the symptoms are: increased heart rate, dizziness or light-headedness, increased respiration, trembling, shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, blurred vision, a feeling of unreality, and/or a sense of impending doom.

It is difficult for those who experience panic disorders or chronic anxiety to believe that life will ever be normal again, especially if they have struggled with anxiety problems for a long time. But recovery is possible.

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*Anxiety disorders are the #1 mental health problems in America.*

The National Institute of Mental Health

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Recovery takes patience and time. The good news is that the more time given to recovery, the more stable and long-lasting it will be.

The Open Door Support Groups offer new insights and understanding that can help you open that door to recovery.

Meetings are held at different locations in the Twin Cities Metro area and southern MN. For times and locations call NAMI-MN at: **1.888.NAMI.HELPS** or check the web at **[www.namimn.org](http://www.namimn.org)**.