

MINUTES
Interfaith Mental Health Coalition Zoom
given ongoing COVID 19 pandemic
Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 1-3 pm Central Time
Interfaith Mental Health Coalition (IMHC)
"Connecting faith leaders with mental health resources"
www.interfaithmhc.org

Recent Attendees (Minutes will underline to show attending):

Jolene LeRoy, IMHC Pres/AMITA

Rev. Dr. Darryl Jenkins,
IMHC VP, Pastor

Denise Elsbree, IMHC
Treasurer/MHFA

Rita Rippentrop, IMHC

Sec/Stenzel Venoncia Bate-
Ambrus, IMHC Brd

Member at Large, Workforce

Dev, Journey Care

Suzanne Martinez, IMHC Brd
Member at Large, Advocate
Aurora, Co-Pres NAMI

McHenry,
QPR Trainer, ACES

programming Robert Skrocki,
IMHC

Communication

Greg Alexander, McHenry Co
Cluster

Hugh Brady, NAMI

Pam Caine, Church of Jesus Christ
of LDS

Maria Connolly, St. Damian's MH
Awareness Support Gp

Robert Dell, UCC Network, P2P,
Sandwich Cluster

Nathaniel Ekman, NAMI Cook
County North Sub

Janet Holden, UTUUC, UUMHN

William Hood, CRSS, NAMI

DuPage Dawn Levin, JCFS

Trina Lueckhoff, Linden Oaks

MHFA Brian Lux, Outreach

Amy McNicholas, Advocate Health

David Penner, Pastor, Pr of Peace,

Pal

Shamim Sufi, LCSW, Nap Islamic Ctr

Barbara Wilson, Chicago Presbytery

Charla Waxman, Lake Beh Hosp,

Waukegan

Cesar Hernandez, 1st United Ch of

Christ, Crystal Lake

Bunny Hughes, Pres Pastor, Chic
MH Committee

Linda Pacha, Nick's Network of
Hope, St. Margaret Mary Cath

Janet Altmeyer, City Min, Ft

Wayne Jan Fuja, Gateway

Foundation Angela Stephenson,
Living

Abundantly Ministry

Mike Rudolph, Riveredge, Forest
Pk Marianne Bithos, NAMI So Sub

Linda Wylder, St. Thomas Apos,

Nap

Mike Rudolph, Riveredge Hosp

Paula Kosin, LCPC, St. Thomas

Apostle, Nap; BH ministry team,

grief support

Norvel Brown, Pastor, Cary United

Methodist Church

Guest Panelists:

Laurie Garber-Amram, JCFS;

and Adana Cranfield

- 1) 1 p.m Introductions
- 2) Opening Reflection or Inspiring Thought to share— Rita Rippentrop; Five Summit Journey, Phyllis Davies from Grief: Climb Toward Understanding
- 3) Business Matters:
 - a. Approval of Minutes of January 19, 2021 meeting <http://interfaithmhc.org/minutes>
Robert moved, Bob Dell seconded; Minutes approved
 - b. Financial Report -- Denise Elsbree <https://interfaithmhc.org/balance>
Balance \$ 11,022 ; only expense was website update \$230
 - c. Further planning on the 2021 IMHC Calendar <http://interfaithmhc.org/calendar>
March: discussion on how pandemic impacted faith communities and responses, moderated by Darrel Jenkins; if have any ideas of people to participate please email Robert, Jolene or Rita
April: not meeting; encourage regional clusters to hold own events
May: Topic: Social Determinants that impact health and health disparities; 4 county representation
 - d. Update on development of the one stop shop repository of resources for mental health ministry development. Progress on becoming a member of Northbridge Technology Cooperative and Denise

and Robert beginning conversations with Northbridge staff to refine our needs (“must have” features, “want” features, most cost effective ways to obtain those features). See the Northbridge proposal at <http://interfaithmhc.org/Proposal>.

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Robert provided update; exploring this repository, in exploration phase; resources, IMHC documents; access for geographic clusters; Denise and Robert are IMHC ambassadors for this initiative

4) Announcements: upcoming events, legislative updates, or anything else applicable to our audience.

Gateway opening IOP in Downers Grove opening; March 4th virtual tour; added program, gambling, Jen Fuja (jafuja@gatewayfoundation.org; 224-412-0507)

Hugh updated: NAMI Barrington Area operating all support groups online, 4 of them, NAMIBarringtonArea.org; family members; parents of young children with mental health challenges; NAMI connection; specialized group for people who identify as LGBTQ

Legislative: percolation stage for now; Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives Coalition working on bill CARES line for anybody on Medicaid in MH crisis can access, if call get in person visit within 90 minutes; proposal to expand this to all people, 24/7; separate from 911.

