



# MBRLC Newsletter Spring 2021

Hilary K. and Idony Lisle, Editors

[www.mbrlc.org](http://www.mbrlc.org)





## Greetings!

As we go to press, Spring is only a week away. Winter was relatively kind to us here in Boston this year, and we can expect a lovely New England Spring—that is, if the March winds don't buffet us to the pavement first!

Daffodils and crocuses are not the only new things appearing right now—we invite you to visit our website, [www.mbrlc.org](http://www.mbrlc.org), and check out the schedule of your fa-

vorite center—many have new groups listed.

We welcome submissions from anybody in the MBRLC community; all opinions expressed in these articles are those of the creator, and not necessarily of the MBRLC itself. Submissions should be sent via email to [idony.lisle@bmc.org](mailto:idony.lisle@bmc.org); please include a note re which center you consider your home base.

—Your Editors



# Introduction to NAMI

by Howard D. Trachtman and Rev. Dr.  
Norma Heath

NAMI---short for the National Alliance on Mental Illness--is the largest grassroots mental health advocacy organization in the US, founded 40 years ago. Their website is [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org). With 600 local affiliates, NAMI Massachusetts is the state chapter located in Charlestown. Their website is [www.namimass.org](http://www.namimass.org). NAMI creates signature programs which are then implemented locally.

In 2004, Howard Trachtman and Kim Holt co-founded the NAMI Greater Boston Consumer Advocacy Network, more recently re-branded as the NAMI Greater Boston Peer Support and Advocacy Network. In 2014, Ewa Pytowska became director and continues to hold the position to this day . We have helped NAMI develop various peer programs in Massachusetts: In Our Own Voice speakers bureau, NAMI Connection Support Groups. and PEER to PEER educational classes. NAMI funds are used to support Opening Doors to the Arts, an organization where we get free tickets to concerts and theater. See [www.OpeningDoorsToTheArts.org](http://www.OpeningDoorsToTheArts.org) or email us at

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

This program is free to join; however, we suggest you become a NAMI member for \$5.00 a year. Members will receive NAMI's Advocate magazine and be able to vote at NAMI conventions. There is power in numbers so please join us!

A monthly NAMI Greater Boston Support and Advocacy Network business meeting with speakers had been taking place at Center Club monthly before COVID, and has been temporarily replaced with a Zoom Speaker Series on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 6:30pm-7:30pm. See more details at <https://www.mbrlc.org/zoom-speaker-series>. All are invited to attend these meetings.





There is a weekly staff/support meeting that takes place on Tuesdays. We have an active Google-group for getting new information on mental health and upcoming classes and events relating to mental health experiences. Contact Howard Trachtman for more information [hdt@mbrlc.org](mailto:hdt@mbrlc.org). Also

see our website,  
[www.namiboston.org](http://www.namiboston.org)

NAMI Connection 90 minute support groups are located on Zoom: <https://namimass.org/nami-connection-recovery-support-groups/>

Note some of these are hosted by the Metro Boston Recovery Learning Community.

If you need help navigating the mental health system or want information and referral, please contact NAMI Massachusetts compass helpline:

[compass@namimass.org](mailto:compass@namimass.org)

(617-704-6264)

Howard D. Trachtman, BS, CPS,  
CPRP, COAPS

co-founder and President Emeritus  
NAMI Greater Boston Peer Support and Advocacy Network

