

Victoria Maxwell BFA, BPP*

Mental Health Educator, Consultant, Actor and Writer

“Victoria’s presentations are incredibly enlightening...recommended at the highest level.”

- Dr. Harry Karlinsky, Director, Continuing Medical Education, Psychiatry, University of BC

For Meeting Planners and Human Resource Directors:

Victoria Maxwell (**Crazy for Life Co.**) is one of North America’s most sought-after consultants and speakers on the ‘lived’ experience of mental illness and recovery, reducing stigma and addressing mental illness and improving mental health in the workplace.

Creative Director of **Crazy for Life Co.** and an award-winning actress and playwright with over 20 years experience, Victoria has worked alongside David Duchovny, John Travolta and Johnny Depp, among others.

After her diagnosis of bipolar disorder, anxiety & psychosis, she became extremely proactive in her recovery. She combines her theatre background, personal experience of psychiatric illness & professional knowledge as a group facilitator & mental health worker, to give a unique & powerful ‘insider’s’ perspective on dealing with depression & other mental illnesses.

Her critically acclaimed one-woman show *Crazy for Life*, her true-life story about accepting and living with a psychiatric disorder and *Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?! about her return to work, tours internationally to sold-out audiences and rave reviews. In places such as England, New Zealand and venues throughout the United States and Canada. Crazy for Life has captured the Moondance International Film Festival award for best stage play in Colorado and the Gordon Armstrong Theatre Award in Vancouver. As well, her efforts have won honours as a finalist at the Canadian National Playwriting Competition and the Courage to Comeback Award. She is also featured in the Knowledge Network documentary ‘Living with Depression’ which aired in last May and several national magazines.*

Her company, **Crazy for Life Co.** assists organizations to raise awareness and recognize employee depression early and enhance workplace wellness. Most popular wellness packages combine her solo shows, *Crazy for Life* or *Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?! with customized keynotes or programs for company conferences. Increasing the Bottom Line: Helping Employees Who Face Depression* and *Making the Most of Treatment* prove to be exceptionally inspirational and informative programs for conferences worldwide. Her highly anticipated second play *Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?! recently premiered in both Canada and the US and continues to tour throughout North America to capacity audiences.*

Victoria is a charismatic keynoter and performer whose honest, often hilariously irreverent approach to her own experiences disarms the prejudices often associated with mental illness, even as she provides crucial information on how to deal with it openly and effectively – in the workplace and elsewhere. A frequent guest on radio (CBC, CKNW; 600AM) and television, she writes monthly columns for various health magazines, and websites (BC’s Mental Health Journal Visions Magazine, BC’s Mood Disorders Association, Calgary’s Organization for Bipolar Affective Disorders).



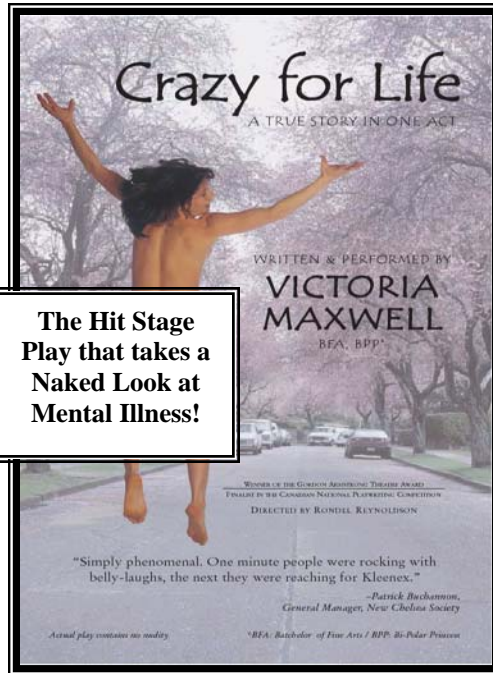
Areas of Expertise

- Lived Experience of Mental Illness and Recovery
- Early Detection of Workplace Depression
- Resiliency and Overcoming Adversity
- Patient/Healthcare Provider Relationship
- Mental Health Policy Consulting
- Return to Work Strategies
- Mental Illness, Mindfulness and Spirituality
- Stigma and Diversity at Work

Crazy for Life

The One-Woman Hit Show about Living with Mental Illness

2007 Entertainment Industries Council PRISM Award Nominee
Winner of the 2005 Moondance International Film Festival Award for Best Stage Play
Winner of Solo Collective's Canadian National Emerging Playwright's Award
Winner of the Gordon Armstrong Theatre Award
Finalist in the Canadian National Playwriting Competition



“Simply phenomenal. One minute, people were rocking with belly-laughs, the next they were reaching for Kleenex.”

