

mental health services & support groups



This section focuses on mental health promotion, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery, including supporting individuals and families in self-care and resiliency. Area support groups are included as well which offer a wide variety of concentrations and a vast network of area resources.

Overcoming Mental Health Issues in the Elderly

Aging brings many losses and adjustments along with a few surprises. One thing that is not a given in the aging process is the presence of mental health problems. These issues could range from mild anxiety about changing life roles to a full-blown depression following an illness. Fortunately, many mental health difficulties can be addressed and usually helped with recognition of the concern along with a focused action. Let's discuss the most commonly seen mental health issues in the elderly population and learn together how they can be conquered rather than feared.

The Challenges of Mental Health Care

Although there is no accepted definition, mental health is normally described in a positive sense as the ability of a person to maintain a healthy emotional and behavioral state. When you or a family member experiences an imbalance in this healthy ratio of feelings or actions, you could be diagnosed by a physician or other health care professional as having a mental illness or mental disorders.

If you do receive a diagnosis, you are in good company as the National Institute of Mental Health reports that over twenty-six percent of all adults in the United States may have a mental disorder. That statistic means that one out of every four adults or one member of your singing quartet may be in the midst of a mental illness. A smaller, yet significant group of people, approximately six percent of the whole population, has what is termed a serious mental illness. These statistics are variable as some individuals may endure more than one type of mental disorder at a time.

This can all be quite confusing to someone who is "feeling blue" but doesn't want to bother anyone. All the health care experts agree that mental health illnesses, whether minor or major, tend to be underreported and underrated causing problems for each individual who is struggling as well as society as a whole.

In addition, the President's Commission on Mental Health found these three main obstacles that thwart citizens like yourself from getting the mental health care you many need:

- **Stigma.** There still exists a sense of social unacceptability in seeking help for a mental disorder. This reluctance to come forward to the proper professionals and leads to lack of treatment and unclear data on the true needs of the people. The elderly are especially vulnerable to dismissing some symptoms rather than be negatively labeled or present a burden to loved ones.
- **Financial Limitations.** Many health care insurance options are found to be less robust when it comes to mental health illness coverage with caps being set on the number of treatments or benefits. You have finally found a practitioner who you find easy to talk to and you could be limited to six sessions by your insurance carrier.
- **Incomplete Delivery System.** Seniors often struggle with the proper entry point into the mental health system. One person recently said to me, "I was upset because my dog died but I didn't know who to call or what to do." Unfortunately, researchers predict that the mental health system will remain fragmented for many years to come as no clear initiatives to change have been adopted.

Common Mental Health Issues During Aging

There is a wide range of possible mental health problems but our conversation today deals with two of the most familiar, depression and anxiety.

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- **Depression.** Coping with the aging process doesn't automatically mean you will experience depression but many elderly people do. Up to twenty percent of all adults may have signs of depression at some point in their life. Depression symptoms such as a decrease in energy, lack of interest in usual activities or change in eating and sleeping habits are more than just an off day. Although there may be no specific event to link to sudden symptoms, it could be related to stress, caretaking of others and even dealing with your own serious illness. The good news with depression is the fact that it is often quite treatable. Many families, like my own, may have a history of depression and despite some reluctance to admit a need for treatment (there is that stigma again!), action usually yields positive results.
- **Anxiety.** The swirling changes of aging such as loss, relocation and chronic illness can bring on anxiety symptoms such as nervousness, lack of coping skill or panic. Studies show that about eighteen percent of adults may have felt anxiety at one time or another including a special category of anxiety called post-traumatic stress disorder. Veterans and other who have endured wartime are especially vulnerable to anxiety. As with depression, many forms of anxiety can be lessened with medication and/or counseling.

What To Do If You Suspect Mental Illness

If you are recognizing symptoms in yourself, extend yourself a congratulations as the first and hardest step is to acknowledge the need for assistance. Once you are involved in treatment, you should also be mindful of these self-care suggestions:

- Seek out the care you need and remain your own best advocate
- Stay connected to your support group of friends and family
- Exercise, sleep and eat regularly
- Find a hobby or task that you enjoy to help you manage stress

If you are noticing mental health symptoms in a friend, gently "step up" and guide them to a practitioner who can help them. For some friends, this can be tricky but be quietly persistent. If symptoms grow to a dangerous level like a threat of suicide, don't hesitate to seek immediate help.

Rather than you or a loved one enduring the discomfort of a mental disorder such as depression or anxiety, release your fear and potential embarrassment and get the help you need to continue enjoying your life. You'll be glad you did.

