



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI

Family-to-Family

20th Anniversary

TRIBUTE BOOK



ARIZONA

Virginia Dindy
F2F teacher
NAMI Arizona West Valley

Most Memorable Experience: I have taught many classes and was in the first training class presented in AZ. There were so many memorable experiences, but one that stands out particularly took place in Avondale, AZ when I was teaching with Patricia Bonivel. There was an elderly husband and wife whose 2 daughters had **forced** them to take the class to learn about their brother/son's mental illness. The parents were totally opposed to the thought that he couldn't get up and get to work like everyone else. The first few weeks were very difficult for the family. The parents kept their backs straight and never expressed an opinion. But as the weeks went on, they mellowed slowly. By the last couple of sessions they were interacting and providing us with homemade treats. IT was a total transformation and new light dawning. I was so happy to be involved in a program that could help someone learn and accept the truth about mental illness in their family.

How did you find a F2F class: I was asked to train as a teacher in the first training here (can't remember when) Mary Baron and I were the first teachers in the West Valley and we taught several classes together. I think the Beavers were our trainers, but that may have been for the Family Support.

Favorite "Joyceism": Sorry, I can just see her and hear her teaching so dramatically, so beautifully.

CALIFORNIA

Loretta Benge

Most Memorable Experience: It has been amazing to watch the transformation in families as a result of this class. I have been teaching this class for 5 years. The most recent positive experience was when a woman had been dealing with her ill son who would come out of a locked room and pour every drink, milk, juice down the sink. Then he would go outside and turn on all the hoses believing that the liquids had demons in them. She was a petite woman afraid to confront her son or tell anyone her problem. This continued for 7 years. She took the class and a year later she and her other kids confronted him and he had an episode. Now he has a complete diagnosis. Is living on his own and she finally has her life back.

Stories like these leave us all with hope and how awesome to see such a great turn around. Wonderful things are being told about all the great ideas which actually provide tools for family members to use and understand mental illness.

Thank YOU!

**Kathleen Farrell
NAMI Tulare Co.**

How did you find a F2F class: I heard about F2F from NAMI members before my daughter was diagnosed because I was working in the county health/mental health system. I adjusted my work schedule to be able to drive to the class and then the 30 mile home after. I became a F2F teacher so the class could be offered in my home community.

Favorite "Joyceism": You can't know what no one has told you.

**Lynn Cathy
NAMI California
F2F teacher, trainer, program director, & class graduate.
Lynn.cathy@namicalifornia.org**

Most Memorable Experience: Training I co-taught in Orange, California in 2009. It was just 12 participants and us two trainers. We had a little more time for discussion because of the smaller group. In that class we ran the gamut of family experience with mental illness. We had a young child represented by her mom; we had two others whose loved one had committed suicide. We had arrests, beatings etc. We all were there, affected in these different ways by mental illness, and all sharing the common experiences of grief, regret, uncertainty, frustration and the other at least ten feelings that are frequently listed in the Class 1 exercise. We were there, learning how to impart information and communicate a message of understanding and HOPE.

How did you find a F2F class: I saw a brochure at the mental hospital where my son was an inpatient. That led me to NAMI and 6 months later, into a F2F class.

Favorite "Joyceism": "Be patient. You will be rewarded in Heaven".

The greatest message of F2F – "It (Mental Illness) is not your fault."

**Anna M. Lowery
NAMI Monterey County
Monterey, California
F2F teacher, local program coordinator, class graduate**

Most Memorable Experience: I was so lost when the onset of bipolar disorder symptoms began to appear in our 18 year old son and we could not find answers or help. Feeling so alone was despairing and not knowing what to do was debilitating. My husband did not believe our son had a mental illness and I was in the throws of powerful denial. Our son was confused, scared, angry, depressed and self-medicating. I was blessed when introduced to the services NAMI Monterey County and Interim Inc. Things began to look hopeful and I began the process of education.

How did you find a F2F class: One day, I was handed a flyer for a Family-to-Family class. My husband and I took the class and life changed for all of us. My husband accepted our son's mental illness. We learned how to communicate with each other, how medications worked and affected the brain, how to deal more effectively with the mania and his depression, how to take care of ourselves, that we were not alone.....that there was hope! We bonded with members of our class and were able to learn from those who were farther along on their journey; we were even able to help those new to this journey. We learned so much valuable information about mental illness and it gave us a start to get our lives back....all of us. I was able to start healing through education and volunteering. Our son began his small steps to acceptance and to see his life could be managed and fulfilling. From the very first class I began to think "Everyone needs to know this information! The families, the consumers, the professionals, those in government, law enforcement, hospitals...and hope can be restored!" I am a shy person by nature but this was so important to me and to my family, I became a Family-to-Family teacher. I joined the NAMI Monterey County board; I began to speak to community groups, medical professionals, schools, parolees with mental illness, Crisis Intervention Training. The more I spoke, the easier it became for me and I realized you can't go wrong when you speak from the heart and you have such an important life changing message. Family-to-Family gave us the beginning of a journey of hope, advocacy, and recovery. It hasn't always been easy, but with hopeful determination and this wonderful education our lives have been changed for the better. My work as Outreach Coordinator is fulfilling and rewarding. I can share that message of healing and hope with others...with heartfelt gratitude.

**Nancy E. Oriol
F2F teacher
NAMI Butte County
Chico, California**

Most Memorable Experience: It's all been memorable, but most gratifying and moving for me and my co-teacher has been the change that takes place from the first class to the final party. Our classes participants start off looking stressed and somber in class one and leave after class twelve with hope, knowledge and empathy for their ill family members.

How did you find a F2F class: I found a class through my local affiliate, NAMI Butte County. I was desperate for information after my daughter was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 2007

Deborah Starkey
F2F trainer
Sacramento, California

Most Memorable Experience: The Family-to-Family class was hard to attend. We were about a year into our 15year old (at the time) son's mental illness. Hearing the other families stories who had grown children who had suffered from mental illness most of there lives was devastating to us. We had been told he could grow out of it and here we heard many did not. The first six weeks of the class were the hardest for us. Once we past that mark we started to learn more and see that others had made the same mistakes we had and that going forward we could communicate with our son in a much more effective way. This class saved our family and my marriage. We recommend his class was to everyone we can and next year hopes to become teachers.

How did you find a F2F class: The NAMI Sacramento office is in my office building and I talk to the very helpful person who works the office.

Sharon Dunas, MFT
President NAMI Westside Los Angeles and NAMI Los Angeles County
Coordinating Council
F2F teacher, trainer, class graduate, and program coordinator.

Most Memorable Experience: I learned that "I was not alone with a mentally ill child, that the illness was not my fault and that I was not powerful enough to fix my child's illness myself." It was the greatest relief to know that I could not have prevented someone getting ill on my watch."

As I watched Joyce chuckle while she was teaching the class, this helped me to become an effective parent again, because I could finally stop blaming myself for my child's brain illness. "I said if Joyce can do it, I can do it." I went right out and taught a class in Westside Los Angeles next to Macy's Dept. store in 1996. I had still not ever been to a NAMI meeting and Joyce said that this was backward, but it was OK. Of course I found NAMI and became so involved that I am now President of the NAMI Los Angeles County Coordinating Council of President's. NAMI Family-to-Family class saved my psyche and thereby, my child finally found she could save hers too. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "You have to face the things that you cannot face, you have to do the things that you think that you cannot do." Dr. Joyce Burland and the Family-to-Family class is the reason I could face mental illness.

How did you find a F2F class: I found Joyce on the internet late one night in 1995 when my only child was the most ill, lying in the gutter in West Los Angeles in psychoses. My child was unwashed with matted hair and tattoos all over her body. She was mean and angry and refusing treatment. I went on the internet late at night and I found NAMI and then I found Joyce in Vermont. I called her in Vermont. I told Joyce that I was a licensed clinician and my daughter was mentally ill and I didn't even see it coming. She said I am coming to Los Angeles to train people to teach a class calls the NAMI Family-to-Family class. I asked Joyce if I could attend. She said "yes" you can come even though you have never been to a NAMI meeting. I went to the training at the Catholic Claritin Center in L.A. and ate the worst food all weekend and got trained. The class saved my life.

**Peg Super
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Marin, California**

Most Memorable Experience: I remember my teacher when I took the class back in 2006. She was the first person I had ever met who was just fine and had a brother with serious mental illness. She described some of the things her brother had done (including stabbing her mother) and what it was like to grow up with her brother (and 3 other wild older brothers). She spoke of her past and her present in a very balanced way. Her brother was not "cured" and was at that time in a mental hospital; however, she loved and respected her brother and was fine with her life. It was truly transformational for me and my husband. We felt that maybe we could also reach that place one day and indeed we have. Our teacher moved away shortly after our class completed but I will never forget her and her contribution to my family. I have been teaching F2F for the past two years. I will be teaching my third class in the fall. I always think of my teacher when a hard question comes up. I try to give back the way she did.

How did you find a F2F class: My husband and I were reported to the Child Protective Services after my son lied about how we treated him. When the CPS worker came to our house, she talked with us for about 15 minutes. Then she put down her tablet and said, "There is no problem with you two. You two need to go to NAMI." We said, "What is NAMI??" She told her she had taken F2F because she was responsible for the care of her uncle with severe bipolar. We enrolled in F2F the next day.

Favorite "Joyceism": I have never met Joyce but in seeing her training CD, I was as impressed with her insightfulness and creativity and patience as she helped a family member through the problem solving process.

**Wanda Materre
F2F teacher, trainer, class graduate, program coordinator
NAMI San Francisco
San Francisco, California**

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience is taking the F2F class receiving a wealth of information about families and mental health. It was so rich and filling that I thought I struck it rich. I thought how we can fix this, what can I do. I then took the F2F training to become a teacher and my 2 trainers were great and from then I vowed to educate as many people as I can about mental illness. We have come a long way from where we were but still have a long way to go.

My most favorable moment was getting trained to be a state trainer by the one and only Joyce Burland wow now that was rich. She is so kind, and has a heart that is so loving, caring, compassionate, understanding

We all want wonderful things for our children and family members. Recovery is possible and we are keeping hope alive by educating those who are hurting, lost and feel alone.

Knowing that NAMI is there is to pick up the pieces just when you thought there was nothing left to do is a God send. I am so glad to be involved with something that is so wonderful and meaningful and effective in helping others.

How did you find a F2F class: I started a new job and my first job assignment was to attend a NAMI meeting and take the F2F class. Wow I was so impressed and so excited to find a free program out there that not cared about your loved one but cared about you as well. Thank God for NAMI F2F

Favorite "Joyceism": We are heroes as families, we must see the heroism of that condition. And that's when we can join them. And we really can't join them until we are able to, as witnesses; see the heroism of that position.

I've had one really good idea". And that was I was going to trust family members to be teachers of other family members.

If they're not going to help us, we need to help ourselves.

**Sue Musa
F2F teacher
NAMI San Francisco Valley**

Most Memorable Experience: I don't think there is only one most memorable experience. Whenever someone in the class has a step forward with their relative, it was a special moment. The most memorable experience overall, how strong people can be when they are hit by mental illness in their family, which I think it is the most devastating disease you can deal with.

How did you find a F2F class: About 10 years ago, I went to a support group meeting when my brother was in the middle of a crisis. One of the F2F teachers, Jim Randall was there. He told me about F2F class that just started, so I signed for the class, I have missed one class at that time. After I finished taking the class which helped me tremendously, Jim asked if I am interested in taking the F2F training, I was very interested. So I took the training the same year & I started teaching the class since that time until 2009

Favorite "Joyceism": I am not sure what that "favorite Joyceism" means. But from the whole manual, the letter that is written by a patient in recovery asking his family to be patient with his recovery & not push him is the most influential on me. I realized over the years that the most important factor in helping my brother is to be patient with him.

**Michele Kraft
F2F teacher
Santa Cruz, California**

Most Memorable Experience: In the final class, I had one family member who came to me and said, "You have no idea how much you have helped me. Before this class, I was in despair and feeling hopeless. I now have tools to help me understand and communicate better with my brother, and hope for the future." As a teacher, I was amazed with the great attendance and participation. One couple shared at the final meeting that the husband was only planning on going to the first class for support for his wife, not 12. They made every class together!

How did you find a F2F class: I found a F2F class on the NAMI website.

**Ruan Frenette
F2F teacher and trainer
San Francisco, California**

How did you find a F2F class: Thank you for asking for comments about Joyce.

I heard about F2F from a San Francisco college friend who 20 years later is a nursing teacher in Burlington VT. Of course the program saved my family and I...we know this works! At the St Louis F2F training, Joyce said that I was bold. Ha! Never would I have thought. But that remark inspired me and has carried me since. Not that bold is necessarily good; I've stepped in a few puddles! I write her training remarks in my manuals, which are preciously rewritten in each update, they are priceless. Her humor is relayed to all my students. One of my favorites is reading the list of signs of mental illness, and she says, a little flippantly, "Oh I felt just that way yesterday" – totally takes the seriousness out of the moment and makes us all feel like this is just part of life...which it is, each and every one of us, different only by degree.

Joyce Burland is inspirational, a visionary, a delightful presenter, a master of compassion. The Family To Family course should be noted in history as a course that saves society. When Joyce goes to the great village of the sky (hopefully many years off), her life achievements should be in the weekly magazine, The Week <http://theweek.com/>. Can I help make that happen? Her contributions are phenomenal.

Tonight I attended the first of a 4 part class on mental health first aid. The leaders although trained, but not professionals, were fun but much disorganized and needed to study their material better, or have better material! Every exercise was confusing and misleading, and the leader gave wrong information. Seemed like information from the manual was skipped over, missed the point, or didn't connect - so it wasn't easy to follow. I appreciate the NAMI programs all the more! Joyce makes teaching a breeze with the manuals just as they are! Good job Joyce! Thank you!

**Gail Beeker
NAMI Ventura
Ventura County, California**

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience with F2F was typical but sooooooo painful. It was a bit unique since my husband, my ex-husband/son's father and I all attended our first class together within weeks of our son's second psychotic break at the age of 25. Of course, when NAMI was recommended by our family physician at the time of his first break, my notes somehow got tucked away without registering in our minds. The second time, we were "ordered" to attend at least two NAMI support group meetings by the acute-care physician at our son's discharge to intermediate care/rehab. Our reaction was and still is that learning what we did in F2F kept our family from fracturing and contributed greatly to our son's wonderful recovery.

Largely because of Joyce Burland and the people SHE has inspired, I am now a F2F Teacher, PEP Teacher and NAMI State Teacher Trainer from Ventura County California.

It is SO very unfortunate for NAMI to see Joyce retiring, but also I am SO very happy for her. We wish her the absolute joy in her "best years" yet to come and extend a heartfelt THANK YOU not only for what she has done but for who she is.

**Bertha A. Garcia
F2F teacher and class graduate
Glendale, California**

Most Memorable Experience: I have two most memorable experiences with Family-to-Family. First, Family-to-Family has allowed me to make life long friends. I am still in touch with a couple of people who took the class at the same time I did. I have also kept in touch with some of the people who have been in the classes that I have had the honor of teaching. Through all the struggles you know that you have friends who understand exactly what you are going through and who are willing to listen and talk when ever you need to reach out. Second, as a teacher, hearing the words "you have helped me tremendously" make it all worth while. On the last day of class, when someone comes to you and thanks you for being there, helping them get through such a difficult time and giving them the "light at the end of the tunnel", well, there are no words that can describe the emotion and satisfaction you feel knowing that you have helped someone get through the turmoil that mental illness brings.

How did you find a F2F class: I found a F2F class on the NAMI California website. However, it was two years before I could actually take a class because at the time there were none in my area and I did not want to travel a long distance to take the class.

**Camille Heagerty
F2F teacher and Trainer
NAMI Orange County
Santa Ana, California**

Most Memorable Experience: My friend and I had wanted to take F2F for almost 2 years. Since she worked nights, it made it very difficult to find a class that worked with her schedule. Finally, we were able to attend in Sept. 2009. As the weeks went by, slowly you could see each individual in the class change. We were no longer the lost, scared, overwhelmed, embarrassed, looking individuals who had come together that first night. It was as though seeds were planted in each of us and we blossomed. It wasn't as if most of our loved ones got any better in those 12 weeks, however, we had grown to understand so much more about their illnesses. We learned how to accept them as they are now, when to "help" and not "help", accept what we can change, what we can't change, how important it is to take care of ourselves and so much more! We came as individuals, but left as friends, helping each other every week by listening, learning, crying and being supportive together. I will never forget looking around the room that last night, sharing with my friend, that I could not believe that we had experienced anything so powerful!! That night, we committed to becoming F2F teachers and taught our 1st class last fall!

How did you find a F2F class: Our son had struggled with ADHD, ODD, dyslexia and anxiety in grade school. By the time he was in high school, my husband and I were facing physical abuse from him and he was beginning to experience mania. He was attending a non-public school, but it was becoming apparent the next step would be an RTC. As part of the process, we were referred to Orange County Wrap-Around services. I was given a NAMI brochure on Hand to Hand. I took the course and became a NAMI member immediately. That taught me about all the great programs and as soon as the Basics course came to Calif. I became a teacher.