*Patrick Buchannon,
General Manager,
New Chelsea Society*

The Hit Stage Play that takes a Naked Look at Mental Illness!

“Artistically marvelous... the writing poetic, the delivery superb.”

Karen Freeborn, President/Artistic Director, Moonstone Theatre

Written and performed by Victoria Maxwell BFA, BPP*
Directed by Rondel Reynoldson

Talk about a walk on the wild side... *Crazy for Life*, is a ‘tour-de-force’ one-woman show of Victoria Maxwell’s roller-coaster ride with bi-polar disorder. A brave, funny, and compelling look at experiencing, surviving, and coming to terms with mental illness. Actor/writer/educator **Victoria Maxwell (Crazy for Life Co.™)** takes us ‘round the bend, and back again: from meditation groups to hospital psych wards, from black depressions to manic highs and psychedelic psychoses. Most memorable moment: joyfully running down the street... naked... in posh Point Grey, playing hide n’ seek with the Divine.

“Authentic...honest...with a transformative ending that will move every heart.”
Aaron Bushkowsky, award-winning playwright of Strangers Among Us and The Waterhead

Directed by **Rondel Reynoldson** (*White Trash Blue Eyes*), *Crazy for Life* both entertains and educates, exploding stigmas, myths and revealing glimpses of one face of psychiatric illness. But at its’ essence, the play is a celebration of the richness of life, the strength of the human spirit and the power of the human heart.

So get ready! Get excited! And get...Crazy for Life!

For more information, please call toll free: 1-866-885-7465
or email info@victoriamaxwell.com or visit www.victoriamaxwell.com

Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?!

The Highly Anticipated Second Show About Returning to Work & Mental Illness

“The comments about your performance were spectacular. We are so grateful to have been able to hear your message. We will definitely have you back next year!!!”

- Linda Alderson, Manager, Rehabilitation Mental Health Services, Nova Scotia



*Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?! is the much anticipated 'sister' show to Victoria Maxwell's hit **Crazy for Life**. This high energy, irreverent one woman show is the second instalment of her bipolar escapades, capturing the world of work before, during and after bipolar disorder, anxiety and psychosis.*

Follow her mad dash from acting with John Travolta to cashiering at Safeway to wearing backless hospital greens, to participating in vocational rehab with job coaches and back into employment again.

Like her previous show, this true life story both inspires and informs, giving a unique 'insider's' perspective of the often wacky and worrisome journey of returning to work after a diagnosis of mental illness. At its core, this deeply personal play reflects a universal story: the resiliency in each and every one of us despite the challenges we face, and the literally vital role love, hope, and support plays in our lives.

Audience members walk away enlightened and entertained, and holding an expanded vision not of what's improbable, but instead of what is possible.

“Victoria takes the painful reality of living with mental illnesses and turns it into something we can understand, laugh with her about and come away feeling empowered and ready to take action. Brava!”

- Sue Bergeson, Past President, Depression Bipolar Support Alliance

Call *Crazy for Life Co.*™ toll free: 1-866-885-7465
or email info@victoriamaxwell.com or visit www.victoriamaxwell.com

Educational Shows and Seminars

“Exceptionally engaging, thought-provoking and irreverently funny...the expertise and experience she imparts translates into good business sense... an important element in the wellness initiatives our company takes pride in offering our employees and their families.”

- Shayne Ramsay, CEO, BC Housing

Solo Shows

Crazy for Life – A True-Life Story of Living with Mental Illness

Filmed version on DVD available for bulk purchase orders with bookings

Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?! – The Sister Show to *Crazy for Life* about Returning To Work.

LAI – The highly anticipated 3rd play, capturing Victoria's experience of dating disasters & romantic romps before, during & after bipolar disorder, anxiety & psychosis. Available: Excerpt readings only.

