

## September 2022

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### Upcoming events

**NH Mental Health Peer Alliance, Tue Sept 20, 10 AM.** Come, let your voice be heard. The Alliance is made up of adults with lived experience who want to improve mental health services in NH, organizing to advocate, educate, and inform. Please use this link <https://meet.goto.com/709997085> to join us.

**Board of Directors, Wed, Sept 28, 5 PM.** Members and staff welcome and encouraged to attend. Through this link: <https://meet.goto.com/160387205>

**Community Meeting, Mon, Sept 12, 10:15 AM**  
Whether offering ideas for new groups or getting updates on Step Up/Step Down, this a chance for our entire community to gather and be involved in making Connections even better. We need your voice!  
<https://meet.goto.com/709997085>



## Choosing Hope



*“Where is your hope? If you don’t have hope, have someone hold it for you.”*

*Dave Andre*

Choosing hope. It is the basic task we must accomplish so we can face another day. But what happens when hope isn’t present? September is Suicide Prevention Awareness month. At Connections, we are spending some time learning about how to respond when someone has no hope, including a talk by Karen Prive from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and a new group specifically for veterans. Inside, two members of our community share their own stories of coming back from a place of no hope.

As a peer support agency, we are here to offer support through our groups, Warmline, and SUSD residential program. We invite you to reach out to us. In addition, we wish these resources may help you in a time of need or allow you to hold hope for someone who needs it.

# OUR VOICES

## Choosing Hope: Two Stories

### From Mary:

There have been decades of feeling on /off suicidal. One particular time was about the worst of all! I was sitting in my room, as usual of late. I had been spending a lot of time in bed for weeks. This was a quite typical vice for me during my depression.

This time in particular I ended up pouring out three huge prescription bottles, in front of me on the bed, into one pile. It felt like an endless amount of time sitting there and contemplating whether or not to actually take them. Every scenario going through my mind, but mostly not caring anyways. It had gotten to the point I no longer cared about myself, considering me to be worthless.

There was a tug in my mind just prior to me actually taking them: my family. What was this going to do to them? I didn't want them to think I don't love them enough to live and I didn't want them to think it was their fault. Once those doubts appeared, it led to the seed of wanting to live, although I didn't know how. Thankfully, I had heard about warmlines: Step 2 for me.

Thank heavens Warmlines exist, as well as that kind, caring, and compassionate person on the line. On a typical day, I shy away from the opposite gender. However, with the state of mind I was in and how nice the person was, the phone call turned into a 40 minute conversation.

This person understood where I was. What millions of people don't know, is that there are millions that are in the same situation at some point in our lives.

I was lucky enough to find a gem of a person to talk with! He helped the seed of life grow into wanting to live even more! He helped me realize how important I am to my family (and myself as well.) Thank you to all Warm Lines!

### From Nicole:

The word suicide is a very imposing and dangerous word all by itself. I, personally have a painful and powerful understanding of suicide-as do so many, sadly. A very important family member died by suicide and the ripple effect has never really ended. The absence is impossible to embrace. There are so many difficult and unanswered questions.

It became a personal vendetta for me to understand suicide. I worked many overnights answering a hotline in order to remind people that they are worth fighting for. Life happens and years pass. I found myself in a dark and lonely place after my marriage failed. I felt as if this was the end of the road for me. The excruciating realization that I had been lied to and betrayed by so many people felt like a fire throughout my soul.

## OUR VOICES

Many failed attempts at mental health and recovery from substance misuse layered on top of the others and it became very blurry. I had a lot of dry runs, lapses in judgment and repeat visits to inpatient treatment. I started losing people, jobs, apartments, cars, money, personal belongings, and vital energy and untapped resources to lift myself out of this messy world. I did a lot of praying...that gut wrenching praying to summon my real self back.

I made some very self-abusive and sabotaging decisions. I tried to stop thinking and feeling through substances and medications for way too long. I found myself considering suicide. I attempted to find reasons to go on, a little hope, maybe a future. The loneliness and feeling of failure was not ready to release me.

After some additional attempts and a long series of inpatient stays and rehab programs I finally broke free from that dark hold. The journey was going to be long and difficult. I wasn't sure I had what it took to do that, but I kept waking up. The self-inflicted prison of limitations and nightmare-filled rampage through two decades of wake-up calls and epiphanies has led me to a place of compassion and forgiveness for myself and others.

