

Sharing Stories to Stop Mental Health Stigma

Our stories are powerful. Stories bring us together and help us see each other with more empathy and understanding when it comes to mental health.

Research shows that sharing real stories from those living with mental health conditions and their allies is key to bridging the gap between people with a mental health condition and those without. When these stories are shared, people realize that mental health conditions are common across all walks of life, but that what truly makes someone who they are is much more than whether or not they live with a mental health condition.

SHARE YOUR STORY

WhatMakesUs



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Here are a few tips to keep in mind when sharing your unique story.

BE YOURSELF

It's all about showing who you are as a person. What makes us who we are is not a mental health condition - we are so much more than that.

SHARE YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

In your story, it's important to share that you live with or have experienced a mental health condition. Telling people what specific condition you live with (such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, etc.) helps shed even more light on that specific condition and counters the stigma about it more directly.

BE HONEST, BUT MINDFUL

It's okay to share the challenges you face when it comes to mental health, but be mindful that some aspects of our stories may be triggering for others. Sharing about very serious topics such as past traumas or suicidal thoughts is valuable and important to acknowledge, but it is best to avoid sharing details of these traumatic events.

DON'T FORGET THE POSITIVE

Living with a mental health condition isn't easy, but to help challenge negative stereotypes and assumptions, it's important to share positive parts of your story and your life as well. This might include sharing:

- Things about you and your life that you're proud of. Especially examples that show how mental health has not held you back from accomplishing goals, trying new things, etc.
- Your interests and the things you value in life. These examples help show that those who live with a mental health condition share many things in common with those who do not live with a mental health condition.

LOOK OUT FOR YOU, TOO!

You never need to share anything about yourself or your mental health journey that you're not ready to share or that is upsetting to talk about. Sharing your story is meant to be a positive experience. If you aren't ready to share, that is okay, too!