I met Joyce for the first time, just a few weeks ago, while attending the state training in St. Louis. It was so moving to hear all the testimonials about what the F2F program had meant to so many during her roast. The best line was when someone compared her to Mother Teresa and across the room Joyce shouts out "but I have sex". I have told that line to several of my NAMI friends and we all agree, it proves Joyce not only has a great heart but also a great sense of humor!! Now I know why no one else could have done for NAMI what she has!!

Kathy Forward
F2F teacher, trainer, program coordinator, and class graduate
NAMI Santa Clara County
NAMI Santa Clara County
San Jose, California

Most Memorable Experience: Every class is a memorable experience...to see people come into class #1 with such pain and then in Class #12 with a smile and hope is what still amazes me after teaching for so many years.

How did you find a F2F class: I searched for two years after my 17 year old son became ill to find help and resources. My sister has been ill for many years before this and I realized how little I knew about dealing with mental illness. I heard about the course starting the same week in 1997. It was just what I'd been looking for!

When I became a trainer a few years later after my F2F course, meeting Joyce was like meeting the "Mother Theresa of Mental Illness"! Her belief in families and recovery is so inspiring...this was long before the words "recovery and wellness" were mentioned by anyone in the system.

Nancy K. Fuller
F2F teacher and class graduate
NAMI San Diego
San Diego, California

Most Memorable Experience: There are two experiences with NAMI that will forever stand out in my mind. The first was discovering NAMI as a parent and the second occurred in my role as a Family to Family teacher.

How did you find a F2F class: Our son was first diagnosed with mental illness almost fourteen years ago. We are the proud parents of two amazing children. At the time, our daughter was in her third year of college moving toward a career in public health. Our equally bright, witty, lovable son, armed with two university scholarships, was ready to embark on his university life. On a night that will forever be burned into my consciousness, I found our son, hunched over his SAT study materials, catatonic, and forever changed. At that time there was no NAMI in our state of Michigan. We were terrified, worried, and seeking answers from every source we could, and in the process, being told that as parents, this was our fault. Ten years passed as our family tried to continually "patch up" our son and return him to some semblance of a life. The diagnoses changed often and so too the medications. By this time, the three of us had moved to California and while still desperately seeking answers, I found NAMI. My husband, daughter, and I began our Family to Family program together and finally, finally, found information, answers, and resources we were so desperately seeking. We became armed with knowledge and felt immersed in the fellowship and understanding of so many wonderful people. For so long our son was the invisible family member that no friends or even our extended family even wanted to ask about. Now, with NAMI, we found a new home, a place that welcomed all of us with open arms...and our world opened up and has been forever been changed.

I quickly agreed to become trained as a Family to Family teacher. It was in my third program of teaching Family to Family that my second most memorable experience

occurred. I will never forget this particular group of 24 caring individuals comprised of mainly parents of sons and daughters newly diagnosed with mental illness. One of our members was a lovely widow that came to us with a troubled, worried heart, and desperately needing help. She had a 45 yr. old mentally ill son who had spent most of his life living in Board and Care homes. The woman had just been informed that her son had suddenly been taken to a nearby hospital and placed on life support. Having emigrated from Eastern Europe, the woman spoke with a heavy accent and had trouble understanding what the hospital personnel were telling her. As we discussed and tried to sort out the information together, sadly we discovered that her son had attempted suicide. One week later, her son was taken off life support and pronounced dead. The impact on all of us, especially in the first few weeks of a new NAMI program, was enormous. I was asked to speak at the funeral on behalf of her son, the difficult impact of mental illness on a family, and the caring life force of NAMI. The experience certainly was profound, but I don't think I will ever quite forget when that brave mother on the very next Family to Family class evening, returned to our class and continued to be present every night after that. She quite simply wanted to join the family that is NAMI and to help any other family in whatever way she could.

Marilyn Kelly
F2F teacher and class graduate
NAMI Orange Co., California

How did you find a F2F class: I attended F2F in September 2008 as a class participant. We were in crisis as my son was diagnosed as Bipolar and had to return from his first semester in college. At that time he had been hospitalized 3 times in less than a year. The course was awesome. It gave me information about his illness, strategies for communication and coping mechanisms all rolled into one class.

I knew I had to give back so I volunteered to be a teacher. I have taught two classes and have learned so much more from the students and various speakers we've invited. It's the most rewarding process I've ever gone through.

Thank you NAMI for providing this venue for everyone. There is hope and you've given that to everyone involved!

A friend told me about NAMI. I searched the Web site, found the course and enrolled immediately. I was fortunate as a class had just started and was able to get in.

Favorite "Joyceism": You can't know everything but we give you the tools to find out.

**Deanne Buchan
F2F teacher and program coordinator
NAMI Yolo
Davis, California**

How did you find a F2F class: In 1997 I attended one of the first trainings in California conducted by Brian Jacobs. I had not attended the 12 week F2F class as the program did not exist prior to then so you can imagine what an overwhelming experience it was to receive that HUGE 3 ring binder filled with information that previously I had not known. For 12 years I coordinated and taught the class twice a year with various other trained members of NAMI Yolo. What a wonderful experience it has been. I got to know our NAMI Yolo members through teaching the class which became the source of new members. Our membership grew by leaps and bounds in those years. Teaching and coordinating the class was hard work but very gratifying and I only gave it up because of old age. I recently met Joyce at a teacher/teacher training and marveled at her stamina. Family problems have precluded my participating in the teacher/teacher program however last evening we at NAMI Yolo are at last getting a Spanish speaking program off the ground. The participants many of whom do not speak any English (we had a bi-lingual interpreter to help us) are so enthusiastic to get F2F classes in their community that it reminded me of what a difference it had made in my life.

**Steve Pitman
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
NAMI Orange, Co., California**

How did you find a F2F class: After 42 years of dealing with mental illness with my brother, for the first time, I found myself in a room with 20 people who understood exactly what I had been going through. I did not think that was possible.

During one of my brothers many Manic episodes and trying to get him help, I was on the phone writing down names and numbers as fast as I could. Once he was in the hospital, the list was forgotten. Several months later I got a phone call from a very nice sounding lady who said that I had signed up for a class – 12 weeks. I did not remember any class but since she was pleasant enough, I thought I should at least check it out. So much for checking it out. I stayed and drug my granddaughter back to the second class with me. We both stayed and now teach F2F together.

**Kay Blackwill
F2F teacher
NAMI Marin
San Rafael, California**

Most Memorable Experience: It is impossible to pick out one, but this story from the class I finished teaching last week, says something about how valuable these classes are to everyone involved. One of my class members, Pam, called to ask to join the class, on the day the class was to start. When I had to tell her the class was full, she broke down and cried, and said her daughter would be dead before the next class began. Of course, I immediately said, "Come anyway, we'll fit you in. Don't worry." Pam loved the course, and thanked me every week for giving her a space. She signed up for my San Francisco Bay Area walk team and went to her mother for a donation. To her surprise, her mom resisted. "Look," Pam said, "this organization has kept me alive for the last 12 weeks, and has kept me off your back. Get out the check book!" Not romantic, but it's real like everything in this course. It is a privilege and a joy to teach Family to Family. Thank you, Joyce, for creating this amazing course

How did you find a F2F class: I had heard about it, around 1990, when my son got sick and they were asking for teachers in the NAMI Newsletter. At that time I was working full time and it was not possible. I did not hear about it again until I moved to Marin and joined NAMI. In 2006, we had two trained teachers and I was able to sign up for the class.

CANADA

**Affectionately Eileen Callanan
F2F teacher, trainer, and program coordinator
British Columbia, Canada**

Most Memorable Experience: Thanks to Joyce Burland and NAMI we have been able to continue with Family to Family Education Program in British Columbia, Canada. I have been involved in first learning about F2F and teaching F2F in 1995. Not only has the course helped me but has helped the many others who have taken this wonderful course. The support from NAMI has been exemplary. Thank you Joyce for developing and promoting F2F. May you be blessed in your retirement.

**Therese Kelders
Ottawa, Canada**

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience with F2F was when Joyce came to Ottawa to show us how to teach the course. I was so amazed at how great she was at modeling how to teach it. I remember being very emotional as well.

I also remember her mentioning that she kind of 'adopted' a girl about her daughter's age (or maybe her sister's age) who was like a surrogate daughter (or sister) and I thought that was a great idea! As my mother is the one who is ill, I wanted to bring Joyce home with me! I have not yet found my 'surrogate mother', but I have not given up hope!

How did you find a F2F class: I got a call from someone from another organization that was looking for teachers to teach this new program called NAMI in Ottawa. As she had never done the course herself, she was not quite clear as to what it entailed but, it somehow sounded like something I would like to do! That was in 1997 and have been teaching or training teachers ever since!

Favorite "Joyceism": In struggle we trust! To me, it represented we honour people where they are at and we trust people's capacity to get through the tough times while we support them through it.

I have seen Joyce only 3 times in my life and yet she has had a profound impact on me. She has been my female role model, (I have not known any other women who even came close) my 'heroine' given her passion to help the families (both those who have an ill member and those with the illness). Although she was always gentle and compassionate with everyone, there was also this amazing strength in her that you knew she could fight with the best if necessary. I will never forget her!

Joyce, I wish you all the best in your retirement, filled with peace and love! All my love,

CONNECTICUT

**Marilyn Ricci
Connecticut Farmington Valley Affiliate
F2F teacher
Avon, Connecticut**

Most Memorable Experience: It changes lives! This will probably be said again and again in these messages, but it can't be said enough. Until my husband and I took the course about 16 years ago, we were completely alone and feeling so helpless. The class gave us the support and education we needed to make life better for ourselves and our family member with illness. I was so grateful, that I signed up to be a teacher at the end of the 12 weeks. Since then, I have observed the classes changing lives over and over again. It is a remarkable course. There is nothing else like it. I am so thankful Joyce designed this course and I know I speak for many families. I stay active in NAMI, in part, because I want to be sure this course is available to all who need it.

Catherine Palmer Paton
F2F teacher and program coordinator
Salisbury, Connecticut

Most Memorable Experience: Being welcomed to a group in the small northwest corner of CT town of Kent by a dozen others ready to share 'personal, real stories' about their life of living with family members with mental illness. I did not understand the complexity of what was needed to be a good caregiver. The care, organization, and steadfast commitment to respond intelligently and consistently was shared by our leaders and others who had stood by loved ones, often children or teens but also adults through a dozen doctors, various trials and even the death of their mother by her own son who was not on his medication when on parole. Yet these women and men were living and breathing, learning and making progress as part of the NAMI Family. I wanted to be part of that. Sadly, I lost my own son who drowned saving a friend in a raging river. Somehow training became available to me as a support group leader, and I realized the skills of dealing with a crisis and helping others were invaluable resources not often available. They further helped me cope and again many shared moving stories of dire situations that they pulled through. That gave me hope that even though my husband had divorced me the day before my teen son died, and there had been a lot of coercive control resulting in him keeping our children from me, that dealing with things in a level headed manner, with a lot of support would make it more possible for me to pull through as well. This continues to be the case almost two years later, while I still am not seeing my younger girls and no 'forensic evaluation' has been ordered by the courts such as in VT or in MA, to determine whether my former spouse has a mental health or abuse condition that merits an intervention. I am attending a NAMI Basics to gain insights to monitor my children and again be reminded of the wisdom offered by NAMI in the groups and literature.

How did you find a F2F class: I saw a flyer and read about the classes in the local papers. That was a great help, no one told me about it.

Favorite "Joyceism": Would dealing with a Problem Pile-Up count? I learned a great deal in a workshop she gave in CT. I would like to encourage NAMI to look at sites such as duluth-model.org, and mothers custody conference (in NY) with the book *Domestic Violence, Abuse and Child Custody* by Mo Hannah and Barry Goldstein as a timely, meaningful resource guide for Best Practices to address the systemic problems in the courts and the mental health field where often victims of abuse are blamed, children are turned against their protective mothers, and attorneys to do not effectively advocate for the mothers or victims. Also, there is lundybancroft.com and endingviolence.com and healthyplace.com, nolo.com and womanslaw.com, rainn.org which are all important to let people know about to become better advocates on their own. *Have Justice Will Travel* (www.hjwv.org) shows how Wynona Ward has helped 10K in VT regarding custody. Thanks for trying to bridge this critical safety gap. I would be happy to speak with others at NAMI. A screening tool could be developed to help ensure the safety of more people in the programs, since many do not know if they are being abused even by a 'nice partner'

Randy Kaye
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
NAMI-Connecticut

Most Memorable Experience: During one of the classes I taught, our members voted unanimously to invite our "loved ones" to the meeting about recovery. During the class itself, many sat quietly and appeared more defensive than interested. I remember thinking of a Joyce-ism: Let them be where they are. The memorable moment, however, came during the break. As the F2F class members were inside at the snack table, the "relatives" were out in the hall, talking and laughing about meds, diagnoses, experiences, and treatment. They had needed each other more than they'd needed the class. This reinforced, to me, the need for peer support. I know my own son enjoyed that break-time a lot. He felt he belonged. That hadn't happened for a long time.

How did you find a F2F class: I heard about it in a NAMI Support Group in Fairfield, CT, and immediately signed up. However, a few weeks before the class was to start, one of our instructors dropped out for health reasons. The NAMI Group leader took a chance and sent me to the next F2F teacher training - one week away - and I experienced my first F2F series in one exhausting, enlightening weekend. Then I taught the class, reinforcing everything I had learned so quickly during the weekend, and giving me time to absorb it all more slowly. Amazing experience. Each time I teach F2F I teach more myself, both from the curriculum and from the members of the class. Plus - each time, I am in a different place.

Favorite "Joyceism": "What are your relative's strengths?" during the "problem-solving" workshop. I hadn't been asked that question for so long. It brought me back to a place of possibility for my son. Years later, as my memoir "Ben Behind His Voices: One Family's Journey from the Chaos of Schizophrenia to Hope" is about to be published, I know that I have that "Joyceism" - and many others like it - to thank for bringing me to the place where I could support my son in his recovery, and stay patient and accepting when he wasn't ready to be where I wanted him to be.

Cheri Bragg
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
NAMI-Connecticut & NAMI-Manchester

Most Memorable Experience: Taking Family-to-Family at age 33 was the FIRST TIME I ever had the chance to openly talk about my experience as a daughter of a person living with a mental illness. I think I cried on the way home from almost every single class - it was hard emotional work to go through the course. I was (thankfully) flooded with information for the first time in my life. No one should have to wait 3 decades to learn about their parent's serious health issue - no one should have to live with depression and anxiety in part due to a complete lack of mental health information/education and support. The unknown is frightening. This course was the starting point of my own recovery from the trauma of "losing" my mother. Ten years later, I can say with 100% confidence that if I had not had the good fortune of finding and taking a Family-to-Family course in my town, I would still be depressed, anxiety-ridden, panic-stricken, in the dark, and stuck in Stage 1 grief. Thanks to Joyce, my two excellent teachers (Judy Joyner and Nancy Calderbank),

and the Family-to-Family course, I continue to grow, thrive, and advocate. I was able to receive a hug from my mother for the first time in over 30 years! Although she still doesn't officially recognize me as a "daughter" (she believes my whole family died in a car accident when I was 11/when she entered the state hospital more permanently), I feel thrilled to have a loving, caring relationship with her - she calls me "The best conservator in the world"! I am raising a wonderful young man and am in, for the first time ever, a loving relationship of my own. I went on to teach Family-to-Family, become a State trainer, and also participate in the very well received "Parents & Teachers as Allies" program and advocate both personally and professionally. I continue to work alongside other daughters, sons and parents living with mental illness to create systems responsiveness so that families like mine can be fully supported and thrive in the future. Family-to-Family SAVED MY LIFE.

How did you find a F2F class: I had just started working for a local mental health agency as a case manager and someone brought in a NAMI Advocate. I read about Family-to-Family classes and called NAMI-CT and found there was a course happening shortly in my own town.

Favorite "Joyceism": I can still hear my teacher's voice repeating Joyce's voice that she heard over and over again "You can't know what no one has told you!" This came in handy repeatedly when teaching and continues to come in handy - in fact I just used it last night when presenting at a clubhouse and speaking with a family member newly in crisis about how her son had symptoms much earlier that she didn't recognize. This is the greatest "guilt-buster" phrase ever invented! Thanks Joyce!

Carolyn S. Drescher
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
NAMI-Connecticut, Windham County Affiliate

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable occasion is the inspiration and encouragement I received from Dr. Joyce Burland and the truly valuable experience of teaching F2F classes and training others to be F2F teachers. Her training sessions in St. Louis were indeed a marathon to her own dedication as well as ours. I *respect the curriculum* and could not easily teach another's work if I didn't. (I happen to be a retired high school teacher.)

I was a participant in Manchester, Connecticut about 12 years ago and knew I would have time in retirement years to become an instructor as well. I also have been very active in the **Parents and Teachers as Allies** in our state and have tremendous respect for this program. I hope it can eventually become a mandate in all 50 states !!!

