



Advocacy | Education | Prevention

An interview series with MHA Storytellers

Q: How have you benefitted from sharing your story?

A: One of the main benefits of sharing my story through MHA is that it not only helps to overcome the stigma associated with mental illness, it helps me overcome the stigma I've imposed upon myself. That sense of shame, of being somehow flawed or broken, is being replaced with the idea that I am battling an illness. My illness is not a character defect but something that is real and treatable. At some level, I understood this, but being able to share my experiences has opened my eyes to the fact that I'm not alone. I am part of a larger community. That realization has not only strengthened my resolve to work on my own recovery but I also realize that my story isn't a singular one. MHA has given me a platform to reach other people who need to learn that they aren't alone and that their lives do not have to be defined by an illness.

Q: What do you think is the most important aspect of MHA's work?

A: MHA is active in so many areas, it's hard to pick one aspect as the most important—all their programs are vitally important. If forced to choose, I would say that MHA's Education through QPR Suicide Prevention and Mental Health First Aid can be literally lifesaving. Everything begins with a conversation and MHA's role as a conversation starter makes everything else possible. I know the impact those conversations have had on my life and those conversations have moved me to become active in having more conversations with more people. Each conversation leads to more and the more we discuss mental health the more people can be helped through training, advocacy and referrals. It all begins from that initial conversation.—JL



Jim Love



MHA Storytellers

MHA Storytellers are volunteers trained on the mission, vision, purpose, and history of the MHA. Once trained, Storytellers are called upon to represent the MHA or accompany staff to various health fairs, civic presentations, campus or church meetings, etc. Storytellers typically have a true personal recovery story to share as a way to ultimately help break the stigma of mental illness.

[More details](#)

MHA's Coffee & Conversation

Join us for these monthly virtual gatherings to learn more about MHA and ways to get engaged with our work. At each event, an MHA Storyteller shares a story of hope and recovery and Executive Director Kathy Rogers starts a dialogue to increase understanding and awareness about mental health. Bring your own coffee and we'll provide resources and inspiration. [Register here](#)