Archdiocese Commission on Mental Illness: 4th Tuesday of month, Feb 23rd 7 -8 pm, zooming lexio divina: prayer, connection and hope

Presbytery level: sharing information about support groups and trainings; reducing stigma through education and training, offered from April - October 2020 webinar on trauma, various perspective; 2021 scheduled companionship, 3 trainings; ACES, 4 trainings; open to collaboration; South Suburban area does not have a cluster, regrouping and working with area faith leaders and organizations. (bwilson@chicagopresytery.org)

Venoncia, 3 community health workers focus on Chatum, and other areas; conducting 5 Wishes presentations virtual presentations, last Fri in Feb 1-2:30 pm (CHW@journeycare.org)

Riveredge trainings on various topics of mental health; arise and lunch and learn; 2 hour presentation by local organizations (Mike Rudolph- contact him to participate)

Feb 27, 8:30 am Come Live hosting zoom call; walking thru spiritual and physical practices that are nurturing; Come Alive small group (Angela Stephenson: angela@livingabundantlyministries.org; 630-200-2533)

Bob Dell: Sandwich cluster; reported ER dept has remodeled to provide space for those with mental health issues

5) 2-2:45 pm Spotlight Discussion Topic: Spotlight: Healing from all types of losses during the pandemic, panelists: Laurie Garber-Amram, LCSW, Grief and Mental Health Specialist in the Community Services Department at JCFS, who has been doing community programs related to loss and hope during the pandemic; Venoncia M. Bate-Ambrus, Founding Director of Workforce Development, JourneyCare, on workforce development and job/career loss; Adana Cranfield, LCSW, staff therapist at SamaraCare;

Laurie Garber-Amram

Snow as metaphor for loss and grief; cold, heavy and comes unbidden and restricts our movement

Pandemic losses

Community responses

Spiritual responses--holders of hope and sense of purpose

Viktor Frankl "search for meaning as central motivating force in our lives"

How do you replenish yourself? Who do you want to become as a result of this pandemic?

Oprah Winfrey interview Elli Wiesel: how do you have the will to live after all the horrific things you've seen? Because of what I've seen, I value your life so much.

Loss can feel like a blanket of snow; pain is a light, ateacher, shining on our life as to what is missing; healing a process; in our choice to restore meaning to life; find gratitude and lessons learned through our struggle that discover renewed hope and purpose.

Venoncia Bate-Ambrus

Work/Job loss and mental health

Statistics: unemployment in our region, as of Aug 2020

Chicago-unempl 15.3; Dupage 9.3; Kane 9.6; Kendall 6.3; Lake 9.6; Mch 9.4; Will 10.9%

Women impacted more; typically caretaker roles

Does not account for underemployed

1-3 describe what does work mean to me--in chat

Job vs Career vs vocation/calling

What happens to people when they lose all of those functions? Multifactorial loss. Loss of self as loss of identity. Insecurity. Transitional phase. Stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance to what comes next

Volunteering; being or having a mentor; job coach; spirituality and religiosity can be social support

Venoncia will provide resources via Robert: CARA; Jobs Council of Chicago; St. Hubert Job Ministry; Key job search engines; search firms.

Worth is not determined by whether or not they are currently employed

Apply to people who have retired as well.

Adana Cranfield.LCSW, Samaracare; Adjunct Prof Aurora

Ambiguous Loss: Loss, Trauma, and Resilience; Therapeutic Work with Ambiguous Loss by Pauline Boss (2006)

Freezes loss process

2 types: physical absence with psychological presence; physical presence with psychological absence

Pandemic=pervasive sense of uncertainty

Psychological family: who they see as family recognizes and affirms the psychological family; may include church family; cultural factors that vary with regard to what is defined as community.

Resiliency “stress means the bridge has pressure on it, strain means the bridge is shaking but holding, crisis means the bridge is collapsing, and resiliency means the bridge is bending in response to the stress on it but can absorb this pressure without incurring damage.”

Finding Meaning:

Naming the problem
Dialectical Thinking
Religion and Spirituality
Forgiveness
Small good works

Rituals
Positive attribution
Sacrifice for a greater good/love
Perceiving suffering as inevitable
Hope

“Listening is witnessing ..is the beginning of establishing human connection that provides the sources of new meaning and hope”

Panel Q & A:

Young children and ambiguous loss: structure important; process either/or thinking shift to both/and especially feelings and thoughts; school district have social emotional gaps on their radar at this time.

IPS: Individual Placement and Support program; finding employment for people for people who are living with mental illnesses; Cornerstone, Thresholds (Hugh Brady)

6) 2:55 pm Meeting adjourned

Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday, March 16th 1 - 2 pm via zoom. Topic Impact of pandemic on faith communities, learning from faith leaders, moderator Darryl Jenkins

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Rita Rippentrop, MDiv, LCPC, IMHC Secretary