Favorite "Joyceism": Well, you have to watch for those "sticky wickets" or "hot potatoes" in these classes. I love the sticky wicket and hot potatoes metaphors for those many trouble spots we often encounter. Joyce certainly knew what kinds of difficulties we might encounter in open discussions in our classes.

Carol Force
F2F teacher and class graduate
Stamford/Greenwich, Connecticut

Most Memorable Experience: I both took the course and then qualified as an instructor for the course. I found out about it at a support group meeting. Support groups are good but I wanted more information and facts about mental illness not just to sit and complain or vent about what was going on. The group gave me the knowledge about what to look for when communicating with medical people and my ill family member. It made me have patience to allow the medications to work. Before that I thought that two pills and call me in the morning would be all that was needed. It has been two years since my family member has been diagnosed but improvement has occurred, at a snail's pace, but I know now this is perfectly normal. It has saved my sanity. Whatever I learned I passed on to my family member as soon as the medication allowed him to comprehend it. Now he is informed and has an idea of what to expect. As result of this knowledge he knew to change doctors when the medication he was on wasn't working and the doctor said this is all there is. I also served as a source of knowledge to other family members who did not take the time to educate themselves as I did. I have read many books and articles as well as memoirs of people living with bipolar disorder. Joyce did a remarkable thing by creating the f2f class and has enhanced many peoples' lives (more than she could ever imagine).

Sheryle M. Pardee
F2F teacher
Farmington Valley Affiliate
Avon, Connecticut

Most Memorable Experience: Can't think of just one . . . the circle of sharing is incredible.

How did you find a F2F class: I was referred to a support group where I met Marilyn Ricci and she told me about F2F!

Favorite "Joyceism": Family is important part of the process! Advocate.

Marisa Walls
F2F teacher and class participant
NAMI Farmington Valley in Connecticut

Most Memorable Experience: Today, I share my NAMI F2F experience with everyone because this class helped me when my son Alex was diagnosed with Schizophrenia. My NAMI F2F experience revealed to me that:

1. My son's mental illness is a brain disorder
2. As a mother and primary caregiver, I am not alone
3. F2F provided me with education and tools of hope on mental illness for sunnier days ahead

"Hope is more than a word -- it's a state of being. It's a firm belief that even if you don't know how, even if you don't know when, God will come through and better

days are ahead. Life brings rain. Hope dances in the puddles until the sun come out again." –

How did you find a F2F class: When life brought rain into my journey with my son Alex, I had seen a NAMI flyer at an adolescent out-patient hospital medical visit. I picked it up and thought I would read it. The panic, chaos, crisis mode, and the five hundred bricks which landed on my head when I realized my son was diagnosed with Schizophrenia, made it difficult for me to concentrate on this very NAMI flyer which God had put in front of me in spring 2008. In spring of 2009, I signed up to take the NAMI F2F course for 12 weeks and this was a true blessing. When I graduated as a class participant, I said to myself: "I should have taken this class a year earlier. I wish I had known all of this information concerning mental illness then." I thought to myself, "babies do not come with instructions when they are born, and neither does a diagnosis of a mental illness for a loved one." NAMI F2F class brings education and tools of hope on mental illness to me and all participants!

Favorite "Joyceism" - "You can't possible know what no one has ever told you"

DELAWARE

**Marilyn Siebold
NAMI -Delaware
F2F teacher and trainer**

Most Memorable Experience: I've been teaching since 2000 - Jon Barber and I were the first to teach F2F in Delaware, so I was taught by Joyce to be a teacher before I took the course.

Well, this is on the "light side" but it demonstrates how family members support one another and use humor to do it! I will never forget that evening...

Some years ago, I and my co-teacher Jon Barber were teaching a large class. Every week, at the beginning of the class, we always checked in with the participants, asking them about what happened since we last met, etc., in order to get a sense of what was going on and to give support.

Everyone's struggle is hard and unique in its own way, and one particular couple was having an exceptionally difficult time being in the class. At about the 3rd or 4th week, when Jon and I asked them how their week was, the husband answered and shared a litany of horrendous experiences (daughter hospitalized again, financial difficulties, job problems, etc., etc.) and ended by saying, "AND WE'RE GETTING A DIVORCE." The rest of the class just sat there STUNNED. Total silence - what could you say?!?!?! Oh my gosh they just announced their divorce to 20 + people!!!! What should we do?!?!?! One other family member knew just what to do... in a totally neutral, dead-pan voice, he said, "So other than that, how was your week?" After one second of silence the entire class roared in laughter - INCLUDING THE COUPLE ANNOUNCING THEIR INTENTION TO GET A DIVORCE!!!

It was just what the class needed to feel comfortable with everyone's unique pain, and what the couple needed to be part of the group - and they DID NOT DIVORCE

and my recollection was that it was one of the most satisfying classes, because after that, we could all talk about anything and we used humor appropriately to cope!!

FLORIDA

**Ann Jerman, Program Chairman,
NAMI Manatee County, Florida**

Most Memorable Experience: Linda Davis, our Vice-President, and I taught Family-to-Family for two years in a row. I am a retired educator so was able to fully appreciate such a wonderfully put together program. Linda is also a retired educator. There wasn't a word of the material we would have changed! We fully enjoyed the experience of teaching this wonderful program.

I have been a NAMI member since 1982 and Linda has been a Member since 1993.

Our thanks and good wishes go out to Joyce Burland as she receives the NAMI Distinguished Service Award.

**Linda R. Murphy, F2F teacher and class graduate
Florida/NAMI Volusia/Flagler, Inc
Palm Coast, Florida**

Most Memorable Experience: Watching my friend teach a F2F class after the suicide of her young son. It was therapeutic for her and for the participants to be a part of her healing during the class. I will never forget the way the class came together to help her and each other. What a privilege to be a part of this training

How did you find a F2F class: I found the class through my local NAMI Support group. I had to travel three hours for the course, but it was worth the effort. Twenty years ago it was very difficult to find helpful information. Even the libraries had older dated material. When I found E. Fuller Tory, I was elated. Of course, it was called Journey of Hope in those days. It was a moving experience and much later, I was able to get training in Florida to bring the class to my local NAMI. We rotate the course between Deland, Daytona Beach, Palm Coast, and St. Augustine with a month or two in between. It's difficult to find teachers with loved ones stable enough to allow them to continue teaching over and over. We add new teachers whenever we can.

**Victoria Polanis
Florida - NAMI Pasco
New Port Richey, Florida
F2F local program coordinator**

Most Memorable Experience: One of the parts of the class that affected me the most was when we gathered a list of problems that all of our families experience. We chose one of our class mates, and gave suggestions that might help with the problems she faces. I could see by the look on her face as we gave our suggestions, that she was truly hearing things she had not tried, and she looked excited. She came back at another class and told us she was grateful for all the suggestions, and she had been experiencing success with a number of them. It felt good to know that we did so little, and was able to help so much! Another time we had a Consumer visit the class. I noticed her listening to our discussions, and watching us, and I could see she made a few notes at certain points of things she wanted to address later when she would speak to us. When she spoke, she told us about her life - all the problems she experienced, how her mental illness affected not only her, but also her family, and I was astonished at her candor. We were allowed to ask questions, and she didn't hold back at all. She gave us SO MUCH useful information. I could see that everyone in the class was affected as much as I was. And when she was done, she offered her phone number to anyone that thought they might want to call her in the future, or if we had any of our family members that might want to speak with her. The whole class was wonderful, but these are 2 of the things that I put at the top for effectiveness.

How did you find a F2F class: A friend I met at work introduced me to NAMI, and I started going to a support group she was involved in. She had told me about the class, but the one in our area had just started 2 weeks prior, so she suggested I attend the support group and when the next class started I could go to it. The people in my group are fantastic. I was lucky to really feel a connection to them right away. In fact, when it was time to enroll for the next class, I said I wanted to sign up, and was told I was already on the list. They knew I wanted to go, and didn't even wait for me to ask. I have found not only support at our group, but have made some very special friends there as well!

Favorite "Joyceism": I don't know if you would call it a Joyceism, but there was a section in Class 7 that she wrote that I have read over and over again. It is page 7.24 - Inside Mental Illness: The Internal Battle of Your Relative with Depression. No matter how many times I read this, it still affects me tremendously. Thank you Joyce for all you have done - NAMI has given me much hope for my loved one! Before NAMI, I was always so afraid I would say or do something in the wrong way. I now feel much better equipped to help my nephew, our family and myself. I think that through NAMI I have found a way I can be of help to many that need it, and I am excited that I am becoming more involved each day.

Gloria Strother
F2F teacher
NAMI Florida/NAMI Pasco County
Elfers, Florida

Most Memorable Experience: Watching the attendees grow in confidence and comfort, and shedding the guilt that so many have harbored for years. Seeing the impact that this class has on the fathers and brothers is so very rewarding. Hearing back from the consumers of what a difference it has made in their family dynamics makes all the time and effort that goes into teaching this class so worthwhile. Having the opportunity to teach this class has given meaningful purpose to my life.

How did you find a F2F class: I first found the class by goggling for answers and ended up on the NAMI Website. I read about the education class and from there I continually checked back to see who in my area might be offering the class. It happened to be a nearby county and a 60 mile round trip for me which I made every single week. My county affiliate didn't offer it and from there I made the decision to change that.

Favorite "Joyceism": "Oh no, we can't have providers in our F2F class, those providers need more then what the F2F has to offer"

Deborah Ann Rush
F2F teacher and local program coordinator
Events Specialist
College Relations and Marketing
Seminole State College
Of Florida

How did you find a F2F class: I came to find NAMI through a suggestion from the hospital. About five years ago within months my husband was diagnosed with bi-polar, my oldest son diagnosed with bi-polar, and my second oldest son diagnosed with bi-polar schizo affective disorder. My husband and second oldest son were admitted to the hospital, and my oldest was in juvenile detention for domestic abuse all at the same time. This was the beginning to our family's journey in dealing with mental illness. I unknowing never had lived with mental illness and knew nothing about it. After about two years into my family's illnesses I decided it was time to stand up and fight. When you do not know what to do in a situation knowledge is power, so I decided to take the F2F class. It changed my life forever. It gave me the knowledge and the power from within to get myself to a place to where I could enjoy life again and better deal with all of my family. I learned to support, have empathy, and try to keep a stress free environment. After taking the class I committed to train to become a teacher. Training to become a teacher was an experience in itself. The relationships that I created with others and the knowledge expanded. The training class helped me to continue the realization that I am not the only one, I am not a horrible person, mother or wife, there is nothing to be ashamed of, and I can make it through this! Then I taught my first class and I felt like I had come full circle. The rewards I received from teaching that class were unbeatable to anything that I had ever experienced. To see each class members face express; "I get it now and I can make it through this" was like no other accomplishment that I had ever experienced.

All of them so grateful were so rewarding. I still run into class members and they tell me how their lives have changed for the better and the feeling of accomplishment flows through me again. I talk about my families illnesses and I am not ashamed. I talk about NAMI to others all the time, whether they are professionals in the field or they are someone dealing with the illness. My hope is to send others to find NAMI to allow them to change their lives, like it changed mine. NAMI organization saved my life and my family. I will forever be grateful for that.

Ruth O'Keefe
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Florida
Jacksonville, Florida

Most Memorable Experience: When Jean Silsby and I took the F2F teacher training in Tampa, I had not taken the F2F class myself. We were doing the role playing exercise with blue cards where our job is: Reflect, Reflect, Confirm. After 5 years' in the trenches with my dear son's schizophrenia I thought I was pretty competent to do the exercise. Ha. After Jean read, "I'm not going to take my meds anymore," all I could do was sat there wordlessly with my mouth open! Thank goodness Beverly Whitely (I think) was there, gently coaching how to Reflect, Reflect, Confirm. It was good laughing with the group. This was my first real experience with empathic humor and it helped so much. I will always bless Dr. Joyce Burland for developing F2F and teaching me so many things: empathy, patience, loving acceptance, and humor in helping me to help my son Christopher.

How did you find a F2F class: Jean Silsby, my long-time F2F co-teacher wrote a letter to the editor of the Florida Times Union about NAMI Jacksonville. I looked up her phone number, called her, and got me involved with NAMI. In a few months she asked me to go to Tampa to be trained with her to teach Family to Family and the rest...is history! Also, my eldest stepson's wife told me about NAMI. She has a sister who suffers from schizophrenia.

Favorite "Joyceism": "You can't know what no one has told you." This does so much to eliminate the guilt.

Elaine Green
F2F class participant
Florida / Leesburg, Florida
Clermont, Florida

Most Memorable Experience: I attended the Family-to-Family Education Program in fall of 2010 in Clermont, FL. The most memorable experience from attending this Program was the atmosphere of sharing, caring and the opportunity to learn. I very much appreciated this program and the three Program Coordinators! When I began attending I felt lost and alone as I dealt with my son's illness and legal problems that evolved. As the course progressed and our group shared I realized the impact of this disease on others and their families and the resources and knowledge to maintain, sustain and to improve. My son has improved greatly and he is employed. Thanks to

effective professionals, God's mercy, medication and the resources and information of NAMI ~ THANK YOU! I apologize for the tardiness in submitting these comments, perhaps that can still be included.

How did you find a F2F class: A notice was in the local newspaper under courses affiliated with the hospital.

**Michael and Marcia Mathes
Orlando Florida**

How did you find a F2F class: In the fall of 1992 (we think, after all we were in chaos in those days) our daughter was having a very difficult time refusing treatment and denying that she had bipolar disorder. Our home life was a living nightmare, one that would be very familiar to many NAMI families. We lived in Weybridge Vermont just outside of the Shire Town of Middlebury and my husband Michael called from his office. He had read an ad in the local weekly for a class for families of people with a mental health diagnosis. He gave me the phone number and asked me to call to find out more. My response was less than positive, "what good would it do, why bother, we've read the books, I just don't think it will help". He very reasonably answered what could we lose?

We ended up taking the class that was then known as Journey of Hope, Sarah Chamberlin was our instructor, it was the second time she was teaching the class and it quite simply changed our lives. It saved our marriage. It gave us the tools to help our daughter; it may have saved her life because we were able to help her when she felt helpless and hopeless.

The class which was to become Family to Family gave us a mission in our lives to reach out to all who are touched by mental illness and to give some of what we gained from F2F back. We are just two people of the millions that have been touched by the grace and wisdom of Dr Joyce Burland and Family to Family. Thank you.

My Tribute to Dr. Joyce Burland

**By Judi Evans
Tallahassee, Florida**

"If you do what you always do, you get what you always got".

I have repeated these so many times since I first met Joyce about 15 years ago. I can't remember if we first met at a National Convention or when she and Lynne came to Florida to personally do Provider Education training (then called Family-to-Provider). Joyce made such a lasting impression that I have since been called "Joyce Junior" by our NAMI members. She became my mentor, friend, teacher and sometimes therapist. With Joyce you always know where you stand and what she is thinking. Whenever I would hear the words "Now, Judi Darling" or "Sweetheart, we mustn't" I knew I had said

or done something the “Judi way” rather than the “Joyce way”. Not good! I have gained new respect for the word “fidelity”.

I know many folks will write how Family-to-Family changed their lives but Joyce changed mine. I was so impressed with her understanding, compassion and respect for persons with a mental health diagnosis and their families that I could not help but want to be a part of what she was giving to others through her Programs. I have been a Family-to-Family Teacher/Trainer for the past 15 years and I continue to discover new material with every class.

I have met many throughout the years who have graciously given me thanks for their experiences in class: the bonding, friendships, support and a safe place to tell their story and finally be heard. I do not deserve their gratitude; it belongs to Dr. Joyce Burland. I have just been one of thousands of messengers who has derived her own pleasure from following in Dr. Burland’s footsteps and delivering her message of hope and recovery. I will continue to do what I always did and am sure I will get what I always got – gratitude and thanks. Joyce, thank you for being the ultimate “NAMI Mommy”

GEORGIA

Gigi Cautino
NAMI Hall County
Gainesville, Georgia

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience as a teacher was watching a stepfather go from: reluctant participant who believed his stepson was just lazy and mom was just enabling - to a person that had empathy and a true understanding of mental illness as a true illness that causes tremendous suffering to those affected by it. That is always the highlight when I teach the class.

How did you find a F2F class: Personally, when I took the class, it was like someone pulled me out as I was drowning in a sea of overwhelming feelings of stress, grief and desperation, not knowing what was happening and what to do for my son affected by schizoaffective disorder. It was a lifesaver both for me and my son. Thank you NAMI volunteers for helping others to get through this most difficult situation. You are my heroes.

Diane Reeder
F2F teacher and trainer
Georgia/Savannah
Savannah, Georgia

Most Memorable Experience: Teacher trainings with Pat Strode. It has been so inspiring to see Family to Family graduates become powerful advocates and very capable leaders in the community and state. Personally, Family to Family gave me something so empowering to do while I was feeling helpless and hopeless about my son. He sees me taking care of myself and supporting others and he takes pride in that. Family to Family is indeed the only way to really grow a powerful affiliate. We experience a real determination in our affiliate when we did not provide F2F.