The long path back to a world that offers promise rather than further destruction can be a tough one. Mine included many serious players. I got close to my family after many long years without them in my corner. I started looking for ways to connect with people like me. I got very involved with Safe Harbor (a peer-led recovery center focused on substance misuse) where I made some vital changes. I did a series of clean and sober activities as well as 12-step meetings, SMART recovery meetings, which is based on a more cognitive behavioral model, as well as church involvement, outpatient therapy and medication maintenance. I aligned myself with those who were in recovery. I started doing things I had buried so many years ago. There were poetry classes offered at Safe Harbor and during these classes I shared and listened to others. I started putting my energy back into making jewelry and reigniting my passions.

Suicide touches so many lives, especially those in the future. The knowledge that life can get rocky and stormy, but patience can bring the second chance that a sunny day has to offer is now paramount in my personal jigsaw puzzle, some may call a journey. The commitment I now have to live out every intentional moment and to squeeze out the opportunity that is here is now my plan.

To those who are struggling now with these raw and vulnerable feelings of personal failure, traumatic experiences, and loss and depression, the path can feel like a million miles away. There is hope and it may start with clearing out the torturous lies your mind may be telling you. Everyone has a different landscape of possibilities. Trust can feel impossible. To get it all back may not be an option or even what you want.



*My cat, "Perlita"*

Focusing on the moment, trying new ideas that bring you peace and breaking down the day into doable pieces can be one direction to a healing journey. Examples such as consistent rest, healthy food, a person to check in with. When you can tackle the next pieces such as cleaning your home and taking care of yourself, there may be a moment that clarity could show up. Finding support, new interests, structure to the day and positive fun can help you make it through the tough moments.

I had always been aware of a spiritual center of peace that exists. I have lost many loved ones, but today is another chance to be that best version of myself that I can be. Life can be risky, but it can also be magical. Carpe Diem!

*Diamond painting feels like meditation for me.*



# NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

## LOST & FOUND

### Veteran Support Group Focused on Mind, Body & Spirit: Find Your Tribe Again

When: September 15th, 2022 at 17:00.

Where: Meet at Connections Peer Support Center located at 544 Islington St, Portsmouth, NH 03801.



My mission is to invite and accept all veterans towards discovering commonality amongst one another. To achieve this objective, 'Lost & Found' will present an overarching theme/discussion point each meeting while participating in a mind, body & spirit centered activity. We aim to emulate the essence of brother and sisterhood shared while serving alongside one another. After gathering at Connections, we will then head to Odiorne Point State Park in Portsmouth to go for a walk and discuss how movement can impact mindfulness.

\*Transportation may be available. Please access the chat at GroupMe to coordinate (instructions and QR code to access the GroupMe app are below).

~Ariana

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/Lost-Found/100084645164089/>

You can download the GroupMe app for our chat using this QR code (take a picture with your phone):



# NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

Guest Speaker Karen Prive

Tuesday, September 13 at 10:15



**National Alliance on Mental Illness**

In Our Own Voice offers brief presentations about mental illness including personal testimony and discussion, enriching the participant's understanding of how people with these serious disorders cope with their symptoms, recover and lead productive lives with hope, meaning and dignity. The program also empowers those who are faced with mental illness, and provides living proof that recovery is an ongoing reality. Karen will share with us her story of being a suicide attempt survivor.

## Where to Get Help in a Crisis NH Rapid Response and 988

The New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point (NHRRAP) is a centralized contact center for individuals experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis. The contact center consolidates and streamlines access to mental health and substance use disorder services when you need it most. Crisis services are available to anyone in New Hampshire. Depending on your needs, the crisis contact center can:

- Send a team member from a community mental health center to meet you right where you are – in your home, or another location in the community.
- Provide rapid response follow up appointments that include crisis intervention services.
- Refer you to inpatient treatment options, if appropriate, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – including holidays.

