



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI

Black Hawk Co.

Newsletter

May-June 2026

A grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with mental illness and those who love them.

Thank you to our newsletter sponsors: The Accel Group, Beecher, Field, Walker, Morris, Hoffman & Johnson, Home Instead, Locke Funeral Services, VGM Associates LTD

Free Program and Activities Calendar

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

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Monday, May 11th | Topic: When You're Tired of Being Strong |
| Monday, May 25th | Topic: Small Wins Still Count |
| Monday, June 8th | Topic: Seasons of Growth |
| Monday, June 22nd | Topic: What Fills Your Cup |

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: May 5 & 19 and June 2 & 16

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: May 13 and June 10

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

*****NEW*****

Tuesday May 19th and Thursday June 25th

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.

Educational Presentations

Tuesday, May 12th

6-7PM

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

"Re-thinking ADHD: New Science, New Understanding"

Please join us for an in-depth discussion of a new way of thinking about ADHD based on scientific breakthroughs.

Rachael Jorgensen is a licensed therapist (LISW) who works with adolescents and adults. She specializes in trauma, eating disorders, anxiety, and ADHD, and integrates EMDR and trauma-responsive yoga into her work. She is co-founder of The Olive Branch.

Emily Conrad Steffen is a licensed therapist (LISW) who works with teens and adults. She specializes in trauma, relationships, anxiety, ADHD and mood disorders, and is EMDR certified and Trauma-Focused CBT trained. She is co-founder of The Olive Branch.

Tuesday, May 26th

6-7PM

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

Forgiving for Your Health

Alicia Jefferson, author and licensed mental health counselor, discusses how forgiveness, often looked at as a "high road" practice, is a practical and manageable way to decrease stress, get better sleep and support emotional healing. It's an act of self-love! Please join us as Alicia shares a personal story and provides data relative to the topic.

Tuesday, June 9th

6-7PM

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

Neurodiversity

Dr. Paul Conditt is a saxophonist and clinical psychologist who has been working in the Cedar Valley since 2001. In 1997 during his psychology internship in Lubbock, TX, he was first introduced to this little-known condition at the time called Asperger's Syndrome. Fascinated by it, he has worked with the autism community ever since. He will provide a board overview of neurodiversity in general and autism more specifically, presenting the latest theories and research and dispelling some of the misconceptions.

Monday, June 22nd

6-7PM

**Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, 3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls
To Be Announced!**

Loving-kindness meditation links to lower anxiety through self-compassion, by Vijay Kumar Malesu (News-Medical.net, 3/31/26)

A new study suggests that loving-kindness and compassion meditation may be linked to lower anxiety over time, not just through longer practice, but also by building self-compassion and loosening the grip of distressing thoughts.

In a recent study published in the journal *Scientific Reports*, researchers examined how long-term Loving-Kindness and Compassion Meditation (LKCM) practice influences anxiety through self-compassion and cognitive fusion, considering the role of practice frequency.

LKCM Background and Long-Term Benefits

What if practicing kindness toward yourself could reduce anxiety? Various studies suggest mindfulness improves mental well-being, but its long-term benefits remain unclear. Second-generation mindfulness approaches, such as LKCM, expand beyond observation to nurture warmth, care, and emotional resilience.

While short-term benefits are established, evidence on sustained practice is inconsistent, particularly regarding how duration and frequency shape outcomes. Some individuals meditate for years without clear psychological gains, raising questions about what drives effectiveness.

Understanding how meditation works may help optimize its use, although further research is needed to determine how different practice routines influence long-term outcomes.

LKCM Study Design and Measures

The study employed a cross-sectional correlational design involving 60 long-term LKCM practitioners recruited from a meditation center in Spain. Participants had 2 to 15 years of experience and practiced 1 to 7 times per week for 15 to 120 minutes per day.

Event guide: 3rd Measuring Patient Engagement Summit eBook Moving beyond anecdotal engagement, this summit centers on measurable, data-driven patient involvement across clinical development. Data was collected via an online survey between November and December 2022, following ethical approval. Anxiety was measured using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale-Anxiety subscale (HADS-A), while self-compassion was assessed using the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS). Cognitive fusion was measured using the Cognitive Fusion Questionnaire (CFQ).

Statistical analyses used the PROCESS macro to test moderation and mediation effects. Weekly practice frequency was evaluated as a moderator, and age was included as a covariate. Bootstrapping with 10,000 samples was applied to improve robustness.

Self-Compassion, Cognitive Fusion, and Anxiety

The study identified a complex relationship between meditation and anxiety. Years of meditation alone were not directly associated with lower anxiety, suggesting that how individuals practice may be more important than duration.

