



National Alliance on Mental Illness

nami Black Hawk Co.

Newsletter July-August 2026

A grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of people who have mental illness, their families, partners, and friends

Thank you to our Newsletter Sponsors!

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Free Program and Activities Calendar

Sharing and Caring Support Group for Adults with Mental Illness, their Families, and Partners

Monday, July 13th	Topic: Understanding Depression
Monday, July 27th	Topic: Anxiety Disorders: More Than Worry
Monday, August 10th	Topic: Bipolar Disorders: Understanding Mood Episodes
Monday, August 24th	Topic: Schizophrenia and Psychosis

In-Person

**Hawkeye's Van G. Miller Adult Learning Center, 120 Jefferson Street, Waterloo
Break Room- see signage- enter through door left of main entrance, 6-7:30pm**

Support Group for Adults Affected by Mental Illness, their Families, and Partners

Tuesdays: July 7 and 21 & August 4 and 18

We have Scheduled Zoom Meetings from 6-7 pm. Please contact us for information to link or call in to participate.

Monthly Support Group for Adults with Mental Illness, their Families, and Partners

Wednesday: July 8 and August 12

We have Scheduled Zoom Meetings from 6-7 pm. Please contact us for information to link or call in to participate.

Monthly Collage and Writing for Mental Wellness. All are Welcome!

*****NEW*****

Thursday, July 23rd

In-Person

6-7:30PM

**Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa
3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls**

Therapy doesn't have to be hard! Using a guided art and writing experience led by local therapist Katy Delagardelle, come see for yourself how fun and enlightening a simple collage can be. NO creative experience needed, and no forced group sharing! This process will help you effortlessly answer your own big questions in life about who you are and what you actually care about. Please note that this experience has the potential to be therapeutic but is not a substitution for actual therapy.

Support Group for Military Veterans, their Families, and Partners

*****NEW*****

Thursday, August 27th

In-Person

6-7:30PM

Americans for Independent Living

4020 University Avenue, Waterloo

Parking located at the back of the building

Please join us for this new support group as we offer the opportunity to connect with other veterans and support one another on our mental health journey. No sign-up needed, we'll just see you there!

Educational Presentations

Wednesday, July 15th

6-7PM

Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, 3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls

A Conversation About Depression

Please join us for a comprehensive discussion of depression in both adults and adolescents.

Tom Eachus has been a Licensed Independent Social Worker since 1988 and is the current Executive Director of UnityPoint Health, Black Hawk-Grundy Mental Health Center, a position he has held since 1993. He obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from UNI in 1980 and his Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Iowa in 1985. Prior to joining the Mental Health Center in 1988, he worked at the Bremwood Lutheran Children's Home in Waverly and the Cromwell Children's Unit at the Mental Health Institute in Independence before joining the Mental Health Center in 1988.

In addition to his administrative duties, Tom continues to see patients for mental health services, supervises multiple staff and programs and provides trainings throughout the community. He has and continues to serve on multiple internal committees within UnityPoint Health as well as local and statewide committees and workgroups.

Wednesday, July 29th

6-7PM

Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, 3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls

Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) and Mental Health

Have you ever considered how your ZIP code affects your health? This presentation explores how the conditions around us—such as housing, education, employment, transportation, and social connections—significantly influence our overall health and mental wellness.

Dan Dejapin is a Licensed Master of Social Work who transitioned from a community and resources role in an EAP environment to private practice. Working with both adolescents and adults, he uses a person-centered approach, Dan attends to the unique details of each client's lived experience, balancing warmth with gentle challenge to foster insight, resilience, and self-awareness. His practice integrates CBT, ACT, motivational interviewing, and psychodynamic techniques, emphasizing emotional regulation and practical coping skills to support sustainable change.

Wednesday, August 19th 6-7PM

Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, 3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls Burn-out: Recognizing the Symptoms and Creating a Plan of Action.

Often, we are warned about the effects of burnout, yet most of us have difficulties recognizing it in ourselves and others. We'll dive into the environmental factors that lead to burnout, the symptoms most common in adults and adolescents, and practical ways in which to utilize self-care and an action plan to get back to baseline. This will be a conversation-based presentation that will hopefully provide you with additional tools for your mental health toolbox!

Adelia Hancock is a certified Community Health Worker and Business Development Representative with Eagle View Behavioral Health. Her previous professional roles have included Re-Entry services for incarcerated individuals, non-profit work dedicated to bridging gaps in healthcare, and Behavioral Health Response (988 mobile crisis).

Article/Activity

Anomaly Puzzles: How the Brain Detects the Unexpected By Marcel Danesi, Ph.D. (Psychology Today, 6/29/26)

Anomaly puzzles strengthen observation, logical reasoning, and critical thinking.

- Anomaly puzzles challenge us to spot what does not belong or violates expectation.
- Puzzles can illustrate in microcosm how the brain detects anomalies.
- Anomaly puzzles bring out how the brain generates prediction errors.

Simply put, an anomaly is something that deviates from what is expected. The human brain is highly attuned to detecting patterns, becoming especially alert when those patterns are violated. This ability is often highlighted in mystery and detective stories. In Arthur Conan Doyle's 1892 short story, *The Adventure of Silver Blaze*, Sherlock Holmes concludes that the horse thief must have been familiar to the stable because the guard dog did not bark during the crime. Holmes deduces that the thief must have been someone the dog knew, and thus that it was an inside job, which turned out to be true.