How did you find a F2F class: Susan Davis asked me to come to Atlanta to train to become a teacher.

Favorite “Joyceism”: In Struggle We Trust. I use this daily when I am tempted to try and “fix” anyone’s problems. It works every time.

Linda S. Langley
F2F teacher and class graduate
NAMI Rome
Rome, Georgia

How did you find a F2F class: I had all but given up; despair defined my state of mind. Sitting for hours as my son went through the intake process at a public mental health center where, no professional had anything substantial to say to a “family member”,(given we had probably caused all the mental health issues), I contemplated quitting life, death just seemed like a peaceful place to be. Walking outside, leaving a crowded waiting room of despondent people, I met a young disheveled man yet he had very serene, peaceful expressions thus we began to converse. He told me to call Bonnie Moore that she helped families like ours, and he even had her phone number. Turns out that Bonnie and husband Jim Moore head up NAMI Rome, Georgia **and** a F2F course began in 2 weeks!
Divine Intervention?

Favorite “Joyceism”: “That you have to separate the person from the illness”, this concept began the process of forgiveness towards my son. Our relationship had been severely damaged by the illness; and as forgiveness creates compassion, understanding, and the ability to seek wisdom we have been able to begin the process of recovery. The wisdom gained from F2F has nurtured and rekindled Hope in our lives which give us the strength to apply the principles gained from the course. The road has not been easy yet we now have a directional path to take with applicable tools that work!

Betty Robinson
F2F class graduate
AUGUSTA, Georgia

Most Memorable Experience: The class was a breath of life, because I felt hopeless. I felt there was no one to hear my cry and understand what I was going through. The class allowed me to express my concerns and realize what my family member was experiencing. The class information was informal on medications and how to communicate with my family member (empathy). I had been longing for this for 7 years. The class allowed me to meet others that shared their stories that gave encouragement to me and my family member for success in our walk of life. I appreciate the coordinator (Donna Adams) for the teachers that were well equipped to give us hope in our life challenges. I can now skip through the tulips, even when the wind is blowing strong, the class showed me how to hold on and sing and smile anyhow things are subject to change! I am truly grateful for the experience.

How did you find a F2F class: I was introduced to the class by a friend who realized I was looking for a support group and could not find one. The class had not begun and was starting up in two weeks. I got in touch with the coordinator just in time. The time that was set for the class was perfect. The building (accommodation) where the class was presented was really fantastic.

Darnell M. Cummings
F2F teacher and class participant
NAMI Central Georgia in Warner Robins

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience with Family-to-Family is when my son became ill, and I didn't know anything or anyone that I could ask for help. I was so grateful when I learned about the family-to-family classes that were scheduled in Warner Robins, Ga. I had to ride there every Monday night for 12 weeks, but I didn't mind at all because I got to meet other people that were going through the same thing that I was going through. I got to share my experiences and actually got feedback from other family members. This helped me more than I can say. I will always be grateful for Family-to-Family for the education that I received.

George Larry Adams
F2F teacher and class graduate
NAMI Hall
Gainesville, Georgia

Most Memorable Experience: My experiences in seeing people get the knowledge, help, and support that they need are always heartwarming. But the ones I remember most are the tragedies of knowing and teaching parents in the class that have lost a loved one. One family had their son shot by law enforcement, another lady had her son to commit suicide on his father's grave on the anniversary of his father's death and another family lost their daughter in a fire that may have resulted because of her smoking and her alcoholism with her mental illness. Those will always be a reminder to me of how horrendous in many ways these illnesses are.

How did you find a F2F class: It's kind of a long story. I have a younger sister that has been sick most of her life. My oldest daughter told us she was going to take her life when she was about 12 years old. Luckily we got her into treatment right away and she recovered and went on to obtain a degree in psychology and has had a successful career and just recently became a licensed Occupational Therapist. My youngest daughter went to Clemson University in SC, also working on a degree in psychology/counseling. While there she told me she had heard of an organization called NAMI that had F2F classes on mental illness and that there was an affiliate here in Gainesville. She said she would like to take the classes and said it might help us to better understand about what was going on in our family with the mental illness with my sister and daughter. She then asked if I would take it with her and I agreed because I knew my parents who had always taken care of my sister were aging and that I would have to become the caregiver eventually. So we took the class in 1999 I think it was here in Gainesville, taught by Meg Inglis who was also

the affiliate president. Well with both my daughters studying psychology in school and my sister being sick for so long and my daughter's illness, I thought I knew about mental illness. Well I was wrong because I learned so much in the class and the knowledge and support and practical advice meant so much to me that I knew right away that I wanted to do something to give back and to help. So I went for the teacher training right away and have just finished my 23rd class I think it is and I continue to learn and share about mental illness and get to meet the most loving and

the bravest people imaginable. I even taught my oldest daughter in one of the classes. My youngest daughter became an LPC and she and her husband both also have depression but the knowledge and support from NAMI allows all of us to deal with our situation and to function and have a great quality of life in spite of these illnesses.

ILLINOIS

Katie Petray

**F2F teacher, trainer, and program coordinator
NAMI Illinois/NAMI Kane Co.
Sleepy Hollow, Illinois**

How did you find a F2F class: I met Joyce Burland in April 1993 at the first Illinois F2F training held in Williamsville, Joyce arrived laden with her original charts and books to lead our 16 member group in one of the first three-day F2F weekends ever. It was an exciting weekend and a most memorable and remarkable learning experience for all of us.

I agreed to serve as Illinois' F2F Program Director, but I also became a teacher and trainer over the next 14 years while promoting the Program and helping to enlist and draw in family members. I was indeed inspired by Joyce Burland and her beautifully organized and insightful education classes. I realize now that the F2F family education program is so perfectly organized and written and updated – it speaks for itself, "have legs."

I treasure the memories of meeting with Joyce, our conversations, our problems, our laughing moments and all the things I learned about teaching. I appreciate so much her hard work over many years in bringing help to so many family members. Joyce Burland is an elegant, caring person and is so talented. Congratulations, Joyce, and your staff, for giving families for 20 years, your remarkable and "life changing" family education program – a program that's here to stay!

Favorite "Joyceism": Joyce has a special way of saying "doggone." Remember emphasis on "You can't know what you Don't Know".

**Thelma A. Walker
NAMICCNS
Evanston, Illinois**

Most Memorable Experience: We did an interactive exercise to demonstrate what a person who has schizophrenia experiences. The thought that this is what my loved one goes through, 24/7, just broke my heart. But, more importantly, it helped me to

empathize more, and gave me a greater understanding of how the illness manifests itself.

How did you find a F2F class: I read an article in my local newspaper that was promoting the F2F program.

Anne Merle

How did you find a F2F class: I cannot remember exactly how I came upon NAMI - some things are just meant to be. I know it was a result of searching for information online. Finding NAMI fortuitous in so many ways!

First of all, it was unexpectedly great comfort to find a group of other family members who looked like me, felt like me, and were experiencing the trauma my family was going through. Second, F2F spawned new friendships which are invaluable. Then, of course, the training! The new knowledge and perceptions I was able to bring back to our family have been enormously helpful.

And then, there's Joyce. Our class's main teacher was Joyce Schadweiler, who is a gift from heaven. Her patience, steady hand, easy laugh, and loving understanding was the undergirding of the great F2F course, which made the course so much more than the words on paper. I came needing information and came away with understanding - what a gift!! Joyce's dedication to the members is amazing - years later she continues to send informative and timely bits of information our way on a regular basis. I feel like I've got a guardian angel in Joyce. We can never show her the full appreciation she deserves. She has made a difference in so many people's lives. I hope she knows how much she has given us, and feels the love that returns in her direction!!

Alice J. Adcock
F2F teacher and program coordinator
NAMI Southwestern Illinois
Edwardsville, Illinois

Most Memorable Experience: It was the spring of 1999, Kay Rittenhouse and I were teaching a Family-to-Family course. We were feeling quite good about things. Two of our class participants had taken a weekend and trained to be F2F teachers never missing one of our classes. Kay's daughter, Theresa, who had suffered through 5 years of bipolar rapid cycling, suicidal episodes, etc., etc., was beginning to hold down a job. Life was good. About halfway through the course, Kay was called to the hospital and told that Theresa had diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and wasn't expected to live past the weekend. We all prayed that they would have some more time to adjust to this horrendous news. She lived 19 days and Kay and Wilbur were with her the whole time. What happened in the class was stunning. The group had bonded but this was mind numbing news and, of course, Kay could not continue to teach. The two who had trained (during our class) contacted me and said they would like to work with me and do Kay's part. This is the way we finished that course and the warmth and comfort that the group exhibited will stay with me always. Throughout all of my classes, I have always found people with incredible compassion

and the ability to express it in such perfect ways. It seems any time I teach this course, it is memorable.

How did you find a F2F class: A friend told me about NAMI and the F2F course. At the time, I did not think it would help. I thought nothing would help. I even missed my first Class One. I had lost hope. However, someone from the NAMI office called me and she was so dear and gently persuaded me to come to Class Two. Actually, she practically browbeat me into going. But, I did and it wasn't long before I saw the value of it and decided to train to teach it myself. I have never been sorry. It has kept me current with what is going on in the field of mental illness. It has totally turned around my family with respect to their interactions with my daughter who is ill. It allowed me to be a real advocate for her. And, I have met some very special friends along the way.

Favorite "Joyceism": This one is torn out of my notes taken when I trained to be a Missouri State Trainer. It is paper clipped to the front pocket of my F2F Teacher Manual where I can see it every time I prep for a class. I don't recall if she said it during F2F Training or the Support Group Facilitator Training but it seemed significant to me when she said it and it has proven to be true. She said, "The people who come to you are wise, strong, resourceful, and smart". But, they don't know it yet." As the time has gone by, I almost get a high when I begin a new Class One. I look out over the new group, many of them looking very sad and depressed. But I know, that in a few short weeks, they will change. It has happened so many times, I know to anticipate it. It is a good feeling. It is very satisfying. I feel as though Joyce has allowed me to share in her legacy. She has touched the lives of so many and she has touched the lives of so many and she lets me use her words to ... pass it along. Thanks, Joyce

INDIANA

**Charles L. Sims
F2F class graduate
NAMI-West Central Indiana**

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience was when after the completion of the classes, one of our student's sons suddenly passed away. Kim, I, and another student called at the funeral home. The mother of the deceased put her arms around us and exclaimed, "Here is my family!" This is a heart warming experience that I shall never forget. I will always be grateful to Kim Loy for introducing me to NAMI.

How did you find a F2F class: Kim Loy of Monticello, Indiana introduced me to NAMI two years ago. I took the classes as a student in Delphi, Indiana. Then this past year, Kim and George Loy asked me to assist them in the Family-to-Family classes in Monticello as a resource person. I enjoyed the experience very much.

Donna C. Griffin
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI-Southeast Indiana
Lawrenceburg, Indiana

Most Memorable Experience: I can't tell you how much the F2F class has meant to me. My 23 year old son was diagnosed in July of 2010 with Paranoid Schizophrenia. WowWhat a frightening diagnosis to hear after raising what we considered a "model child" up until 2 years before his diagnosis. We had no idea what PS was all about and how it was going to effect not only our son but our family unit. I was fortunate enough within a couple weeks of his diagnosis to read something in our local library newsletter about an upcoming F2F class. I was ready to "dive in" and learn as much as I could about my son's illness. The class was amazing. It helped me to understand not only that my husband and I weren't to blame for this terrible brain disease but it gave us hope that he can lead a fairly normal life. I've been to so many classes and training sessions in my 26 year career but honestly nothing compares to the information I took away from my F2F class. I felt relieved and hopeful at the conclusion of the class. I still stay in contact with many of the others that took the class as well as the support group in my area. I felt the only way I could thank my affiliate for all the information I received from the class was to become a F2F teacher myself. So I did just that. I took the F2F teaching class in April in Indianapolis and look forward to helping teach my first class starting at the end of August of this year! I am looking forward to helping other family members like me with the tools needed to lessen the burden they feel having a loved one with a mental illness diagnosis.

How did you find a F2F class: My family is members of our local "Friends of the Library" and it was there where I saw an ad about an upcoming F2F class.

Favorite "Joyceism": Would be that there is hope. Many time we were ready to through up our hands and give up....thinking we just can't do this anymore. The turmoil in our home was beyond explanation. The classes kept me focused and hopeful that things will get better if you have the right tools to manage. The F2F class gave me those tools.

Carol S.Warner
F2F teacher and class participant
West Center Indiana, Lafayette, Indiana

Most Memorable Experience: My most memorable experience was the opportunity to laugh with others. In a time of crisis it was liberating to know I could laugh. I was at a Family to Family teacher training class in Indianapolis. The workshop was 3 days of intensive training. On Saturday night I had to get out and do some shopping. Whenever in Indy I have to go to Trader Joe's (love that store). I found two other individuals in the class to go with me. My friend Luci and Kitty. While in the store we were admiring all the food choices and laughing about anything that seemed funny. When Kitty went to check out the clerk said" you guys are having a great time where did you come from" Kitty hung her head and tried to cover up her answer. We have been in NNNNAAAMMII training all day". "What is that?" She responded. Kitty raised her head and said Mental Illness. The clerk said, Oh, I know

about that my father is Bipolar!" Kitty exchanged information and then left the store to get on the white bus with kitty and I. **not really white short bus but we felt like it.

It has been 4 years now since my husband and I found NAMI. Since that time we were diligent in attending the support group and then took the class. As we learned there was no quick fix for brain disorders but there is healing for the caregivers of loved ones with a mental illness. Because of NAMI we have not let our marriage crumbled, we have not let our personal or professional lives faultier, and we have our daughter back in our life and community as a productive citizen. Not to say every day is rosy but we have tools and skills to handle the changes in our life due to mental illness.

How did you find a F2F class: I found a class through the Lafayette Crisis Police and support group.

**Diane Arneson
F2F teacher and F2F trainer
Evansville, Indiana**

Most Memorable Experience: John and Kathy Berry completed F2F in 2003. At the end of Class 12, John said, "Kathy and I are so grateful for the help. We want to plan something to give back to mental health services". It wasn't long until they had drafted their friends and a few advocates to plan an event. They called the group Friends of Mental Health. Every planning meeting was also a social event with dinner at their home. Plans for an event developed quickly. Mike Wallace said he would come to Evansville and bring his friend Art Buchwald. They called themselves The Blues Brothers and talked about their episodes of depression and about getting help for depression. A panel of local providers followed their remarks. About 1500 locals showed up to hear these famous guys.

The positive energy from this has continued with additional events. Funds have been raised to enhance mental health services in our area. The memories of that first event live on – we'll always have Mike Wallace and Art Buchwald.

**Kyle D. Lloyd
F2F teacher
NAMI Madison County – NAMI Indiana**

Most Memorable Experience: Seeing a shipment of class material binders near my mail box at home and thinking, "There must be some mistake; I didn't place an office supply order like this!"

Later realized, "Aha! My State office folks are supporting this effort as they promised."

Sharing too, personally with Joyce Burland, Ph.D. that we were holding our 1st F2F Class at Marion Indiana City Hall – And to close the chapter on this, the class concluded with a GRAND CELEBRATION just today and we have a couple new invigorated folks ready to change our community with advocacy, personal efforts, and speaking to the injustice of lack luster services offered to this Indiana community. "We're mad as H--- and we're not taking it anymore!!!"

How did you find a F2F class: I was a "Consumer Guest Speaker" for a class that Bob & Dot Denniston were leading at the Anderson Center for Mental Health back in 2004.

"Cheers to all you Great Facilitators, this couldn't happen without YOU!"

IOWA

Janet Greenwald

Most Memorable Experience: Feeling like I have never before ever experienced so much strength in a room before in my life! I found F2F I believe through either speaking with Terry Sobotta, realtor, by accident in looking at homes/apartments./ condos or with June Judge.

June Judge Iowa

Most Memorable Experience: I was pleased to read Joyce's comments in the recent Advocate. Yes, Dr. Agnes Hatfield called for family education and gathered folks from each state, to be trained in what she called Family Education Specialists. I was in the class with Joyce. Little did we suspect that Joyce would take this wonderful concept of families teaching families to such heights. Dr. Hatfield had a panel of her Family Education Specialists at the national convention the year following that first training. We were not welcomed by our own... Many NAMI family members who were professionals in their own right, were completely against family education by family members. Even though we were receiving little or no education from any mental health professionals we were NOT to teach each other. Today, those very same folks are singing our praises and have even become teachers themselves. Times do change.

Also wanted to mention that Iowa was the 47th state to embrace the F2F. As a family advocate for Merit Behavioral Care I 'wall-papered the state' with Family to Family information...

When I took a survey of all the providers of services for this Title 19 contract agency, about what was being offered in family education and came up with 'absolutely nothing' the dye was cast. Merit paid for the F2F teacher training and the on-going expense of the materials. Today, we continue to receive accolades from our own families...saying "you saved us".

Thank you Joyce for your mission that has saved so many lives.

