

## Well-Being Tip

May 2025



### What's in a Story? The Mental Health Benefits of Storytelling

Predating written words, storytelling has been a way for people to make sense of their lived experience, share information, and connect with each other for thousands of years. May is National Mental Health Awareness month, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is highlighting the positive power of storytelling. Sharing our unique stories with others can promote empathy, foster a greater sense of connection, and reduce stigma around mental illness (Kyaïen et al., 2023; De Vecchi et al., 2016). They can also serve to remind all of us that we do not have to face our challenges alone, and there is always hope.

As the semester winds down, MSCC invites you to reflect on your own mental health story. To start generating your unique narrative, take a few moments to reflect using these prompts provided by the NAMI:

- What do you wish people knew about mental health?
- What misconceptions about mental health do you encounter in your work?
- What have you learned on your mental health journey?
- How does your mental health impact how you show up within your community?
- What do you share with your friends or family in moments when they need support?
- How do you help reduce stigma surrounding mental health?
- In one word, describe your mental health journey.
- What inspires you to support mental health — in your life, work, or community?
- What motivates you to be an ally in the mental health movement?

All the experiences we've had, the great ones, the mundane ones, and the challenging ones, create the story of our strengths and resilience. This Mental Health Awareness

month, consider sharing your mental health story with loved ones and friends. Sharing your story with others can help to reduce the stigma around mental illness and fortify the fabric of our community. To learn more about NAMI's initiative, [visit the NAMI Mental Health Awareness Month storytelling campaign website](#).

#### [Connect with the MSCC](#)

The Medical Student Counseling Center (MSCC) offers free, confidential personal counseling, disability and accessibility services, academic and career development support, and wellness consultations to MD and PA students.

#### Contact MSCC

Email: [osac-mscc@uiowa.edu](mailto:osac-mscc@uiowa.edu)

(Email should not be used to share confidential information or in the event of an emergency.)

Phone: 319-335-8056

If you are in crisis or you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, call or text 9-8-8.

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