 **New Hampshire**  
Rapid Response Access Point

— Free and available 24/7/365 —

 **833-710-6477**

 **NH988.com**



- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

# Connections Peer Support



544 Islington St, Portsmouth, NH 03801  
603-427-6966

Center Hours: 8:30-5:30 Mon-Thur,  
8:30-4:30 Fri

Warmline Telephone Support:  
5-10 PM 7 days a week

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
<b>Step Up/Step Down: Connections Community</b>  <p>Connections Community is our peer-driven, voluntary residential program. Staffed by peer specialists, we are here to support you in achieving your mental health goals. For more information, please see our website <a href="http://connectionspeersupport.org/susd">connectionspeersupport.org/susd</a></p>		
<b>Closed</b> 	<b>5</b> 9:15 AM Check-in 10:15 IPS Topics 11:00 Meditative Art 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy	<b>6</b> <b>7</b> 9:15 AM Check-in 10:15 Stress Management 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting 1:15 Addressing Trauma
9:15 AM Check-in <b>10:15 Community Meeting</b> 11:00 Book Club 11:30 BYO Lunch/ Walking Group 1:15 Hearing Voices 1:15 Anger Management 2:15 Dual Recovery*	<b>12</b> <b>13</b> 9:15 AM Check-in 10:15 IPS Topics 11:00 Meditative Art 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy	<b>14</b> 9:15 AM Check-in <b>10:15 Guest Speaker: Karen Prive</b> 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting 1:15 Addressing Trauma
9:15 AM Check-in 10:15 Personal Boundaries 11:00 Book Club 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group 1:15 Hearing Voices 1:15 Anger Management 2:15 Dual Recovery*	<b>19</b> <b>20</b> 9:15 AM Check-in <b>10:15 NH Peer Alliance</b> 11:00 Meditative Art 11:30 BYO Lunch/Check-in/ TED Talk 1:15 Assertiveness and Self-Advocacy	<b>21</b> 9:15 AM Check-in 10:15 Stress Management 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 12:00 Al-Anon Meeting 1:15 Addressing Trauma
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# September 2022 Schedule

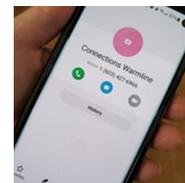
For more information, including group descriptions, please visit our website:

[connectionspeersupport.org](http://connectionspeersupport.org)

Or call us at 603 427 6966



Thursday	Friday	
9:15 AM Check-in <b>1</b> 10:15 Anxiety and Depression 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 1:15 WRAP Topics	9:15 AM Check-in <b>2</b> 10:15 Meditation/Journal Prompts 11 Visit Gather/Hannaford 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group 1:15 Coping Skills thru Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All services free of charge.</li> <li>• No referral needed.</li> <li>• We offer transportation.</li> <li>• Groups available in person or online.</li> <li>• In case of bad weather, the center may close but groups still run online.</li> <li>• Masks are optional.</li> </ul> <p><b>Warmline</b></p> <p><b>When you just want to talk to someone.</b> Our trained peers are here to listen 365 days a year from 5-10 PM. If you are having a great day and want to share your success, or having a tough day and need some support, give us a call at <b>603 427 6966</b></p>
9:15 AM Check-in <b>8</b> 10:15 Anxiety and Depression 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 1:15 WRAP Topics	9:15 AM Check-in <b>9</b>  <b>Season Finale: Seaside Picnic and Cookout: Please call us by 3PM on Thurs, Sept 8 to save you spot!</b>	
9:15 AM Check-in <b>15</b> 10:15 Anxiety and Depression 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 1:15 WRAP Topics	9:15 AM Check-in <b>16</b> 10:15 Meditation/Journal Prompts 11 Visit Gather/Hannaford 11:00 Poetry Group 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group 1:15 Coping Skills thru Art	
9:15 AM Check-in <b>22</b> 10:15 Anxiety and Depression 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 1:15 WRAP Topics	9:15 AM Check-in <b>23</b> 10:15 Meditation/Journal Prompts 11 Visit Gather/Hannaford 11:00 Poetry Group 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group 1:15 Coping Skills thru Art	
9:15 AM Check-in <b>29</b> 10:15 Anxiety and Depression 11:30 Community Lunch/Check-in/Walking Group 1:15 WRAP Topics	9:15 AM Check-in <b>30</b> 10:15 Meditation/Journal Prompts 11 Visit Gather/Hannaford 11:00 Poetry Group 11:30 BYO Lunch/Walking Group 1:15 Coping Skills thru Art	



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Please send any additions or corrections to

[info@connectionspeersupport.org](mailto:info@connectionspeersupport.org)

**Crisis Text: Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a trained crisis counselor**  
[www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)

To connect with local resources in the Seacoast area, go to [www.211nh.org](http://www.211nh.org) OR call 211.

## Service Link:

Your link to information and support services within your community.

