U of M students has been diagnosed with a mental illness during their lifetime.*

Everyone is affected by mental illness. Let’s start talking about it.

www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/sos

My name is Will Menzel. Last spring, I graduated from CBS with a Bachelor’s in biochemistry. Now I’m a junior scientist in a plant metabolomics lab on the St. Paul campus, and I’m applying to combined MD-PhD programs.

Over winter break of my freshman year, I lost my mom to suicide after she’d battled borderline personality disorder for most of her life. Talking to loved ones and a counselor helped me grieve. Joining the student group Active Minds helped me give back.

I want people to know that not only can you survive a painful and challenging experience like this in college, you can grow from it. Do your best to stay healthy and keep your grades up. Forgive yourself when you can’t. Keep reaching out. You can get through this.
My name is Alice Johnson. I’m a student here at the University of Minnesota and am involved in the group Active Minds.

I began having issues with anxiety and depression in high school. I had always been a worrier and was extremely aware of my social surroundings. I avoided situations. I’ve come to understand that my social anxiety is a part of who I am. I know it won’t just go away, but through therapy and personal growth I’ve come to peace with it.

I hope sharing my story will encourage others to get help that they need and reduce the stigma that surrounds mental health issues.
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My name is Anne Phibbs. I’m the Director of the University of Minnesota GLBTA Programs Office.

I was diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) a few years ago. You wouldn’t really know I struggle with it unless I told you. Sometimes I count things a bit obsessively. I also have odd, almost funny things I do that don’t make any sense—like look at the back and front of my car after I park it. It’s mostly a way to manage anxiety. My twin sister does similar things.

I’ve learned that you need to accept ALL of who you are. It all adds up to make each one of us...special.

Stamp Out Stigma educates the University of Minnesota community about mental health concerns, promotes access to mental health resources and creates a supportive environment for students, faculty and staff affected by mental illness.

*2010 College Student Health Survey, Boynton Health Service, University of Minnesota, www.bhs.umn.edu
My name is Joe Cardamone. I’m a family social science major here at the U, and I’m involved in the groups Active Minds and Stamp Out Stigma.

Throughout the majority of my adolescence, I struggled with depression and social anxiety. My mental and emotional suffering became so great that I reached a breaking point. After this, I got the help I needed. I didn’t need anybody to tell me it was okay or normal. I just came to accept how things were.

I know firsthand how tough this battle can be. Many mental illnesses are misunderstood and have stigmas attached to them. It’s okay to get help. I encourage others who are struggling to get help before they reach a breaking point.
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