776 Main Street #541481

Waltham, MA 02454-5448

Home/Office (781) 642-0368





# Thoughts While Living Through the Pandemic

*by Jon Gottlieb*

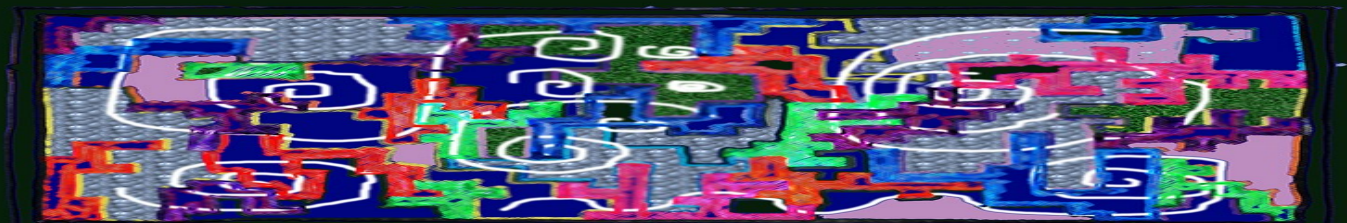
Early to bed and early to rise really doesn't make much difference at times. I feel tired no matter when I arise. I say my prayers just before I retire for the evening. Thank G-d they are always answered in some ways. Knowing that I am not doing any of this life stuff by myself keeps me steady. Although most of the time, I am the only person in the room. I am learning from my Higher Power and think of those good souls who are with Him and are no longer physically with me. They will always exist through me.

Most of my deepest thinking takes place late at night while trying to lull myself to sleep. It isn't easy. I mostly analyze myself with thoughts of the future. I've noticed that at various times of the day noises change at various levels and pitches. The atmosphere outside brings about those quiet times, mostly lying in bed.

I fall asleep quite often during the day, napping in my chair near the tv at odd hours. TV is my sleeping pill. I love it too much to give it up. Sometimes I feel so strapped out that I have to lay down and I lose track of time.

Writing, reading, music and internet research have kept me level headed. Also, getting out of the house on a regular basis helps. I spend a lot of time by myself on my journeys to shop for my guilty pleasures. Or, I just enjoy the sights while walking. This soothes and refreshes every bone in my body. Isn't that what life is all about? Especially now. Making yourself happy comes first before you can concentrate on the welfare of others.

I guess I use my time wisely after all. Get ready for those changes that throw you for that needless loop.







Lilac petals grow  
Inside my soul, when with you  
Kaleidoscopic



Don't ask for a waltz  
Or how one crosses right, left  
Look through bamboo, stars

~~~~~  
~~~~~ Haiku by Rob Macdonald ~~~~~



# DAY 15

*by Diana Sabella (Dhyana)*

I awake with  
Mind clearer  
Vision brighter  
Body lighter  
Day 15  
after my 14 day  
quarantine  
Heart pounding  
Grab Street clothes  
Outdoor shoes  
Don't forget mask  
And... Zinc lozenges  
Turn the door knob  
A Hallway  
An elevator  
The lobby  
Feet hit the ground  
My beloved Boston  
ground  
Holding in a scream  
Eyes bulging as if  
Gaining sight for the  
first time  
Am I Lazarus  
healed by Jesus  
Walking down

Huntington Avenue?  
College students and  
puppies  
In socially distanced  
circles  
Young men jogging  
Jumping - jacking  
Faces, limbs, torsos.  
On a bleacher...  
I ... break down  
weeping!





# Introduction to Opening Doors To The Arts

*by Howard D. Trachtman and Rev. Dr. Norma Heath*

Opening Doors To The Arts (ODA) provides members of the mental health recovery community with access to low cost or free arts and entertainment opportunities. We invite our community to experience the healing power of the arts. Due to Covid19 we have been mostly attending online events. We did do a dinner with outside seating in Waltham and saw lights shows at Franklin Park Zoo and Gillette Stadium. We plan to continue going to Covid safe events. After Covid we will continue to watch plays and concerts as a group. We usually have lunch or dinner either before an event or after an event.

We partner with many theaters including Reagle Music Theater, Wheelock Family Theater, SpeakEasy Stage Company, Central Square Theater, Lyric Stage and many more. We attend concerts with Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Philharmonic, Handel and Haydn Society, Berklee School of Music and many more.