By Sue Lanza



Missouri Listings

Al-Anon

Phone: 314-645-1572

14 Sunnen Drive, #144, St. Louis, MO 63143

Website: www.missouri-al-anon.org

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Bond IL, Clinton IL, Madison IL, Monroe IL, Randolph IL, St. Clair IL, Washington IL

Description: *The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. We believe alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery. Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization, or institution; does not engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any cause. There are no dues for membership. Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic.*

Alcoholics Anonymous - St. Louis Central Service Office

Phone: 314-647-3677

14 Sunnen Drive, #144, St. Louis, MO 63143

Website: www.aastl.org

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Bond IL, Clinton IL, Madison IL, Monroe IL, Randolph IL, St. Clair IL, Washington IL

Description: *Alcoholics Anonymous® is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.*

Alzheimer's Association St. Louis Chapter

Phone: 800-272-3900 **Fax:** 314-432-3824

9370 Olive Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132

Website: www.alz.org/stl

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Clinton IL, Madison IL, Monroe IL, St. Clair IL, Washington IL

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES & SUPPORT GROUPS - Missouri

Description: *The St. Louis Chapter provides round-the-clock support through our 24/7 Helpline, care consultations, community resource lists, support groups, safety services, advocacy and education classes for families and professionals.*

Bi-Lingual International Assistant Services

Phone: 314-692-9010 **Fax:** 314-692-9014

8390 Delmar Blvd., Suite 210, St. Louis, MO 63124

Email: bilingualstl@cs.com **Website:** www.bilingualstl.org

Counties Served: St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO

Description: *Psychotherapy, social services and other mental health services to frail older adults. Home delivered one on one assistance in desired language and on flexible schedule.*

Center for Senior Renewal-Christian Hospital

Phone: 314-653-5123, Connie 314-653-4544

Fax: 314-653-4425

Christian Hospital 11133 Dunn Rd., Suite 1120 PDF, St. Louis, MO 63136

Email: cxt5024@bjc.org **Website:** www.christianhospital.org/csr

Counties Served: St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Madison IL, Monroe IL, St. Clair IL

Description: *The Center for Senior Renewal is an out patient program that provides group counseling services for seniors and older adults who suffer from Depression, anxiety, panic attacks, bi-polar,loneliness, isolation,& grief. The outpatient program provides group counseling and individual counseling, transportation, on-site psychiatrist,on-site RN,on-site Therapist, Hot Lunch and bus transportation.*

Continuum

Phone: 314-863-9912, 636-861-3336 **Fax:** 314-863-9918

12882 Manchester Road, Suite 201, St. Louis, MO 63131

Email: info@continuumcare.com

Website: www.ContinuumCare.com

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO

Description: *When faced with major changes in ability, health or mental status, making the right decision can be confusing and complicated. Continuum looks for solutions that maximize a person's potential and bring the least disruption in lifestyle. Only Licensed Clinical Social Workers with specific geriatric experience are used as Continuum care managers. Our social workers meet with the client to create a workable plan of care based on their individual goals, needs and preferences.*

Green Valley Nursing & Rehab

Phone: 314-741-9393 **Fax:** 314-741-2810

610 Prigge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63138

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Bond IL, Clinton IL, Madison IL, Monroe IL, Randolph IL, St. Clair IL, Washington IL

Description: *Outstanding, secure special needs units. Specializing in geriatric psychaitric services, alzhemier and dementia. Special activities and focus to maintain a high quality of life.*

Laclede Groves Bereavement Support Group (Lutheran Senior Services)

Phone: 314-968-5570 **Fax:** 314-968-2497

709 S. Laclede Station Road, Webster Groves, MO 63119

Email: DAnderson@LSSLiving.org **Website:** LSSLiving.org

Counties Served: St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Monroe IL

Description: *Offering comforting support for widows and widowers in times of crisis.*

Life Memories Renewed

Phone: 314-368-7969 **Fax:** 801-912-7662

P.O. Box 181, Chesterfield, MO 63017

Email: memorykits@lifememoriesrenewed.com

Website: www.lifememoriesrenewed.com

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO, Madison IL, St. Clair IL

Description: *Life Memories Renewed provides reminiscing "edutainment" programs and vintage memorabilia that elicit fond memories of the past for residents of retirement communities and members of social groups and clubs. Other services include facilitating small group/individual reminiscing hours, turn-key vintage displays, and reminiscing activity kits.*

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse-St. Louis Area

Phone: 314-962-3456 **Fax:** 314-968-7394

8790 Manchester Rd., St. Louis, MO 63144

Email: ncada@ncada-stl.org **Website:** www.ncada-stl.org

Counties Served: Franklin MO, Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO

Description: *National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse-St. Louis Area is a nonprofit community health agency, providing the metropolitan area with information and resources on issues pertaining to substance use, abuse and addiction through education, prevention, intervention and referral services.*

Aging can be difficult.