Modern cognitive science describes the brain as an organ that continually constructs internal models of the world, using them to anticipate what is likely to happen next and what is typical in a given context. When incoming information conflicts with these models, the brain generates a prediction error, which signals a mismatch between expectation and reality.

The puzzles in this post are designed to invite readers to identify anomalies. They provide a playful way of engaging the cognitive mechanisms involved in detecting unexpected departures from familiar patterns, indirectly clarifying why those departures stand out and how they can be resolved. In this sense, each puzzle offers a small-scale illustration of the kind of reasoning Sherlock Holmes applied when solving mysteries.

Puzzle Example

Each puzzle contains a single element that violates what would normally be expected. Consider the following illustrative example.

The day after a bank robbery, a manager tells an investigator that he was working alone in a soundproof room at 1:00 p.m. when the robbery took place. The investigator then listens to an audio recording of the crime and hears a nearby church bell clearly chiming 12 times. From this, he concludes that the manager's timeline is inconsistent, since the bell indicates it was 12:00 rather than 1:00 p.m. The manager quickly admits he was lying about his account of events.

Each solution to the puzzles depends not on complex deduction but on noticing a mismatch between what should be true and what is actually observed. In this way, they illustrate a core principle of reasoning: Understanding often begins when assumptions are broken. What initially appears mundane—a wet shoe, a cold oven, a locked case, a timing discrepancy—becomes significant precisely because it violates an expectation. Taken together, these puzzles show how careful attention to small inconsistencies can transform uncertainty into explanation, revealing how hidden truths are often encoded not in what is present, but in what does not quite add up.

Puzzles

1. An electronics store was robbed yesterday. The owner told police that no one entered after he activated the alarm at 9:00 p.m. The security log appeared to support this claim. However, surveillance footage shows the owner entering the store at 9:20 p.m. without triggering the alarm. Why did the police suspect him?
2. A man was suspected of vandalizing a monument. He claimed to the police that he had stayed indoors because it was raining heavily. However, investigators noticed that his umbrella was completely dry while his shoes were soaked. Why did they disbelieve him?
3. An office worker claimed that someone poisoned her drink while she attended a two-hour meeting. The manager examined the cup and saw ice cubes still floating in the water. Why did he immediately reject her story?

4. A resident told police he stayed inside all morning with her door locked after hearing that a robbery was taking place downstairs. Investigators noticed a morning newspaper lying just inside her apartment door. Why was this suspicious?
5. A suspect claimed that she spent the evening baking a birthday cake as a store robbery was occurring. The police went instantly after the robbery to the suspect's house, finding that the cake was beautifully decorated, but finding the oven to be completely cold. Why was she suspected of the robbery?
6. A student claimed that his eyeglasses were stolen after he fell asleep in his dorm. The dean found the empty glasses case neatly locked beside his bed. Why was this suspicious?
7. A car was reported stolen during a heavy snowfall. Investigators found clear tire tracks leading away from the house. Why did this raise suspicion?
8. A security guard responded to a burglary at an art studio. All doors were locked from the inside. The studio floor is coated in a unique blue security pigment that stains anything that touches it. Before going in, the guard calls the police. They see that his boots are stained blue. Why is he suspected?

Answers

1. The footage contradicts the store owner's claim that the alarm system remained properly armed after 9:00 p.m. Since the owner entered freely without triggering it, the system must have been disarmed or bypassed after activation, meaning that his account of the alarm being securely active is unreliable.
2. If the man had been outside using the umbrella, it should have been wet. If he had stayed inside, his shoes should have been dry. The combination of a dry umbrella and wet shoes is inconsistent with his claim.
3. Ice cubes would have melted over two hours at room temperature. Their presence shows that the drink had not been unattended for the time she claimed.
4. The fact that the newspaper was inside the apartment implies that the door was opened after delivery. This contradicts the resident's claim that she neither left nor interacted with the door during the morning.
5. A freshly used oven would typically retain heat. A completely cold oven suggests it was not used recently for baking, contradicting her explanation.
6. A thief removing glasses in a hurry would not typically take time to carefully lock and return the case. The undisturbed, locked case suggests the situation was staged or misrepresented.
7. Fresh snowfall should have partially or fully covered the tire tracks. Clear, undisturbed tracks indicate that the vehicle was moved after the snowfall ended, contradicting the reported timing.
8. The blue pigment exists only on the studio floor. The guard's boots are already stained with it, meaning that he must have been inside the studio before arriving at the scene.

Message from Chad

Hope you are enjoying summer! I just wanted to take a minute to again say “thank you” for your ongoing belief in what we do here. We have a great partnership and it is appreciated! Speaking of appreciation, please welcome Hogan-Hansen, P.C. and Den Herder Veterinary Hospital to our family of Newsletter Sponsors. Appreciate all of you!!

We’re excited to announce the launch of our newest support group for Military Veterans, their Families, and Partners as mentioned above. This will start as a monthly group and we will certainly add additional dates as needed. If you are a veteran or someone who loves them, we hope to see you and we hope you’ll refer others to this group! As always, please reach out to me with any questions.

Thanks again all!

Please consider a gift

I/we would like to make the following contribution:

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In Honor/Memory (Please circle one option) of _____

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