



Unsinkable



**Bridging Minds: The Transformative Power of Digital
Storytelling in Mental Health Care**

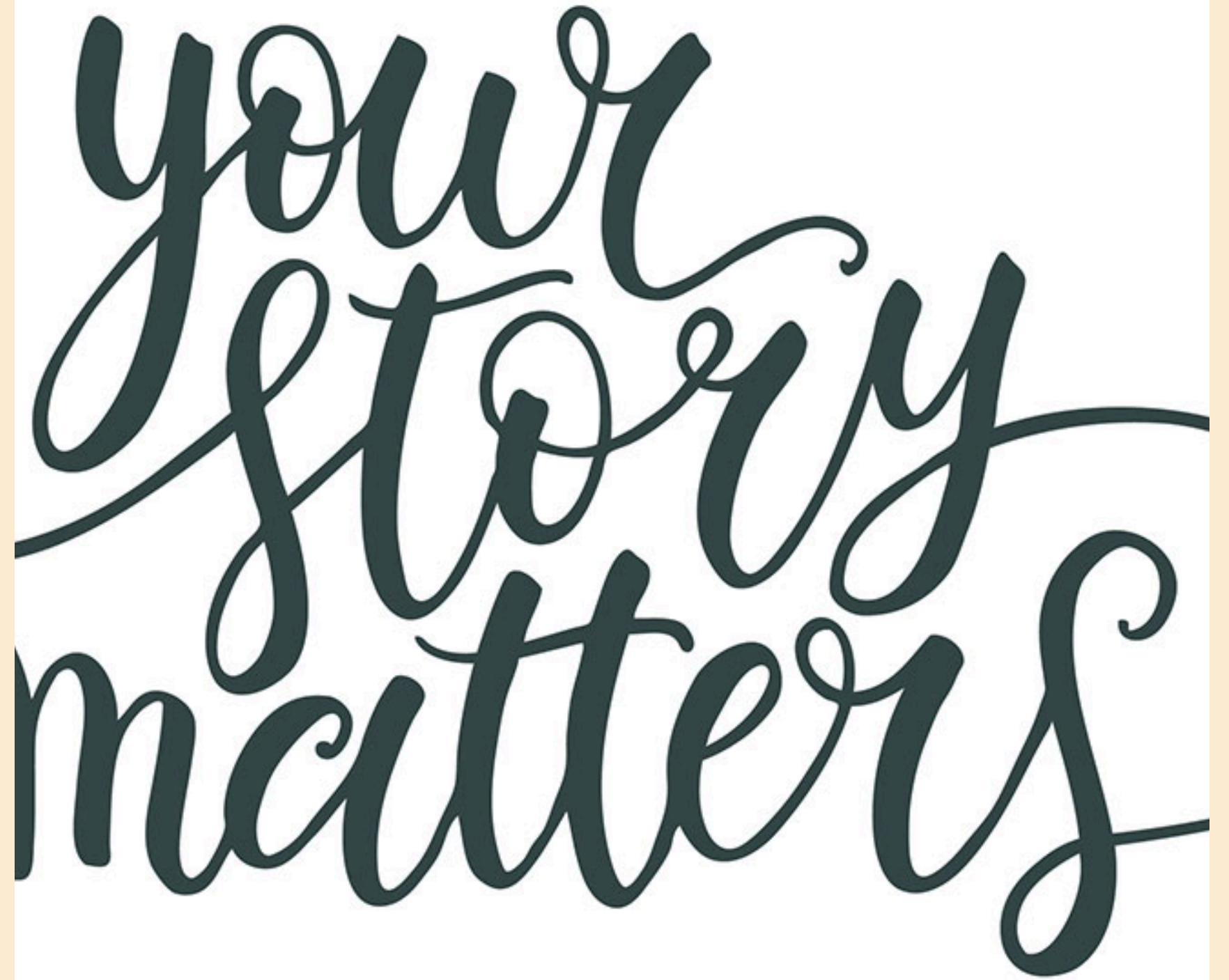
eMHIC Webinar October 29th at 1:30pm EST

WHAT IS DIGITAL STORYTELLING?

Digital storytelling (DST) is an arts-based method that provides a platform for agency and freedom ([De Vecchi et al., 2016](#); [Quah and Ng, 2022](#)).

DST combines photographs, written words, images, videos, voice-over narration, music, sound and other creative endeavours to communicate a personal narrative ([Lambert and Hessler, 2018](#)).

Digital stories are shared from a first-person perspective, are a tool for self-reflection and can be utilized to cultivate community among storytellers and the audience.



your stories matter

OUR ORIGIN STORY

‘I wanted to create a space where anybody could go to read about human strength and struggle, get inspired by another’s perseverance, and be uplifted by another human being’s capacity for love. People remember and people connect through storytelling. I hope you see yourself in some of these stories, I hope you identify a little bit of your own courage and tenacity in these lives of fellow humans. What I have taken away is that we are a hearty lot with more guts and determination than we give ourselves credit for.

We have all struggled. Sharing our stories and the strategies that helped us is a gift to others. Collectively, our lived experience has tremendous power to provide hope, help, and inspiration. I created Unsinkable to give people a voice, an outlet, and a supportive community. I want all people to know that together we really are unsinkable.” - Unsinkable Founder, Silken Laumann



Silken Laumann

Founder, 4x Olympian & Mental Health Speaker



MISSION

Unsinkable harnesses the power of storytelling to **bridge the gap** between clinical supports and lived experience by shifting internal dialogues, cultivating community and connecting people to mental health resources across Canada.