<https://www.servicelink.nh.gov/>

Toll Free Number: 1-866-634-9412

## Peer Respite:

Peer Respite is a 24-hour, peer-driven, short-term, non-medical alternative to hospitalization. To begin your pre-qualifying application and interview, call the following respite centers:

**Stepping Stones**, Claremont, NH. Respite 603-543-1388, Stepping Stone Peer Center: 603-543-1388, Toll Free: 1-888-582-0920, [www.stepsstonenextstep.org](http://www.stepsstonenextstep.org)

**H.E.A.R.T.S.** Peer Support of Greater Nashua, Nashua, NH. Crisis Respite: 603-864-8769, Peer Support Center: 603-882-8400, [www.heartspsa.org](http://www.heartspsa.org).

**Monadnock Area Peer Support Agency**, Keene NH 03431, Respite 603-352-5093  
[www.monadnockpsa.org](http://www.monadnockpsa.org)

**HAVEN** Violence prevention and support services. 24-Hour Confidential Support: 1-603-994-7233 <https://havennh.org/>

## Legal Help:

**NH Legal Assistance** 603 431-7411

**NH Pro Bono** 800-639-5290

**Legal Advice & Referral Center**

800-639-5290

**Disability Rights Center:**

800-834-1721

## Meals:

**Salvation Army Food Truck** parked on behind Middle St Baptist Church, Portsmouth: Dinner Daily 5:00-6:00PM, Breakfast included for next day. Takeout only

**Middle St Baptist Church, 18 Court St, Portsmouth Community Lunch,** Wed 12 PM-1 PM. Takeout only

**St. John's Church, Chapel St Portsmouth Community Lunch:** Thur 12-1 PM. Takeout only

## Community Health Services:

**Families First:** Providing health and dental care, as well as parent and family support. Portsmouth location: 8 Greenleaf Woods, Portsmouth 603-422-8208

## Food Banks:

**Operation Blessing: 600A Lafayette Rd, Portsmouth:** Call for an appointment. 603 430 8561

**Gather: 210 West Rd, Suite 3, Portsmouth.** Monday-Thursday 10 AM- 5 PM by appointment, Friday 10 AM-1 PM. [info@gathernh.org](mailto:info@gathernh.org) or 603-436 9641

## Mental Health/Substance Misuse Resources:

**Alcoholics Anonymous, A.A. World Services, Inc.,** 24-Hour Hotline 1-800-593-3330; [www.aa.org/](http://www.aa.org/)

**NAMI NH,** [www.naminh.org](http://www.naminh.org)

**National Suicide Prevention** 1 800-273-TALK (8255), [www.suicidepreventionlife.org/](http://www.suicidepreventionlife.org/)

## Granite Recovery Centers

855 712 7784

<https://www.graniterecoverycenters.com/treatment-program/mental-health>

## Granite Pathways Rehabilitation Services

10 Ferry St, Suite 319, Concord NH [granitepathways.org](http://granitepathways.org)

## Safe Harbor

603-225-9540,

<https://granitepathwaysnh.org/safe-harbor-recovery-center/>

## Seacoast Mental Health Center, Inc.

603-431-6703, <http://www.smhc-nh.org/>

## Seacoast Pathways

603-812-9031,

<https://www.seacoastpathways.org>

## Transportation:

**ACT (Alliance for Community Transportation)** 603-834-6010, [triplink@communityrides.org](mailto:triplink@communityrides.org)

## COAST (Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation)

603-743-5777, [www.coastbus.org](http://www.coastbus.org)

# FREE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Here we focus on events in the Portsmouth community, with an occasional, distant online offering. Please note, that while all events are free, you may need to pre-register; just follow the links or call!

From Bliss Mindfulness comes two opportunities to practice mindfulness together:

## Sublime Sundays

**Sundays 8:00-8:30 pm**

Join Kalyana for guided mindfulness meditation every Sunday as we focus on cultivating joy, loving-kindness, and other wholesome attitudes. Please have your video on for the entire session, if possible. Join our email list for login information. All are welcome! Join the email list for login information.

[Contact \(blissmindfulness.com\)](mailto:blissmindfulness.com)

## Thursday Midday Meditation

**12:00-12:30 pm**

Join Kalyana on Thursdays at lunchtime for guided mindfulness meditation in partnership with the York Public Library in York, Maine. Please have your video on for the entire session, if possible. All are welcome!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83872612246>

## Weekly Meditation

**Wednesdays, 12:15 PM**

Sponsored by Portsmouth Public Library. A rotating roster of local teachers. In the library or online.

