

Presenter Interview Screening Tool

Initial screening is a critical part of the presenter application process. This tool is designed to assist you in making the best decisions possible in the selection of candidates to be trained as NAMI Ending the Silence Presenters. The process described below should be followed after the potential candidate's application has been reviewed and determination is made that minimum requirements have been met.

Interview Process

Interviews should be conducted by the Program Director/Coordinator, Executive Director or other individual responsible for managing the NAMI Ending the Silence program. It is best practice to conduct interviews face-to-face; however, an interview may be done by phone if this isn't possible. In addition, it would be ideal for all interviews to be conducted by the same person to best compare the performance of each candidate.

It is recommended that the interviewer document each candidate's responses using the Presenter Screening Interview form, which can be found on page 8 of this tool.

Step 1: Begin the interview by describing the requirements of being an ETS presenter:

- ✓ Willingness and capability to undergo an intensive ETS training process
- ✓ Agree to maintaining fidelity of the NAMI ETS presentation model at all times
- ✓ Make a commitment to being available to perform at least one presentation per month for at least one school year
- ✓ Agree to report presentation data, as required by NAMI, after each presentation
- ✓ Willingness to serve as a representative of your NAMI Affiliate
- ✓ Is (or willing to become) a member of NAMI

Upon reviewing these requirements, interviewees should ask the candidate if s/he understands and agrees to them.

Step 2: Key Interview Questions

There are a number of important questions that can be asked during the actual interview; it is not necessary to ask all of the following questions. Questions 1-4 are included in the presenter application and those responses can be reviewed prior to the interview to save time.

Following each question are “points to look/listen for” as well as “red flag” areas to be concerned about in the candidate’s responses. These are offered as helpful suggestions to assist you in determining whether an individual is a good candidate for becoming an ETS Presenter as well as to help you determine how successful they might be as a presenter. “Red flag” responses might be a signal of qualities which would rule out a candidate, and need to be explored to clarify anything of concern.

*This tool was adapted from the NAMI In Our Own Voice Presenter Screening Tool

Application Questions

1) Why do you want to be an Ending the Silence Presenter?

✓ Points to look for:

- I enjoy working with youth
- I (or my family member) is doing really well in my recovery and I want to show young people that mental illness isn’t as scary as they think and that it doesn’t have to mean you can’t achieve your dreams
- I hope to inspire young people to speak up if they or someone they know is experiencing mental health challenges
- Want to give back
- Want to help others
- I want to be a part of giving honest and accurate information about what it’s like to live with a mental illness
- Would like to be part of a national program that breaks down stigma, discrimination and misunderstanding surrounding mental illness
- I hope my lived experience and participation in NAMI programs will lead to a career in mental health
- Want to help students recognize the signs in themselves or a friend early to decrease the delay between onset of symptoms and seeking treatment

✓ Red flags

- I can’t get a job so I need money
- I want to build my resume
- I just want to tell high school kids what to do
- I want to teach the kids who bully and stigmatize others a lesson
- My high school experience was awful and I want to tell the kids what not to do
- I like to be in charge

2) What is it about your (or your family member's) experience that you think the students will be able to relate to?

✓ Points to look for:

- I (or my family member) began experiencing symptoms when I (or they) were in K-12, so I truly understand what they or their friend may be going through
- I can share what my friends did to help me (or my family member) get through the rough times
- High school students are starting to think about college and their careers. I can share my (or my family member's) experiences dealing with a mental health challenges during that time
- I'm close to their age
- Because I'm doing well in recovery and have many successes and dreams, I can be a good role model
- From my lived experience, I can give them honest information about what it's like to experience mental health challenges and answer any questions they may have

✓ Red flags

- Unresolved anger or pain from high school experiences

3) What does recovery mean to you?

✓ Points to look for:

- Wellness
- Recovery is possible for everyone
- Life can continue, might have to alter plans
- It's a continuous process
- My life doesn't revolve around my (or my family member's) illness
- Acceptance and being at peace
- I am able to manage my daily living
- Utilizing coping skills to maintain recovery
- Ability to share experiences to help others
- Advocacy
- Being aware of signs of relapse and making the necessary adjustments in a timely manner

✓ Red flags

- Mentioning not having to take meds, go to the doctor or therapist, or engage in any type of treatment plan
- Wanting to give others advice
- Wanting to tell others how to ___ (fill in the blank. ex: use alternative medicine, pray)

- Recovery isn't possible for everyone
- Recovery means I am (or my family member is) completely well and no longer needs to take medications or engage in a treatment plan
- Anything that sounds like denial or not having accepted their (or their family member's) mental illness

4) What are your views on treatment for mental illness?

✓ Points to look for:

- Treatment is a necessary part of staying well
- Any mention of specific treatment or coping skills strategies
- There are many kinds of treatment, you just have to find what works the best
- Treatment is a continuous process

✓ Red flags

- Negative outlook
- Treatment isn't necessary
- Treatment is overrated
- Mentioning not having to take meds, go to the doctor or therapist, or engage in any type of treatment plan
- Talking of going off medications without consulting a doctor
- Overly negative about medication
- Viewpoint that mental illness is curable

Interview Questions

5) Why do you think being an Ending the Silence Presenter is a good fit for you?

