

## LET'S TALK MENTAL ILLNESS™

*Begin a positive conversation about mental health, mental illness and stigma*

**What is the Let's Talk Mental Illness™ (LTMI) Presentation?** Sponsored by NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Queens/Nassau, LTMI is 45-minute interactive classroom presentation for middle and high school students to learn about mental illness and experience a first-hand inspirational mental health success story. Students will gain insight that proper support from helping professionals, friends and loved ones can lead to good outcomes when faced with mental illness.

**Why LTMI for Students?** Given that suicide is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of death in youth ages 15 to 24 and that ½ of all lifetime cases of mental disorders begin by the age of 14, high school and middle school is the perfect age to begin a positive conversation about mental health, mental illness and stigma.

**What is the LTMI Format?** John Johnson, a motivational speaker, shares his personal story of mental illness, recovery and wellness. Valuable information raises awareness and decreases stigma around mental illness. Interactive and engaging, LTMI is inspiring and up-lifting. Content includes:

- What is mental illness? Prevalence, symptoms, and how to seek treatment.
- What is it like to have bipolar disorder? A story of recovery and resilience.
- The importance of seeking help; regiment of medication, psychiatry, and psychotherapy.
- Living and thriving with diagnosis; relaxation techniques, diet, exercise friendships, family, faith, etc.
- Ending the stigma
- Questions & Closing

**Want to Bring LTMI to Your School?** A recent law making mental health a required part of the health curriculum for middle schools and high schools, signed 10/1/16 by Gov. Andrew Cuomo, takes effect in 2018. LTMI fits well for:

- Health and science classes
- English classes- especially when discussing a story or character who has mental illness
- Groups led by social workers or school psychologists, Clubs, Athletic Teams

**What is LTMI's Impact?** LTMI has reached over 30,000 students in the past four years. A survey of school staff in 38 schools has indicated that 443 students reached out for help for themselves, a friend, or family member.

- *"The presentation showed me that a lot of people have mental illnesses and there are ways to get help for it,"*  
- Lynbrook HS student
- *"I am diagnosed with anxiety and I feel more comfortable to talk about it and seek help,"* - Jericho HS student.
- *"I was watching the faces of students in the room who I have worked with that have been diagnosed with a mental illness. I could just sense the relief they must have been feeling,"*- Social Worker, East Meadow HS Peer Leaders.

**Who is John Johnson?** John is a Wesleyan University B.A. graduate with a Masters in Special Education from Queens College. As "Director of the Future" Thomas S. Murphy Clubhouse at the Madison Square Boys and Girls Club, he implements activities geared for teens regarding career and college.

Contact John to schedule LTMI at [john@btslessonplans.org](mailto:john@btslessonplans.org)