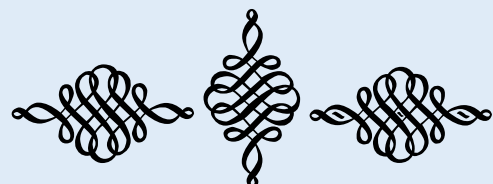
ODA has been helping people for over ten years and attend-

ing performances together as a community, building relationships and supports for those otherwise isolated. Membership is free, however we suggest you join NAMI Greater Boston Peer Support and Advocacy Network for \$5.00 a year. Members will receive NAMI's Advocate Magazine and be eligible to vote at conventions. There is power in numbers! Email [hdt@namiboston.org](mailto:hdt@namiboston.org) for details.

Also, after every event we ask for a short thank you email so that we can send to the venues and for our monthly reporting on event attendance.

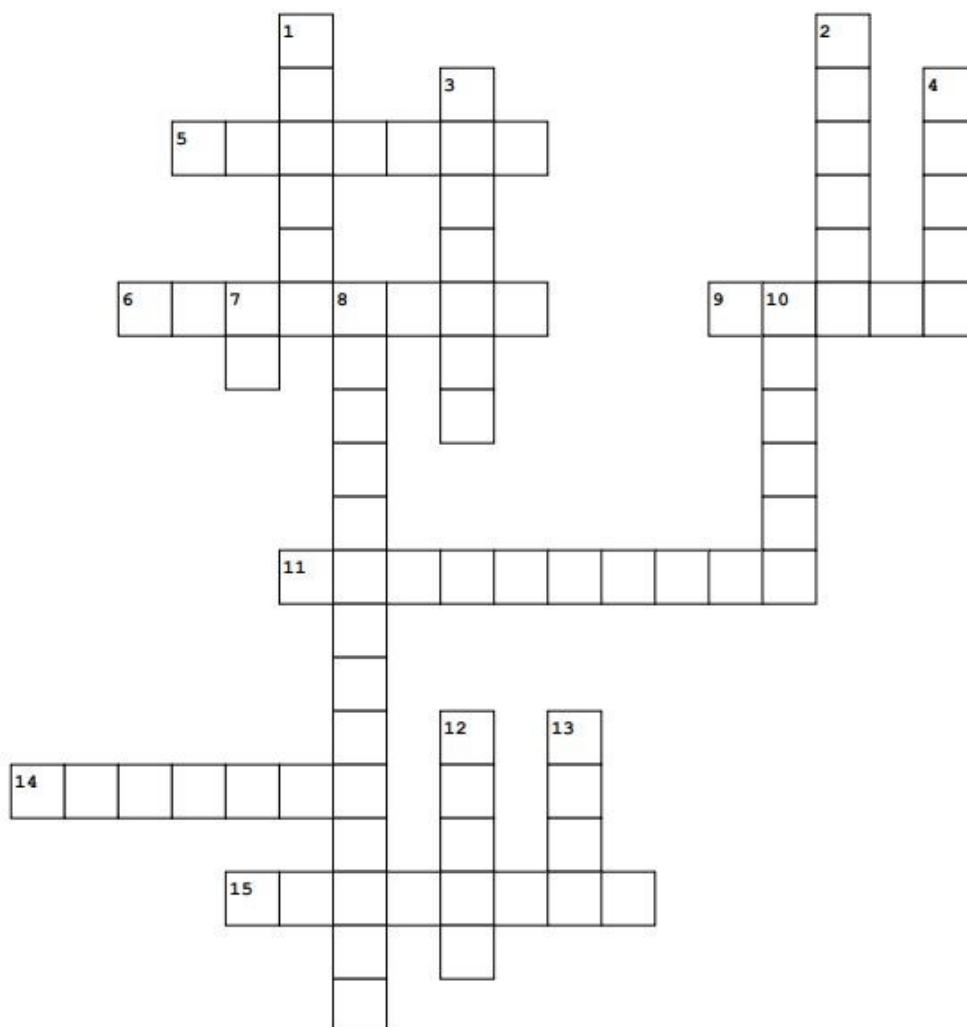
Howard D. Trachtman is the Executive Director, Reverend Dr. Norma Heath is the Consultant and Liz D'Uva is the Executive Assistant of ODA.