KANSAS

Barbara Oplinger
F2F teacher and class graduate
Flint Hills
Manhattan, Kansas

Most Memorable Experience: When I took the F2F course, it was early enough in my experience as a family member of one with mental illness that I just sat and sobbed for the first 4 sessions. That group just loved me – they encouraged me and allowed me to grieve. I soaked up sooooo much information and perspectives and gained a lot of respect for families that met this challenge with grace and courage. I vowed then that when the time was right, I would help others. It took 8 years to be in that position and each class I help with, I learn more about how to help in both my own family and others. It's not how I would teach the class, but it's a proven method to present such heavy duty data and I respect the process WAY too much to change it! Thanks for making it happen and available to us!

How did you find a F2F class: Read about the F2F class in the paper.

Favorite "Joyceism": I've only known her from the stories of others and the CDs – never been able to hear her in person. But, I'm sure it wasn't always easy for her to be obedient along the way – we're blessed that she stayed the course.

Em Soulia
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Johnson County, Kansas

Most Memorable Experience: Because I was so "needy," I cried all the way home after each class (it was a 25 minute drive), and I took it 3 times. However, it changed my life dramatically, and, in turn, the lives of my loved ones who struggle with mental illness. As I continue to teach and train, it is so amazing to see others' lives change because of the curriculum and the way it is presented. It is absolutely empowering and transforming. Every time, I am so thankful for all the effort Joyce has put into the program; truly, we have been blessed to benefit from her labors. Also, the idea of the "ripple" effect—it changed my life and the life of my family members; just think of the folks that have participated in the 28 F2F classes and 5 state training sessions I have been privileged to present since 2004. What an incredible legacy we have been given!

How did you find a F2F class: A friend told me there was some type of class, and it would be helpful to me as I was at my wit's end with coping with a manic episode my spouse was experiencing again. (We had been dealing with bipolar disorder since 1960.) What a marvelous lifting of weight from my shoulders to learn so much about the illness that had traumatized our lives for so long!

Favorite "Joyceism": I appreciate and frequently use ALL her quips. However, one "picture" I shall always treasure occurred at a training session I attended in St. Louis for becoming a trainer. When we entered the restaurant for breakfast, Joyce was sitting by herself, eating breakfast AND pouring over the materials she had authored getting ready to present to us that day. When I train others to teach, I use this

illustration to encourage others to prepare for their presentations in their own classes. If Joyce needed to review, then it is our responsibility to get ready to be effective leaders for those who take the time to attend NAMI F2F.

KENTUCKY

Liz Coomes
F2F teacher and class graduate
NAMI Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

Most Memorable Experience: Family to Family offered my husband and I safe haven when we were lost in the mental health maze and trying to educate ourselves about mental illness. We were able to connect with other families also experiencing the lack of a cogent system of care for their family members. Some had been on the rollercoaster for years. Some had happy endings to share but most had experiences more typical of families trying to cope with a family member with an untreated chronic illness. All of us came looking for answers and relief. The answers were hard won we learned. We had excellent teachers who encouraged us not to give up hope. I think the most memorable experience class experience for families is in connecting with one another.

How did you find a F2F class: NAMI (local chapter) advertised their services in the hospital where we were visiting our son. I called them and signed up for the class.

I first met Joyce at a NAMI National Conference in 2006 in San Diego. I was headed for the pool to get in a little exercise before a full day and night of conference sessions. She had already finished her very early morning swim and was off to a breakfast meeting prior to the start of the sessions. I introduced myself and told her I had taught F2F three times and thanked her for her work in organizing the F2F material. Later the same morning in a session of state education coordinators led by Joyce and Lynne Saunders we discussed the importance of customizing the classes according to the varying state laws and conditions for the benefit of families. Joyce was convinced that national standards for F2F were of primary importance but she also understood that the grass roots were where real change and family connection would occur.

Tracy Jacobson
Lexington, Kentucky

Most Memorable Experience: During a psychotic break of my family member I was overwhelmed, stressed out, and felt completely helpless. The advice I received from friends and family was not helpful as my ill family member did not respond to reason. I didn't know what to do or how to respond to his uncontrollable behaviors and distorted and unreasonable thoughts. Attempts were met with anger, irritability, and refusal. I couldn't find anyone who understood mental illness enough to give me guidance or understanding. It wasn't until I enrolled in the family to family class that I found information that was very helpful. It was like being

thrown a lifesaver when you are drowning. The understanding, validation, and fellowship of the teachers and classmates were priceless the class helped me sort through emotions, begin the healing process, empathize with my ill family member, and move toward forgiveness. I would not be where I am today if it were not for the class. I have gone on to teach the class because education is empowerment and the answer to coping with mental illness. You learn so much from listening to others stories and realize you are not alone in this illness. It's nice to have a place where people are not afraid or embarrassed to talk about mental illness.

**Madonna B. G. Chancellor
NAMI Lexington, Kentucky**

Most Memorable Experience: I had planned to set up the family role groups as Moms, Dads, spouses and siblings. The weather was bad and as a result attendance was low. I decided to put 4 parents together, to put myself in the spouse group with 2 others, and to put my co-teacher in a sibling group with the one sibling class member present and a guest sibling who came with his parents. The parents and spouses groups did well, as usual. The sibling group was engrossed and did not want to come back to the circle. We gave them an extra 10 minutes, and they decided to link up on Face book to continue their sharing. My co-teacher was crying, so touched by the opportunity to share with other siblings. All of us were impressed with the depth of sharing, and how it impacted the 3 of them. This was a guest co-teacher, a last minute addition, and a surprise guest, with 1 class member! The material works, no matter who shows up! My co-teacher says "Miracles happen!" In previous classes we had never had enough siblings to form that group. Many lasting friendships are formed in these classes.

How did you find a F2F class: Attended support group for 9 months while waiting for a class to be offered.

**Yolonda Kelsor Clay
NAMI Affiliate Lexington, Kentucky
F2F teacher and a participant/graduate**

Most memorable experience: I completed my Family to Family class on Passover night, April 2006. I spiritually began a Journey to Joy! I came to the first class thinking that I would not return. However, that was not the case. The first thing I heard was 'mental illness' is not your fault. As a parent you are not to blame for your child's illness anymore than if he or she was diagnosed with diabetes, cancer, or hypertension. I have a passion within to take the message that mental illness is like any other illness. I am empowered to take the message to others that mental illnesses are not character flaws or moral weaknesses. I am no longer hiding my diagnosis of major depression. It holds no more power over me!!! I am a passionate advocate and serve as the Outreach Coordinator and Multicultural Action Committee, Co Chair for my local affiliate. I have been through numerous trainings as a result of being affiliated with NAMI. Becoming a member of NAMI Lexington opened doors to empower myself and others. I am a Stigma Buster!! Now I am Sharing Hope of recovery with others, especially those in the Faith Community. Thanks Dr. Burland

for your dedication to this program for the past 20 years! Many blessings to you as you retire.

How did you find the class: I learned about NAMI through a close friend. She was a member of NAMI and felt it was something that I would benefit from. Wow, was she ever right!!

Favorite "Joyceism": Don't beat yourself up, you cannot know what you have never been taught.

LOUISIANA

**Marion Vallery Bono
NAMI SW Louisiana
Lake Charles, Louisiana**

Most memorable experience: Seeing family members, particularly men, soften their attitude toward their mentally ill family member. Seeing a look of happiness and hope.

How did you find the class: I found the first class taught in the area 18 years ago. It was advertised in the newspaper.

Favorite "Joyceism": My co-leaders and I frequently preface something with "Dr. Joyce says....."

What Dr. Joyce has done is the work of a Saint.

MARYLAND

Arianna Day, Regional Resource Coordinator for Maryland's Commitment to Veterans but speaking on behalf of self

Most memorable experience: I would like to express my deep appreciation for the Family to Family class that NAMI southern Maryland affiliate offered in spring 2010. I found the class to not only be very educational in helping family members and loved ones in understanding the medical research behind mental illness and treatment, but also teaching about tips for treatment topics, ways to cope and support our loved ones diagnosed with mental disorders. The group I had felt like a family that was there to listen to one another and provide that camaraderie and support to ensure each person in the group did not feel alone in the challenges faced when trying to understand the illness their loved ones were struggling with and how these issues can bring frustrations to the table that often leave family members feeling hopeless. This class brought hope and courage to families that are standing by their loved ones on their journey to recovery. I will be referring anyone who is in a situation where education and support is needed to learn more about how they can help themselves and their family member who is diagnosed with a mental illness. Thank you southern Maryland NAMI for the wonderful and truly educational experience.

MISSISSIPPI

**With gratitude and peace,
Sandy Kinnan, family member, MSN, FPMH-NP
Hattiesburg, Mississippi**

Most memorable experience: It is a pleasure to remember the work and person of Joyce Burland. I remember being in her first Mississippi training class at the Grey Center and follow up training in Texas. It was a life changing event for me and my family. Her commitment to families and her ability to do so genuinely disclose her personal struggle with her precious daughter's illness, gave me such hope...it was tangible for me during each session that weekend. It continued each time I was privileged to team teach both Journey of Hope (previous title) and Family to Family.

Joyce was always ready to understand and listen to the plight of each person. She lived "self discovery" and facilitated and supported the work with each family. Her ideas were always well grounded, well documented and "evidenced based" long before those words were coined. Her work has been transformational for families and the mental health field across the globe. She celebrated the dignity of each person/family and taught so many what advocacy can be and mean. Her detailed, accurate materials gave families a sense of "yes" someone does understand and there is hope for us all!

The gift of the person of Joyce lives on in every person who has been a participant in her training, has been a teacher with other families, and felt new confidence in addressing the mental health system for and with their loved one. She lived the challenge she presented to us all and walked the walk with dignity as an example for us all to follow.

Favorite "Joyceism": Her mantra..."In struggle I trust" became mine and continues to be my "Joyce Burlandism" when talking to families who are struggling and doubting their ability and strength to manage a mental health crisis for their family member.

Thank you, Joyce, for visioning and creating paths to possibilities for families!

**Linda Hurstell
F2F teacher
Jackson, Mississippi**

How did you find the class: We first found NAMI F2F in a tiny newsletter article in the calendar section of our paper. My husband and I attended the class and we learned SO many coping skills, that I decided to train to be a teacher. My most memorable moment would be last Tuesday, my 3rd class, when a mom shared her crisis moments and had a SMILE on her face. She learned how to set a boundary for herself and to use empathy skills to ease her family through the latest situation with her son. (The entire class noticed the difference in her and even APPLAUDED her!) Bravo!

**Berry R. Allison
Tippo, Mississippi**

How did you find the class: I was desperately seeking support and knowledge on mental illness as my adult daughter succumbed to an illness following post partum depression. In 2003 I found NAMI MS and later had an opportunity to take the Family-to-Family course offered within 30 miles of my rural home. My adult daughter also began volunteering at the NAMI MS office in Jackson. Teri Brister, Executive Director at the time, gave her hope and courage. Through NAMI we learned life-saving coping skills, more understanding of her illness, and were able to lessen our anxiety.

The Family-to-Family course gave me the courage, the knowledge and the format for speaking out. As a professional educational administrator, I had a route for speaking engagements and presentations and acted on that to help secure speaking appointments. Family-to-Family set me on fire to share my knowledge and give others hope and direction. The course helped me to fight the stigma so prevalent in a small town setting by sharing personal experiences and knowledge. Both my daughter and I have made numerous educational presentations. She has received training in several NAMI courses and is currently making presentations for the NAMI Metro NYC organization.

We met Joyce Burland at the National Convention in Orlando, FL. She was kind, approachable, and called my daughter by name. We are so thankful for her work.

MISSOURI

**Donna Kay Rittenhouse, F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Missouri/NAMI Saint Louis
Jefferson City, Missouri/Saint Louis, Missouri**

Most memorable experience: We were eating a celebration banquet at the end of a combined training. NAMI trainers and trainees were spread over two levels. I remember Joyce walking to the edge of the top floor where she could be seen by all. She said "Look around you". As we looked we saw diversity of age, culture, race, geography, talents, skills, experience, etc. We saw what one sees in any shopping mall or grocery store. Then Joyce said "This is NAMI". Over the years as I have faced support groups, F2F classes and trainees I have remembered this and responded "Yes!"

How did you find the class: My husband and I were in Saint Louis to give support to our daughter who had been recently diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder. I visited the NAMI office, told our story, and offered to volunteer. The previous year Missouri had piloted F2F. I was sent to the state training so I could teach a class. This first class, with my wonderful co-teacher, was also MY F2F class.

Favorite "Joyceism": Is "Whee...ee..ee". I think I first heard this "Joyceism" at the Baltimore training for State Trainers of support group leaders. Joyce described a skier making his/her way up a steep hill and upon reaching the top folding the poles back, bending slightly forward and enjoying the ride down "Whee.ee..ee!" Remembering this has so often helped me during NAMI activities as well as in other

parts of my life. We prepare, we listen, we teach, we support and when the family/group is empowered we sit back, relax and experience the "Whee..ee..ee!". Thank you, Joyce, for everything!!

MONTANA

**Gary and Sandy Mihelish
F2F teachers, trainers, and class graduates
F2F program director**

Most memorable experience: In 1996 NAMI Montana was able to get the funding together to introduce the F2F program across our state. (At that time the program was called Journey of Hope). We contacted Joyce to arrange a training and we were blessed to have her come to "Big Sky" country to train our first eight teaching teams. Joyce flew into Great Falls Thursday night prior to the training and was generally excited about being in the "Big Sky" state. She was anxious to see how Montana's sky was bigger than any other state's sky. The training was even being held in the "Big Sky" room of the hotel. All of the new teacher trainees were from different towns and unfamiliar with the hotel...but we were excited to host Joyce in the "Big Sky" room and share the view of wide open spaces from the meeting room. Much to our surprise the "Big Sky" room was located on the lower level of the hotel and there were NO WINDOWS in the "Big Sky" room!! Since the training went from dawn until dusk for three days and the early morning of Monday Joyce returned home...the only appreciation of Montana's Big Sky she experiences was flying out of it and flying into it as she came and went. We have laughed over the years about the missed opportunity to appreciate our Big Sky, but we hope now that she is retired she will return and enjoy Montana, the Big Sky, wide open spaces and beautiful mountains.

How did you find the class: We discovered the Journey of Hope quite by accident and were trained to be teachers and had not had the experience of taking the classes. The one thing we knew for sure after we took the teacher training was that this material saved our life, our marriage and was going to make life better for our family member. The now F2F program is the greatest gift family members of people with serious mental illness can receive. We are not sure any celebration can be big enough or recognition high enough to thank Joyce Burland for her devotion and dedication to the F2F program. The careful consideration of how the material is written; the thoughtful progression of when topics are present; the ingenious way the course is designed so families can present this material as peers; and the heart to heart connection that is made during the twelve weeks is REMARKABLE!! Thank you, thank you and thank you, again, Joyce for this exemplary program.

Favorite "Joyceism": "In Struggle We Trust." Each time we begin a new F2F session we are amazed at the strength and perseverance of the families taking the class. They readily admit they know nothing about mental illness and their lives are in turmoil. They don't know which way to turn or what to do next. By week twelve they have worked their way into some sense of peace and understanding that is unique to each one of them and I am always reminded that we must trust in the struggle to bring them through the storm and give them some sense of calm.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Sheila Johnson
F2F teacher and class participant
NAMI NH – Bow, New Hampshire

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience in taking the class was learning I was not alone and my feelings and experience were normal. The things I learned and experienced enriched my life and have helped me be more effective in understanding my son's bipolar disorder and what he struggles with, and to have the coping mechanisms to be an advocate for him and above all to just be his mother.

How did you find the class: From a dear friend who referred me to NAMI NH. I credit NAMI NH with saving my life after my son was diagnosed. The F2F class was a lifeline for me.

Favorite "Joyceism": Mental illness is no one's fault.

Patricia Whitney
F2F teacher and class participant
New Hampshire

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience is repeated each year I teach F2F. It's the moment when individual participants visibly "let down", express relief that someone understands what they are going through, and begin to hang on every word. They are hungry for information, answers, validation and real empathy. They come early and stay late and bond with each other. It's the moment they realize they can be open, be honest, and share their frustrations, anger and pain and everyone else there understands. For many, it's the first time they have ever been able to do this! I am privileged to see this in each class and I remember how I felt when I was taking the class and realized it was a safe place to share my own feelings.

How did you find the class: I heard about the F2F class from the Support Group I was attending.

Favorite "Joyceism": There is no gene for rudeness!

NEW JERSEY

Jeri Doherty
NAMI New Jersey/NAMI-Sussex
Sparta, New Jersey
F2F teacher and local program director

Most memorable experience: Family-to-Family helped me tremendously twelve and a half years ago when my son had his first psychotic break. Recently I retired after 25 years in public education and have become a Family-to-Family teacher to help other family members going through the type of trauma my family went through. It is extremely rewarding to be told by so many F2F graduates that the course turned their life around and got them headed in a positive direction. My favorite messages from the course are that we are not alone, we did not cause our loved one's illness, you can't know what no one has ever told you, treatment works, and never give up hope!

How did you find the class: One month after my son first became ill, I was fortunate to see a little tiny article in a local weekly newspaper about a "free 12-week course for family members of persons with mental illness."

