

Victoria Maxwell BFA, BPP*

Mental Health Educator, Consultant, Actor and Writer

Crazy for Life Co.

“A hilarious and compelling masterpiece...the entertaining Maxwell immediately captivated the audience ...she ignites not only a beacon of understanding, but also of hope and acceptance.”

-Jennifer Luna, University of California, Irvine, New University Paper

Victoria Maxwell (**Crazy for Life Co.**) is one of North America's most sought-after speakers and educators on the 'lived' experience of mental illness and recovery, raising awareness and reducing stigma on campus, and successful early detection and accommodation strategies.

She presents to campuses nationwide helping students and staff better understand the 'insider's' experience of mental illness and recovery. Programs and shows raise awareness of college mental health issues, particularly depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder, help identify student mental illness earlier and enhance return to school strategies. More importantly, they offer tools and hope to build recovery and reduce stigma of this, one of the very last taboos.

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 theater background, personal experience of psychiatric illness & professional knowledge as a mental health worker, to give a unique & powerful 'insider's' perspective on dealing with depression & other mental illnesses.

Her critically acclaimed one-woman shows *Crazy for Life*, her true-life story about accepting and living with a psychiatric disorder, and *Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?!?* about the world of work, tour the United States and Canada to sold-out audiences and rave reviews. Recent runs also include England and New Zealand. *Crazy for Life* captured Best Stage Play Award at the Moondance International Film Festival and the Gordon Armstrong Theater Award in Canada. Her efforts have also won her honors 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' and several national magazines.

Most popular packages combine her solo shows, *Crazy for Life* or *Funny...You Don't Look Crazy?!?* with seminars for students and staff. *Ready, Set, Recognize* proves to be an exceptionally informative program for campuses across the country. Her highly anticipated second play *Funny...You Don't Look Crazy!?* 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 and television, she writes monthly columns for various health magazines, and websites.

Areas of Expertise

- Lived Experience of Mental Illness and Recovery
- Detecting Student Mental Illness & How to Help
- Resiliency and Overcoming Adversity
- Survival Tips for Students Living with Depression
- How Campus Staff Can Help Students
- Return to School Strategies
- Stigma and Diversity on Campus
- Mental Illness, Mindfulness and Spirituality

* Bachelor of Fine Arts / Bi-Polar Princess



Crazy for Life

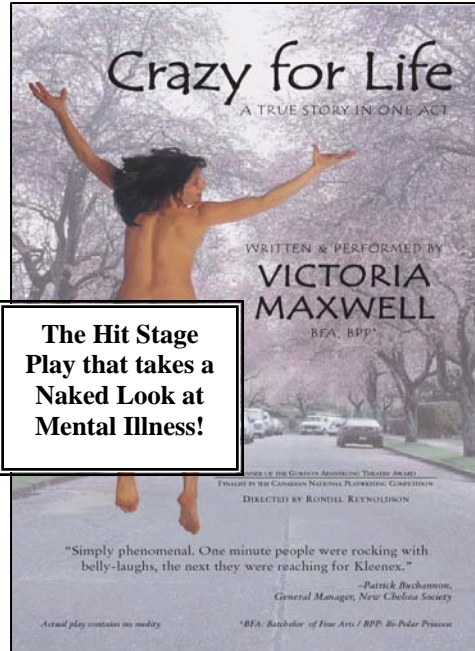
The One-Woman Hit Show about Living with Mental Illness

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 Theater 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!**

**“Fantastic...
the students all loved it!
She inspired many folks.”**

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

Written and performed by Victoria Maxwell BFA, BPP*

*Bachelor of Fine Arts / Bi-Polar Princess

Victoria's presentations are incredibly enlightening...recommended at the highest level.

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

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.

She performs her solo show to sold-out audiences and rave reviews across Canada and the US. She's also 'hit the boards' in New Zealand and in England as a guest artist. Her play continues to tour internationally and has garnered awards in both Canada and the United States.

Crazy for Life 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 The World of Work & Mental Illness

“Of the all presentations, yours was the highest ranked...you have a gift that’s rare & appreciated.”

- Carol Redston, University of British Columbia, Conference Coordinator



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

- Lynn Carter, Instructor, Langara College

*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 installment 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, holding an expanded vision not of what’s improbable, but instead of what is possible.

“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

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College Shows and Seminars

“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, National President, Depression Bipolar Support Alliance

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.

LAID – 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

- **Ready, Set, Recognize:** Detecting Mental Illness in Students & Supporting Their Recovery
- **When a Mood Disorder Gets Out of Control:** Survival Tips for Students Living with Depression and Bipolar Disorder
- **Acceptance, Accommodations & Achievement:** Returning to School Strategies to Reach Your Potential (a program for students)
- **Acceptance, Accommodations & Achievement:** Returning to School Strategies to Assist Students to Their Potential (a program for faculty and campus staff)
- **The 'Nut' and Bolts of Mental Illness and Recovery:** All You Want to Know About Mental Illness, But Were Afraid to Ask
- **ABC's of Stigma Busting?** A 3-Step Directed Investigation of Internalized Stigma
- **Making the Most of Treatment:** Recovery and Empowerment
- **Helping Those Who Help Others:** A Workshop for Counsellors & Caregivers

Two New Seminars Coming Soon!

