

Prayers from NAMI (National Association of Mental Illness) Disability Awareness Sunday

Sample Prayer of Confession

Leader: We confess that we are still uninformed about mental illness and how it impacts individuals and their families.

Response: At times, because of our lack of knowledge and understanding we find ourselves separated from our sisters and brothers with mental illness, their families and ourselves.

Leader: There are lines drawn between us because our definitions of wholeness are distinctions made in word, not spirit.

Response: Because of our lack of knowledge we live cut off from sources of strength and power that would help us to be present to people with mental illness. This disconnect often makes us feel that we cannot act.

Leader: So many events, meetings and needs call to us, grabbing for our attention, that we find ourselves stretched to a fine, thin line.

Response: In the face of all this, we continue to seek knowledge and understanding of mental illness that will bring liberation and shalom to us and those we serve, uniting us to action.

All: O God, our liberation and shalom, we seek the power of your Spirit, that we may live in fuller union with you, ourselves and our sisters and brothers with mental illness. Also grant that we may gain the courage to love and understand each other. Amen.

Sample Faith Leader Prayer

Loving Creator, we come to you on this National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness Recovery and Understanding because we know that you are a God of love and compassion. We come as people of all creeds and all nations seeking your presence, comfort and guidance. We come as individuals living with mental illness, family members, friends, co-workers and mental health professionals. We come this day because we believe that you, Divine One, love each one of us just as we are. You walk with us on our individual journeys through life. You see the ignorance and injustice that divide and separate persons living with mental illness and you weep with us.

Give us courage to face our challenges and open us today to the many ways you are already working in our midst. Help us to identify mental illness as the disease it is, that we might have courage and wisdom in the face of ignorance and stigma. Inspire us as we seek to overcome fear, acquire knowledge and advocate for compassionate and enlightened treatment and services.

Lead us as we open our hearts and homes, our communities and job opportunities, our houses of worship and communities of faith. Enable us to find ways to include persons living with mental illness in our everyday lives. Be with doctors, therapists, researchers, social workers and all those in the helping professions as they seek to overcome ignorance and injustice with care and compassion.

Sometimes, Divine Spirit, we feel discouraged and hopeless in the face of so many challenges. Help us to see ourselves as you see us—persons of value and worth, persons of creativity and potential. May we come to understand the interconnectedness of mind, body and spirit in bringing about health and wholeness. And may we go forward into our communities with a renewed sense of vision, hope and possibility for the future. **Amen.**

Reverend Susan Gregg-Schroeder