Favorite "Joyceism": "You can't know what no one has ever told you."

NEW MEXICO

Betty Shover
F2F teacher and local program coordinator
NM/Santa Fe
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Most memorable experience: I had the honor of co-teaching the Fall 2010 F2F in Santa Fe with Joyce. When I first agreed to share this wonderful 12-week experience with her, I must admit I was feeling a little intimidated by the idea of teaching with the "guru" of F2F; however, Joyce's approach due to her personal experience with mental illness was never over-shadowed by her key professional role with NAMI. Of course, we all wanted to take advantage of her "doctor" role, which she would do occasionally but normally it was "business as usual" with all of us as family members.

How did you find the class: In 2005, I called NAMI Arapahoe/Douglas CO for support when our son was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. I was invited to a Family Support Group Meeting where I learned about F2F and was immediately signed up for the class. What a life & marriage saving experience for us! I have been promoting F2F ever since - either with my personal story, teaching F2F, or in my past role as F2F Coordinator.

Favorite "Joyceism": One evening at F2F class, in referring to the frustration I was feeling in supporting my son, I told Joyce "I just have to let go" - to which her response was "Honey, we never let go - we just step aside."

**Melanie Sanchez Eastwood
F2F class graduate
NAMI Westside New Mexico**

Most memorable experience Making friends foremost. The F2F class made me feel normal, if that makes sense. I felt as though I was in such a horrid situation before taking the class. It also made me view my loved one as a human-being, not a person with bipolar. I don't feel sorry for myself, I feel empowered.

Funny story: I am a bit on the quirky side. My husband is not, and very conservative looking! I was asked to come to a F2F graduation to talk about membership. I was the new membership director. My husband who has bipolar 1 with psychotic features came along with me. Hardly anyone would ever guess he has bipolar. He looks like your average Joe. One of the family members came up to my husband and asked, "So what does your wife have?" We laughed.

How did you find the class: I first found a F2F class by calling NAMI national.

Favorite "Joyceism": I am not sure about a favorite "Joyceism". But she created, what is probably, the best thing NAMI offers.

**Jeannette Lee
F2F class participant
NAMI WESTSIDE
Rio Rancho, New Mexico**

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience during my family to family class was the team of three we had, they gave not only the information but also their hearts, sharing the pain they have surrounding the illness of their relatives even after all the years they have journeyed down this path.

This in addition to all the excellent information I received, gave me hope! This information was just as important to my son, unbeknownst to him, because with my hope and family to family education I now also have a realistic timeline and expectations. This of course makes life more enjoyable for all of us.

How did you find the class: I found the class via the NAMI flyers posted around the UNMH psychiatric emergency room waiting area. Upon calling the number (it was Peer to Peer flyers) I was directed to the family support person and that is how the journey began to sign up for a class.

Favorite "Joyceism": Hummmm -- not sure.

Cindy L. Kurey
F2F teacher
NAMI NM, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience with Family to Family was when I met the spouse of one of my class members, who lives with mental illness. She told me how thankful she was that her husband took the classes and finally understood her illness. She told me that before her husband took Family to Family course, he was making plans to leave her. After completing the course, they were going to stay married and that they were much happier now. The Family to Family course saves lives, marriages and families. I am proud to be Family to Family course graduate and teacher!

How did you find the class: My son's psychiatrist gave me the brochure about Family to Family when he was discharged from his first hospitalization. I was also given the ad from our local newspaper by a friend who knew I was struggling with my son's illness and lack of knowing what to do to help him or our family. In the F2F course Joyce Burland talks about having mental illness is like running a marathon with a broken leg. Also she speaks in the F2F course about "tender loving neglect" which speaks too many of us who need to take care of ourselves and our loved ones. Her words come to me so much as I am living my life. I love the things she has written for F2F; the course has given me great comfort.

NEW YORK

Betsey Hasenauer Ketcham
F2F teacher
NAMI PROMISE
Syracuse, New York

Most memorable experience: Meeting Sheila La Gassey and having her become a mentor, advisor for my daughter's care and advocate in an inhospitable environment for the younger mentally ill persons. Without Sheila and her class I would never have survived as a mother and consumer during the ten years of my daughter's most active illness. Her illness began in 1992 and at that time there were no facilities available for persons under 18 available for her care. Thanks to her doctor, Sheila and the knowledge I garnered from the class, I was able to get two hospitals in the area to admit her at age 12 and from then on accept other juveniles needing care. Also through Sheila and the class I was able to locate my daughter through NAMI National when she went away and after she was able to stand on her own I took the class to become a volunteer teacher of F2F.

How did you find the class: It was my daughter's psychiatrist who recommended Sheila LaGassey, her class and the newly developing Transitional Living Services headed by Sheila. At that time Sheila was very involved on a state level to help refine the F2F class. She also should be recognized for her contributions to this class. She has been so dedicated to the Syracuse Transitional Living Program and to this day an inspirational force in my life.

Favorite "Joyceism": I am sorry to say that I do not have one as my knowledge of this program has been limited to this area and to Sheila LaGasse. I will however, look forward to reading all the information on her and what she has contributed to this program so that I can acknowledge her also when teaching my classes.

**Patti Sacher
F2F teacher and trainer
Nami NYC Metro, NAMI, New York**

Most memorable experience: After teaching family to family for the past 17 years, the most recent experience I had was when a mother who's son was diagnosed with schizophrenia less than a year ago came up to me after class 7 (the empathy workshop) and said: "I thought I could go right into advocacy. I now realize that I had to go through the hard part. This class showed me that I can't avoid the pain by distracting myself with political advocacy." Another was an email that I got years ago from a mother of five adult children with axis one diagnoses. Two of them had been in medical school when they became ill and a third who became ill in college. After the class had ended, she sent me an email after mother's day stating that although she knows that her children will always have these illnesses, that this was the best mother's day she's had in ten years. Knowing that she did not cause her children to become ill.

How did you find the class: My husband and I attended a Nami NYC general meeting in 1991 and Gail Kreigel who was our first F2F teacher, spoke about F2F. I believe that Joyce was there. I've been teaching since 1993 and training since 2005.

Favorite "Joyceism": That dog won't hunt. Tell me more.

**Pamela Solomon
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI NYC Metro
New York, New York**

Most memorable experience: The fact that in 2009, I inadvertently taught a Family-to-Family class every week (ex: one class ending, another beginning, classes simultaneously, etc.) for five straight months! And I loved every minute of it!!

How did you find the class: I called the NYC Metro Helpline and was offered to take it.

Favorite "Joyceism": "We must press on!"

**Gail Terp
F2F teacher
NAMINYS-North Country
Glens Falls, New York**

Most memorable experience: I had just finished my F2F teacher training program and was returning home to my 18 year old son who has bipolar disorder. When I entered the house I knew that he was entering a crisis. For the next 2 hours, my son ranted and paced. But because I had just been through many role-playing exercises, I was able to reflect what he said and actively listen. Usually such exchanges ended up in an ER visit. That night, I was able to help him defuse and he was able to go to bed. Thank you for this wonderful program!

How did you find the class: I found the F2F class through a PSA in my local newspaper.

**Patricia Sine
F2F teacher and program coordinator
NAMI Rochester/ NAM New York State
Rochester, New York**

Most memorable experience: There are so many since I have taught it about 8 years in the spring and fall. I haven't in a couple of years because we have so many other teachers in our affiliate now who are anxious and excited to teach a class after they come back from the training. Currently NAMI Rochester has about 14 teachers both here and in Wayne County (rural satellite). This speaks to the immense popularity of this class that so many who have been helped want to give back to others. I remember one couple who had been in the class for several weeks. Their grown, divorced son with mental illness was living with them and was very angry that they were coming to the class and even fearful of being left alone at home. In fact, on more than one occasion he came and waited in the car while they were in class. As is the case with a lot of families, there was bickering and tension in the house. They shared with us that their son told them that he was glad they were coming to F 2 F because they were learning a lot about his illness and they were treating him with a lot more empathy ! This was the best compliment we felt we could receive from someone whose family members were taking the class.

How did you find the class: We actually went to Albany to get the training without ever having attended a class. We took the provider education course training from Joyce in Pennsylvania because New York didn't have anyone to train us and we wanted to bring it to Rochester. Joyce arranged for that to happen. I don't know about a favorite "Joyceism" but I remember the time she took speaking to one member of our team whose son was at a state psychiatric hospital and she was requesting that he be put on a certain medication and was meeting resistance. Joyce encouraged her to continue her advocacy efforts and gave her a reference to find out more information about the medication. She pursued it and was eventually able to convince the psychiatrist to prescribe the medication. She was very grateful to Joyce for her support and kindness. I also remember that during that training one morning Joyce was a little late. Someone in the class had a great idea- to introduce a "power point" presentation that would become part of the course ! He has actually done a sample of it and was showing it to the class when she came in. He excitedly explained it to Joyce. Joyce did not say a word; she simply apologized for being late

and started the class. It was very obvious what she thought about someone "redesigning" the curriculum and it was never mentioned again. Whenever our team even thought about changing something minor or questioned anything in the curriculum for either F 2 F or Provider we would immediately correct ourselves and one of us would remind the others that Joyce would not be happy nor would she approve even if we did ask her !

**Carol F. Puschaver
Liverpool, New York**

Most memorable experience: Dr. Joyce Burland's remarks in the Spring 2011 NAMI Advocate about the prevalent attitudes that "obstruct and inhibit our ability to help" people who struggle with mental illness brought to mind a particularly hurtful phone conversation I once had with a representative of my health insurance carrier. This person very matter of factly stated that at least some types of mental illness, like the major depression which had ravaged so much of my life, were frankly a matter of choice, and that a person could choose to be well.

That phone conversation led me to jot down some personal reflections of what major depression is – and is not. And I felt moved to share those reflections with you.

Thank you for all you do to educate so many people across the country and, in so doing, work to overcome the seemingly omnipresent stigma with mental illness.

What Major Depression is ... a brief reflection

A physiologically-based, organic illness every bit as real and potentially life-threatening as a pulsing aneurysm // countless hours spent in solitary contemplation of a failsafe means of suicide // a patchwork quilt of self-inflicted cuts and burns // inability to concentrate, to carry one thought from inception to logical conclusion // dissociative episodes // pervading, abject hopelessness // sleepless nights fraught with anxiety, with desperate thoughts clamoring for the balm of self-imposed, final sleep // an overwhelming lead-like feeling that makes the smallest effort seem Herculean // inability to sense or savor pleasure // tearfulness // panic from forgetting how to turn off a car directional signal // loss of appetite // tunnel vision and distorted thinking that obscure all but the present moment of un-eclipsed, acute suffering // seizure by sheriff's deputies and involuntary hospitalization // Rx medication roulette // terror of abandonment // the grand mal seizures of ECT, the permanent memory loss, the fervent wish not to recover from the general anesthesia used // hopelessness...

IN THE MATTER OF MAJOR DEPRESSION, HYPERBOLE IS CATEGORICALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

What Major Depression is not ... a brief reflection

A matter of personal preference or volition // figment of the imagination // hysteria // exaggerated case of the "blues" // failure or refusal to see the proverbial glass half full // character flaw // self pity // refusal to accept responsibility for oneself // mired in the past // pessimism.

NORTH CAROLINA

Sharon Pitts
Asheville, North Carolina

Most memorable experience: My husband and I took F2F the year when our son was first diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1999. In hindsight, what I remember most is that we lived in a heightened sense of "crisis." We went on to teach F2F four times. Each time that my husband and I teach F2F we experience continued healing.

Because of F2F, I feel that my husband and I interact with our son in ways that enhance his recovery...rather than inadvertently throw road blocks in his path. Through F2F our hearts and minds were fortified with the knowledge that we needed to be supportive advocates for our son and mental health activists in the community.

Today our son not only successfully lives with his illness, he is a peer support specialist and is pursuing his dream of completing college.

How did you find the class: My husband and I took F2F after learning about it at a NAMI WC support group meeting in the winter of 1999. The class came highly recommended by the other participants. The people who ended up being out F2F teachers were also in attendance.

Violette Blumenthal, F2F teacher
NAMI North Carolina
NAMI Durham; Durham, North Carolina

Most memorable experience: I took Family to Family many years ago with Shirley Strobel and Barbara Smith. The class really helped me help my son. I've been teaching the class for years now and coordinating the classes for NAMI Durham. It really helped me help my son. I learn something new every time I teach it. And every time I am amazed at the courage and strength and caring of the family members who are the students.

How did you find the class: My son's social worker recommended I look into NAMI and the Family to Family class in 1996.

Favorite "Joyceism": I don't have a favorite. I love the whole class

Florence Rowe
F2F teacher, trainers, and program coordinator
NAMI Western Carolina
Asheville, NC

Most memorable experience: Joyce Burland truly has been an impact person in my life. I certainly had some trepidation when my late husband John and I agreed to be part of the first group in NC trained to teach Journey of Hope. That April 1996 weekend in Raleigh was intensive, exhausting, and inspiring. "You must prepare!" Joyce admonished. You better believe that I did. Somehow I always felt that Joyce was looking over my shoulder whenever I taught. Her words and wisdom such as "We validate our feelings in the crucible of shared pain" resonated. Classes often heard me explain, "Joyce say that..." I confess that I sometimes referred to her as St. Joyce and often repeated sentences that were especially well-written. Wrestling with those dreadful yellow sticky notes and enjoying delicious Mexican food are in my memory of the June 1997 Dallas training to become state trainers. Beth Hardy, John and I then had the adventure of several long weekends training additional teachers in NC. Following another Joyce-led training, it was a challenge to lead Provider Education in 2001 to a group of Asheville providers. More recently in October 2010, I again repeated "Joyce says" when Leslie Huntley, Liz Smith and I trained teachers in Asheville.

Gaining insight or as Joyce would say, "facts and feelings" about mental illnesses and their consequences on all those affected has lightened my path in my 34 year journey of dealing with the chronic and severe mental illness of my only son. I've found much wisdom in F2f and been glad to have shared this insight with others. Their positive responses to F2F have been rewarding. I look forward to co-teaching F2F for the tenth time for what other program so effectively improves peoples' lives! I am grateful to be among so many whose lives have been touched by Joyce's remarkable creation of F2F.

OHIO

Karen L. James-Cousins
F2F trainer
NAMI Franklin County
Columbus, Ohio

Most memorable experience: I am a transplant from Los Angeles, California (NAMI Urban Los Angeles) to Columbus Ohio (NAMI Franklin County) as of October 2010. I got married and moved to my husband's home here. I've been a member of NAMI for the past 13 years and as a F2F teacher I always tell family members during the first class that "NAMI saved my life." If you've never been around anyone with a brain disorder, you don't recognize it at first. Its rebellion, independence, depression, anxiety, and creativity...anything but what it is. Once I began to do research, I was devastated. And sad. And angry. And frightened. Never embarrassed though. The more I learned and tried to practice what I'd learned, the more I knew I wanted to help others know there was hope for them and their loved one. I wanted them to know that they needed to be the "squeaky wheel" for their loved one.. Help them understand that how they felt, what they had been through was OK and that they could advocate for their loved one. That's when I took the

teacher training from Sharon Dunas in Los Angeles to become a F2F teacher. It's been a long journey, but it would have been a very different journey without F2F. Being there for our loved ones is a marathon, not a sprint.

What is odd is that I don't remember how I heard about NAMI. Someone gave me a number to call and the next thing I knew I was sitting in the first F2F class taught by NAMI Urban L.A. I knew that first night that I was in the right place. I could take a deep breath and know that the road ahead might be rocky at times but that I was getting the tools I needed to navigate that rocky road.

**Gini Haffner
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Ohio**

Most memorable experience: Having been trained as a F2F educator in 1997, F2F master trainer in 1998, Provider trainer in 1999, and support facilitator trainer in 2000, having attended all the Leadership Academy opportunities presented, Joyce has been a major influence on my life both in and outside of NAMI.

Her dedication to NAMI's mission is unequalled and her influence is a constant reminder of devotion to our cause that propels me daily in making a difference for people living with symptoms of mental illness and their families.

Blessings, joy, peace, health and happiness in retirement.

OKLAHOMA

**George Hedrick
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
NAMI North Central Oklahoma**

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience is when I first to an F2F class. I had just learned of my daughter's diagnosis (Bipolar disorder, most recent episode manic, at that time, now schizoaffective disorder, bipolar type.) I had almost no knowledge of mental disorders or what to expect. I had been reading anything I could find about mental illnesses, but it was random reading; F2F presented the material in a much more organized and coherent way. I remember the relief I felt each week as we learned more about the disorders and what to expect emotionally for myself as a family member as well as what to expect from my daughter.

How did you find the class: My former wife (the mother of my older children) found a small story in the local newspaper and told me about it. We attended together.

Favorite "Joyceism": I always remember Joyce's holding up her hand to stop unwanted comments when she was presenting the class 5 master class

Jean Williams
F2F class graduate
Edmond, Oklahoma

Most memorable experience: I have taken F2F twice. The second time I took it to accompany my husband. The first go round what I experiences was more on an emotional level. How to draw boundaries (what are boundaries, I wondered). The class was like a pinch that woke me from my nightmare. It eased my anxieties. The day of the last class and trying to put my thoughts into words all I could think of was the *Serenity Prayer*. The class gave me back some serenity and helped me figure out the difference between what I could and couldn't do.

