

Share Your Story!

LifeWays invites people who struggle with mental illnesses to break the silence and share their stories. We all know how empowering human connections are to those seeking wellness and recovery. By speaking out about your experiences, you help give a voice to the 57.7 million American adults—and as many as one in 10 children—who have a mental health disorder.

Your story will help bust the stigma that keeps people from getting care and perpetuates misunderstanding about those affected by mental health disorders. We think there's no better antidote to that misunderstanding than the real lives of real people. And there's no better antidote to silence than speaking out.

Together, we can help others and kick open the door to the truth about mental illness: that it's real, common and treatable.

So tell your story and give a real voice to a great cause. **Your story can change a life, and even save one.** Thanks for your courage and your time.

Questions to Consider when Writing Your Story

- How has mental illness affected your life? Your relationships? Your schoolwork or job?
- Describe your experience with mental illness. How old were you when your illness began to affect you? Was there a diagnosis, and if so, what was it?
- Do you have insurance coverage?
- What form of treatment have you received? If you haven't sought care, why not?
- What problems have you encountered in getting care? Have you been able to get healthcare and other mental health services when you needed them? Have you experienced discrimination by an employer, landlord, health insurance plan, etc.?
- Tell us about other aspects of your life. For example: What you do for a living or are you a student? Are you married? Do you have children? Where do you live? What is your highest level of education? What are your hobbies or interests?
- What is your life like now?
- If you could change one thing about how people think about mental illnesses, what would it be?
- What has been most helpful to you as you have worked to cope with mental health problems in your life and manage your illness?
- Is there anything else that you would like to say?



Please submit your story to Heather English at heather.english@lifewayscmh.org for consideration.

Thank you for bravely sharing your story!