We invite you or someone you love to join us at [info@openingdoorstothearts.org](mailto:info@openingdoorstothearts.org) or call us at 617-626-8686 and leave a message or email [Norma@openingdoorstothearts.org](mailto:Norma@openingdoorstothearts.org)





## In the house



### Across

- 5. We are all experts now
- 6. Our gateway to the world
- 9. Home-made, hand-decorated, outfit matching
- 11. Improve your spirit!
- 14. Worth their weight in gold
- 15. You still need this

### Down

- 1. Bored, not hungry
- 2. Don't overwater
- 3. We are all feeling this. It's normal right now.
- 4. Improve your mind!
- 7. Don't watch too much of this
- 8. Most effective with a fistpump!
- 10. The warrior women supplying our needs
- 12. Are we all potatoes now?
- 13. Our best supporters

Solution on Page 12





Boston Common Carousel, September 2020

Photo by Hilary K., who says, "It sums up a lot about this Corona time."

Harvard Square, April 2020

Photo by Andromeda Lisle





# Recovery is Real

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

peer support

connection

strength

wellness

music

PSN

creativity

Hope Center

sharing

happiness

honesty

humor

friendship

positivity

dreams

Boston

CSRLC

hope

resilience

recovery

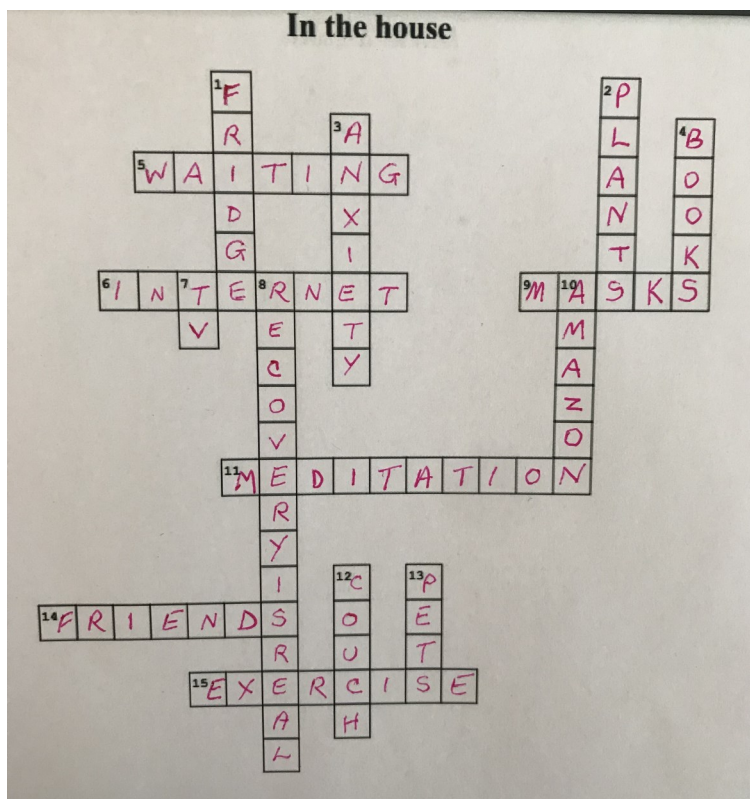
groups

MBRLC

Zoom

BRC





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**Page 2:** Grand Teton National Park, NPS/David Restivo

**Page 3:** "Lavender" by Andromeda Lisle

**Page 4:** "Siberian Lily" by Andromeda Lisle

**Page 5:** "Digital Graffiti" by Idony Lisle

**Page 6:** "Lily pads from a botanical garden in Thailand" by Stacy Shorr. Ink on paper.

**Page 7:** "Gold Leaf" by Idony Lisle. Marker on ATC.

**Page 12:** "Butterfly" by Idony Lisle. Marker on ATC.

**Back Cover:** "Tuxedo" by Kimberly Collins, oil on linen.





Kimberly Collins. *Tuxedo*. Oil on linen. 36 x 24 in.