The second time I took the class it was more about the information. More of the details stuck. As a trained volunteer teacher soon to teach my first class I expect to continue to learn and heal. I appreciate the opportunity to turn my heart ache into advocacy.

How did you find the class: I found the first class through the Edmond support group.

Favorite "Joyceism": I call it WWJD. What would Joyce do? Joyce would say it straight up and with a smile. Be authentic! "In struggle we trust." Allow others to be where they are and who they are.

OREGON

Pam Ames
Southern Oregon
Medford, Oregon
F2F teacher and person in the community

Most memorable experience: Taking F2F changed my husband's and my life. We had no idea how to get our daughter help or anything about the mental health system. We were isolated and stigmatized and had no one to turn to. We discovered there were people like us and people who were worse off! We learned who to call, how to get our daughter into the system and how to take care of ourselves. We learned not blame anyone for her disease and not to feel guilty about what we couldn't do. When we finished the class I said to my husband that I could teach that class. So I got trained and started teaching the next year. That was 10 years and 9 classes ago. I love teaching this class.

How did you find the class: A skills trainer with Jackson County Mental Health who was a patient of mine told me about it

Shauna
F2F Local program coordinator
Troutdale Oregon

Most memorable experience: I went to Family to Family when my daughter was in crisis. I felt like I was falling down a dark hole that had no end. Other support groups had been helpful for a "fix" to get me through to the next meeting. But F2F gave me tools. The knowledge empowered me. F2F was an important beginning for me to be able to begin living life again.

Patricia Garoutte
F2F teacher and class participant
NAMI of Southern Oregon
Medford, Oregon

Most memorable experience: Every Family-to-Family class I teach is memorable to me as I see the frightened, determined people whose lives are in chaos; grow in knowledge each week as we faithfully follow Joyce's teachings. As each week's class progresses, they become more open, sharing, and caring of each other. After graduation, many of them go on to become friends, NAMI members, active volunteers and join Family to Family Support Groups. As a Family to Family teacher, I find each student teaches me something I can also use to make mine and other's lives better.

How did you find the class: My mentally ill daughter sought out the information and suggested I go so I could learn more about her illness. That was many years ago. I have been teaching Family to Family classes since then.

Marna McComb
Lake Oswego, Oregon

Most memorable experience: My parents and I took the f2f course and it changed our lives. My mom & I went on to teach. My compassion for others and dedication to spreading this valuable info is an ongoing mission of mine. I compiled the following feedback from class participants awhile back.

What people have said about taking the Family-to-Family course in Lake Oswego, OR (March & June 2008):

- "This class is a life-changing, life-saving experience. The confusion, grief, misconceptions, guilt, and stigma of dealing with mental illness – and the mental health care "system" – is all helped by the good work done by NAMI - Thank you." (F; 53)
- "I can't speak highly enough about how this course can and will change my life. I have gained perspective that I would have never known otherwise. For that I am eternally thankful. I believe this is a process of learning and I have taken my first step." (F; 38)
- "The class made me understand the value of life with mental illnesses. Being a Tri-Met bus driver, I think every person in the world, and all Tri-Met drivers should take this class to understand the meaning of mental illness in a person." (F; 49)

- "It seems to be a safe place to verbalize your fears and needs as support for our injured ones. The brain/body dichotomy needs to be erased so that someone that is sick is treated the same, regardless of the location of the injury" (M; 64)
- "It changed my life. I was so lost and isolated and targeted for blame until I found this group. The education confirmed my instincts and assured me in my decision-making." (F; 46)
- "This stuff should be taught in school, on TV, everywhere!" (F; 40)
- "This class has brought healing to my heart as I have a better understanding of my father's illness. This has been a safe environment for me to talk and vent my pain, and others have "understood" what I was going through. I have been encouraging "everyone" to attend this course, as the information is extremely valuable." (F; 34)
- "Very comprehensive in its scope. I especially appreciate that I was able to see for just a little bit of what it must be like to deal with a brain disorder from the eyes/body/person. I gained a physical and intellectual understanding". (F; 49)
- It expanded my compassion for all families dealing with mental disorders. (F; 62)
- Very accurate information. I've had lots of therapy and this was "new" info. (M; 36)
- "Incredible. I have referred my clients to it. Much more to do." (M; 52)
- " Extremely helpful in furthering my understanding about mental illness and brain disorders. As a result, I have looked at the situation with my brother in a completely new light. It has made me more understanding and allowed a new level of discussion for us." (F; 56)

Judy Davis
F2F teacher and class graduate
Multnomah Co.
Gresham, Oregon

Most memorable experience: My most memorable F2F experience was as an instructor. Two thirds of the way through the 12-week course, our group had a collective breakthrough. The class members understood and truly got that they did not have to accept abuse, hostility, disrespect and violence from their mentally ill family member. Having a mental illness did not give one a free pass towards harming another. This notion crystallized within the group members and had them realize that loving, understanding and accepting their family member's mental illness did not have to extend to tolerating abuse. A subset of the class went on to understand that not setting limits and enforcing consequences actually promoted negative behavior within their mentally ill loved one. These class members realized that they had been complicit in condoning, tacitly rewarding and maintaining a cycle of bad behavior.

As a result of the above ah ha moment, our class participants were allowed to truly heal, move forward and have a greater quality of life. F2F impacts all those who participate in a very formative way.

How did you find the class: I happened to pick up a brochure at my doctor's medical office. I phoned the information line, was given the telephone number of the F2F instructor in my area and was able to begin attending the course even though it had already started.

Favorite "Joyceism": Unfortunately, I have never had the opportunity or pleasure to meet Joyce.

**Jennifer Garrett
F2F class graduate
Marion/Polk NAMI
Salem, Oregon**

Most memorable experience: I went to F2F to learn more about my kid's struggles with mental disorders and how to better deal with them. Little did I know that I would be challenged to deal with my own bipolar disorder which I have been fortunate to be in recovery from for some years. I was able to share with other class members some real-life experiences, and also to learn new information and coping skills for my own disorder as well as my family's. It was such a safe environment to finally talk about symptoms as recognized disease conditions that it really helped me release a lot of guilt over my actions while sick. I even became brave enough to become an IOOV presenter and have shared my story a number of times now. It's good to start seeing my experiences coming full-circle to be used to help others. I look forward to this continuing this with other community members as well as families dealing with mental disorders in their ranks.

How did you find the class: I found a F2F class through my children's counselor.

SOUTH CAROLINA

**Michelle Ready
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI SC/NAMI AOP
Seneca, South Carolina**

Most memorable experience: Even though I've taught the course seventeen times, my most memorable experiences with Family-to-Family were my classes as a student and during the Family-to-Family State Training. I registered for the course not even realizing I needed it. A friend talked me into attending it with her. I thought I knew it all and was handling things just fine so would use this as a venue for meeting a lot of new people. Oh, the denial. My husband had been diagnosed with major depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder, described by his psychiatrist as 'the worst case I've ever seen'. He, literally, had not left our house in seven years! Our local affiliate president welcomed us to NAMI and began her speech by saying something like, "If your loved one is incarcerated..." I thought, Incarcerated! You mean some of these people have loved ones in jail?! Then, I began to hear the other family's stories. Unbelievable stories of ill family members drawing weapons and calling the police on their well family members, running away, kicking out car windows while they were riding in the car along the interstate, spending exorbitant amounts of money, etc.. I'll never forget my first thought after that class- I got the

good disorder! After hearing all the trauma in these families, I just knew I needed to help others. It still hadn't fully sunk in that I needed help, too. One month after my Family-to-Family graduation I attended the teacher training. This was the first time I heard the Empathy class as I had missed it during my time as a student. When I heard how difficult it was for my husband to live with his illness twenty-four hours a day and the bravery it took to do so, I cried through the entire class. I FINALLY GOT IT! We all experience the trauma, but we can get better. We don't have to 'stay stuck'! Since that time, I've also become a Family-to-Family State Trainer, a Family Support Group Facilitator, a Provider Education Teacher, a Parents and Teachers as Allies Presenter, a member of the NAMI SC State Board, and am the Secretary of the local Mental Health Center Board. When I got it, I REALLY got it!

How did you find the class: While I was on vacation, a friend was given a church bulletin containing the information about an upcoming Family-to-Family course. My girlfriend registered her husband and herself. She was told the class was now full. She knew I needed the course as well. I'm glad somebody recognized that! The instructor, Betty Jane Crandall, told my friend the course was full, and I needed to contact her immediately if I wanted to attend as she needed to meet me first. After meeting with Betty Jane for a few minutes, she got in and out of her chair and said, "You could teach this course!" I felt really good as this woman had just met me. When I told my friends, they said, "Sucker"! Well, little did we know she was right! To this day, she'll tell you it was the best thing she ever did was to get me involved with NAMI.

Favorite "Joyceism": This has to be the hardest question of all as there are so many to choose from! The one that always makes me laugh is the way she starts a sentence by saying 'Darling!' Years ago she told me there was a cloud in Heaven with my name on it. I'm holding her to that promise and am going to request mine be near hers! Thank you, Joyce, for showing me my calling! You have changed the world one family at a time. We are forever grateful!

Susan K. Vogel
F2F teacher and class graduate
NAMI Piedmont Tri-County, Rock Hill, South Carolina

Most memorable experience: What I remember the most is going to my first class of what was then called "Journey to Hope" and realizing that I was finally with people who really knew what I was going through. I had wonderful sympathy and support from friends, but there is nothing like being with people who know what you are experiencing because they have been on the same journey.

How did you find the class: One of my friends saw an article about the class in a city magazine in Pittsburgh where we were living at the time. It was quite a lengthy article about the 2 teachers and how they got involved in teaching the class.

Favorite "Joyceism" - You can't know what no one has told you and this is a no-fault illness.

TEXAS

Loretta Knickerbocker
F2F teacher
NAMI Dallas

Most memorable experience: In the late 1990's I was referred to NAMI and F2F by Dr. Joel Feiner. At the first NAMI meeting I attended I was taken aback when the reality of the chronic long-term reality of mental illness struck me. I took a class as soon as I could. F2F saved my sanity. Learning about the illness, the guilt busters, communication skills, etc., were invaluable. Meeting other families and finding out I am not the only one and the support we gave each other was very comforting. After the class was over, I wanted more, and I wanted to give back so I signed up to be a teacher. As a teacher I learn something every time there is a class. I am reminded of tools to use when needed regarding communication, empathy, and my rights as a parent of an adult with mental illness and how important we at NAMI are to each other. I've made life long friends who I cherish. I cannot thank Dr. Burland and NAMI enough for the F2F class, including the continued research and work to keep the curriculum current! Congratulations on 20 years!

Jackie Shannon

Most memorable experience: My remembrance of the Family to Family program and of Joyce goes way back before F2F was originated. Joyce and I were participants (and sat next to each other) during a special family education training seminar conducted by Agnes Hatfield. During that 3 day seminar, Joyce first conceived the idea of the education program, now called Family to Family!

I had the privilege of being in the first class of teachers trained by Joyce in Texas.

Tracy Hines
F2F class participant
Nami Metro Houston
Houston, Texas

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience with Family to Family has to be the NAMI WALK. It was my first time and I saw all of my Family to Family classmates. My co-workers had even come to show their support. The walk was the day of my birthday and I worked the registration table. I had an amazing time and as I was leaving I remember crying because I was so overwhelmed with emotions – happy I had found NAMI but sad I had to be a part of it.

A year later - My son, MY SON who had been through so much (but thank God for Peer to Peer and was doing so well) walked with me. He saw some of his nurses and aides from the hospital he had been in. He saw his peers from Peer to Peer. He asked someone to take our picture and he posted it on his face book page.

I knew everything was going to be alright – and it really is!

How did you find the class: I actually cannot remember who first told me about NAMI. It was either my son's doctor or his lawyer (because sometimes you need one of them as well.) In any event I sent an e-mail off to the president of the Nami Metro Houston Chapter. I told her everything about my situation. This was monumental for me to disclose so much because I hadn't shared anything with anyone outside of my family. It was her reply that almost brought tears to my eyes. She wrote, "Oh yes - that happened to us as well..." Her story was so similar to mine; our sons had gone through the same things. I signed up for the next available F2F class and it was the first time I saw light at the end of the tunnel and it wasn't another train! Words cannot express how wonderful it was to share, listen or sit quietly and know you were in a safe place with people who truly understood.

Favorite "Joyceism": "This is the only illness in the world where you never get a covered dish." I can actually laugh at this statement now, but when I first heard it I realized how true it was. So many times throughout the years living in my neighborhood I would send over a dish of spaghetti, chicken fettuccini, fruit baskets or a bottle of wine to celebrate, grieve or support my neighbors through their good times or hardships. In my case however with my son's illness (that was so colorfully displayed for the entire neighborhood to see) I never received anything, not even a kind word. It wasn't until I started speaking about it in a very "matter-of-fact" way that the conversations started, the well wishes and words of encouragement came. What I loved best were the parents and grandparents who came to me for advice and support when they began going through the same thing! I appreciate Joyce and NAMI so much for helping me through this beautiful journey!

**Jean Puckett
Wichita Falls, Texas**

Most memorable experience: My Dear Joyce, How deserving you are of this outstanding recognition and award...You are the best! I just read your interview in the NAMI magazine and you are the one who really tells it as it is! Bless you for your insight and wisdom. I was in your first class in Houston, Texas. Doris Houston and I came from Wichita Falls to learn all we could and we are still learning. I was also in your class to learn to teach others. It was rewarding. You opened many doors of inquiry and mostly you opened our hearts to empathy...you often told me I wore my heart on my sleeve. I probably still do because I know what grief and sorrow a consumer and family member feels. You have opened a great movement for understanding and acceptance which I pray someday will be accepted. May God Bless you and we do remember and love you.
Your student and friend,

**Frances Musgrove
Austin, Texas**

Most memorable experience: My son had his first psychotic breakdown seven years ago before me ever new anything about mental illness. I'm at the psych ward that he is at and I am beside myself with grief when the nurse says to me "ma'am you really should contact NAMI, my quick response was don't tell me what I need tell me what my son needs". I had just learned of NAMI's existence through my sister looking for information on my son's illness. It took me a awhile but I contacted NAMI and registered for the Family to Family class. I was of course amazed that my family wasn't alone. Here I learned it was me that needed to contact NAMI to learn of my son's illness so that I could understand and identify with his feelings and symptoms. This class was so powerful to me that I joined NAMI, became active, served on the board 3 1/2 years, and became a certified Family to Family teacher myself.

How did you find the class: Went on the walk "out of the darkness" saw a man that was holding a NAMI banner and since I had heard about this organization I started talking to this gentlemen and he told me about the family to family class and a telephone number to call to register.

Favorite "Joyceism": For all her knowledge and commitment in helping others

UTAH

**Chandra Fenwick
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Salt Lake City, Utah**

Most memorable experience: I love every word of this program. As a teacher I watch this journey family members take over the weeks, I see healing and miracles. The most memorable experience was being trained by Joyce as a state trainer. She presented the trauma lecture information. I was captivated by every word. It gave me understanding about why we do things the way we do. This program is so powerful, it is something I can throw my whole heart and passion into, knowing it changes lives. Thanks Joyce for giving birth to something that will live forever.

How did you find the class: 10 years ago I found myself sitting in front of a marriage counselor. He told me about Family-to-Family and told me if it didn't help to come back and see him. Well, you can guess that I never went back, although I sent him plenty of flyers for the class over the years. Family-to-Family changed my life. It helped my marriage survive, it created a passion in me to want to help other families going through the confusion of mental illness. I walked into that first class feeling such a relief before anything was said. I felt the safety to talk about the difficult aspects that I had not been able to explore.

Favorite "Joyceism": Darlings, I am known as a Joyce Burland "purist", I want to be just like her! I will have to study the list of Joyceisms that come out...

VERMONT

Ann Cummins
Jamaica, Vermont
F2F Teacher

Most memorable experience: In the Family-to-Family Class I took in 2002, I was really impressed by the wealth of information about my boyfriend's illness. The information in the education program helped me understand his behavior and what to expect when he came home from the hospital. I was grateful to the class for helping me understand how important the post-inpatient phase is and how to help him cope. I credit NAMI with helping us stay together. Because I learned so much through NAMI, we have had many happy years together. He has not had another manic episode since I took F2F and we were married in 2004. Thank you so much!

How did you find the class: Clare Munat helped me find a NAMI Support Group and she encouraged me to take the class when it was offered nearby in Londonderry, Vermont

Favorite "Joyceism": "You can't know what no one has told you!"

Clare Munat
Brattleboro, Vermont

Most memorable experience: My remarkable experience was having Joyce as a teacher in 1992. I was new, so very new. I did not really know what NAMI was, but I had the good fortune to see a therapist about 10 days before the class started and she suggested I take it. I had no idea what I was doing. My first impression was what this tall, lanky woman is with a slight southern accent doing in Vermont.