Seminars

- **Making the Most of Treatment:** Action Steps to Reach Recovery and Your Potential
- **Creating Healthy Bottom Lines:** Understanding Workplace Mental Illness & Helping Those Who Face It
- **Wilderness Tips for the Comeback Trail:** Surviving to Thriving with a Mental Illness
- **Helping Those Who Help Others:** A Workshop for Counsellors, Caregivers & Service Providers
- **Rehab, Recovery and Rapport:** The Connection that Creates Success
- **On The Road Again:** What Works in Voc Rehab To Get Back to Work After Mental Illness
- **But You Don't Look Crazy?** Practical Stigma Busting
- **Meaning Out of Madness:** Reclaiming Identity After Trauma
- **The Managers Toolbox:** Effective Low Cost/No Cost Mental Health R.T.W. Accommodations
- **The 'Nut' and Bolts of Mental Illness and Recovery:**
All You Want to Know About Mental Illness, But Were Afraid to Ask

“Of all the presentations, yours was the highest ranked...you have a gift that is rare and appreciated.”

Carol Redston, Psychiatry, UBC, Conference Co-ordinator, Vancouver Hospital & Health Sciences Centre

*Keynotes/seminars customized to accommodate time limits, specific industry/company goals.

Shows, keynotes & workshops are eligible for Continuing Education Units for a broad range of professions, including CME credits and CE units for both the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and the American Medical Association (AMA) as well as for other organizations.

Detailed learning objectives and further information upon request.

What's All The Buzz About?

Excellent...terrific speaker ...Victoria is outstanding. The mixed audience (psychiatrists, health professionals, residents, students) enjoyed the show and the insights revealed.

-Dr. Raymond W. Lam, Head of Clinical Neuroscience & Director UBC Mood Disorder Clinic

Touching, accurate, informative and educational...We were so impressed with her that we recommended her as the keynote for another association's annual conference.

- Patti Holland, Assistant Director, New Jersey State Office of Housing

Truly talented...the story she shares through her gift continues to inspire lives.

- Martin Labelle, President, The Aequitas Group, Toronto

Superb. An absolutely superior presentation... entertaining and very, very powerful.

- Lynn Carter, Social Service Worker/Instructor, Langara College

Fantastic workshop... the participants all fell in love with Victoria! She inspired many folks.

- Wayne McNiven, Head of Community/Career Education, Vancouver Community College

One of the brightest stars at the UK festival...passionate, mesmerizing and empowering.

- Moya Harris, Executive Director, Equata Company, London, England

Victoria is magic...the response was unprecedented. All sold-out shows. We are still receiving calls about the power of those performances...a leader in mental health education.

- Katie Hughes, Executive Director, Canadian Mental Health Association, Vancouver

Loved it...funny, beautiful and profound... a show for everyone.

- Phil Patston, President/Founder, International Guild of Disabled Artists, New Zealand

Rare for an excellent writer to bring words to such vivid life on stage...

irresistible stage presence, humour and acting ability.

- David Roche, International Humorist, California

Victoria is an inspiration, giving hope to all.

- Rafe Mair, Broadcaster/Author, Vancouver

By popular demand, we opted to add a performance to our already tight schedule.

We were not disappointed. It educates and entertains. Great!

- Geoff McMurchy, Artistic Director, KickstART! Festival, 2004 Courage to Comeback Award

Smart, wry and full of wonderful imagery. The end is a knockout.

- Frank Moher, Director and Governor-General's Award Nominee, Vancouver

Excellent! Vulnerable, insightful, intimate and honest.

- Stacy Sprague, Director of Vancouver Hospital, Employee & Family Assistance Program

Wonderful...the staff keep telling me it was the best education they ever had. They want more!

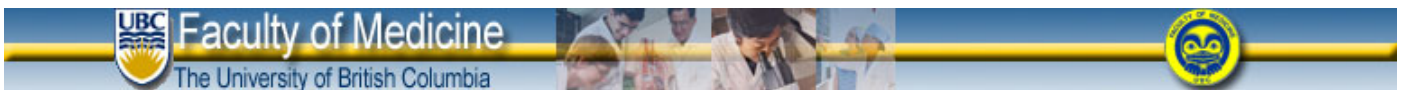
- Theresa Castro, Psychiatric Nurse, BC Housing Commission, Victoria

Partial Client List



Vanc. Hospital Employee Assistance Program
 Vancouver Hospital and Health Sciences Centre
 Vancouver Coastal Health
 WorkSafe BC
 Wyeth Worldwide