<https://portsmouthpl.librarycalendar.com/events/weekly-meditation-66>

## Prescott Park Arts Festival

**Various times and days through first week of September**

There is still some great music to be had the first week of September, including The Indigo Girls! Take a look at the schedule, bring a picnic, and make this a great event to wind down your summer. Donations accepted. <https://www.prescottpark.org/>

## Art Around Town

**Fri, Sept 2, 5-8 PM**

The first Friday of every month year-round, downtown Portsmouth celebrates its inspired, intimate urban community in big city style by presenting its Art 'Round Town free gallery walk! Featuring fantastic art, new exhibitions, and refreshments at each participating gallery! Check the website for participating galleries.

<http://arroundtown.org/>

## I got Bridged Fellowship Group

**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month, 8:30 AM**

Held at the First United Methodist Church, 129 Miller Ave, Portsmouth. We gather monthly to share our life experiences, our joys, our concerns, and find fellowship. Complimentary fruit, pastries, coffee, and childcare. Also available on zoom.com Available by [Zoom meeting ID: 91625556909](https://zoom.us/j/91625556909)

# INSPIRATIONS

*“We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope.” – Martin Luther King, Jr*

The way we respond to a crisis is changing and there are more resources than ever before. Keep this graphic close by. You can access support for yourself or a loved one that can save a life.

## New Hampshire Rapid Response vs. National 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

  
Someone  
to call, text or chat

  
Can deploy  
mobile crisis  
teams

  
Connection to  
local resources  
and appointments  
when needed

  
Services  
in NH

	Someone to call, text or chat	Can deploy mobile crisis teams	Connection to local resources and appointments when needed	Services in NH
 <p><b>New Hampshire Rapid Response</b> Call/Text <b>833-710-6477</b> Chat <a href="http://www.nh988.com">www.nh988.com</a></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>National</b></p> 	✓			

**NH Rapid Response and 988 are both available 24/7 and anonymous**  
Calls and texts to 988 are routed by area code. A call from an area code outside of New Hampshire will reach a call center in the state with that area code.  
**For a local response every time, call NH Rapid Response.**



# THE MONTHLY PUZZLE

Created with TheTeachersCorner.net Word Search Maker

## We are Worth it

The words in this month's puzzle come from our stories of choosing hope.

H R G J N B O B L Y A U Y U W E X Y Z P  
W U J F O K Y L V Q C D N C L A R I T Y  
Q H U R I Q D I A K V Y G V E A W N H I  
M L G D T N N F L E X Y V S T I S B E H  
N W E I C P U E U S V S B F O V Q S Y  
F K C R E A L O A K T I E V U F E E R G  
X Q R H N I S W B J I I V R B Q P R K S  
S G O Y N N L J L M Q K X R N N O U W J  
S Y Y Q O D E P E V Q M J Q U W H T U B  
E E X I C V E T R O P P U S B S H C R Q  
N O T J O Q C S K L A N V W Y X L U E D  
E L F J L Y F C P A U S S U V L E R C V  
R F U T U R E X I E M D M E W X X T O S  
A G E V O U I T Y H R M W M A Q P S V Z  
W S P V M Q W J K G K A A R P W H A E B  
A B O D N T S W D O K X T M B I U L R T  
Z S I F X U N E O L N Y J I I O H J Y N  
B L C K G H F F L B O Y L V O H Z C V T  
M W C Y J O W A O F M I T J I N B G F U  
F L Y Z Z R D X H H A U L Q S C Q Y L D

HOPE  
SURVIVE  
RECOVERY  
STRUCTURE  
CONNECTION

SUPPORT  
SELF  
FUTURE  
DESPERATION  
HEAL

PAIN  
VALUABLE  
CLARITY  
AWARENESS  
LIFE



If you are struggling with your mental health, you may benefit from being with others who have similar experiences. Intentional Peer Support is about making and sustaining **mutually supportive relationships**. When people are mutual partners in a relationship, there is equality; one person is not the “helper” to the other, both benefit and can support each other working toward what we

want in life. It is a positive, hope-based approach, helping us to determine actions we can take to reach our goals.

CPSC is open to everyone 18 and older seeking support in pursuing mental health wellness with an emphasis on hope and recovery.

**All services are free and no referral is required.**

- Groups Mon-Fri in our Portsmouth center or online
- One-on-one support for computer, budgeting, or job skills
- **Warmline telephone support, staffed by trained peers, available 5-10 PM seven days a week. Please call us at: 603-427-6966**
- **Step-Up Step-Down, our voluntary residential program, staffed 24/7 by peer specialists**

**Connections Peer Support Center**

**544 Islington St.**

**Portsmouth, NH 03801**