VISION

To create a more **compassionate, informed** and **inclusive** Canadian society where mental health is embraced, understood as an essential aspect of overall wellbeing and **actively supported** within community



LIVED EXPERIENCE LIVES ON OUR TEAM

Unsinkable is an organization for and by people with lived experience with their mental health. Here are a few examples of stories from across our team



Hailey Hechtman,
Executive Director



Asante Haughton, Program
Manager, Storytelling



Maria Estrada, Program
Manager, Unsinkable Youth



Mikaela Brewer, Podcast
Host, Braving the Waves

GROUNDING OUR APPROACH IN CLINICAL EXPERTISE: STRENGTHENING PROGRAMS THROUGH PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE

Unsinkable values and incorporates evidence-based approaches and clinical expertise to ensure the highest level of support for those with lived experience.

Our approach is validated, informed, and enhanced by the inclusion of psychiatrists, psychotherapists, and other mental health professionals.

These experts play a critical role in shaping our programs by providing clinical insights that complement the lived experiences we highlight, ensuring our initiatives are both empathetic and grounded in proven mental health practices.

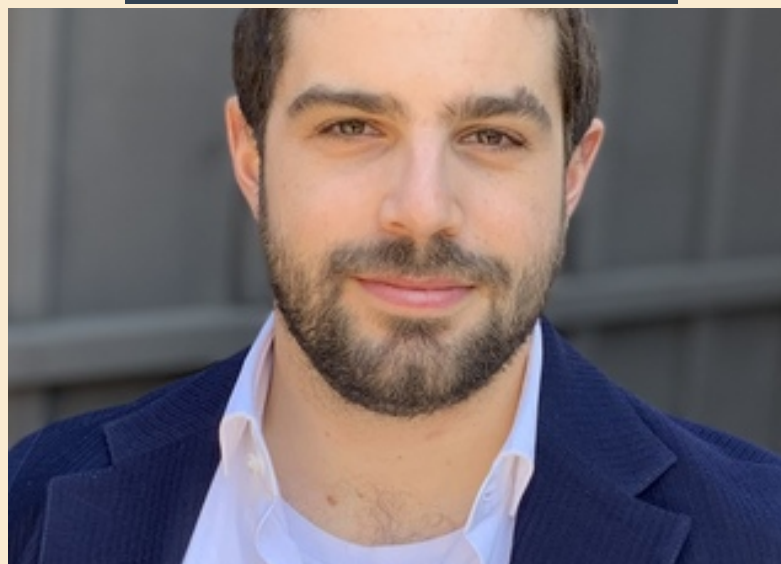
This collaboration allows us to offer holistic, well-rounded support, bridging the gap between lived experience and professional care



Dr. Andrew Howlett,
Psychiatrist



Niya Bajaj, Narrative
Medicine Facilitator



Noah Tile, Psychotherapist



Dr. Chika Oriuwa, Psychiatry
Resident



Hayley Peek, Peer Support
Consultant



Dr. Gillian Mandich,
Happiness Researcher

FROM THE RESEARCH

According to numerous research studies, mental health storytelling leads to: Connectedness, Hope, Optimism, Identity, Meaning and Purpose, and Empowerment



Recent research on narrative identity shows that when it comes to life stories, those who find redemptive meanings in their past challenges and adversity, and who tell their life stories with ideas that include agency, exploration or more open-mindedness enjoy higher levels of mental health, well-being, and maturity.

Stories that highlight recovery and coping strategies can encourage others to seek help. When individuals see their own struggles reflected in the stories of others who have successfully navigated mental health challenges, it can inspire them to take action and reach out for support. This is especially important in reducing the barriers created by self-stigma and fear of judgment (BioMed Central).

Research suggests that people who choose to disclose their lived-experience have better social functioning and show more hope and increased self-esteem, all of which contribute to sense of wellbeing (Corrigan 2016)

When individuals who have struggled disclose their experience to others, they may feel more empowered as a result of their advocacy role, indirectly reducing self-stigma (Corrigan and Rao 2012).

Research also suggests that disclosure of mental struggles/illness helps increase people's mental health literacy, in turn reducing societal stigma by reducing damaging misconceptions, stereotypes and labels attached to mental illness (Corrigan and Rao 2012).

Storytelling can allow people to identify coping strategies and to reflect on their journeys as well as encourage them to use their experience to teach others (De Vecchi et al. 2016).

Why Storytelling?

Storytelling is an evidence-based, effective, accessible and scalable way of supporting people across the mental health continuum

To What Benefit?

Storytelling supports people to feel:

- Safe
- Seen
- Supported

1. Empower storytellers to explore and share their stories

3. Cultivate storytelling spaces to build community

What We Do

2. Amplify stories across Canada

Current Program **PORTFOLIO**

01

Storytelling

Working alongside storytellers to share their personal mental health journeys.

02

Unsinkable Youth

A peer-led, youth-driven mental resilience program featuring safe storytelling, mental health strategies and peer discussions.

03

Community Champions

Collaboration with mental health advocates across Canada, empowering them to share their lived experiences through storytelling to drive systemic change and connect people with mental health supports.

2024-2027

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To empower individuals across Canada to experience the Unsinkable journey—a transformative path of personal storytelling, resilience-building, and deep community connection.

Through reflective exploration and shared storytelling, participants not only find healing and amplify their voices but also become part of a compassionate, supportive network that drives mental health awareness and lasting societal change.



**Empower Storytellers to
Explore and Share their
Stories**



Amplifying Diverse Voices



Cultivating Community

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Share “How has someone’s story inspired you to reflect on your own mental health journey?”

Record a 30 sec video using our Vidlo platform

<https://live.vidlo.video/BridgingMinds>

<https://www.weareunsinkable.com>



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