AstraZeneca Inc.
 British Columbia Housing Commission
 Balancing Acts Festival, Stage Left Prod'ns - Calgary
 Business Leadership Network
 Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Professionals
 Canadian Mental Health Association – Nation-Wide
 Canadian Psychiatric Association
 CBC Radio – Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary
 CKNW Radio, CJOB Radio Winnipeg
 City of Calgary
 Clark College, Washington
 Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey Inc.
 Columbia River Mental Health, Washington
 Diversity Works Co., New Zealand
 Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) Program
 Equata England Incorporated, U.K.
 Faculty of Medicine, UBC
 Fraser Health Authority
 Janssen Ortho Incorporated
 Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals
 Mood Disorders Association of British Columbia
 New Zealand Mental Health Commission
 North Fraser Valley Health Regions
 Organization of Bi-polar and Affective Disorders of Calgary
 Ryerson University
 Toronto Madness and Arts World Festival
 University Mood Disorders Clinic, UBC Hospital
 University of BC, Department of Psychiatry



Creating Healthy Bottom Lines: Understanding Depression & Helping Employees Who Face It

Victoria Maxwell (Crazy for Life Co.™) combines her own 'been there-done that' experience of depression & successful return to work with her professional mental health facilitator background to produce compelling & hilarious seminars to increase early detection of the illness & reduce costs associated with it. Program approaches blend current company values & objectives with the corporate culture to create immediate & effective results.

- Does Your Staff Wrestle with the Challenges of Work/Life Balance?
- Are Your Short/Long Term Disability Costs Rising?
- Do You Want to Decrease Presenteeism and Absenteeism?
- Need to Enhance Productivity and Staff Morale?

The 'Bottom Line' workshop & keynote gives managers and staff alike, tools to*:

- differentiate between feeling 'down' and clinical depression; performance and mental health issues
- detect the presence of depression early
- identify and reduce workplace stressors associated with the onset of depression
- reduce financial and productivity losses correlated with untreated clinical depression
- encourage staff to seek help early avoiding costly presenteeism, sick time and STD and LTD
- effectively talk to staff when depression is suspected

“Mental illness cost nearly 14 percent or \$13.5 billion of Canada’s corporate income last year alone. It is the #1 health challenge in the workplace.”

Bill Wilkerson, CEO, Global Business & Economic Roundtable on Addiction & Mental Health, 2002

Did you know?

Depression is the **fastest growing** category of **disability claim**, overtaking cardiovascular disease
People suffering from untreated depression are **3 times more** likely to take **sick days**
Only 1 out of 15 workers living with depression **ever seek treatment**

*Yet:

80% of the time chronic depression can be **treated successfully**
A **company saves approximately \$10,000/year** for every employee treated for depression
YVR's wellness **programs reduced short /long term disability claims by 42%** from '99 – '01
Telus states an overall **return on investment of \$3 for every \$1 invested in wellness strategies.**

Protect your most valuable resource - your staff. Invest in wellness initiatives that not only work, but also last.
Invest in **Crazy for Life Co.™** educational keynotes & programs.

VICTORIA MAXWELL
Crazyforlife.co.

Available No-Charge Options & Extras

**“Wonderful...we’ve received enormous amounts of positive feedback...
I haven't seen our participants this excited at our conferences ever!”**

David Wardle, CEO, REES Network

- A personalized eWelcome/Announcement by Victoria, available for you to upload to your website or for use in a promotional email. A great idea to promote your event!
- A DVD / Booklet signing session after the presentations.
- Special bulk order rates for reprints of Victoria’s mental health articles and Crazy for Life DVDs.
- If a luncheon or social event is held, Victoria can be in attendance to play an informal role at the event.
- Photo opportunities during the engagement.
- Victoria is available to media prior to the event; she has extensive experience in TV, radio and print interviews.
- Broadcast quality footage of Crazy for Life, headshots and show excerpts are available for media use.
- PDF file of the Crazy for Life poster and a theatre program template is available for use by the event organizers.
- One booklet and one DVD of Crazy for Life will be donated to the organizers for library use or as door prizes.
- A reprint of one of Victoria’s articles on a mental health topic relevant to the events for the attendee’s package or the organizers newsletter for the month prior or after the engagement will also be made available. Complete topic and title list available upon request.
- A ‘Q & A’ follows all shows and programs, unless otherwise discussed.
- Activities not listed above are possible pending further discussion and mutual agreement.

Requested services must be confirmed and arranged at least three weeks prior to engagement.

Please note that although we will do our best to accommodate your requests we are unable to guarantee them.