Weekly practice frequency was associated with increases in self-compassion. Individuals practicing 2 or 4 days per week showed increases in self-compassion over time, whereas this relationship was not observed among near-daily practitioners.

This pattern suggests that individuals who practice more frequently may reach higher levels of self-compassion earlier, while those who practice less frequently may experience more gradual improvements.

Higher self-compassion was associated with lower cognitive fusion, meaning individuals were less likely to treat thoughts as literal truths. Lower cognitive fusion was, in turn, associated with lower anxiety. Mediation analyses showed that self-compassion and cognitive fusion jointly explained the relationship between meditation and anxiety through a serial pathway, rather than independently.

Practice Frequency and Clinical Implications

The indirect association between meditation and anxiety depended on practice frequency, with significant effects observed among individuals practicing two or four days per week.

Descriptive results showed relatively high self-compassion (71% of maximum score), low cognitive fusion (40%), and low anxiety levels (27.5%), suggesting possible ceiling and floor effects.

Overall, long-term LKCM practice was associated with lower anxiety indirectly through increased self-compassion and reduced cognitive fusion, rather than through duration alone. Practice frequency appeared to shape how these relationships developed over time.

These findings do not support the idea that more frequent practice is always better. Instead, they highlight the importance of psychological mechanisms such as self-compassion and cognitive flexibility. However, the cross-sectional design and the selected sample limit causal inference, and the findings should be interpreted cautiously.

Message from Chad

A very big “Thank You” to all who supported us in 2025: Allen Hospital, AmVet Ladies Auxiliary #49, Vickie & Dave Bailey, Joli & Michael Becker, Stacey Bentley, Elaine Bliss, Reggie & Tammy Byrd, Cedar Heights Presbyterian Church, Cedar Valley United Way, CHS Class of 1958 (In Memory of Dan Herndon), City of Cedar Falls, Kim Conrad, Maxine Davenport, Beth Delagardelle, Gallagher Family Foundation, John & Tracey Fischels, Fred Freese, Melody Good, Patricia Harper, Clem & Janis Havlik, Barbara & Michael Henning, Cindy Herndon, Randy Hogancamp, Hogan-Hansen, PC, Lynda Innes, The Isle Casino Hotel, Alan & Denise Kleinendorst, Charmaine Kramer, DeNicca Luker, Bob & Mary Marvin, Max & Helen Guernsey Charitable Foundation, John McCormick, Judy Meyers, MidwestOne Bank, Frances Molinaro (In Memory of Henry Molinaro), Molinaro Family Charitable

Foundation (In Memory of Sebastian Morales and Jesse James Scheisal), Mary Lisa Mueller, Dave & Sandy Munger, Don Noble, Tom & Kathy Oleson, Steve & Hilda Ostby, Marjorie Riley, Kristy Ruddy, Mary Schwake, Jane Slaughter, Laura Sniffin, St. Edward Church, St. Mary Church, Allen Stickfort, Jesse Swan (In Memory of Joyce Swan), The Team at John Deere Engine Works, Elizabeth Thorpe, Craig & Stephanie Tomlinson, VGM Associates LTD, Phyllis Walton (In Memory of Quinton Walton), Jane Whitehead, Gary & Jill Wilson, Kate Wyatt, Xi Omega Beta Chapter

In Memory of Bryan Mueller: Larry & LeAnn Bakker, Greg & Sue Becker, Randall & Patty Berning, Barbara Brainard, Linda & Ross Chapin, James & Christine Draude, Karma Fischer, William & Jacquelyne Hager, Gerald & Marcella Hartleip, Mary Herring, Richard & Linda Johnson, Jeri Jenner Karr, Marvin & Diane Noyd, Diana McEnroe, Gloria Mueller, Marty Mullnix, Bonnie Sadler, Donald & Nancy Saul, George Warren, Deanna Wheeler, Nancy Woodley, and Rachelle Yousefi.

In Memory of DeArgo Clopton: Kerri & Neil Clopton, Clinton Diehl, Phillip & Katheryn East, Staci Fry, Becky Hawbaker, Melissa Heston, Debra Jacobs, Tiffany Megargee, Colleen Mulholland, Suzanne Riehl, Dwight Schumm and Beth Dykstra VanMeeteren

Thanks very much to all of you for partnering with us as we continue to grow and bring better mental health to the Cedar Valley!

And another “Thank You” to our newsletter sponsors. It’s great to have you as new partners! Please consider them when it’s time to do business!

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