Well, as we all know, the family to family class is a transforming experience. You come out a different person. Not only did I learn everything I needed to know

The class has had lasting effects. I am still in contact with five members, of that class, most of who have been members of the support group I facilitate. And remember we are talking about a family class from 1992! I also facilitate the support group in West Brattleboro, Vermont, the same church where Joyce was first introduced to NAMI (then AMI).

The class ended in early December, and it only took a couple of months for Joyce to get me on the NAMI VT board. She is quite a persuasive woman. I served on the board for 13 years, 12 as its President.

Joyce is a genius, she combines organizational skills with knowing what works and has immense compassion for everyone. I can't count how many lives she has changed. Thank you, wonderful one.

Sarah Chamberlain
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
Vermont

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience with Family to Family occurred at a national Training of the Trainers. Thinking I had mastered the Problem Solving process for Class 5 Joyce asked me to come to the front of the room and demonstrate how to do it. Well, what I really demonstrated was how NOT to do it. With every sentence out of my mouth Joyce said "Saree, NO. You do it this way!" After about 10 minutes of this I and the rest of the room were hysterical with laughter. However, following this experience I went home, practiced, and nailed the problem solving process. Class 5 is my absolutely favorite class, now, whereas before I had dreaded it. Thank you, Joyce, for calling on me. And thank you for the vision you had that family members could absolutely be trusted to convey complex information and be emotionally available and authentic with other family members. This concept and the architecture of your courses and trainings are brilliant!

VIRGINIA

Char Cate
Staff Actions Control Officer
Command Group Actions
Hampton, Virginia

Most memorable experience: My most memorable F2F class was week 7, which we just facilitated last night where we learn that our loved one gets stuck at the point of when their illness started. That was such a revelation to me since my 27 year-old daughter surrounded herself with guys and gals in their late teens. I couldn't figure out why. That was my "aha" moment.

Favorite "Joyceism": "Asking someone with mental illness to snap out of it is like ordering someone w/a broken leg to run a marathon."

Mozelle 'Evelyn' Steward
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
Hampton/Newport News

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience was when I attended the first F2F Class offered in our area while 'going through the pitfalls' of not knowing how to deal with my daughter who had become ill, at the time all I had were question marks as to how to deal with her. The class and the teachers helped remove a lot of the question marks. It also started me on my path to 'advocate' and help others dealing with their 'question marks'.

How did you find the class: I was attending as a participant a F2F Support Group in Hampton Roads/Newport News which I now co-facilitate.

Favorite "Joyceism": I do not have a favorite.....I've 'hung on her every word' when in her awesome presence at NAMI events/training.

Betsy Greer
F2F teacher
NAMI Northern Virginia
Arlington, Virginia

Most memorable experience My husband, Richard Greer, always referred to Joyce Burland as the Mother Teresa of NAMI. To those of us involved with the education of other family members, she is, indeed, a saint. In my nine classes of Family to Family, I have watched the magical transformation of individuals overwhelmed by the worry and care of an ill loved one to family members empowered to take charge and advocate for their loved one. It is awesome. It happens every class, which makes each experience memorable. Joyce has developed an education program that works, and we in NAMI benefit from it. She deserves a well-deserved respite from updating our manuals and responding to our questions. She will be remembered for her countless contributions to NAMI. NAMI will have difficulty in finding someone to fill her shoes. She will, of course, be missed. –

WASHINGTON

Bruce Raper
F2F teacher
Whatcom County / Bellingham / Washington

Most memorable experience: During F2F class #12 I filled out the questionnaire “Would you like to volunteer?” I wrote in big bold letters:
“I WANT TO TEACH THIS CLASS!! Soon thereafter I was trained and started teaching. It is so rewarding helping others discover the insight, education and support I gained from the class.

During one class I taught a couple whose relationship was visibly challenged because of the different ways they were trying to discipline and encourage their very recently diagnosed son (in his early 20's). When I encouraged the couple (in private) to take time for themselves and to nurture their marriage with pleasant activities together – The husband told me I would make a good marriage counselor. I am really just an uneducated family member who cares about the people I teach.

How did you find the class: My wife and I had been attending the local DBSA support group meetings for about 4 months. One day a lady came and told us of a class she had recently completed called “Family-to-Family.” Our family was very new to mental health consuming (less than a year) and I had never even heard of NAMI before. I contacted the local NAMI chapter, and literally pleaded to be enrolled in the next class, which we were. The experience changed my life.

**Liz Fry
Walla, Washington**

Didn't know how long you wanted this but here is the "testimony" that was written up about me in the NARSAD email bulletin last month.

The Beauty of Recovery

Liz Fry of Walla, Wash., overcame the devastating diagnosis of bipolar disorder as a young adult to become an example of recovery and a teacher of what has become her model for recovery to others.

Liz was misdiagnosed with schizophrenia when she was 22 and after a year, diagnosed with bipolar disorder. "My first thoughts were denial: "No, this can't be happening to me," Liz said. "It took years to accept my diagnosis. You never get okay with the diagnosis because bipolar is a touch disease to live with."

Her decades of struggle with a brain and behavior disorder have had their ups and downs, including three very bad psychotic episodes. The last one in 2001 spiraled into the loss of her family, home and job. At that time, with the help of medication and two therapists, Liz started a recovery that continues today. One of her therapists said to her, "You can thrive." And everything that came after that statement proves that she can.

I think recovery is possible and it's the most exciting thing in the world," Liz said. As the interview for this story began, Liz was clear that she wanted to share a message about "the beauty of recovery."

Recovery made it possible for Liz to repair her relationship with her daughter, with whom Liz was estranged from the time her daughter was 16-18 years old. bipolar disorder can devastate family relationships. Liz said it took seven years for her daughter to begin to trust in Liz. "We are closer now than we have ever been," Liz said. "It took a lot of work on both our parts but we made it! Recovery and lots of love and trust were, I think, responsible for this miraculous rejoining in our relationship."

In an effort to manage her life in a more healthy way, Liz reached out to find others who were facing the same diagnosis. "It was when I made these connections that I realized there was real hope."

Liz is involved with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (Nami) and Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA). Volunteering as a Nami support group facilitator, Nami Convention (support group) state trainer and teacher of the Family-to-Family class on all types of mental illness. Liz is also involved with the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Wrap) designed by Mary Ellen Copeland, Ph.D., which includes elements such as a wellness toolbox and daily maintenance plan that help people recovering from mental illness prepare for the challenges they face. Liz feels so strongly about the importance of Wrap in her recovery that she is a Washington State Wrap teacher/facilitator and teaches the program at a local VA hospital and community college. "I love teaching and seeing the progression people make after creating their wellness toolbox and practicing the program," Liz said. "And so much of my wellness comes from giving to other people."

Her generosity is something Liz credits to her mother, Dorothy Locke who passed away in 2005 at age 101. "She gave me an incredible spiritual foundation - a foundation for giving to other people. She was an amazing woman."

Through a combination of medicine, therapy, spiritual grounding, music (Liz is a flutist) and daily wellness practices that include exercise, prayer, connecting with her community and spending time with her dog make up her recovery. Liz is proof that (as she said) "you can have a positive life even with a touch diagnosis."

**Stacie Larson
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Thurston/Mason**

Most memorable experience: The very first class I taught had 17 members, and they were so dedicated that I was convinced that anyone who came to the first class would do anything to make it to the rest of the series. That spring we had the usual flooding. One of the couples had forty miles to drive and arrived a few minutes late to class. They told of driving through five inches of water with salmon leaping in front of the car! (In Western Washington State)

One of the women asked, rhetorically, "How else could you change so many people's lives in less than three months?"

I felt that this was the best paying job I'd ever had. The "pay" wasn't anything I could take to the grocery store, but it would last longer than a bag of groceries anyway.

Thank you, Joyce, for giving us a format and a plan for passing on the research with our own hard-won experience. The change we witness in the participants is frequently profound.

WISCONSIN

The official state flower is Wood Violet

**Gail Louise Auerbach
F2F teacher, trainer, class graduate, and state program director
NAMI Wisconsin**

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience with Family to Family was being directly trained by Joyce to be a teacher as the 13th state (NAMI WI) to pick up the program back when it was Journey of Hope. We had to be trained directly by Joyce b/c we were a new state joining the program. Also, I'm not sure there were such people as state trainers. I learned all the teaching points well as Joyce brought them home one by one very strongly with great passion and clarity just a few feet from my chair. (I say this b/c the room was so small we couldn't fit in tables; we balanced those GIANT binders on our laps!). I was mesmerized by her voice and cadence and what she had to say. For the first time, my dad's illness and my experience as a young girl, then a teenager, then a young woman, then a middle-aged woman made sense and so did my various brothers and sisters mixed reactions to it. I have never learned so much, so fast, so well, in my life. And I loved every minute. It was, I realize now, as I have become a trainer and then Program

Director for Family to Family for NAMI WI for 18 years, life changing and live giving. When I teach, train or act in my Director role, it is Joyce's voice I hear inside

I volunteered to teach for NAMI Dane (NAMI WI) in 1993 I was the first teacher in NAMI Dane, along with my friend and excellent teacher Donna Murdoch. Then I trained to be a trainer, in 1994. In 1997 I became Program Director, when the First Director Nancy Abraham retired.

**Allen R. Liegel, F2F teacher and class graduate
WI/NAMI Dane County,
Madison, Wisconsin**

Most memorable experience: This class gave me the information to understand our son and the problems that he was experiencing. I would never have been able to help him move forward into recovery without this class and the people I have met through this program. I often think that without this program I may have actually hindered recovery. The class was also helpful to me as an administrator because it helped me to be much more open to the people I managed and interacted with. It has changed my life in so many positive ways and I believe that I am a better person because of the Family to Family Class that I took with my wife. I felt so good about what I had learned that I decided to become a teacher and have taught the class 7 times. These classes have enabled me to help others much like I had been helped years before. I think that it is important for class participants to hear the male perspective if this is possible. The class participants are still predominantly female but the number of males is increasing. I still communicate annually with one of the participants in the first class that I taught more than 10 years ago. Thank you Joyce, for developing this class and updating it on a yearly basis for all these year. You have made a big difference in my life and the life of those I love.

How did you find the class: I first found the Family to Family Class through a parent support group at NAMI Dane County. The people in that group recommended it to us. We have maintained friendships with many of the people we met at that support group.

**Carole Serpe
F2F Teacher
NAMI Kenosha, Wisconsin**

Most memorable experience: My husband and I attended a F2F class right after our daughter's second break and it was so well timed. It gave us hope and healing and knowledge. I was so encouraged that I immediately knew right then and there that I wanted to teach F2F and took the training the next spring. Since then I have had the honor of teaching 4 F2F classes and touching the lives of almost 100 people that have been through our classes in Kenosha! Most recently, our fall 2010 class provided one more person who is now trained to teach, and our spring 2011 class provided 4 Spanish speaking people who are going to be trained and will teach the course in Spanish! Kenosha now has 4 trained teachers and 4 soon-to-be teachers! We feel we are making a difference in the lives of those who live with mental illness.

How did you find the class: A hospital provided me with NAMI information that included information about a F2F class.

Favorite "Joyceism": "You can't know what nobody has told you."

Tammy Allar
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Wisconsin
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Most memorable experience Family to Family was life-changing for me. I think my most memorable experience so far was just realizing there were other people out there struggling with the same loss that I felt over my loved one's diagnosis. I believe my most memorable experience ever is yet to come as our class still meets on a monthly basis to share the joys and sorrows of living with someone with a brain disorder. Thank you Joyce!

How did you find the class: I called the NAMI Waukesha office and was referred by Barb Ducey there.

Favorite "Joyceism": You can't know what you've never been told.

Mike & Sherry Williams
F2F teacher and Trainers
NAMI Fox Valley, Appleton, Wisconsin

Most memorable experience: Our participation as teachers and trainers of F2F has prepared us to care for the ill members of our family so that each of them is making the progress that we prayed for. We learned that in caring for mentally ill relatives, knowledge and training trump prayer!

A distraught couple took the course several years ago b/c they were very concerned about their daughter who had been diagnosed with BP disorder after the birth of her first child. This daughter had been an exceptional college student graduating at the very top of her class at a major university. The F2F experience allowed the couple to develop the skills to support the daughter and while she went through the process of illness to recovery. The daughter now holds an important paid position in our local affiliate and has rebuilt her life.

Sharon (Sherry) Williams
F2F teacher and trainer
NAMI Fox Valley

Most memorable experience: I will always remember the first Family to Family class that my husband and I took as class members. The teachers, Gail and Lynn, led with great compassion. During and after the class, I came to realize the powerful format that Family to Family offered. In no other place had we received such unique understanding and knowledge as in the Family to Family class. Together, my husband and I decided that we wanted to tell other families who were struggling about NAMI and this wonderful class, Family to Family. We were trained as teachers and later as trainers for the state of WI. Today we teach and train not realizing all of the wonderful caring individuals that we would meet along the way. We are retired and hope to continue this work for a long time.

How did you find the class: We discovered Family to Family through a dear friend who had taken and taught Family to Family. Of course, we will always be grateful for her recommendation.

Favorite "Joyceism": Her determination, ability and true understanding in helping very difficult family situations

Michael Williams
F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
NAMI Fox Valley
Appleton, Wisconsin

Most memorable experience: Every thing we have learned in our 9 years of being affiliated with F2F in the roles of class member, teacher, and Wisconsin state trainer has prepared my wife and I for the last 18 months. During this period we have continued to care for three ill family members while we trained two classes of teachers and taught a new class in Calumet Co., Wisconsin –[More Dairy cows than people] where NAMI had never offered anything before because of Calumet's geographical challenges. We literally took F2F "on the road" promoting the class with the help of Calumet Co. HHS and our own promotion efforts with church congregations and with a poster program supplemented by speaking engagements with several service clubs.

In addition to the F2F work, we used all the skills we have acquired to help us deal effectively with an 18 month "manic" event with one of our ill loved ones. As I write this, the manic period has been diminished and we continue our vigilance for what happens next with our relative. We know that we have the tools to prevail.

How did you find the class: We were referred by a personal friend several years after we had our worst period with our relatives. We knew we had to be "involved"!

Favorite "Joyceism": I don't have any specific "Joyceism" except for finding her in the exercise room of the St. Louis Hilton hotel where we were taking our training for F2F state trainers several years ago. She started her exercise before I did, worked

harder than I did, and stayed longer than I did. In the technical jargon of exercise training she "burned my ass"!

Ann M. Skochinski
F2F teacher
NAMI Brown Co.
Green Bay, Wisconsin

Most memorable experience: THE WAY THAT THIS CLASS SAVES SO MANY LIVES AND FAMILIES. How fortunate I have been to be able to look at my sons with pride and love.

F2F changed my life. I learned to see my sons as blessings because of F2F. I took the class in 1998 and in 1999 I became a Family-to-Family teacher. I have been teaching classes since that time and I learn more every time I teach a class.

It is wonderful to see the families, that come in scared and angry and sad; and at the end of the 12 classes, it is so rewarding to see the change in their lives.

DR. BURLAND HAS PERFORMED MIRACLES FOR US.

How did you find the class: I was advised to go to a NAMI meeting in California. It was scary! When we moved to Green Bay, I again attended a NAMI meeting and I was welcomed to join and that was how I eventually became a teacher.

Favorite "Joyceism": Never give up hope!

Denise Hackel
F2F teacher
St Croix Affiliate, River Falls, Wisconsin

Most memorable experience: My most memorable experience was in the 2nd Family to Family class I took. We had a wonderful older gentleman in our class and his wife who have a daughter that has been struggling with mental illness for over 20 years. This gentleman, whose name is John, was a chemistry college professor for his career and also has written many versions of chemistry books in many different languages. He is currently working on re-writing a book and he told me at the last class celebration that since taking Family to Family, he has changed his thoughts on chemistry and how that relates to mental illness and will be reflecting that in his latest version of his book. What a great way to spread the word about the facts about mental illness!

WYOMING

Linda Valenzuela

F2F teacher, trainer, and class graduate
Nami-Casper, Casper, Wyoming

Most memorable experience: A couple took F2F. The stepfather and the mom of the young man with schizophrenia were beside themselves. The stepfather could not accept that this was any different from alcoholism and that the AA 12 Step Program worked, so the son needed to just get a grip on himself. After completing the F2F the stepdad was still in denial that this was mental illness. The dear wife encouraged him to take the class again with her. TA DA!!!He got it----- and they have become F2F teachers and have taught two classes together. The wife was very active in getting CIT in our community.

Favorite "Joyceism": JOYCES' SAGE COMMENT: You can do this---Uh huh!!!

Cheryl Tottenhoff
F2F teacher
NAMI Wyoming
Cheyenne, Wyoming

Most memorable experience: I have taught 9 classes now and I think the most memorable experience was when a father of a young man with schizoaffective disorder, in an emotional state, made the statement "Now I know that it isn't my fault".

How did you find the class: I saw an ad in our local newspaper and found the F2F class.

Favorite "Joyceism": "If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got"