Hanging Out, Hooking Up and Bipolar Disorder &

Dating and Diagnosis -

Essential Information for Every Student who has a Mental Illness or is Dating Someone Who Does

“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

Shows & seminars eligible for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for most professional associations
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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

An excellent, rare writer who brings words to such vivid life on stage... irresistible stage presence, humor and acting ability.

- David Roche, International Humorist, California

You were wonderful! We are getting rave reviews about you & the special tone you set. It's a gift to us that you're willing to risk so much in order to share your experience. Our spirits were nourished.

- Ed Murphy, Executive Director, The Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey

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

-Karen Freeborn, President/Artistic Director, Moonstone Theater

Authentic...honest...with a transformative ending that will move every heart.

- Aaron Bushkowsky, award-winning playwright of Strangers Among Us and The Waterhead

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

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 keeps telling me it was the best education they ever had. They want more!

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

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

Partial Client List



RAMP of North Central Illinois
Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey
South West Regional Behavioral Health Conference
University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey
University of BC, Department of Psychiatry
University Mood Disorders Clinic, UBC Hospital
US Psychosocial Rehabilitation Association
Van. Hospital and Health Sciences Center
Van. Hospital Employee Assistance Program
Washington Community Mental Health Council

AlliesInc.
AstraZeneca Inc.
Boggs Center of New Jersey
British Columbia Housing Commission
Business Leadership Network
Canadian Psychiatric Association
Canadian Mental Health Association – Nation-Wide
Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Professionals
Care Plus Foundation
Care Plus of New Jersey Inc.
Clark College, Washington
Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey
Columbia River Mental Health Services, Washington
Department of Defence
Depression Bipolar Support Alliance
Diversity Works Co., New Zealand
Early Psychosis Intervention Program
Equata England Incorporated, U.K
Governor's Conference for People with Disabilities
Idaho Office of Consumer Affairs & Technical Assistance
Idaho Department of Health & Welfare
Janssen Ortho Incorporated
Jefferson Mental Health Services
Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals
Mountain States Group of Idaho
New Mexico Department of Health
New Directions of Delaware
New Zealand Mental Health Commission
Organization of Bi-polar and Affective Disorders of Calgary
Pennsylvania Community Care Behavioural Health
Wyeth Pharmaceuticals Worldwide



University of
British Columbia



UMDNJ
UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE &
DENTISTRY OF NEW JERSEY



UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA • IRVINE

References

“The event went better than I could have ever hoped... we are still hearing and receiving lots of great feedback. I look forward to working with you again in the future.”

Jennet Cox, Diversity, Equity & Human Rights Services, George Brown College

Mr. Wayne McNiven

Director, Career Awareness Program
Community & Career Education
Vancouver Community College
Phone: (604) 443-8438
Email: wmcniven@vcc.ca

Ms. Ellen T. Reibling, Ph.D.

Director, Health Education Center
University of California, Irvine (UCI)
Phone: (949) 824-5036
Email: ellent@uci.edu

Mr. Brett Barbaro

Graduate Student / Board Member,
University of California, Irvine (UCI) Mental Health Initiative
Member, National Alliance on Mental Illness's (NAMI) Stigma Elimination Task Force
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Email: brettbarbaro@yahoo.com



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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.**



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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...?

- Young adults aged 18-24 have the highest prevalence of diagnosable forms of mental illness at 27%
- One out of four young adults will experience a depressive episode by age 24; **One in 10 college students experience clinical depression.**
- **Suicide**, often a result of untreated mental illness, **is the 2nd leading cause of death of college students.**
- Bipolar disorder typically develops in late adolescence or early adulthood
- 75% of people with schizophrenia develop the disease between the ages 15-25
- Nearly 1/2 of all college students report feeling so depressed at some point they have trouble functioning.
- **77% of the college juniors reported feeling depressed either “frequently” or occasionally during the past year;** compared to 61% who reported those feeling when they first entered college (UCLA, 2004)
- **About every two hours, a young person kills himself/herself.**
- Mental illnesses affect people of all ages, income and educational levels, and cultures.
- Mental illnesses are caused by complex interplay of genetic, biological, personality, environmental factors.

But The Good News is...

- Recovery from mental illnesses is possible; It is not the exception to the rule, but often the rule itself.
- Major depression is a medical illness and highly treatable
- Depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder & schizophrenia are illnesses that get better with proper treatment
- **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 & treatment but also to acceptance in the community.
- 70% or more of patients with bipolar disorder respond well to medication and combined with counseling, most individuals return to productive and fulfilling lives
- **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 behavioral therapy and counseling.

¹American Psychiatric Association, National Alliance Mental Illness, American Health Stats '04, National Mental Health Association, Suicide Prevention Action Network, American College Health Association, www.activemindsoncampus.org www.HealthMinds.org

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