When faced with major changes in ability, health or mental status, making the right decision can be confusing and complicated.

Continuum offers...

- Care Coordination
- Resource Referrals
- Counseling (Medicare accepted)
- Assessments and much more



Please visit ContinuumCare.com for FREE online resources.

Locally owned and operated by Barth Holohan, MSW, MBA

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Life Memories Renewed

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LIFE MEMORIES RENEWED REMINISCING SESSIONS

- Utilize vintage memorabilia as conversation starters for social interaction, cognitive and sensory stimulation
- Provide entertaining, engaging and enriching experiences that help relieve boredom and depression
- Can be personalized and tailored to meet individual needs

Contact Karen Bono at
314-368-7969 or
www.lifememoriesrenewed.com
memorykits@lifememoriesrenewed.com
for more information.

Counselor, coach and care coordinator
with over 25 year's experience

Care Consultation

- * Do you have an aging parent/spouse with chronic, disabling conditions?
- * Are you feeling alone or misunderstood in your caregiving role?



Sylvia Nissenboim,
LCSW

Supportive Counseling

- * Are you feeling depressed, anxious or lonely?
- * Is work causing you stress and distress?

Telephonic Coaching to accomplish unrealized goals

- * Have you achieved your career goals?
- * Do you seek more meaningful professional or personal relationships?

Call or Email Today!

Day and evening appts available.

LifeWork Transitions

Sylvia Nissenboim, LCSW
12401 Olive St. Rd, ste 205, St. Louis, MO 63141
314-477-3144
www.sylvianissenboim.com

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES & SUPPORT GROUPS - Missouri & Illinois

Pathways for Aging

Phone: 314-361-3530 Fax: 314-685-1847

6614 Clayton Rd., #235, St. Louis, MO 63117

Email: contactus@pathwaysforaging.com Website: www.pathwaysforaging.com

Counties Served: Jefferson MO, St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO, St. Louis City MO

Description: *Helping older adults to cope with the multitude of changes, losses, and stresses of aging, depression, anxiety, and end-of-life issues, through in-home or on-site counseling/psychotherapy. Caregiver counseling/coaching is also available. Counseling services are provided by Licensed Clinical Social Workers and may be billed to Medicare and Insurance for qualifying individuals.*

SSM Behavioral Health Services at DePaul Health Center

Phone: 636-288-1340

12303 DePaul Drive, St. Louis, MO 63044

Email: kate_ries@ssmhc.com Website: www.ssmdepaul.com

Counties Served: St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO

Description: *SSM Behavioral Health Services provide geriatric in-patient and out-patient services, geriatric day program, chemical dependency program, 24 hour central intake (314-344-6700) and physician services.*

SSM Behavioral Health Services at SSM St. Joseph Health Center - Wentzville

Phone: 314-750-5561

500 Medical Drive, Wentzville, MO 63385

Email: kate_ries@ssmhc.com Website: www.ssmhealth.com/sjwz

Counties Served: St. Charles MO, St. Louis MO

Description: *SSM Behavioral Health Services provide geriatric in-patient and out-patient services, geriatric day program, chemical dependency program, 24 hour central intake (314-344-6700) and physician services.*



Illinois Listings

Belleville Memorial Hospital / Memorial Senior Care

Phone: 618-257-5900

4500 Memorial Drive, Belleville, IL 62226

Website: www.memhosp.com Counties Served: St. Clair IL

Description: *The operating hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. They offer outpatient mental health counseling (group therapy, individual therapy, and family therapy) to the elderly.*

Sight-Loss Support Group

Phone: 618-234-4410 Ext. 7033

St. Elizabeth's Hospital, 211 South Third Street, Belleville, IL 62220

Website: www.steliz.org/about/support_groups.php Counties Served: St. Clair IL

Description: *This support group offers support and education to those concerned with unresolved reduced vision. The group meets on the second Thursday each month at 1:00pm at 201 North Church, Belleville, IL 62220.*

St. John's Community Care

Phone: 618-344-0276

222 Goethe Avenue, Collinsville, IL 62234

Email: shawg@eldercareandmore.net Website: www.eldercareandmore.net

Counties Served: Madison IL, St. Clair IL

Description: *Two Caregivers Support Group, On-site care for loved one while caregiver is in meeting: Alzheimer's Support Group, 1:30-3:00 pm, 2nd Tues. of every month; Caregivers' Support Group, 5:30-7:00 pm, 2nd Wed. of every month, complimentary light dinner.*