✓ Points to listen for:

- I enjoy working with youth
- I (or my family member) began experiencing symptoms when I was (or they were) in K-12, so I truly understand what students or their friend may be going through
- My friends (or my family member's friends) played a key role in my (or my family member's) recovery, which I think would be a good example for them to hear
- I'm a good listener and won't just talk at the kids

✓ Red flags

- I enjoy telling my (or my family member's) story and this is just another way for me to do so
- I know what the students need to hear
- I want to be a teacher and this is a great way for me to get teaching experience

6) How do you think being diagnosed with a mental illness affects an individual's plans, hopes and dreams for their future?

✓ Points to listen for:

- Positive outlook, optimism and hope
- Mention of recovery
- One may need to alter their plans a little, but life can continue and you can still achieve your hopes and dreams for their future
- With treatment, recovery isn't just possible, it's highly probable
- You can't be cured and it's not something you just get over, but individuals in recovery can definitely achieve success and their dreams

✓ Red flags

- Negative outlook
- Their hopes and dreams need to be recalibrated
- Recovery isn't possible for everyone
- Life becomes about getting through the day so the future doesn't really matter
- It's possible to be cured and not have to think about it anymore
- Get a diagnosis and then you move on
- It doesn't affect anything

7) What do you do (or help your family member to do) to stay in recovery?

✓ Points to listen for:

- Ongoing process
- Want someone that is an empathetic family member or peer
- Important for family members to be a part of ongoing recovery
- I didn't always do that well with my family member, but some things I could have helped with are...

✓ Red flags

- It's not up to me, I'm done!
- Get a diagnosis and then you move on

- I made them figure it out on their own
- Defeated outlook from family member (i.e. there's nothing I can do)
- A family member stating that their loved one doesn't want to get well

8) Sharing your own personal story is a critical part of being an effective ETS presenter. How do you view your own “lived experience”?

This question is intentionally vague. It gives individuals an opportunity to either have a positive or negative outlook on their experiences and will show a lot about their true feelings.

✓ Points to listen for:

- Positive outlook
- Concise
- Clarity about their experiences
- Demonstration that they've fully processed and reflected on their experiences
- Learned something
- Story conveys hope

✓ Red flags

- Negative outlook
- Anger or grief (a little emotion is natural, but it needs to be clear that presenters have dealt with their experiences)
- A very long answer or an inability to be concise
- An inability to elaborate on their experiences or not being able to “tell their story”
- A story that may be difficult for the students to relate to

9) How were you able to accept your (or your family member's) mental illness?

✓ Points to listen for:

- Acceptance of any illness is a process
- Different stages, doesn't necessarily happen all at once
- Work in progress
- Hopeful outlook
- Positive self-image or image of family member
- I do feel I accept my (or my family member's) mental illness

If you perceive the candidate to be indecisive please write down why for future reference

✓ Red flags

- I accept that my family member is mentally ill and won't ever be able to take care of him/herself
- Lack of hope or expectations
- Denial
- Inability to say that they or their family member has a mental illness
- Mention of a breakdown or suicide attempt, but family member (or the individual) is OK now
- Negative image of themselves or family member
- I am still in a grieving process

10) How do you view your (or your loved one's) life today?

✓ Points to listen for:

- Answer reflects a positive attitude
- Answer reflects hope
- I've been doing well for x-period of time
- Mention of a relationship or friendships
- Mental illness doesn't define them

Pay attention to how easily the candidate is able to answer this question. Struggling to answer this question may indicate that they're not at a point where mental illness doesn't define them.

✓ Red flags

- Life is consumed by the management of their (or their family member's) mental illness
- Identity is their (or their family member's) mental illness
- Not at a point where their (or their family member's) mental illness doesn't define them
- Still in the space of hiding their (or their family member's) mental illness
- Signs that the individual (or their family member) has recently been diagnosed

Closing

Thank candidates for the conversation you've had.

Let them know when they will be notified about the results of their application and screening.

Remind them that even if they attend the training, if there is a question on their part, or on the trainers' part, about their abilities, they may not be certified at that training. If the timing is bad for them it may be suggested that they wait until the next training.

Presenter Screening Interview Form

Name: _____
Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____
Email: _____
Date: _____

Job requirements:

- ✓ Willingness and capability to undergo an intensive ETS training process
- ✓ Agree to maintaining fidelity of the NAMI ETS presentation model at all times
- ✓ Make a commitment to being available to perform at least one presentation per month for at least one school year
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- ✓ Willingness to serve as a representative of your NAMI Affiliate
- ✓ Is (or willing to become) a member of NAMI

Applicant understands the job requirements: ☐ Yes ☐ No

REMINDER: It is not necessary to ask every question listed below. These are just suggestions to help you to evaluate whether or not an individual is a good candidate for becoming an ETS Presenter and how successful they might be. Questions 1-4 are included in the presenter application and intended to be reviewed prior to the interview. Therefore, questions 1-4 are left out of the screening interview from.

5) Why do you think being an Ending the Silence Presenter is a good fit for you?

6) How do you think being diagnosed with a mental illness affects an individual's plans, hopes and dreams for their future?

7) What do you do (or help your family member to do) to stay in recovery?

8) Sharing your own personal story is a critical part of being an effective ETS presenter. How do you view your own “lived experience”?

9) How were you able to accept your (or your family member’s) mental illness?

10)How do you view your (or your loved one’s) life today?

11)Additional Comments:

Compliment the person genuinely after they finish the interview.

Let them know that you will get back to them in _____ days/weeks (whenever decisions will be made on who will be invited to participate in training).

Based on responses from the presenter application and today’s interview, I recommend this person to attend the ETS Presenter Training: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature of Person Conducting Screening

Date