**For information, call *Crazy for Life Co.*™ toll free: 1-866-885-7465
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Selected Reprint Title List

1. Depression: No Laughing Matter - Or Is It? Word Count: 1013

A light-hearted look at how to retrieve your sense of humour when grappling with clinical depression

2. 'Club Medication': A Look At Common Myth-Conceptions Word Count: 674

A brief examination of the most common reasons why individuals/patients resist taking medication

3. Stress Management Solutions for Mental Illness Word count: 628

A succinct piece summarizing the most important factors that determine maintaining mental health after a psychiatric diagnosis

4. Let Fear Be a Guideline, Not a Noose Word count: 981

Using fear as a healthy sign of how and when to move into action

5. Meaning Out of Madness: The Healing Tapestry Word count: 625

A description of the healing process that is so particular to recovery from mental illness

6. Moving from Goal Fretting to Goal Getting Word count: 780

A fun how-to article about the trials of setting goals when faced with mental illness and the action steps that can make it easier

7. Where Kindness Falls: Suggestions for Family Word count: 1275

A brief overview of some things family members can do to help their loved ones and themselves when mental illness hits home.

8. Helping those who Help Others Word count: 1141

Suggestions for health care professionals (particularly nurses, doctors, psychiatrists and social workers) to maximize their skills and time when working with individuals with mental health disorders.

9. ProActive - not just a skin care product anymore! 265 words

The importance of taking responsibility for your treatment plan

10. Binging and the Blues: The Connection Between Depression and Disordered Eating

Word count: 1000 A serious and comical look at over coming compulsive overeating and clinical depression

11. On The Road Again Word Count: 1650; alternative length: 1310

A first person account about returning to work after depression and bipolar disorder

12. On The Road Again Version 3; Word count: 2172

This variation of the article focuses on the entire journey through mental illness: from childhood and family background to diagnosis to treatment to recovery and return to work

13. From Surviving to Thriving: Stress Management for Mood Disorders Word count: 1553

Outlines the cornerstones for managing and treating many mental illnesses and guidelines for healthcare professionals to help clients and patients maintain their mental health

14. Practical Mindfulness: Tending the Mind to Mend the Mood Word Count: 1100 to 1190

An easy to read description of Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) and its' benefits for those dealing with mood disorders such as clinical depression or bipolar disorder

15. Guilt: The Mother of All Feelings Word count: 1197

An article examining a mother and daughter coming to terms with their family history of mental illness

*Fees for reprints of articles vary; please contact us directly for a quote. Most pieces are written from the 'lived' experience and first person perspective addressing the individual experiencing the mental health disorder

Mental Illness: Facts and Stats¹

Did you know...?

- **1 in 5 Canadians has or will have a mental illness during his or her lifetime;** the other 4 are indirectly affected by the illness of a friend, family member or colleague.
- Mental illnesses affect people of all ages, income and educational levels, and cultures.
- **Over 4,000 people in Canada die by suicide each year;** this 'statistic' doesn't include the many more who attempt suicide.
- Mental illnesses are caused by complex interplay of genetic, biological, personality, environmental factors.
- In developed countries, mental illnesses (depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder) account for four of the 10 leading causes of disability.
- Mental illness costs Canadian businesses \$13.5 billion/year (disability claims, unemployment insurance, lost productivity etc.) – 14% of Canada's corporate income.

Yet...

- **80% of the time chronic depression can be treated successfully.** But only 50% will seek treatment. The stigma attached to mental illness creates a serious barrier not only to diagnosis and treatment but also to acceptance in the community.
- **A company saves approximately \$10,000/year for every employee effectively treated** for depression.
- **Despite the illness, 69% of individuals with bipolar disorder are employed**
- YVR's wellness programs reduced short & long-term disability claims by 42% between 1999 & 2001.
- Telus states an overall **return on investment of \$3 for every \$1 invested in wellness strategies.**
- **Anti-depressants are not addictive** or habit forming; they do not create a high and are not a 'crutch' or a short cut; they are most often and best used in combination with other treatment approaches such as cognitive behavioural therapy and counselling.

¹ BC Stats, Bottom Line Conference '02, Canadian Mental Health Assoc, Global Business & Economic Roundtable on Addictions & Mental Health, Health Canada, NQI - Vancouver Airport Case Study '02, Stats Can '04, Vancouver Coastal Health, Wellness Matters Co.

To request full program outlines or to book a workshop, keynote or performance,
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